

REVES YEARBOOK

of excellences 2013

The most interesting examples of partnerships between
public authorities and social and solidarity economy





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REVES – The European Network for Cities and Regions working with the Social Economy

REVES is a unique organisation at European level. It is composed, on one hand, of local/regional authorities and, on the other hand, of Third Sector/Social Economy organisations (associations, cooperatives, mutual societies, foundations...). There is no other European organisation covering this specific public/private partnership. REVES was created in 1996 and it has members in 10 European countries.

The core idea of REVES is to support partnership processes at different levels, as well as to strengthen and make visible this partnership at European and national level through political actions towards EU institutions and exchange of experience between members. Information and good practice is promoted through projects, conferences/seminars, working groups on specific subjects (proposed by the members), website, newsletter and mailing list.

REVES is recognised by the Committee of the Regions. It also participates in different structured dialogue meetings with the EU Commission. It uses its network of contacts with the Members of European Parliament and contributes to the work of the “Social Economy” Intergroup in the European Parliament. In this context, the network succeeded in placing the question of partnership between local/regional authorities and social economy on the European political agenda.

REVES focuses its work on those political dossiers which are most important to its members. Priority dossiers are for the moment:

- the Single Market Act
- the Social Business Initiative
- the Structural Funds 2014-2020 the reform of EU Public Procurement directive and the reform of State
- Aid rules.

(Alternative) financial instruments to promote social economy

REVES is also part of the European platform Social Economy Europe (SEE), with which it collaborates closely on most of the aforementioned policy initiatives.

The second pillar of work focuses specifically on activities in the member territories. During the years, REVES has been developing an activity of research and innovation aimed at providing member territories with new methodologies for governance and partnership at local level. Among them figures a methodology called Territorial Social Responsibility. Currently, REVES is also working on the creation of financial instruments to be used at regional level in cooperation with European institutions for ethical and alternative finance.

A third pillar of REVES' activities relates to promotion and communication. The objective is to make the social economy more visible, and in particular its potential when it works in partnership with local/regional authorities.

More on REVES and TSR®:

Website: <http://www.revesnetwork.eu>

E-mail: office@revesnetwork.eu

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Reves-Aisbl/203751483021880>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/REVESNETWORK?blend=2&ob=5>

Introduction

by REVES Co-President Philippe Chesneau, PACA region (FR)

REVES launched a call for experiences and the REVES Excellence Award, as, within our network, we see many extraordinary initiatives realized by social economy actors. It is our obligation to share them and make them known to others.

In these times of crisis and despair it is all the more important to show that, each day, solutions to problems and responses to social needs are invented.

Partnership was chosen as a major criterion...

... because partnership between public authorities and social economy actors is the basic pillar of the REVES network.

... because together we are more intelligent than on our own.

... because nobody does have the solutions to problems alone.

... because projects are more solid if they build on an alliance between social economy organisations and public authorities.

... because blends and cooperation are, in our societies as well as in nature, source for development.

In REVES, we have learned a lot from the experience of the REVES Excellence Award.

At the beginning, we expected twenty candidatures. Finally, we received three times more.

Also, replies to our call for experiences were extremely diverse, ranging from initiatives of volunteers to institutionalized instruments. Economic actors of various size applied. They all came from very different sectors of activity and from countries with sometimes utterly different historical background.

Despite of all these differences there was this feeling among all participants to belong to the same family of pioneers sharing the same values of solidarity, cooperation, respect for the other, proudness to work for the common good and a better future.

This all led to passionate and passionating exchanges of experiences that you will find echoed in the following pages...

... and to the desire to repeat this kind of experience.

by REVES Co-President Jan Olsson, Coompanion (SE)

One major argument to join REVES is certainly to take part in our continuous exchange of experience. We can learn much from each other. The conference we organized on excellence in partnership shows this. The cases prove that partnership between the social economy, local/regional authorities and other players is of great benefit to the citizens. It will create a win-win situation for all partners. The public authorities can better achieve their economic and social objectives. Responding to the needs of citizens and mobilizing them in the context of economic activities will strengthen social economy and therewith create local welfare.

The cases presented during our conference and in this publication show a large variety of experience and partnerships. Big and comprehensive regional support structures for social economy were presented in parallel to small local initiatives in the social and cultural sectors. New models of disseminating and replicating social economy initiatives, e.g. social franchising and planning of social services in partnership, were shown. Solutions have also been found regarding access to capital for social economy – an ever present problem.

I think that a large number of these cases should be present at the big conference “Social Entrepreneurs - Have your Say!” that the EU Commission organizes in Strasbourg from 16 to 17 January 2014 (http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index_en.htm). I say this as a member of GECES, the EU expert group on social enterprise to which I was nominated by REVES. Participation in the REVES Excellence Awards was open to all partnerships, not only to members of REVES. We want to broaden our collaboration. Particularly, however, we hope that those social economy organizations and those local/regional authorities that took part will join REVES as members.

by Jens Nilsson, MEP, member of the S&D group at the European Parliament, and former President of REVES

REVES is needed more than ever.

When we see the divide between rich and poor in Europe getting wider and wider,
when increasing numbers of Europeans are let down by society and suffer from unemployment and poverty,
then cooperation is more needed than ever.

Cooperation between elected local and regional representatives and persons engaged in social economy organisations is essential when building a society that is to be just and that gives people hope for the future. If we are to build a Europe that is based on the solidarity we show each other, then we have to start acting locally and cooperate with all good forces.

The REVES Excellence Award shows to what extent REVES plays an important role as an arena for exchanges of experiences and knowledge. It is a forum which allows us to learn from each other and improve our own work.

In addition to this, REVES has today established itself as an organisation providing important expertise to the different EU institutions. Through its unique composition of membership, bringing together municipalities and regions with social economy actors, REVES fulfills a role that no other organisation is able to play.

Foreword

by Luigi Martignetti, REVES Secretary-General

Back in 2011 the members of the European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy REVES, meeting in Siena (IT) for their annual convention, once again agreed upon the wealth of experience that existed and exists in the network. This led to the idea that it would be appropriate to organize a yearly award in order to allow the most interesting experiences to have a proper stage to be presented.

It took a couple of years, but in springtime 2013 the idea came back to life and the “zero” edition of the award was launched, as an open contest for the best experiences of partnerships between local and regional authorities and social economy organisations.

With the valuable support of the Social Cooperative CSC (IT), of ONCE Foundation (ES) and SEFEA (European Society for Ethical and Alternative Financing), a call for applications was launched and in a few days a relevant number of very good experiences applied.

The selection committee, composed of Philippe Chesneau (REVES), Jan Olsson (REVES), Jens Nilsson (European Parliament), Antonella Noya (OECD), Miguel-Angel Cabra de Luna (ONCE), Carmen Arroyo de Sande (European Foundation Centre), Alain Coheur (Social Economy Europe) and Marcel Smeets (Social Economy Europe), had quite a hard time ranking the applications and identifying the most interesting ones. In the end, the decision was that all the submitted experiences had points of interest and deserved a mention, with just a special one for the most original five.

While reading the applications, it was immediately evident that they were made by and in the language of enthusiastic project promoters that turned out to be very effective “reporters” also during the award ceremony in Brussels, on 7 June 2013.

From there the idea to elaborate this yearbook containing the testimony of the different initiatives and their promoters. We hope we succeeded in keeping their vibrant language.

The REVES EXCELLENCE AWARD was the result of a collective endeavour. Anna Antonellini and Nicola Benaglio, who committed to its preparation and organisation in an exceptional way and Erdmuthe Klaer

Morselli, who worked on the edition of this publication¹ deserve a special mention and acknowledgement.

¹ All information about projects reported in this publication were communicated by the applicants. The editor is not to be held responsible for any error or inaccuracy

**Partnerships at micro-level /
Partnerships at local level
(city level)**

The association “Les amis du Zeybu”, Eybens-Rhône-Alpes, France

Introduction

Due to the closing down of their grocery store in October 2008, a group of residents, supported by the city of Eybens and a EU programme has created a unique and innovative project involving fresh food delivery within a restricted area, enhancing social links, solidarity and eco-citizenship.

Description of the initiative

Main purpose of the project is to create or regenerate the link around the Maisons-Neuves district of Eybens thanks to an inclusive project with the goal of “Making the project working with the people of the neighbourhood” organized around the Zeybu Solidaire (alternative currency) and the Zeybu Market.

The Zeybu market is taking place once every two weeks (on Tuesdays evening) in the premises of the association “Les amis du Zeybu”. On the day of the Zeybu market, producers deliver the products pre-ordered the week before by Zeybu members through the homemade online software Zeybux. The association does not take any profit margin from products sale. The entire organization is based on voluntary work along the preparation and execution of the market: from packing products in reusable bags during the afternoon to running the distribution of products and cash registering them on the member’s individual account once the products have been collected.

The Zeybu solidarity concept

1) The solidarity loop starts with partner producers who donate products based on the initial order of members without contract, nor commitment, as it is a voluntary donation and producers, are proud to participate in the Zeybu Market.

2) How is the alternative Zeybu Solidarity money used?

Once the market is closed, the income is credited to the account of “Eybens Accueil Urgence (EAU)”, an association which manages the food aid in Eybens city.

EAU distributes the alternative money on the ZEYBU accounts of ZEYBU

beneficiary members ensuring the anonymity of welfare recipients. With a specific chip card containing the Zeybu money those members are in a position to buy fresh quality products from the Zeybu.

This is called the Zeybu “Solidarity Loop”.

The Zeybu Solidarity loop would not exist today without this unique and innovative partnership between Zeybu and:

- the City of Eybens which puts a free room at the disposal of the association, based on an agreement incorporating the Zeybu Solidarity principle as a mandatory element;
- the City of Eybens, as well as EAU which take care of a fair distribution of Zeybu Solidarity money, thereby ensuring the anonymity of welfare recipients.

Future and perspectives

One of Zeybu’s dreams is to transmit and support the replication of the experience in others regions and/or countries.

