

# Social economy entities in 2023

20.12.2024

**1.5%**

social economy entities' share of employment in the national economy

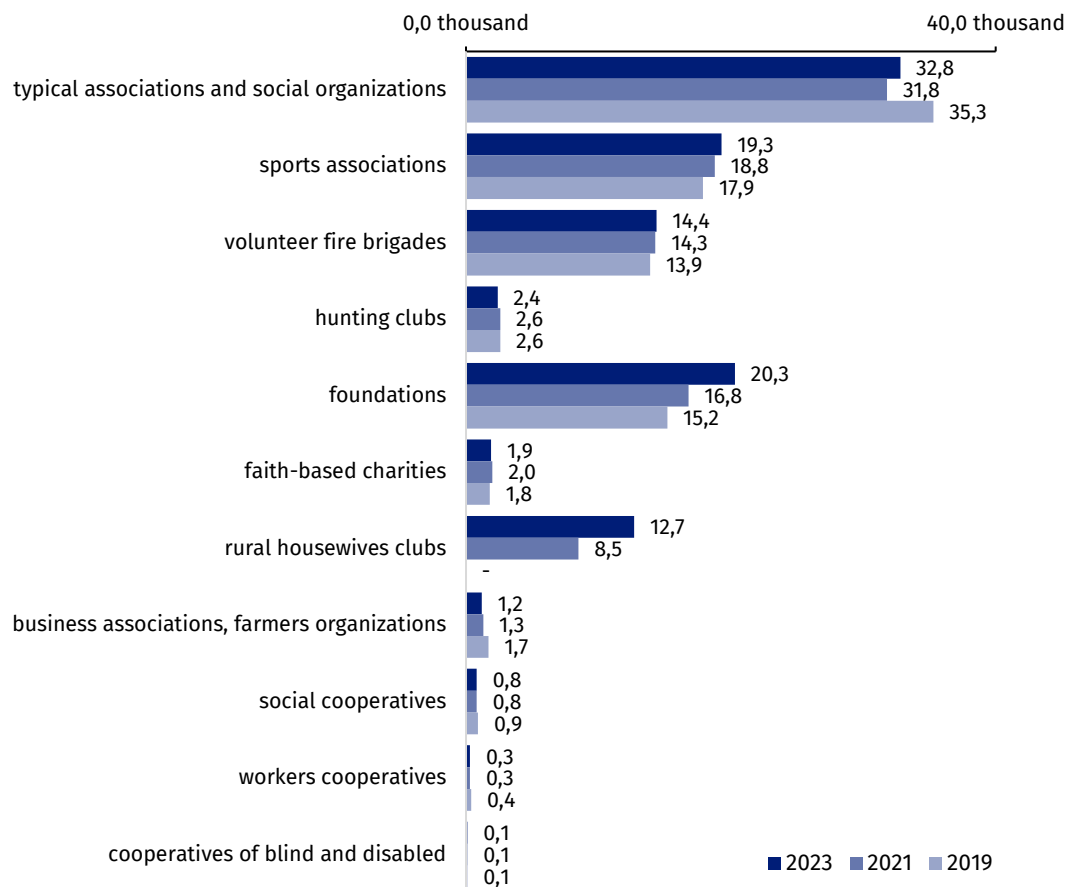
In 2023, 106.2 thousand of social economy entities were active. They employed 210.9 thousand persons on the basis of an employment contract, of which 27.2 thousand persons due to belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion. The annual revenues in this group of entities amounted to PLN 55.6 billion.

## Types of activity

There were 105.0 thousand social economy organizations and 1.2 thousand cooperatives active in 2023. The number of social economy organizations increased by 9.4% (compared to 2021) and 18.8% (compared to 2019), and the number of social economy cooperatives decreased by 6.4% (compared to 2021) and 13.8% (compared to 2019). In 2023, there were 0.7 thousand social enterprises among social economy entities, of which 47.6% were organizations and 52.4% cooperatives.

In 2023, there were 105.0 thousand social economy organizations and 1.2 thousand social economy cooperatives

**Chart 1. Number of active social economy entities by type of organization**



The largest number of social economy organizations were typical associations and similar social organizations (31.2%), foundations (19.3%) and sports associations (18.3%). A low share

was recorded in hunting associations (2.3%), social religious entities (1.8%), economic self-government and agricultural associations (1.2%).

The community of social economy cooperatives consisted mainly of social cooperatives (67.4%), workers cooperatives (24.3%) and to the smallest extent cooperatives of the disabled and blind (8.2%).

