Abstract
When Spain’s Social Economy Act was passed (Law 5/2011 of 29 March, BOE no.76 of 30 March 2011), the country was suffering the worst consequences of the economic crisis and the government was responding with measures to combat these consequences. However, any opportunities for the social economy to help to improve the situation in the general interest that the law might have afforded have been frustrated by the total failure to implement it in the three years it has been in force. The foreseeable processes of economic and social recovery cannot be addressed without the social economy. That is why the primary task is to implement law 5/2011 and give concrete form to the measures it lays down for fostering and developing this sector and, on this basis, to plan far-reaching actions, with sufficient active participation by the sector. One such measure consists in facilitating the institutionalisation of the social economy, adopting a wide-ranging and permanent perspective. Law 5/2011 can also serve this purpose.

Keywords
Non-application of the law, institutionalisation, economic crisis, mistakes in government policies for the social economy, regulations, economic recovery.