Facts and Figures

The association “Les amis du Zeybu” created in July 2009 in Eybens, Grenoble suburbs, near the French Alps, is grouping on annual average more than 300 members. The Zeybu Solidarity loop is implemented since October 2010.

Zeybu Solidaire was the winner of a competition during the first general convention of the social economy in June 2011 in Paris.

Moreover, the association organises various animations around cooking, bakery (with meals then being shared among members), arts and eco-design (solar oven, lombri-composter), also involving the participation of children of the neighbourhood.

Contact: Association “Les Amis du Zeybu”
lesamisduzeybu@gmail.com

The TAPiG Project as a role model - Winwin: Apprenticeship Mobility Project towards Welfare for Both Sides - Hamburg, Germany

Introduction

As part of its complete approach for integration of migrants from third countries the European Commission introduced in July and November 2011 a European agenda for integration. Europe is strongly influenced by demographic changes. Legal migration can help address these issues, in addition to maximising the use of labour force and skills already available in the EU. New solutions for diverse and multicultural societies need to be found.

Integration can therefore be a driver for economic development and social cohesion and is a key instrument in unleashing the potential of migration. Integration is to be seen a dynamic, two-way process of mutual win-win by migrants and by the societies that receive them. The will and commitment of migrants to be part of the society that receives them is required. And reservations of the society need to be taken into account. Effective solutions to integration challenges must be found in each national and local context.

Integration is a long-term process requiring efforts by a wide range of actors in different policy areas and at multiple levels.

It is a collective task! The TAPiG project has found several solutions.

Description of the initiative

As part of the TAPiG project, 150 Tunisian school-leavers were given the opportunity to receive training as nurses for the sick and elderly, with the chance to enter long-term employment if they qualified. The project was developed as a result of the transition partnership launched by the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Tunisia in 2012 and is part-funded by the Federal Foreign Office. It is basically divided into three progressive stages: a six-month 'welcome' stage, three years of training and ideally an employment stage generally lasting at least five years.

Every six months, a group of 25 Tunisian trainees starts on the 'welcome' programme. The three stages are preceded by a recruitment and selection process in Tunisia also involving the Tunisian trainees travelling to Hamburg and sorting out their residency requirements.

To organise and coordinate the project, especially during the

selection process and the six-month ‘welcome’ stage, the hospital group commissioned the association Brückenschlag and the project management team to take on the facilitation tasks described above and act as a central point of contact for the hospitals, trainees and authorities and institutions involved.

Next to the association Brückenschlag, project partners include the hospital group Asklepios, several federal ministries, the city of Hamburg, Hamburg University, the German Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, the Goethe-Institut, the Tunisian ministry for health, the Tunisian embassy in Germany and others.

Results

First of all, through interaction with national and local authorities, the TAPiG project led to an improvement of the administration process of third country immigration in Hamburg.

Moreover, in cooperation with national and local development banks and an insurance company, a new student loan mechanism for people with a European and third country background could be established.

Also, based on interaction and ongoing cooperation with the Hamburg Welcome Centre, a role model for a new German welcome approach could be conceived.

Finally, through cooperation especially with local and national authorities, TAPiG also contributed to changing the receiving society.

The TAPiG subsidised student loans programme

Enterprises have a growing need for skilled workers and wish to hire migrant trainees from abroad.

These trainees do not have access to the usual subsidized student loans on the German market. For this reason, the TAPiG project team and the WK housing loan association in Hamburg have got together with the KfW development bank to develop a programme for the Hamburg Office for Work, Social Policy, Family Affairs and Integration (BASFI). This programme aims to help Hamburg companies successfully integrate more trainees from the EU or third countries into their strategy for gaining skilled workers. It puts at disposal also a full service mobility and integration tool kit. The programme can be extended and is also to be aimed at migrant groups already living in Hamburg (including refugees).

Contact: Projekt TAPiG - presse@projekt-tapig.de

Community theatre “Halfway to somewhere”, Kokkola, Finland

Description of the initiative

The project started in August 2011 and the premiere of the community theatre production “Halfway to somewhere” was in March 2012. The initiative was taken by the professional theatre of Kokkola. The idea was to set up a production about long-term unemployment with unemployed persons as actors. The leading idea of the producers and directors was that everybody knows what unemployment is, but who knows what the daily life of an unemployed person is? A story was written and produced during the process, mainly based on the experiences of the four unemployed persons currently in training schemes at Kokkotyö-foundation.

The partners involved beside the professional theatre of Kokkola were the municipality of Kokkola (social and health care department) and Kokkotyö foundation.

All three partners, and especially the four young unemployed persons, really had to work hard and overcome many limits in order to make the dream come true. The challenge of the theatre was to direct a play with amateurs as actors in leading roles, actors with no experience of theatre at all and with severe personal problems to deal with. The Kokkotyö-foundation, in turn, had to organize the training scheme and arrange support to the actors after working hours, first during the rehearsals and later during the performances. The challenge of the social and health care department was to stretch the limits and barriers concerning the statutes related to work rehabilitation (money, working hours etc.). Finally, each of the four persons involved was to overcome his/her mental barriers, to trust in his/her own capacity despite his/her mental problems, drug problems and physical and social limitations. They wrote a blog during the process and many people followed their process from the start until the first night.

The outcome of the project was a great success: 20 performances took place and only one had to be cancelled. The production clearly showed that persons usually regarded as “socially excluded” and “expenses” have capacities, visions and expertise that can be taken into account and as a lesson. Empowerment was so clear and some of the (former unemployed) persons involved told the journalists that they now were

living their dream! The project reached over sectoral and branch-related boundaries. It has brought the perspective of an unemployed person into the ongoing debate of “exclusion” and “activation” and offered the possibility for everyone to have a glimpse of the world of so many young people today.

For the officials involved the experience of breaking boundaries - and what this can lead to - was overwhelming and will certainly affect their way of working in the future. The partnership developed will last and lead to many new ways of cooperation.

Contact: Kokkotyö Foundation - margita.lukkarinen@kokkotyo.fi

Société coopérative d'intérêt collectif Gâtinais Bois Energie, Parc du Gâtinais Français, France

Description of the initiative

Following the Territorial Forest Charter (Charte Forestière de Territoire, CFT), the regional national park of the French Gâtinais has among its objectives to raise the awareness of municipalities, enterprises and individuals regarding the installation of wood-burning heating systems and accompanies them through pre-diagnostics: thermal balance, synthesis of investment and operational costs...

The promotion of the wood energy line is one of the major objectives and happens through the establishment of a viable supply structure able to provide future users with woodpellets on a regular basis. After several moments of exchange (of experiences) between different actors, a structure of the type Société Cooperative d' Intérêt Collectif (SCIC) turned out to be the most appropriate on the territory. The SCIC is a new form of cooperative enterprise which associates employees, beneficiaries, volunteers, enterprises, municipalities and other types of partners wishing to act together in the framework of a project fostering local development. Its objective is «to provide goods or services of collective interest that have a social utility character». The SCIC Gâtinais Bois Énergie has as its mission: --> upgrading of forest areas and contribution to a better management of forests through an energetic valorisation of wood within short circuits, --> purchasing of woodfuels from producers - mainly from owners of forest land, but also from all types of producers

of wood stemming from the territory (foresters, landscaping companies, structures recycling organic waste), --> transformation into wood for energy (exploitation, grinding, storage, treatment, delivery) by a network of professionals from the territory, --> reselling to the user for a tariff being the same for all members of the cooperative, --> promotion of the line local wood energy on the territory of the Parc, --> assistance to enterprises and clients through a quality service: quality control (products and services) of the treatment process and delivered combustibles.

Facts and Figures

In total, the SCIC Gâtinais Bois Energie counts 31 members representing different players of the wood energy line. They form four groups: 1) group of employees: 1 employee; 2) group of the owners of the resource: 12 woodland owners; 3) group of service providers : 3 enterprises; 4) group of beneficiaries and supporters: 15 (8 municipalities and 7 other organisations).

Contact: SCIC Gâtinais Bois Energie - f.cotte@parc-gatinais-francais.fr

Odyssée de l'Espoir (Odyssey of hope), Roannais, France

Description of the initiative

“L’Odyssée de l’espoir” (Odyssey of hope) is an association bringing together “participant-actors” (families with children, single parent families, individuals), volunteers, associations (Ligue des Droits de l’Homme, Secours catholique, ATD quart monde, Emmaüs, Ellipps,...), representatives of 40 municipalities of the «Roannais Agglomération» and institutions.

Its objective is to let those express themselves that do never have the opportunity to speak. Social integration happens through culture. Social inequalities are fought through artistic creation.

All activities are based on the values of participation, dignity, respect, solidarity, citizenship and democracy.

The association acts as a meeting place, a place of social mixity, listening, exchange, valorisation and citizen participation.

Core activity of the association is the organisation and implementation of

artistic workshops, with the help of professionals and volunteers. Workshops focus on writing, vocal expression, staging, poetry, storytelling, plastic arts, music, chanson, arts plastiques, musique, chant, sewing, fancy dresses, decoration, theatre techniques...

Facts and Figures

Among the activities organised by the association “Odyssée de l’espoir” figure about 10 performances with 30 personnes on stage and 2000 spectators.

In this context, a number of rehearsals and meetings (including international cultural workshops) have been and are held.

Every two years the association invites to an artistic congress on experiences in the field of vernacular.

Partners contributing in different ways to the various activities are the university of Roanne, ATD quart monde, Ellipps, Sésame (re-insertion into the labour market), Ligue des Droits de l’Homme, Secours Catholique, Emmaüs, Centres sociaux de l’agglomération (social centres), CCAS, Boutique santé, Notre Abri, Maisons des Services publics (Public services centres)...

Everybody interested is free to participate in the different decision-making bodies of the association (such as the board) and its working groups.

Future and perspectives

“Odyssée de l’espoir” aims to consolidate the local partnership through the development of activities focusing on training and reinsertion into the labour market (partnership with *Pôle Emploi, Sésame, Ellipps, programme employment service vouchers, volunteers*).