Sport, tourism, recreation and hobbies (26.9%) were indicated as the main field of activity by the largest part of social economy organizations. Other areas of activity indicated were rescue (13.9%) and culture and art (13.7%).

For cooperatives, the predominant type of activity was manufacturing (20.1%). Taking into account the type of entity, the majority of cooperatives for the disabled and blind operated in the field of manufacturing (78.0%). Workers and social cooperatives, on the other hand, dealt with more diverse activities. The two key sections of the NACE under which workers cooperatives conducted their activities were: manufacturing (26.9%), and wholesale and retail trade (12.8%). Social cooperatives most often dealt with activities related to accommodation and food service activities (20.6%), administrative and support service activities (20.6%), but also activities within the scope of human health and social work (16.2%).

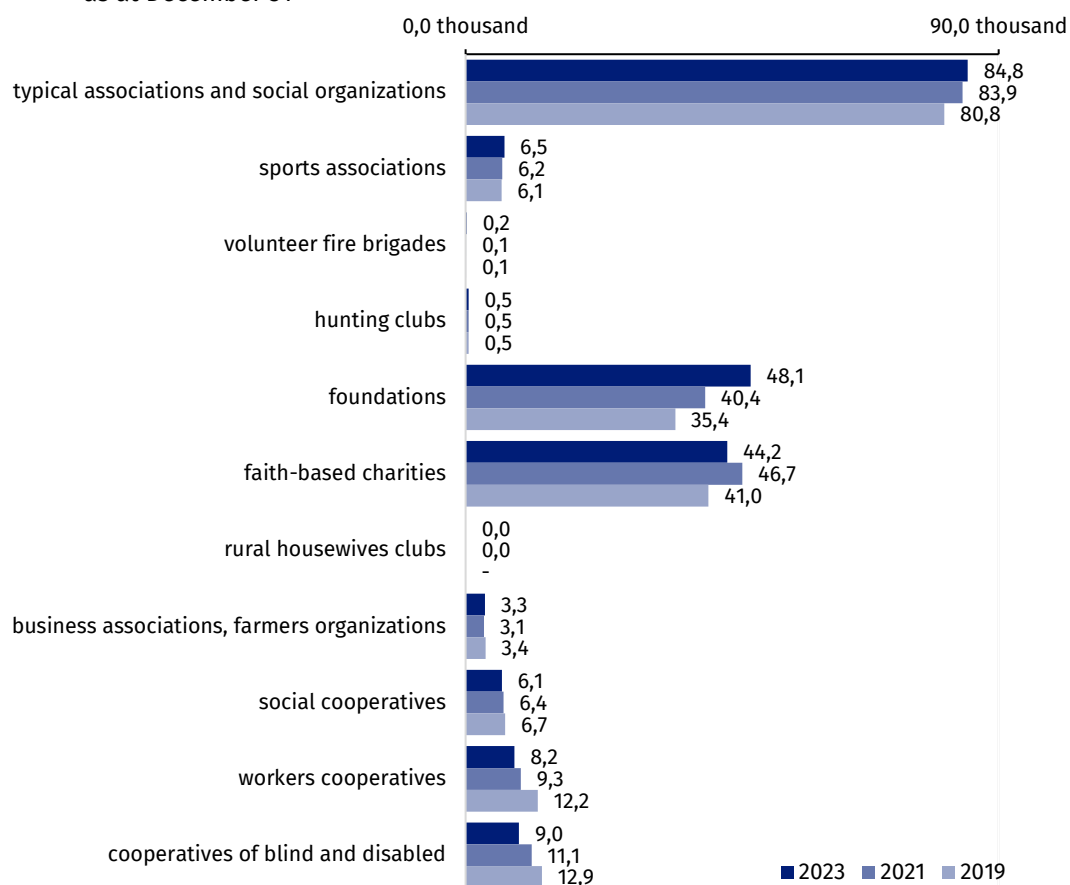
### Employment and its reintegration dimension

At the end of 2023, there were 210.9 thousand persons employed in social economy entities on the basis of an employment contract, of which for 184.6 thousand persons (i.e. 87.5%) it was the main place of work. Most of the employees worked in social economy organizations (187.6 thousand persons), and in social economy cooperatives – 23.4 thousand people. The number of employees in social economy entities increased by 1.5% (compared to 2021) and 5.9% (compared to 2019).

