

Enabling Social Innovation in Chile

Country Snapshot



Social innovation: "the processes and outcomes of developing novel approaches to address societal challenges facing people and planet." ¹⁷

This snapshot represents a descriptive, non-exhaustive overview of key highlights from Chile's social innovation ecosystem.

✓ Direct focus on social innovation 🔗 Connected but indirect focus on social innovation ✗ No focus on social innovation

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Official Definition of Social Innovation 🔗



There is **no legal definition**. Public actors (e.g., CORFO, Laboratorio de Gobierno) use working definitions focused on **participatory, human-centred and scalable solutions** (2015–).^{1 2}

Government Body for Social Innovation ✓



No dedicated ministry. Main bodies:

- **Laboratorio de Gobierno** (2014–): national public-innovation lab supporting co-creation and service redesign.²
- **CORFO / InnovaChile**: innovation and entrepreneurship agency funding social-impact initiatives.³

Government Strategy for Social Innovation ✓



No standalone strategy. Social innovation appears within:

- **National Science–Technology–Innovation Strategy** (2022–): inclusion, territorial development, public value.⁴
- **Agenda 2030 implementation** across ministries.⁴
- CORFO operates thematic strategies on innovation and triple-impact.³

Policies, Laws & Regulations ✓ 🔗



- **Public Procurement Law (21.634)** (2023–24): enables social/environmental criteria.^{5 6}
- **CTCI Strategy** (2022): strengthens R&D and innovation governance.⁴
- Emerging **ESG/tax-sustainability rules** (2024–25).[7] No legal category for social enterprises.

Official Statistics 🔗



No dedicated statistics on social innovation. CORFO provides innovation and programme datasets (DataInnovación).³

Government Programs

Key programmes:

- **InnovaChile social-innovation calls** (prototyping, scaling).
- **Laboratorio de Gobierno** (public-sector innovation tools).
- **Start-Up Chile** impact tracks + women-entrepreneur initiatives.
- Regional innovation programmes. ^{2 3}

ECOSYSTEM

Stakeholders

Main actors: CORFO, LabGob, Socialab, Sistema B Chile, TECHO, university innovation centres, and corporate foundations. ^{2 3 8}

CORFO

Laboratorio
de Gobierno

Sistema
B[®]

Networks

Active networks include Sistema B Chile, Start-Up Chile alumni, women-entrepreneur groups, cooperative networks, and regional hubs. ^{1 8}

Support Organisations (Non-financial)

Key types: public innovation labs, accelerators (Start-Up Chile; university incubators), open-innovation platforms (Socialab), research centres and foundations. ^{2 3 8}

Support Initiatives

Common: challenge-based funding, prototype grants, public-sector training, accelerator cohorts. Notable: CORFO challenges, LabGob events, Socialab calls. ^{2 3}

Collaboration

Frequent public-private-civil partnerships for inclusion, service innovation and sustainability. Key event: **Encuentro de Innovación Pública**. Awards mainly run by universities and foundations. ^{2 8}

FINANCE

Financing Schemes

No consolidated national estimate. Funding spread across **CORFO**, **FOSIS**, municipal funds, philanthropy, impact investors and multilaterals. Only part explicitly targets social innovation. ^{1 2}

Key Types of Financing

- **Public:** CORFO grants, municipal innovation funds, FOSIS subsidies.
- **Private/philanthropy:** corporate foundations, B-corp ecosystem partners.
- **Finance sector:** microfinance (Fondo Esperanza), credit guarantees.
- **International:** IDB and blended-finance tools.
- **Instruments:** grants, equity, soft loans, crowdfunding, microcredit.



Inclusiveness of Financing

Targeting for **women, youth, rural entrepreneurs** is common. Support for Indigenous and disability-led innovators exists but is limited and weakly reported.^{3 9}

SOCIETY



Public Awareness of Social Innovation

Public discourse references social innovation mainly through entrepreneurship, sustainability, B-corps and public-sector innovation. Awareness remains moderate and urban-centred.^{8 10}



Research ✓ 🔗

Universities and public research centres conduct work on innovation and social impact. Practitioner studies from CORFO, OECD, IDB and GEM Chile.^{4 11}



Education & Human Capital ✓ 🔗

Few formal degrees directly on social innovation; modules embedded in public policy, design and entrepreneurship programmes. Informal training widespread (LabGov, accelerators). No national graduate estimates.^{2 3}



Entrepreneurship



EIU Business Environment: strong regional performer.¹²

EIU Business Environment Ranking 2024



Innovation capacity

Global Innovation Index 2024 approx. rank 49–51.¹³



GEM Chile: active early-stage and some social-entrepreneurial activity.¹¹



Social & Environmental Consciousness



Solidarity

moderate trust and active civic involvement.¹⁴



Participation

mid-range EIU democracy scores.¹²



Volunteering

mid-range in CAF World Giving Index.¹⁵



Sustainability

EPI rank ~64; active climate policies (marine protection, green hydrogen).¹⁶