It has the objective to continue bringing people together and to ingrain the movement as major element of social cohesion and element of attraction that is specific to Roanne.

In order to optimise its further development, the association carries out evaluation of its actions based on a specific evaluation sheet.

Contact: Odyssée de l’Espoir - mj.odyssee@gmail.com

The Barka Partnership in Dublin, Ireland

Description of the initiative

Roots and philosophy of Barka Foundation Dublin go back to the Barka Foundation Poland (see page 101). Since 2012, the Partnership in Dublin provides an opportunity for cooperation between Dublin City Council, Crosscare, Depaul Ireland and New Communities Unit Department of Social Protection with Barka Foundation For Mutual Help Ireland, Mendicity Institution and Barka Foundation in Poland. The partnership aims to reconnect and reintegrate vulnerable Central and Eastern European migrants to Ireland and to stimulate social entrepreneurship among them.

Barka Foundation Poland trained a group of community leaders who were themselves once homeless, unemployed and addicted. These leaders now make contact with Eastern European homeless persons in Ireland. During the first year of cooperation, over sixty people were saved through reconnection with their home countries and communities. The reconnection programme has demonstrated that the active collaboration of statutory and NGO partners has contributed to a positive intervention and outcome for a significant cohort of individuals without an income support who were experiencing destitution and homelessness and for whom a reliance on continued access to homeless services in the city offered no sustainable future prospects.

Contact: Barka Foundation Ireland -
<mailto:dagmara.szlandrowicz@barka.org.pl>

Private Leasing and Retrofit of Private Houses, Cork County, Ireland

Introduction

From 1998 to 2008 Ireland experienced a massive "housing bubble" of runaway private speculative development, fuelled by cheap loans and easily available land. Around 70.000 new private homes were built every year from 2002 to 2007, which generated an "oversupply" of

private houses for sale, and collapse of the housing market. A University College of Dublin research study identified 345.000 empty homes in Ireland, where 170.000 are actually available for occupation.

This “boom” enriched many, but did not benefit people who were unemployed or had low or medium incomes. During the same period the number of households registered as needing subsidised housing increased dramatically, from 60.000 households in 2006 to 80.000 in 2010 nationally, and from 9.000 households in 2006 to 12.000 in 2010, in County Cork.

Given the clearly absurd and unfair situation of thousands of households being homeless and badly housed while thousands of houses are empty, Carbery Housing Association (CHA) decided to prioritise the bringing into use of empty houses for persons in housing needs, as one of its principal objectives.

Description of the initiative

CHA is a non-profit company with Charitable Status and has Approved Housing Body status with the Department of Environment. It was set up in 2001, on the initiative of local residents in Baltimore, a small town on the South West Coast of Ireland, where holiday home development was pushing house prices out of the reach of local people.

CHA is a community organisation, where anyone having a genuine interest in the work of the Association, including tenants of CHA, can join as a Member, can participate in the work of the Association as a volunteer, and stand for election to the Executive Committee.

From 2001 onward, CHA tried unsuccessfully to develop a number of affordable and sustainable social housing projects in the West Cork region. These never materialised, in spite of the many efforts of people both inside and outside CHA over the years.

In 2009 the “housing bubble” imploded and Ireland’s Celtic Tiger period was over. The results of this collapse were free-fall house prices, bankruptcies and at least 300.000 empty homes (confirmed by the last national census).

Faced with a severe cut back in new building, but still needing to house a growing number of households, the government introduced the Social Housing Leasing Scheme for Approved Housing Bodies, in the SHIP (Social Housing Initiative in Private Properties) N5/09 Circular of September 2009.

CHA then advertised locally for owners of private properties who were

having difficulty selling or renting these properties to consider long-term leasing to CHA. CHA received offers of around twenty properties, that were then surveyed thanks to funding made available by the Community Foundation for Ireland.

From these original properties surveyed, around seven were “lost” due to problems arising from negotiations with owners. A further eleven were rejected by the County Council, as not being suitable for social housing or being located in areas where there was no recorded housing need. Only two properties were finally approved (although a further four are still under consideration).

CHA then entered in a Payment and Availability (P&A) contract with Cork County Council, where it agreed to make available the two properties to the Council on a long-term basis (10-20 years) in exchange of a payment of 80% of the market rent as agreed between the parties.

Following this, the County Council nominated tenants to these homes, from their priority housing list. The two families were then granted tenancies to the properties by CHA, with rents set on the basis of a formula provided by the Council Council for affordable rent on the basis of income.

Once the properties were secured, CHA entered into an agreement with West Cork Development Partnership’s Warmer Homes Scheme, a social economy retrofitting scheme, part-funded by the Government to carry out energy efficiency improvements to low-income homes.

The Warmer Homes Scheme brings additional benefits to the project in that it works with unemployed persons who are trained and employed to retrofit social homes, at a price that voluntary housing agencies can afford. In addition, by retrofitting existing homes, energy is saved and CO2 emissions reduced, helping to combat climate change and meet Ireland’s energy reduction targets.

Future and perspectives

Although the actual number of properties that CHA has managed to bring into use through this partnership is small, the potential is of course great. Even with the small number of units under management, CHA has been able to retrofit the properties, as well as manage and maintain them, on the basis of the established affordable rents charged. This is due to the participatory approach and the willingness of its Executive Committee to carry out the tasks needed to manage the housing.

The Project is therefore viable event at this small scale, demonstrating

the possibility of being able to scale up as far as required on the basis of the introduction of new properties and tenants.

In addition to the Private Leasing initiative, CHA has now begun to work with the Mortgages to Rent initiative, recently launched by the Irish Government. This new initiative will allow the “rescue” of home-owners who are unable to meet their mortgage repayments. The initiative will allow the Banks holding the Mortgages to enter into partnership with Voluntary Housing Bodies such as CHA, who will be able to re-purchase the property from the Bank, making up any short-fall in Lease Payments from the Council with Voluntary Housing Grant from the Government.

CHA also maintains its original objective of developing sustainable social housing on the basis of participatory design and ecological building with local communities, and is currently working with the Cork Centre for Architectural Education on the feasibility of such proposals in the future.

Facts and Figures

Cork County Council recently published a Strategy which states that there are 2.792 empty homes in the County. This figure was based on the Government survey of “Ghost Estates” (unfinished large housing developments) which identified 16.881 empty homes on specified Ghost Estates throughout Ireland.

However, the National Census of 2011 identified 294.202 empty homes in Ireland, out of which 33.796 were in County Cork, with 6.386 and Cork City and 27.410 in County Cork.

Given that there are 15.018 households assessed as being in housing need in the County in 2011, with 4.271 in the Rural areas, 2.948 in the City, and 7.769 in the Towns it is clear that private sector leasing will continue to be primary source of social housing.

Cork County also owns enough land to build a further 25.037 units, which represents a potential resource for the future.

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CASA COLVERA, Pordenone, Italy

Introduction

Casa Colvera represents a good example of partnership between a public local authority (Pordenone Municipality) and social economy (social cooperative FAI). It is the first effective experience of social housing for the elderly in Friuli Venezia Giulia Region.

Description of the initiative

Since 2008 FAI has been managing the care services in Casa Colvera. It was born as an experimental project carried on by local authorities (the municipality received the financial contribution from the Region in order to retrofit the house) and the Third Sector. At the beginning, the municipality worked in a team with associations and cooperatives to study a suitable model of social housing for the elderly in a suburb of the city. The opportunity to manage Casa Colvera was given to FAI, which has experience managing care services for seniors (different type of homes and day care centres). However, this project was completely different, as it was an experimental initiative in the range of home care services available to active seniors. In fact, Casa Colvera offers twelve mini apartments for older independent people, even if some of them need extra care or support to lead an active life and carry out everyday activities.

The main topic is the self-determination of the residents: the daily rhythm of the individual is at the focus and residents can organise their own life participating in common activities (if they want it), having breakfast, lunch and dinner together in a familiar way. The activities aim at lifelong learning, stimulating brain cells through education and therewith preventing dementia. The approach is not a mere client-centred one but an organising-together approach based on mutual respect and autonomy.

Nowadays Casa Colvera is not a simple home for the elderly anymore, but it offers a range of different services to the community in order to promote social inclusion and face the challenge of an ageing society and increasing needs.

It is a sort of multi-purpose centre in which older people stemming from outside the house can come to join the stimulating activities with the

residents or receive aid and home care services.

Since December 2011, a new project with a strong intergenerational focus has been carried out in Casa Colvera. A group of 15 children (sons and daughters of the workers in the cooperative) aged from 5 to 11 years meets with the old residents of the house during specific periods of the year: Christmas holidays, summer (June and September).

Main objectives of the project are:

- to help women workers in FAI to better face domestic and work/public responsibilities in their life, offering them support in childcare outside school hours;
- to offer both children and older residents in Casa Colvera a choice of activities together in an atmosphere of positive intergenerational exchange.

Future and perspectives

For the future it is planned to increase housing services for seniors through other mini-apartments in which four to five elderly people can live together and share housekeeping needs. Casa Colvera could provide a support network to these persons and therewith aid and social care.

In addition, the aim is to strengthen the partnership between Casa Colvera and another similar new experience for seniors (Casa Pellegrin) situated in the neighbouring hills and managed by the cooperative.

Finally, FAI will disseminate this good practice in meetings on social housing and innovative services for the elderly.

Facts and Figures

The key of success of this housing model can be found both in the professional skills of the five employees and a supportive network of associations and volunteers who are overseen continuously by the Coordinator of the house (a psychologist) in collaboration with the municipality.

In these years FAI has paid particular attention both to the care services and the network of associations and volunteers contributing to the activities. The development of relationships has always been key to the success of the project *Casa Colvera*. Non-formal support is regularly lent by the Coordinator who also consults with relatives of the senior residents in order to involve them in the planned activities.

A key partner in the project is Pordenone Municipality which believes that innovative solutions for the elderly are possible and represent a real

alternative to homes.