At the end of 2023, 187.6 thousand persons were employed in non-profit organizations, and 23.4 thousand persons were employed in cooperatives

**Chart 2. Number of persons employed under an employment contract in social economy entities**

as at December 31<sup>st</sup>



Compared to the number of persons employed on the basis of an employment relationship in the national economy, employment in social economy entities as at 31 December 2023 was 1.5%, and in relation to the total employed – 1.2% (both indicators assumed the same values as in 2021 and 0.1 percentage points higher than in 2019).

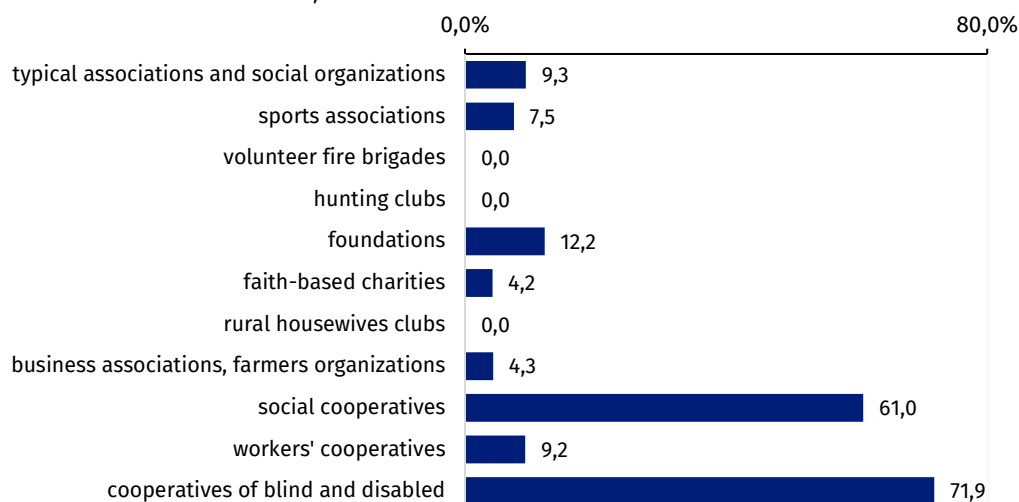
On average, there were 12 employees per one employing social economy organization, and 21 people per one social economy cooperative. The highest rate was recorded for cooperatives of the disabled and the blind (91 people).

Among the persons employed on the basis of an employment contract in social economy entities, there were persons employed due to belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion. In 2023, it was 27.2 thousand persons in social economy entities, which amounted to 12.8% of all employees. Moreover, in the case of disabled and blind cooperatives, persons from groups at risk of social exclusion accounted for 71.9% of all those employed in these entities. Due to the specificity of this type of cooperatives, they were mostly persons employed due to disability (99.8%). In social cooperatives, 61.0% of employees were from groups at risk of social exclusion, who were employed due to disability (41.9%) or unemployment (37.3%).

In social enterprises there were 4.6 thousand persons employed due to belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion, which amounted to 45.4% of all employees in this type of entities.

Persons belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion amounted to 12.8% of all employees in social economy entities

**Chart 3. Percentage of persons from groups at risk of social exclusion<sup>a</sup> among those employed under an employment contract in social economy entities as at December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023**



<sup>a</sup> Persons at risk of social exclusion are people who, at the time of taking up employment in the entity, belonged to one of the following groups: the unemployed; jobseekers up to or after the age of 30; job seekers who do not perform other paid work; people with disabilities; graduates of the Social Integration Centre or the Social Integration Club; persons who meet the income criteria enabling the granting of cash benefits from social assistance; persons entitled to a special care allowance; people becoming independent; people with mental disorders; persons deprived of liberty or released from prisons or leaving a correctional facility; elderly; refugees.

Activities in the field of social or professional reintegration for employees were carried out by 7.9% of employing social economy entities, 4.9% of social economy organizations and 49.1% of cooperatives. Most often, these activities consisted of integration meetings and trips (76.7% of social economy organizations and 63.3% of social economy cooperatives) or participation of employees in cultural events (38.0% and 28.9%, respectively). In the field of social or professional reintegration, due to their profile of activity, cooperatives for the disabled and blind stood out - 75.8% conducted such activities for employees. As part of activities in the field of social or professional reintegration, cooperatives of blind and disabled offered an individual rehabilitation programs (84.0%), rehabilitation in a health resort (40.0%) or a company health or rehabilitation centres (60.0%). A high share of entities offering employees activities in the field of social or professional reintegration was also found in social enterprises (71.6% of social economy cooperatives and 54.1% of social economy organizations).

