The "social economy" can be defined in many different ways. The CCEDNet National Policy Council has developed the following definition in relation to Canadian Practitioners within the SE:

"The social economy consists of association-based economic initiatives founded on values of:

- service to members of community rather than generating profits;

- autonomous management (not government or market controlled);

- democratic decision-making;

- primacy of persons and work over capital;

- based on principles of participation, empowerment.

The Social Economy includes: social assets (housing, childcare, etc.), social enterprises including cooperatives, equity and debt capital for community investment, social purpose businesses, community training and skills development, integrated social and economic planning, and capacity building and community empowerment. The social economy is a continuum that goes form the one end of totally voluntary organizations to the other end where the economic activity (social enterprise) blurs the line with the private sector." Social Economy Roundtable Consultation Briefing Notes, 2005

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**Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network/
Partenariat sur l'économie sociale et la durabilité**

Bridging, Bonding and Building/ Renforcement des liens et des capacities

The Atlantic Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network is a multiple partner, Atlantic-wide research network, one of six regional research centers located across Canada, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada, from 2005 to 2010.

National Vision—To build collaboration between researchers and practitioners to better understand and encourage initiatives at the local, provincial and national level so that the Social Economy and its related approaches will be more widely understood and applied in Canada.

Our Vision—To increase the Atlantic region's capacity for a dynamic social economy built on partnerships, knowledge, and networks across the region by working with its peoples and community partners to meet their research needs and influence policy at the provincial and municipal levels.

We Seek to— Increase knowledge about the social economy and to focus research efforts on community mobilization and action within the social economy.

The Atlantic Social Economy Network Sub-nodes

Sub-node 1: Mapping and Policy Analysis
Coordinator: Dr. Luc Thériault, Sociology, University of New Brunswick

Sub-node 2: Mobilization—Inclusion and Empowerment in the Social Economy
Coordinator: Dr. Irené Novaczek, Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island

Sub-node 3: Mobilization—Food Security and Community Economic Development
Coordinator: Dr. Patty Williams, Applied Human Nutrition, Mount Saint Vincent Univ.

Sub-node 4: Mobilization for Natural Resources and Livelihood
Coordinator: Dr. Omer Chouinard, Sociologie, Université de Moncton

Sub-node 5: Financing and Measuring Performance in the Social Economy
Co-coordinators: Dr. Sonja Novkovic, Economics, Saint Mary's University & Dr. Judy Haiven, Management, Saint Mary's University

Sub-node 6: Communication Practices & Tools
Co-coordinators: Ms. Penelope Rowe, Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador & Dr. Ivan Emke, Social/Cultural Studies, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, Memorial University of Newfoundland

For more information about research projects within the Atlantic Sub-nodes, other aspects of the Network, and background information on the social economy, please visit our website:

www.msvu.ca/socialeconomyatlantic

Why study the Social Economy?

The social economy is present in all of our lives.   In the Atlantic region alone, the social economy generates thousands of jobs and millions of dollars which are used to support social objectives based on self-reliant concepts. By studying the social economy, we can strengthen the transfer of knowledge between the diverse social economy sectors located throughout our region and promote the development of social cohesion, the adoption of innovations and useful alternatives, and help to build the capacity and effectiveness of the social economy.

Collaborative Partners

In the Atlantic region, over eighty social economy practitioners, academics, collaborating institutions, government agencies, and community partners have come together, willing to contribute their complementary strengths, networks and tremendous depth and breadth of experience in social economy research and practice in Atlantic Canada and abroad. Our Network includes self-defined community economic development organizations, non-profits, service sector organizations and co-operatives of local, regional and national scope, and will continue to grow.

There are ongoing opportunities for graduate students, academics and community organizations to become involved with our Network. Please check our website for more information, or feel free to contact the Director, the Network Coordinator, or one of the Sub-node Coordinators.

The Network is the Atlantic Node of the SSHRC Canadian Social Economy Research Partnerships. For more information on the other regional nodes, all part of the Research Partnerships, please visit the Canadian Social Economy Hub's website:

www.socialeconomynetwork.ca/hub

French Visions

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French version