About 25 other organizations are effective partners and rely on many volunteers who play an important role in contributing to activities and organising trips outside.

Volunteers assist the staff in a number of activities, such as cooking for parties. Moreover, they propose different projects to satisfy the residents' needs and interests. Last but not least they provide help particularly to old residents with disabilities by going out with them etc.

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Promotori di solidarietà, Bergamo, Italy

Introduction

With the recent legislative reforms, the public administration fulfills a role of setting guidelines, coordinating and stimulating activities of social general interest. Since 2011 the City of Bergamo valorizes the participation of non-profit organisations in the provision of social services also in the design of activities and their implementation. The Consortium Sol.Co Città Aperta is a partner in the co-programming processes in the fields of disability, work integration of disadvantaged persons and fight against poverty, minors and elderly. This co-programming instrument allowed for a strong interaction between the social players and gave proposals from social enterprises and volunteer organisations significant weight. It led therewith to the selection of qualitative better projects, as well as to the introduction of the concept of the “hybrid service” that is able to be modified within a short period of time, following expectations and needs of citizens. These new modalities allow to consolidate, from a management point of view, the tendency to consider the provision of services as operational phase of the co-programming process and to deeply change the role of the city of Bergamo. The latter becomes the interpreter of the needs of the local community, as well as guarantor and promoter of a broader and better answer to these needs.

The co-programming process, is defined in the national law n. 328/2000 “Framework law for the implementation of an integrated system of social interventions and services”.

The Lombardy region, with a piece of legislation on the valorisation of the third sector in the field of social service management (DGR Regione Lombardia n. 9/1353 of 25 February 2011), has issued guidelines in order to harmonize, in the region, forms of cooperation between local authorities and social economy in the field of social services. At the same time, with the regulation, the region aimed to concretize forms of experimentation of circular subsidiarity in order to provide appropriate answers to needs and to develop the welfare system. The Lombardy region stipulated that the co-programming procedure should be “applicable in situations in which the public authority intends strengthen a local network of services in the framework of which service operators are asked to participate (following a logic of “multilateral network”) not only in traditional activities of service management and provision, but also in the planification, organisation, management and evaluation of entire integrated local systems of interventions and services to the person”.

More specifically, the region regulated the co-programming procedure for innovative and experimental activities and interventions in the field of social services (D.d.g. 28 dicembre 2011 n. 12884).

From a juridical point of view, co-programming is based on an agreement that differs from traditional systems of public procurement and concessions (which are also instruments to regulate relations of horizontal subsidiarity).

Contrary to public procurement and concessions in which the procedural aspect and the final objective to contract services out to third parties prevail, co-programming is based on the objective to establish and regulate partnership relations in the implementation of the social function of public authorities.

This is true in particular in the following cases:

- Public procurement/service contracts in procedures that have social relevance frequently prove to lack flexibility when it comes to subsidiarity. The service that is contracted out to a private entity is pre-defined in a very detailed way by the public entity and cannot be modified for the whole duration of the contract. The formal responsibility for the service remains with the public authority.
- The concession of a service allows for the effective participation of the third sector in activities pursuing the social general interest through a transfer of the formal responsibility for the management of the service. This is a form of externalisation of the service as, even though the responsibility for the fulfillment of the social general

interest remains with the public authority, the formal responsibility for the service lies with the concessionaire that manages the service in his/her own name and for the public authority.

- Co-programming is an innovative instrument aiming to regulate participation in services following the social general interest. The social co-programming procedure has a fundamental role to play in the implementation and organisation of a new local integrated system of social interventions and services. It is based on the implication of the different institutional levels, as well as various social actors and networks in the context of a single process.

The formal responsibility for the fulfillment of the social general interest and for related services remains with the public authority and is shared with the social economy organisation through a permanent process of participation. The social economy organisation takes its own responsibility and acts as a partner. The local authority, in turn, rather coordinates, provides guidelines and stimulates social activities.

Social economy does thus not have any public power, nor does it manage services *in the name of* and *for* the public authority, but it “participates” in the activities pursuing the social general interest and in the process of programming, organizing and managing services.

This process allows for a better coordination of interventions of a number of different public and private actor as well as of different resources. It facilitates a permanent adaptation of a service to the needs of citizens through a continuous redefinition of the programme and related interventions during the whole duration of the contract.

This system promotes, inter alia:

- the participation of social economy in real processes of “governance” of the local social services system (programming, planning etc.);
- the implication of social economy in the implementation and management of projects, not only as provider of services, but as an actor able to generate social innovation and to programme different forms and modalities of intervention;
- the assumption, by social economy, of responsibilities and risks of the pooling of activities and resources in the framework of the partnership in which public and private resources are put together;
- the valorization of local rootage and close links with the local community;
- the promotion of active citizenship: social economy actors (whose

activities emerged out of citizens' initiatives), become promoters of active citizenship through the process of participation and sharing of responsibility in the context of the above described partnership.

The choice of this co-programming procedure favours not only technical aspects, but is above all a strategic and political choice. Social policies can and have to continuously rethink the system of social services without losing out of sight the final objectives. The various actors involved (politicians, administration, third sector and volunteer organisations) need to reason following a logic of active sharing of tasks, as the public authority takes on a coordinating role and is not the only player anymore to develop local policies. Social economy and volunteer organisations are convened together with other local public institutions (including schools, juridical bodies, etc.) in order to ensure that choices and objectives are clear and go into the same direction.

Description of the initiative

The Consorzio Sol.Co Città Aperta is a consortium of ten social cooperatives that work on the territory of the Province of Bergamo. It develops initiatives linking activities of its members on the basis of shared resources and shared knowledge in order to respond to the needs of the territory and to promote social welfare. Activities are based on a participative approach and focus very much on preventive and repairing interventions. The Consortium invests into services and projects regarding various fields and target groups, such as families and children/youth, disability, mental health, housing, access to work and work integration, environment, conscious consumption or social networks. These might be developed in the framework of public procurement or on the basis of purely private initiatives. The territory and its needs are at the centre of the activities of the partnership described above.

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Fondazione di Comunità di Messina, Messina, Italy

Description of the initiative

The Community Foundation Messina “Fondazione di Comunità di Messina - Distretto Sociale evoluto” was created by a partnership composed of five social economy platforms (Fondazione Horcynus Orca, Fondazione Padre p. Puglisi, Consorzio Sol.E, Ecos-Med and PARSEC), the Employers’ Association of Messina (Confindustria Messina), the Provincial Public Health Authority (ASP), the Ethical Bank (Banca Etica) and the local paediatric association. The initiative was developed under the high patronage of the Presidency of the Italian Government, under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice and of the Fondazione con il Sud. Additionally, a structured partnership was developed with Caritas Italiana, with REVES AISBL and with SEFEA (European Society for Ethical and Alternative Financing).

Such a multi-stakeholder partnership was established in order to create the core of a structure able to deal with a profound re-thinking and concrete renovation of the whole model of local welfare in Sicily, and mainly in Messina Province.

At the basis of this process stood the idea of interlinking different approaches to a real wellbeing in a holistic vision, according to the TSR© methodology such as it was developed in the framework of the REVES network and tested first in Messina.

Concretely, the Fondazione - and the outstanding district – fixed as first objectives to 1. promote the development of individual and collective capabilities; 2. promote social cohesion; 3. promote the development of the social economy; 4. create new spaces for social exchange and innovation.

In order to pursue its objectives, the Fondazione put itself at the centre of a complex system of variable partnerships, involving public authorities, social economy players, enterprises, citizens and families.

The project “Luce è Libertà”, the biggest initiative carried out to date by the Fondazione, could be seen as an archetype of the experimentation and realisation of systemic projects and programmes. The project started from the idea that persons that for a long time have been considered as burden for local communities or societies could be seen and have a

role to play also (and foremost) as resources and generators of common wealth for the same society. A meeting with the psychiatric services of the local health authority made it possible to identify inmates of the local juridical psychiatric hospital as being part of this kind of persons.

The Fondazione therefore assumed the task of creating a partnership ranging from the Ministry of Justice, the health care service, a local network of social enterprises, some private enterprises, a number of local authorities and families and, foremost, a group of inmates of the aforementioned hospital.

With the help of this alliance and of the resources the different partners were able to contribute, the inmates were given the opportunity to start a process of self-liberation and re-taking of control of their life and their resources. They decided to “invest in their own future”, generating thus not only their own economic resources, but also occasions for employment of other local inhabitants and commercial activities. Finally, the kind of activity chosen was the installation of solar panels for the production of solar energy and contributed therewith to an improved environmental quality of the area.

Luce è Libertà is an ongoing project that shows the enormous potential lying in local communities - a potential that can be activated, however, only through partnership.

Future and Perspectives

On the same basis, that is to say with a strong involvement of citizens, organised civil society and appropriate levels of public authority, the Fondazione is presently starting new programmes. One of them has been launched, for instance, in the field of energy efficiency of public buildings and with a view also to reinvest economies made in socially valuable projects. At the same time, the Fondazione is setting up a programme of microcredit for social economy-related initiatives dealing with local social and environmental problem-solving. A system of cash-pooling was created among the founders and supporters of the Fondazione, as well as a “solidary purchasing group”.

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Association Zielona Linia, Babia Góra, Poland

Introduction

The association “Zielona Linia” in Babia Góra brings together people who want to contribute to the development of their own region. Thanks to voluntary work of its members, the association, together with inhabitants, has accomplished and is still accomplishing a lot of interesting initiatives which are part of the balanced development of the municipality of Stryszawa as well as of the region of Babia Góra. These initiatives have been accomplished thanks to external resources including financing from the European Union.

Description of the initiative

From the very beginning, the association “Zielona Linia” has been cooperating with the local government and thanks to common actions many interesting ideas were realized.

With the support of the municipality, the organization has been publishing the free local newspaper “Kurier Stryszawski” for ten years now. Initially, it was a project which united active people from the local area around the newspaper. Currently, it is a lasting programme the goal of which is to propagate the idea of social participation in public life through information of the local population and involvement of the inhabitants in local actions. “Kurier Stryszawski” provides media sponsorship for the important events in the municipality.