In 2023, 1.0% of social economy entities employed 0.5 thousand persons after completing participation in social and professional reintegration units (social integration centres, social integration clubs, occupational therapy workshops or vocational activity establishment). Among social economy organizations, 0.7% of them employed persons after reintegration units (0.4 thousand persons). In the case of social economy cooperatives, such employees were employed mainly by social cooperatives (7.0%) and it was 0.1 thousand people.

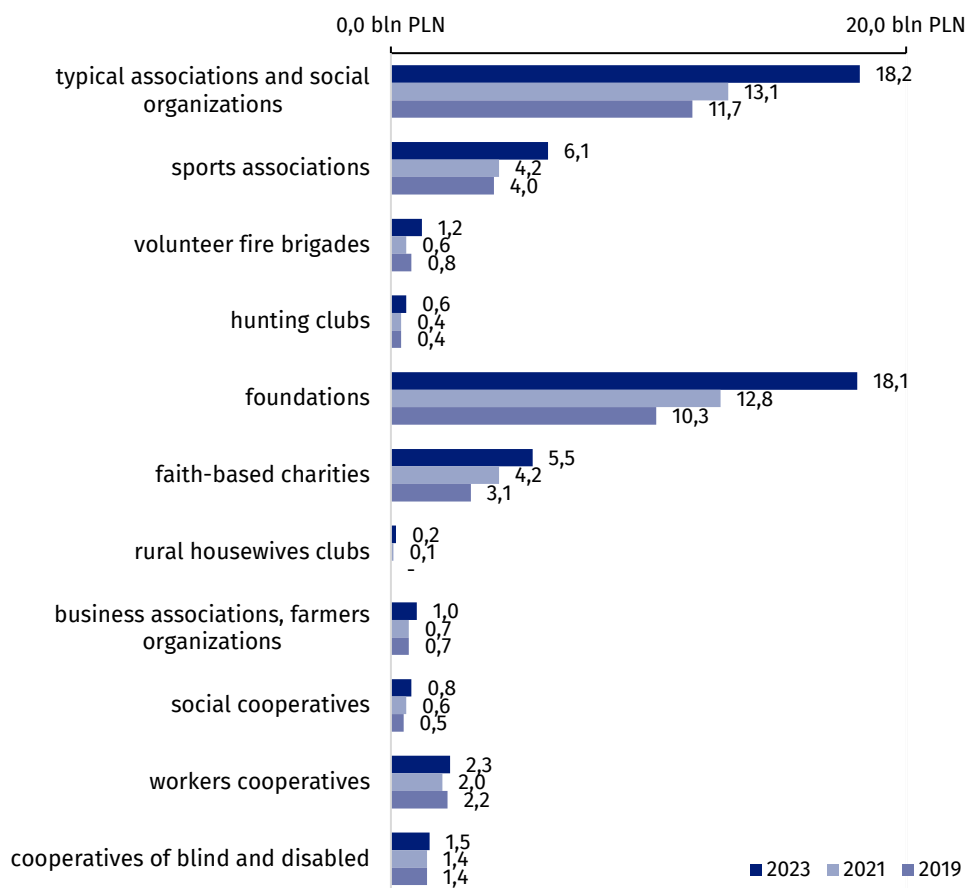
Social enterprises also stood out from the total organizations - 7.6% of them employed 0.1 thousand persons after completing participation in social and professional reintegration units in 2023.

### Revenues and costs

In 2023, social economy entities generated revenues of a total value of PLN 55.6 billion. The sector's revenues increased by 38.7% (compared to 2021) and by 58.3% (compared to 2019). Adjusting for the inflation rate, real growth was lower and contributed to 8.8% and 14.3% respectively. The highest share of total revenues were recorded by typical associations and organizations (PLN 18.2 billion), followed by foundations (PLN 18.1 billion). The cooperative's revenues amounted to PLN 4.7 billion and accounted for 8.4% of the total amount of receipts of social economy entities. Entities with the status of a social enterprise achieved revenues of a total value of PLN 1.2 billion.

Revenues of social economy entities in 2023 reached PLN 55.6 billion

**Chart 4. Revenues of social economy entities**



Among social economy cooperatives, significantly higher values of average revenues calculated for entities with revenues were recorded than among social economy organizations (PLN 3,871.7 thousand compared to PLN 527.5 thousand). Particularly high average values of revenues occurred in cooperatives of the disabled and blind (PLN 15,043.5 thousand) and in workers cooperatives (PLN 7,912.2 thousand). Social economy organizations were characterized by significant financial diversification. Comparing the average value of revenues, the

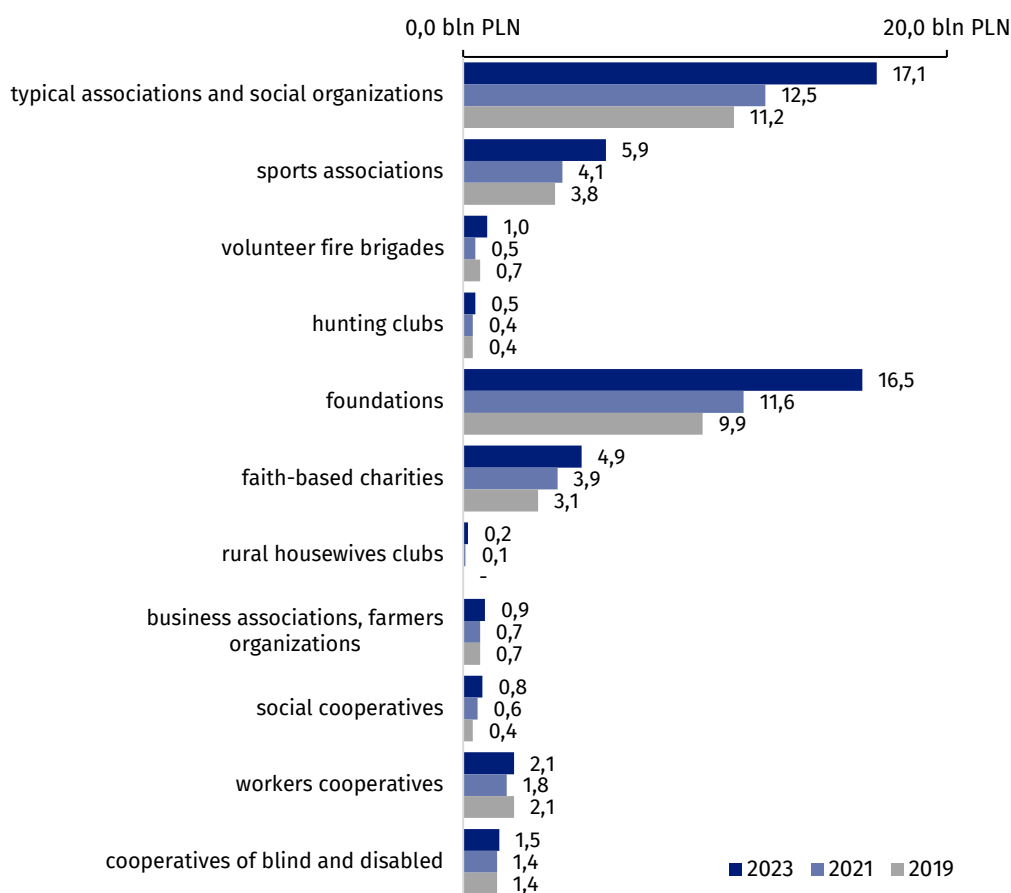
highest indicator was achieved by faith-based charities – 2,932.8 thousand PLN, and the lowest average value of revenue was recorded among rural housewives clubs (PLN 14.1 thousand), and then in volunteer fire brigades (PLN 84.1 thousand).

In 2023, funds from non-market public sources were obtained by 54.5% of social economy organizations and 53.1% of cooperatives. Among social economy organizations and cooperatives using public funds, entities that received subsidies granted through an open tender prevailed, constituting 32.4% and 14.4% of all organizations declaring revenues in 2023, respectively. For cooperatives, the main source of revenue was market funds, constituting 92.5% of total revenues obtained in 2023. As many as 99.1% of the surveyed cooperatives declared using them, compared to 36.1% of social economy organizations. Non-market funds had the largest share in the total amount of revenues of social economy organizations (public 43.3% and non-public 16.5%). Market revenues accounted for 1/3 of all receipts recorded by social economy organizations. Taking into account the type of entity, on the one hand, workers cooperatives stand out, with 97.9% of their revenues coming from market sources, and on the other, volunteer fire brigades, whose 70.4% of funds came from public non-market sources.

In 2023, 92.5% of social economy entities reported incurring costs, the value of which amounted to PLN 51.5 billion. The amount of costs incurred increased by 37.5% (compared to 2021) and by 52.2% (compared to 2019). Adjusting for the inflation rate, real growth was lower and amounted to 7.9% and 9.9%, respectively.