The newspaper deals with topics related to current events in the municipality area, problems and successes. Articles connected with the history of the region also earn a great popularity. Moreover, the newspaper is a good medium of advertisement and information aimed at different institutions and the local community.

The association “Zielona Linia” also runs an information portal covering the whole region (powiat), where, every day, one can find news about the most important events from the region. It supplements the above mentioned newspaper.

Apart from that, the editorial office of the newspaper is closely linked to the Association of Civic Journalists. The latter is a place for people who want to participate in the work of the editorial office, write and publish their own articles. “Zielona Linia” organizes journalism workshops and

training for the members of the association.

“Zielona Linia”’s main goal is civic education and strengthening of inhabitants’ participation in public life. In 2012, the association managed to organize workshops on participation in which both inhabitants and representatives of local government took part. Participants learned, on one hand, what public and social participation is and why it is worth to climb up the ladder of participation, i.e. of control citizens have (in other words, how to keep an eye on authorities). On the other hand, they were made familiar with interesting methods that can transform control and fight for one’s rights into cooperation with the local government (in fields such as area development and planning, sustainable tourism, methods of local problem-solving etc.).

The association also organized the contest “Active place”, by means of which it intended to encourage inhabitants of the municipality of Stryżawa to take initiatives contributing to change in their nearest environment. In the end of the contest two very interesting ideas, prepared during workshops using different methods of participation, were selected:

Initiative 1 “Stryżawa Little Birds Race”:

Running is the form of activity which annually increases the number of sympathizers and participants. The inhabitants wanted to combine this new trend with promoting wooden toys Stryżawa is famous for.

Initiative 2 “Commune Recreation Park”:

The lack of places where people of different age could go and spend time together was the commune’s problem in the area of activity and recreation of the inhabitants. Due to this, the creation of a Commune Recreation Park was proposed. The park could have open basketball, volleyball and football playing fields, a climbing wall, a skate park, chess tables, a playground for the youngest kids, benches and other objects suggested by the inhabitants. Inhabitants worked on this idea by means of the method ‘Project for Public Spaces’.

Future and perspectives

The aforementioned activities of the association would be impossible without cooperation with the local government. What appeared not to be easy in the beginning now turned into a situation in which both actors cooperate and promote each other with increasingly positive results.

Facts and Figures

The association “Zielona Linia” records:

- a) ten years of experience in building the civil society;
- b) fifteen active volunteers;
- c) seven currently running programmes;
- d) twenty accomplished projects;
- e) four years of running the social economy desk;
- f) over 1.000 hours of training carried out;
- g) 27 granted annual scholarships for young people.

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Programme of cooperation between the City of Toruń and social economy organizations, Toruń, Poland

Description of the initiative

Since February 2012, CISTOR® Social Partnership Society, a social economy organisation from the city of Toruń (Poland) is conducting an innovative transnational project titled “Cooperation programme of social economy organisations (SEO) with local public administration (LPA) as an opportunity for the stable functioning of the social economy sector in Toruń”.

The project started on 1 February 2012 and it will be finished on 31 January 2015. The project is financed in the framework of the Human Capital Programme (Number and name of Priority axis: VII. Promotion of Social Integration; Number and name of Measure: 7.2. Counteracting Exclusion and Strengthening the social economy sector; Number and name of Submeasure: 7.2.1 Professional and social activation of persons threatened by social exclusion).

Project partners are the City of Toruń (Poland) and its Dutch twin town, the Municipality of Leiden (Netherlands).

Main goal of the project is to strengthen the alliance in Toruń between social economy and the local public administration by increasing the capacity to collaborate of these actors in the implementation of the municipal public policies.

The project started with a problem diagnosis regarding cooperation between Social and LPA. A study visit in Leiden provided the opportunity to exchange experiences with regard to the integration of social

entrepreneurs in the implementation of public policies. It was followed by the development of a programme of cooperation between the City of Toruń and social economy organisations and the creation of an IT tool to support the implementation of the programme. Currently, the programme is being tested by the Toruń municipality and social economy. All the interested parties are involved in the project.

Facts and Figures

CISTOR® Social Partnership Society is a non-governmental organization from Toruń (Poland) created with a mission of supporting disadvantaged persons in social, vocational, educational and cultural areas. It was established on 29 August 2006. Since 1 May 2010 CISTOR, according to the Public Benefit and Volunteer Act of 24 April 2003, has taken over tasks for the city of Torun. It became the successor of CISTOR - the Social Integration Centre that had been led by the local authorities from 1 May 2004 until 30 April 2010.

CISTOR® Social Partnership Society applies innovative ways of dealing with social exclusion by activating its beneficiaries instead of offering them just social assistance benefits. By using innovative methods the organisation helps disadvantaged people become independent citizens included and engaged in social life according to the idea of “civil society”. CISTOR® Social Partnership Society mainly focuses on vocational training and social activation of persons who are threatened by social exclusion, such as homeless, drug rehabilitants, former prisoners, persons in long-term unemployment or people with disabilities. CISTOR cooperates with national and foreign organizations and institutions.

In 2007, the CISTOR® was rewarded by the Ministry of Regional Development for the “Stokrotkowy Dom” (“Daisy House”) project and is entitled to use the label: “The Best Investment in Man”. The project was selected among 60 others in the framework of a competition organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy called “The Best Practice of the European Social Fund”. The “Stokrotkowy Dom” project had the objective to limit social exclusion. The target group was composed of 56 inhabitants of Torun threatened by social marginalisation due to unemployment, homelessness, addiction or former prisoner status.

CISTOR was also rewarded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in the 2009 edition of the competition “Good Practice of Active Forms of Help”. The organisation received the award for its project “Ośrodek Wsparcia Spółdzielczości Socjalnej” (“Centre of supporting social

cooperatives”).

Future and Perspectives

Partners have also scheduled training for representatives of the social economy sector and the local authority regarding the use of the final product developed by the project.

Expected results of the project are:

- a) the establishment of cooperation between social economy and public administration,
- b) reinforced cooperation between social economy entities and public administration by increasing the participation of social economy in the implementation of the municipal public policies,
- c) increased knowledge of social economy and the public administration regarding each other’s needs,
- d) increased mutual trust and confidence between social economy and public administration,
- e) a better knowledge of Polish and international practices regarding partnership between social economy and public authorities.

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Social Cooperative OPOKA, Klucze, Poland

Introduction

The City of Klucze is a small rural municipality with fifteen thousand people in Southern Poland on the border between the two provinces of Malopolska and Silesia. It is situated near the only European desert - the Błędowska desert, which has the potential to become a tourist attraction at European scale.

Today the region is attractive for a variety of leisure activities, with a beautiful landscape of sandstone and limestone, surrounded by forests full of mushrooms and the landscape of Przemsza White River valley. The Municipality of Klucze thus has its potential, also from an environmental point of view and with regard to the high activity and involvement of citizens. However, it also has its problems. A rural agglomeration, it

is situated in 40 km distance of the nearest city, Krakow. Inhabitants experience thus difficulties in access to opportunities to meet their needs. Unemployment is fairly high - nearly 16%, which represents a major problem (also if one considers that the national unemployment rate averages 12%). Also, there is a large proportion of people with disabilities with limited possibilities to integrate themselves in society.

Description of the initiative

To exploit the potential of the municipality and solve local problems, NGOs and public institutions have decided, in 2005, to jointly find solutions and conceive plans for the future of the local community. The partnership has become the only way to deal with the problems encountered. It brings together different actors such as key members of the City Council, village administrators, social welfare centres in Klucze, the District Employment Office, the Association for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development KEY, a Christian Charity Association. They all sit together and develop joint ideas. Main objective is to create permanent and stable jobs and to solve also other local problems not by piecemeal but in a comprehensive way.

At the beginning, this was a rather informal partnership; specific cooperation agreements were signed for specific projects. Within four years, seven major projects financed by the ESF were accomplished and 250 unemployed people from the area of the county activated.

In 2009, the local partnership was formalized mainly between four main partners:

- a) the City of Klucze represented by the Social Welfare Centre, an entity that is engaged in supporting people who are in particularly difficult situations of life;
- b) PUP Olkusz, a public institution dedicated to the activation of the unemployed in the county;
- c) the Christian Charity Association, founded in 2000, a non-governmental organization that runs a shelter for 90 homeless, therapy workshops for 35 people with disabilities and a centre for 25 drug addicted (providing them with vocational training, opportunities to take part in social life and financial support);
- d) the Association for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development "Klucze", established in 2003, which runs the Environmental Self-Help home for 35 people with mental health problems, as well as the Intergenerational Centre of Support for seniors and youth.

These partners implement joint projects, co-financed by the ESF, that involve socially and professionally excluded, introducing modern methods of working with these persons, etc.

The prevailing objective was to create sustainable work places. With the time, other partners (private companies, other organizations), joined the different initiatives.

The crowning element of the partnership described beforehand was the establishment of the Social Cooperative OPOKA. It was formally established by the two associations with support of other partners. OPOKA was the first social cooperative in Poland founded by two legal entities. Thanks to the existing local cooperation, partners were able to run the company without any subsidies. OPOKA's main purpose is to create jobs for the most disadvantaged people in the labour market and to meet other needs of the local community.

The support OPOKA received for its first service(s) from different partners, took various forms:

- the local Social Welfare Centre had ordered the first service, consisting in providing food to the poor clients;
- the Labour Office prepared the unemployed for training so that people at risk of social exclusion were ready to work in the catering business;
- the city of Klucze put a car at the disposal of the association in order to enable it to distribute the food among the different rural administrative units;
- NGOs provided managers;
- the Elementary School lent a room for the first premises;
- local entrepreneur renovated the premises;
- volunteer Fire Brigades lent spaces in the fire stations for serving food to poor people;
- the Association of Rural Women lent the dishes.

This way, the different partners learned to work together.