For cooperatives, the main source of revenue was market funds (92.5%), and in social economy organizations the majority of revenues were funds from non-market sources (59.7%)

**Chart 5. Costs of social economy entities**



Social economy organizations spent a total of PLN 47.1 billion, of which 86.2% were costs related to statutory activities. The cooperative's costs amounted to PLN 4.4 billion. The largest part of them were personal gross wages (30.6%) and the costs of consumption of materials and energy (29.1%).

In 2023, a loan or credit was taken out by 1.5 thousand social economy organizations and 0.1 thousand cooperatives. In total, these entities accounted for 1.5% of the total surveyed population. The total value of loans and credits amounted to PLN 395.5 million, PLN 322.6 million were liabilities of organizations and PLN 72.9 million were liabilities of cooperatives. The amount of loans and credits taken by social economy entities decreased by 2.9% (compared to 2021) and by 8.2% (compared to 2019).

The value of loans and credits taken out by social economy entities amounted to PLN 395.5 million

Almost half of them were liabilities of typical associations and social organizations and foundations. The average value of loans and credits taken out by social economy organizations amounted to PLN 218.1 thousand, and the average value of liabilities taken by cooperatives reached PLN 637.7 thousand. The highest average was recorded in disabled and blind cooperatives (PLN 1,128.7 thousand), followed by faith-based charities (PLN 821.6 thousand). In two types of social economy organizations – hunting clubs and rural housewives clubs, taking out loans was almost non-existent.

### Methodological information

The signal information was prepared on the basis of preliminary results from the GUS survey on 1.04.09. Integration activities of social economy entities for 2023, carried out on the SOF-5 forms (Report on cooperation, management and integration activities of selected social economy organizations) and GS-S (Report on the activities of cooperatives: labour, social, disabled and blind).

In this study, social economy entities include units that fall within the definition from the Social Economy Act of 5 August 2022:

- social economy organizations: typical associations and social organizations, sports associations, volunteer fire brigades, hunting clubs, foundations, faith-based charities, rural housewives clubs, farmers organizations, business associations;
- social economy cooperatives: workers cooperatives, social cooperatives, cooperatives of blind and disabled.

The presented number of social enterprises takes into account the above-mentioned legal forms from the list of the Ministry of Family and Labour, Social Policy as of 31.12.2023.

The indicators concerning the share of employment in social economy entities in the national economy were based on data on the number of employees and the total number of employed in the national economy (Based on: Employed in the national economy in 2023, Central Statistical Office, GUS, Warsaw, Bydgoszcz 2024, p. 25 - [Central Statistical Office / Thematic area / Labour market / Employed. Employed. Salary. Labour costs / Employed in the national economy in 2023](#)). In social economy entities, the number of employees by main place of employment has been taken into account, additionally due to the fact that in these entities there are no such forms of employment as: employers and the self-employed, the number of employees is the same as the number of employed.

The study Integration activities of social economy entities was carried out via the Reporting Portal of the Central Statistical Office, using the CATI and CAWI methods. Respondents also had the option of sending a completed questionnaire by post.

The part of the survey carried out on the SOF-5 form was a panel file, and the file included units from the SOF-1 file (Report on the activities of foundations, associations and similar social organizations) and SOF-4s (Report on the activities of economic and professional self-government) that submitted reports for 2022. Due to the fact that the file for the SOF-5 report for 2023 was created on the basis of the SOF-1 and SOF-4s files for 2022, it was necessary to take into account changes in the report that occurred between editions of the study to generalize the results. For this purpose, data from the Database of Statistical Units of the Central Statistical Office as of 31 December 2023 and data from the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) were used. Weights were constructed for the result set, which made it possible to generalize the obtained data to the entire population of active units.

**Table 1. Completeness of SOF-5 and GS-S reports for 2023**

form	file of the form	submitted reports	inactive units	refusal to participate in the study, also due to random events	lack of contact	other	
	In thousand	%					
SOF-5	22.7	100.0	93.5	3.4	2.8	0.2	0.1
GS-S	1.5	100.0	81.2	8.8	7.5	1.7	0.8

The GS-S report covered all active social economy cooperatives, however, due to the fact that not all active entities submitted the report, it was also necessary to construct weights generalizing the data to the entire population of active social economy cooperatives.

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[Social integration centres, social integration clubs, vocational activity establishments, occupational therapy workshops in 2023](#)

[Cooperation of non-profit organizations with other entities in 2021](#)

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