OPOKA's main objective is to reintegrate people at risk of social exclusion into the labour market by conducting a joint enterprise and seek for professional activation of these disadvantaged.

Today, the cooperative is an official partner in many initiatives, as well as a direct contractor of many partnership projects. OPOKA is a financially viable social enterprise and proved to be able to be a competitive entity, despite the fact that 80% of its employees started work without any or with very low qualifications. The cooperative has created 50 jobs - 80% of them hold by people with disabilities. Moreover, OPOKA is the only

social cooperative in Poland running a Vocational Rehabilitation Facility. Since the establishment of the cooperative, members of OPOKA have been retrofitting, by themselves, the new building lent by the municipality of Klucze for 30 years. In this context, the space put at disposal was specifically equipped and adapted for the needs of people with disabilities. Retrofitting of the building was financed with the various means made available by each partner and was carried out in accordance with the principles of sustainable development (own biological wastewater treatment plant, devices to reduce CO² emissions etc.).

All profits are passed on to other projects supporting the local community, the development of culture, sports, the elderly and the young. Each activity in these fields is carried out in cooperation with local partners. OPOKA also tries to promote conscious consumption within the local community. As one out of 20 social enterprises in Poland, the cooperative has the right to use the certificate “PROSOCIAL PURCHASE”.

At present, OPOKA provide services not only within the local community, but for the whole country. Activities include:

- a) the provision of food & beverage, catering (serving groups of customers or individuals);
- b) running of three restaurants with healthy and cheap food;
- c) organisation and realisation of training services, e.g. training of unemployed persons and people with disabilities as cooks, waiters, kitchen help; organisation and realisation of training of NGO workers and social workers how to work with the long-term unemployed;
- d) organisation of study visits, during which the cooperative shows how to build local partnerships and work with the unemployed (every year, some 1.000 people from different parts of Poland are welcomed - the feedback from these guests proves that OPOKA has become an inspiration for a number of local partnerships and for other social economy entities).

Facts and Figures

So far, through inter-sectoral collaboration, OPOKA was able to:

- establish a large social enterprise with many lines of business;
- create 50 new work places;
- provide access to good quality food at affordable prices. Every day, 300 persons, including many elderly people, are using meals prepared by the cooperative;
- have a stable source of funding for local initiatives (up until today, the

- partnership around OPOKA realized more than 30 different projects);
- develop a cross-sectoral model of cooperation for the socio- economic local development;
- to develop its own, innovative system to support people at risk of social exclusion;
- to create a comprehensive system of working with the long-term unemployed from individual diagnosis through educational support up to the integration into stable job;
- receive several awards and and distinctions in the field of social and professional activation of people at risk of social exclusion, including inhabitants of rural areas.

Awards and prizes:

- First honourable mention in the framework of Malopolska Leader Social Enterprise 2011.
- Award of the Marshal of the Malopolska Region 2011 “Crystal Salt” First prize in the category of initiatives in local communities - “Wise to success” 2011.
- Label “Prosocial Purchase” marking high-quality products and services of social economy entities.

Future and perspectives

The partnership in the Klucze community around OPOKA grows from year to year. Every year, new projects are launched. New ideas and concrete actions planned for the near future include:

- the development of a Strategy for the Development of Tourism in the Bledowska Desert, including the development of new social enterprises in this area;
- the creation, within the partnership, of a new social cooperative which will supply postal and courier services in the Olkusz county, thereby creating fifteen new work places (which brings tangible financial savings to local public institutions);
- the development, in collaboration with other stakeholders, including commercial companies, of a municipal waste recycling plan;
- the creation of four students’ cooperatives in local schools which will distribute healthy food among pupils, carry out social projects and promote the latter among young people.

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Social Cooperative Poznanianka, Poznan, Poland

Description of the initiative

The idea to create a social cooperative was born at the beginning of 2012. The social cooperative Poznanianka was established by the City of Poznań and Wielkopolska Voivodeship. After the period of preparation, Poznanianka was officially registered in March 2013.

The idea behind the establishment of Poznanianka comes from the need to create jobs for people who have debts caused by not paying rent for social housing (community flats) in Poznań, as well as for people from disadvantaged groups on the labour market (inter alia: unemployed and people with disabilities). The institution responsible for social housing in Poznań agreed that around 30% of the salary of a person employed in the cooperative will be given to the city to pay the debts of this person. This solution enables people to reduce their debts, to prevent eviction and to lead a normal life.

The preparation period before the official registration of the cooperative, included inter alia training for future employees and future managerial staff. The former acquired new skills and professional qualifications in new fields through a project of the Association for Social Cooperatives, financed by EU funds. In addition, market research was carried out in order to find services that could be delivered on the basis of contracting with the City of Poznań and Wielkopolskie Voivodeship. Local self-government units were very engaged in the project and have declared future cooperation.

After the registration, Poznanianka has started providing its first services for the municipality. The first procurement contracts were concluded with municipal institutions and include, inter alia, maintenance of green areas, renovation, construction and cleaning. For local administration there are important advantages: having the claims paid back, reducing the costs of social benefits and of public services.

At the moment, Poznanianka employs five persons from disadvantaged groups on the labour market or in danger of eviction from social housing. The cooperative got a subsidy for its start-up; it was used to buy necessary equipment.

Future and perspectives

In the future, Poznanianka plans to increase the number of procurement contracts with municipal and regional institutions, as well as with private persons. Thereby, new jobs will be created in the cooperative. There is no limit concerning the number of employees, so the more jobs will be created, the more unemployed persons with debts will be lent support.

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Local partnerships for the social market economy, Jarosław, Poland

Introduction

The Jarosław district is located in the South-Eastern part of Poland, in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship. The Eastern part of the county borders with Ukraine - it is therefore a kind of “gateway to the East“. The county covers an area of 1.029 km² and has a population of more than 122.000 inhabitants. Most of the county is agricultural land. Industry is concentrated in Jarosław city and counts a number of economic entities (close to 8.000) operating in a broad variety of fields of production and services. The dominant industries are related to food processing, due to the agricultural nature of the county. Well developed other industries include construction, timber, steel, services, trade and tourism.

One of the problems faced by the Jarosław county is high unemployment. At the end of August 2013, 9.774 persons were registered as unemployed. The unemployment rate was 18,7% (in whole Poland it was 13,1%).

For this reason the head of Jarosław county and the director of the District Labour Office in Jarosław decided to do something about these problems. In March 2012, representatives of the District Labour Office in Jarosław had a meeting with an expert in social economy. In April 2012, the first meeting with representatives of the Barka Partnership in Poznań took place. This was followed by a number of encounters with representatives of local communities, local authorities and businesses.

Description of the initiative

The “Local partnership for the social market economy Jarosław” was

officially established and signed on 18 April 2013. It brings together public authorities, social economy, other civil society organisations, NGOs and private companies.

The partnership lends support to the activities of different organisations. Among the structures supported figures the Social Integration Centre in Pawłosiów (CIS) which provides training in renovation of buildings, construction, gardening, locksmith activities and forest-keeping. Local private companies will outsource services for the CIS. Other entities receiving support are the social cooperative “Garden Documents”, founded by the Jarosław District and the association “Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym”, as well as the Social Cooperative “EKOD”, set up by the Jarosław District and the Municipality of Laszki.

Other entities receiving support are the Social Cooperative “Garden Documents”, founded by the Jarosław District and the association “Polskie Stowarzyszenie na Rzecz Osób z Upośledzeniem Umysłowym”, as well as the Social Cooperative “EKODA”, set up by the Jarosław District and the Municipality of Laszki. The first one was launched in January 2013. The cooperative is mainly involved in care of green areas, as well as minor repairs, cleaning, arranging sales of K- LUMET firelighters and support for a variety of events, such as meetings, conferences and training sessions. The second one was launched in August 2013. The cooperative is mainly involved in repair services, ordinal, forest management services, runs a photocopy service. Local partnership for the social economy helps to find jobs for established cooperatives.

All actions taken by the local authorities supported by Partnership aimed at activating the long-term unemployed.

Future and perspectives

In the near future, as one of the results of the partnership activities, the village “Pawłowe Sioło” will open its doors to show the former life at the countryside. Visitors will be able to see how domestic animals, such as cows, goats, chickens, live and look like. There will be a possibility to participate in pottery and cooking workshops. A shop will sell organic products, some of which will be made in the village.

Moreover, the partnerships created will promote the construction of social housing. Long-term unemployed persons will participate in training on social housing and build houses.

Finally, the Social Economy Support Center (OWES) will be established

to support new social cooperatives.

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Local Partnership in Lwówek Wielkopolski, Lwówek, Poland

Introduction

The local partnership in Lwówek Wielkopolski was founded drawing on the model of the Barka Foundation (see [page 101](#)).

New social problems arose and the dynamics in the population had changed. The low participation of the inhabitants in community life was particularly striking.

Initiators of the partnership saw the need to involve different public partners. Social services, in turn, were looking for cooperation of the local community.

At the same time, only three local civil society organisations did exist. Active participation of the inhabitants was limited to some occasional events and charity parties. Inhabitants were not really involved in public affairs and had thus a rather passive attitude with high expectations vis-à-vis public authorities. A hierarchical way to manage public life prevailed.

All this contributed to the fact that, in the beginning of the process of partnership creation, even the partners were not aware of the real potential of civil society. The objective was simply to revitalise the community in an innovative and progressive way. Nobody expected this would also lead to a development of the own organisation.

Description of the initiative

The partnership is not focused on a specific project or one social group. It has been created as a permanent platform for the development of the whole community.

The objective is to promote good communication, a minimum of formalities and trust-building in order to mobilize inhabitants and to tackle different challenges for the local community with different means. The partnership uses the help of organization to reach out to disadvantaged environments, to organize neighbourhood help and assistance.

The involvement of inhabitants, however, is priceless. Inhabitants create associations and assume responsibility. They identify the needs and create actions to satisfy these needs.

Since its creation in 2006, the partnership stimulated and contributed to the creation of eighteen new associations, three social cooperatives and one social enterprise in the Lwówek commune.

Partners use their services, buy their products and recommend them to others. Knowledge of different actors on social economy and its potential increased.

In 2012, all local authorities from the Lwówek commune joined the partnership, with full participation of the municipal authorities, the representatives of education and business.

The Social Welfare Office has had a key role to play in the development of the partnership and became an example of how the old way of thinking can be changed.

A formal partnership, called the Local Partnership of Lwówek, was established on 1 June 2013.

Despite of its growing success, the partnership also had to solve a number of challenges:

- 1) the death of one of the leaders, which slowed down the establishing of partnership;
- 2) an improper concept of democracy, spending much energy on attacking the municipal authorities, instead of promoting cooperation;
- 3) an incidental use of partnership in political games;
- 4) a misunderstanding of the idea by some local politicians in the beginning, making the process of establishment difficult and discouraging the lead persons;
- 5) fluctuations and changes among the members of the partnership and resignations;
- 6) lack of funds to finance meetings;
- 7) lack of a legal framework for partnerships.

However, it has proven to lead to a win-win situation for all players involved.

The advantages for the local authorities are:

- a stronger participation of inhabitants in the City Council sessions;
- an increase of individual initiatives of inhabitants;
- good communication and better exchange of information in the community;

- the realization of public tasks by organisations - social care services, care for green areas, sports and recreation events;
- education of the local community;
- consultation in local affairs, social dialogue.

The advantages for NGOs:

- activation of inhabitants (including the establishment of representations of the villages),
- organization of social and cultural activities allowing for the creation of links within the local community,
- realization of training,
- implementation of projects financed by the ESF and the FIO bank,
- competitions organized by the municipality, region, ministries,
- identification of the needs and realization of activities by local organisations,
- establishment of a positive competitive spirit in the community,
- cultivation of tradition, values, sound patriotism,
- better contact of the inhabitants with the local government and stronger political awareness,
- dialogue with the authorities,
- integration of the local community, the inhabitants feel the hosts of their homeland, willingly offer their time and work for the good of the village.

Advantages for the business:

- permanent contact with representatives of local authorities and organizations,
- creation of new areas of cooperation among the partners,
- supporting others with their knowledge, entrepreneurship,
- having the opportunity to contribute to the construction and implementation of policies and programmes following the principles of sustainability and other values defined by the community.

Facts and Figures

A number of examples demonstrate the success of the partnership:

- As a result of the initiatives of the partnership, the amount of people using social support decreased significantly, 58% of the beneficiaries of the diverse activities joined the labour market.
- Three Social Cooperatives were set up. The partners make sure that

the cooperatives are prospering well and spread the word about their work.

- In response to the recent proposal of the municipality, one organisation undertook the task of running an animal shelter as a social enterprise.

To give some examples for other citizens' initiatives that were stimulated through the partnership:

- A municipality-led NGO manages rural community centers and established special funds. Rooms which were occupied during election meetings only now serve people to realize their projects and activities which allow them to play, enjoy, learn and integrate.
- The Association of Konin found the old chronicle of the village. It describes the history from the moment when Poland regained for the first time its freedom. The chronicle was scanned, put on CD and distributed among the inhabitants to protect the sense of identity and belonging of different generations.
- The Association of Inhabitants of Zgierzynka finds itself in a permanent co-operation with Nature University and the "Salamandra" association in the field of environmental protection. At the same time, the cultural centre of the village has been renovated and the ancient Fire Engine equipped and restored. These activities were implemented in co-operation with local village Council.
- In a nutshell, the partnership experienced up until today has been a lesson of cooperation for different actors that feel a joint responsibility for local social policy.

Future and Perspectives

The partnership will continue and extend its activities also in the future. Its aim is to further increase participation and activation of the inhabitants, also through organization of feasts and celebrations of the Children's Day, Women's Day, Senior's Day, the Harvest festival and other festivities in various villages. The partnership will continue to organize and elaborate courses, seminars and meetings as a part of permanent education and activation of inhabitants.

Not at least through the aforementioned activities, civil society will further be strengthened.

Finally, the partners have taken an engagement to create a partnership in the poviata (which is a bigger administrative area than the commune).

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Lubaczów - our place to live, Lubaczow, Poland

Description of the initiative

The local partnership for social economy in Lubaczow was created in 2011 by the Major of Lubaczow, the Social Welfare Office, the Job Office, civil society organizations and the forest inspectorate. They all saw in the social economy system a chance to create new work places and opportunities for unemployed people. Moreover, the partnership aims to revitalize social and economic areas.

In January 2012, the partners launched the Club of Social Integration and since then over 400 persons have been participating in it.

The Centre of Social Integration (CIS) in Dabrowa was set up in July 2012. Its purpose is to equip persons with vocational skills and to enable them to be independent on the labour market.

The Centre of Social Integration (CIS) in Lubaczow runs four workshops for 32 people and is a kind of vestibule to employment. It is a social enterprise.

Local authorities also established a social cooperative to give work to long-term unemployed persons from Lubaczow.

Future and Perspectives

Currently, the partnership is creating the Kresowa Osada, a social enterprise that will add touristic and educational value to the post-industrial and post-state-owned farming area of Lubaczow.

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Spółdzielnia Cooperative, Lublin, Poland

Description of the initiative

In November 2010, an unprecedented partnership, called "SPÓLDZIELNIA COOPERATIVE", has been established in Lublin, Poland, by the municipal social welfare office, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and a social cooperative. The innovation in this case

is the involvement of institutional partners, as well as those representing the social economy and private sector. The partnership's aim was to popularise the idea of social economy through the creation of a unique place, a Café-Bookstore "Spółdzielnia".

A unique location on the map of Lublin, the Café opened its doors in February 2011. It offers coffees, and snacks, but also organises socio-cultural events, such as debates, discussions, literary meetings, film festivals, book swapping, exhibitions and others. Besides having a good coffee, persons are given the opportunity to also get involved in local initiatives. The café-bookstore serves as a place for professional and social activation of people at risk of social exclusion. For the second time in a row, it was also awarded the title of a parents- and children-friendly place.

The partnership around the café evolves constantly. On 15 March 2013 it was joined by the Municipal Labour Office and the gastronomic consultancy Monika Ku. The role of the latter is crucial in this case, as it develops the business model of the project, coordinates the contributions of the other partners and ensures a follow-up and continuation of the activities. The public partners, in turn, ensure the complexity of support and build the credibility and image of the partnership.

All players support the institutionalization of cross-sectoral cooperation as a new and more effective form of local governance. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to representation of all possible sectors, i.e. public, social and private. Each partner fulfills own tasks which eventually aim to develop an innovative model of comprehensive support for people at risk of social exclusion both at the local and national level.

Future and Perspectives

As part of the partnership, the formula of "Spółdzielnia" changes continually, in order to develop the best business model and create mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of this initiative. In addition, in the framework of the actions of one of the partners (UNDP), there is a social franchise model being developed which is based on the experiences of the Café-Bookstore "Spółdzielnia" in Lublin and Białystok. This allows gained knowledge to be transferred to other interested communities.

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Social Economy Support Centres (Ośrodki Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej "OWES"), Gryfice, Poland

Introduction

Social Economy Support Centres (Ośrodki Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej "OWES") in the Szczecin area are run by the agency Aktywa Plus Emilia Kowalska in cooperation with the Polish Economic Society Voivodeship Division in Szczecin, the Social Aid Center in Gryfice and the District Labour Office in Kamień Pomorski. The project "Social Economy Support Centers" is carried out within the framework of the Human Capital Programme, Priority VII "Promotion of social integration", Measure 7.2 "Counteracting exclusion and strengthening the social economy sector", Sub-measure 7.2 "Support to social economy" in Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, Szczecin area, from 1 November 2012 to 28 February 2015.

Description of the initiative

In response to the reported needs of the social economy sector in Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, the first project for the benefit of social economy was completed in 2009 by Aktywa Plus Emilia Kowalska and was co-financed by the European Social Fund. The second project "Social Economy Support Centers", which was also co-financed from the European Union funds, was completed in three districts of Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship between 2010 and 2012. The project "Social Economy Support Centers", which is currently being carried out in Szczecin area, is a continuation of the former activities. The objective of the initiative is to provide complex support to the social economy sector and to increase its potential. Moreover, the project aims to extend the range of activities of social economy entities to other districts. Support is provided to social economy entities, as well as to people interested in establishing, running and working in such entities, to labour market institutions, social welfare institutions and local administration entities from Szczecin, Świnoujście and the districts of Gryficki, Kamieński, Goleniowski and Policki. In each of the aforementioned municipalities local centers providing daily services for those interested in working in the social economy sector were set up.

Facts and Figures

Complex support, which increases the potential of the social economy sector and broadens the range of activities of social economy entities, is carried out through:

- a) courses and trainings;
- b) the provision of advisory and specialised services, including assistance to the creation and maintenance of social economy entities, fundraising, legislation, marketing and accounting, creation of partnerships etc.;
- c) promotion of the Social economy idea and Social economy sector employment through information campaigns, website creation and management (free-of-charge for social economy entities), study visits, local debates and student debates, conferences, preparation and publication of social economy related publications.

Future and Perspectives

Planned results of the project:

- 695 persons who will have received support from the Social Economy Support Centers;
- 150 social economy entities which will have received support from the Social Economy Support Centers;
- fifteen newly formed social economy entities;
- seventeen workplaces;
- 50 training modules where participants will have increased their qualifications.

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Social Economy Partnership of Czarnków, Czarnków, Poland

Description of the initiative

The foundations for the social economy partnership of Czarnków were set in June 2009 by an agreement between public authorities of the commune of Czarnków and Powiat, as well as civil society organisations from Czarnków city and surroundings. The initiative draw on experiences

of the Barka Foundation for Mutual Help (see page 101).

In June 2011, an agreement to cooperate *with* and develop social economy in Czarnków city and commune was signed, with entrepreneurs from the Economic Forum of Czarnkowsko-Trzcianecki Powiat, banks and a social cooperative (housing cooperative) joining the partnership.

In January 2012, Sarbia Forest District, forest entrepreneurs, local governments and civil society organisations signed an agreement of cooperation for social entrepreneurship.

Several months later, in June 2012, a Letter of Intent to cooperate in the field of social economy during the proceedings of the Economic Forum of Czarnkowsko-Trzcianecki Powiat was signed.

Facts and Figures

Activities of the partners are manifold and allowed for different partnership-based initiatives.

The *Social Integration and Cultural Centre in Gębiczyn*, for example, pursues activities such as the organisation of cooking workshops during which meals for its beneficiaries, but also for guests from Poland and abroad are prepared. The cooking workshop activities take place in the Community House in Huta village (Czarnków Commune).

The Centre also provides services and training in the field of forestry and cleaning of forests.

Since the creation of the centre in November 2010, 50 long-term unemployed persons participated in the program of social and vocational reintegration; 16 persons found employment (30 %). Currently, the centre works with 27 persons (inhabitants from Czarnków city and commune).

The *Social Cooperative "Słoneczko"*, established in 2010, provides mainly care and cleaning services. Currently, it employs seven persons. Another five persons are employed on a temporary basis.

The *Social Cooperative "Jodełka"* currently employs five persons. From time to time additional persons are engaged for seasonal work. All employees are persons who have been unemployed for several years, have difficult family situations and have been socially and vocationally excluded. Jodełka receives subsidies from the Powiat Job Office. It provides services to the Sarbia Forest District, Czarnków Commune authorities and private entrepreneurs, which are all members of the partnership.

Other activities of the Social Economy Partnership of Czarnków include the organisation of Christmas Eve meetings for all inhabitants - especially

the poor and lonely ones, as well as the preparation and implementation of cultural and integration activities for the inhabitants (concerts). A major objective of the partnership is to build and strengthen civil society in the area and to promote good practice in the field of social economy all across Poland. Since the establishment of the partnership, ten new civil society organisations were created which are active in education, culture, sports and social integration. Together with other organisations they are actively supporting local authorities in the aforementioned fields. In the last three years the organisations have performed projects worth more than PLN 1.500.000.

Future and Perspectives

The *Social Economy Centre of Czarnkowsko-Trzcianecki Powiate* was established with, inter alia, the objective

- a) to create six associations;
- b) to animate six local partnerships;
- c) to prepare strategies for developing the social economy in six municipalities of the powiate;
- d) to create four social cooperatives.

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Barka Foundation UK, London, UK

Description of the initiative

Barka UK came to life in 2007 following the invitation of London local authorities and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs when massive numbers of Central and Eastern Europeans travelled to Western Europe for better lives and job opportunities. As a consequence many failed and ended up jobless and homeless on the streets.

Barka UK is affiliated to Barka Cooperation Network in Poland ([see page 101](#)). In the last six years Barka UK formed partnerships with local authorities and voluntary sector organisations in thirteen London boroughs as well as with the House of Lords, the UK Government and the Barka Cooperation Network for support of Eastern European migrants

who found themselves in extreme life situations in Britain.

Facts and Figures

The context described above allowed Barka UK to assist nearly 3000 rough sleeping migrants to return from the streets of London to detoxication and rehabilitation units, Barka communities, social enterprises and families in Eastern Europe. Also, over 200 migrants entered the job market in the UK through Barka's Social Economy Centre in London and a couple of thousands have been assisted by Barka's pan-UK multilingual help-line service. The success of these activities has been noticed and elaborated upon by the British and Eastern European media as well as by the UK Government (Barka UK was awarded the Andy Ludlow Homelessness Awards in 2009). Barka's CEO was selected to become a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum and was also nominated, in 2013, as a finalist of "Polish Woman of the Year in the UK". According to the Parliamentary Group on Migration led by Lord Roberts of Llandudno "the success of Barka lies in the close, cultural affinity with the people it helps. This, combined with the fact that many of the staff are former rough-sleepers or reformed addicts, allows Barka to approach the struggles faced by homeless migrants with expertise and, more importantly, empathy".

Future and Perspectives

The methodology of work developed by Barka UK has been replicated in several European countries and Canada, where Barka has its franchisees. Currently it is being transferred to Africa through the emerging International Network of Innovative Social Entrepreneurship (INISE - www.inise.org).

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Partnerships at regional level

REALIS, Active Network for Social Innovation in Languedoc-Roussillon, France

Introduction

The REALIS project is the result of a partnership between the region of Languedoc-Roussillon and stakeholders from the social and solidarity economy. The project includes a structured series of innovative initiatives that aim to make the social economy more dynamic, building on its capacity for development and innovation, in particular social innovation. The region of Languedoc-Roussillon is characterised by a fabric of small businesses, the vast majority of which operate in the service sector. With the exception of certain labour markets, the region has a weak industrial base and depends heavily on redistribution revenues. The region's demographic dynamism, the result of migration flows from other French regions, has contributed significantly to regional growth, which is hindered by a strained property sector. However, this trend has not had a major impact on the unemployment rate, which, at 13%, remains one of the highest in France.

Within this regional context, the social and solidarity economy can play an important role, offering a source of sustainable jobs. These jobs cannot be outsourced, as they have a strong presence within social utility services.

Description of the initiative

In 2006, the region joined forces with the EQUAL EST programme, led at national level by the general confederation of worker cooperatives (SCOP) and at regional level by the regional union of worker cooperatives (URSCOP). The aim of the programme was to launch new experimental projects in the field of social economy, namely a social business incubator, a social economy management school and a social economy meeting point. In 2007, URSCOP launched the first social business incubator, ALTER'INCUB, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the region. In 2008, the Regional Chamber for Social Economy (CRES) and the region co-organised COVENTIS, the first business convention specifically for the social economy. In 2009, the School for Social Economy Entrepreneurship, COEPTIS, was established in the form of a social enterprise.

Meanwhile, in 2005, the region of Languedoc-Roussillon became the first French region to be member in a social enterprise, REPLIC, which aims to generate solidarity-based businesses within a sustainable framework. In 2008, the region, together with URSCOP, CRES and the association AVISE, decided to regroup all of these socially innovative initiatives under the name REALIS, a French acronym for “Active Network for Social Innovation in Languedoc-Roussillon”. Today, REALIS brings together *five innovative initiatives*:

- ALTER’INCUB, the first social business incubator of its kind, supports leaders of socially innovative projects from the concept stage through to the development of a profitable business model. To date, 130 projects have been identified, 45 are in pre-incubation, 33 in incubation. Fourteen businesses were created (five to six new businesses per year) and 75 jobs generated as of June 2013.
- REPLIC, a model that is unique in France, meets the needs of local authorities as well as environmental concerns by creating solidarity-based businesses. This is done either by replicating proven models from other local authorities (e.g. the work integration restaurants La Table de Cana) or by establishing businesses from scratch (e.g. the eco-mobility business Mobileco).

In this context, nine cooperatives and 90 jobs (35 of them in the area of work integration) were created, with an annual turnover of €3.5m.

- COEPTIS, the first management school for executives and managers of social businesses, brings together national and regional actors from the social and solidarity economy. In 2011, it absorbed the College for Agricultural Cooperation and the Food-Processing Industry. Coeptis counts ten permanent staff members, 45 advisory teaching staff, realises 3 qualification cycles and has 200 interns per year.
- COVENTIS is a business convention dedicated to social businesses with the aim of highlighting professionalism and expertise of these businesses, which combine economic performance with rich human capital. This nationally recognised event takes place every two years. So far, 120 exhibitors took part. Around 2000 meetings were organized, leading to 500 business plans, 25% of which are put into practice.

Facts and Figures

Key objectives of REALIS are:

- 1) to foster social innovation; encouraging the development of socially

- innovative and profitable enterprise projects;
- 2) to increase the professionalism of managers and executives of social businesses, instilling them with managerial and social skills;
 - 3) to develop economic flows between socially innovative businesses and public and private-sector businesses, raising the awareness of businesses' expertise;
 - 4) to promote the replication and creation of solidarity-based businesses at regional level;
 - 5) to support socially responsible young businesses in order to strengthen their capacity for development and sustainable growth at local level.

These objectives have been met in the following way:

- 1) ALTER'INCUB provided support for more than 50 socially innovative projects.
- 2) So far, COEPTIS has trained more than 200 managers in joint practices and participatory management.
- 3) Through COVENTIS more than 70 business conventions between socially innovative businesses and public and private sector businesses were signed.
- 4) Eight solidarity-based businesses have been established in the region thanks to the framework developed by the social enterprise REPLIC.
- 5) The region will take part in the social enterprise cluster project, which will welcome 30 to 50 social businesses as of autumn 2013.

With the exception of ALTER'INCUB, which, like all incubators, is dependent on public funding, the other measures under REALIS aim to become financially sustainable.

The business model of the management school COEPTIS is based on the sale of its training services at regional and national level.

The social enterprise REPLIC needs to reach the critical threshold of fifteen new cooperatives over three years in order to ensure its business model.

The exhibition COVENTIS needs to strengthen its self-financing contributions in order to reach a satisfactory balance between private and public resources.

The regional social enterprise cluster consists of two parts: accommodation and support. For the accommodation part, financial sustainability will be achieved through the resources provided by the businesses hosted in the cluster. The support part, like any business nursery, will depend on public resources, in particular those of the regional community.

The REALIS project is, first and foremost, the product of an enhanced partnership among social economy stakeholders (CRES LR, URSCOP LR, AVISE) and the region of Languedoc-Roussillon.

The project's success has led to its measures being replicated in other French regions. REPLIC has been reproduced in Nord-Pas de Calais, ALTER'INCUB in Rhône-Alpes, COEPTIS in Franche-Comté and Auvergne, and COVENTIS in Franche-Comté and Poitou-Charentes. The social enterprise cluster is being watched with great interest by large urban communities, in particular Saint Etienne.

Project partners hope as well that the project will be duplicated on other territories and in other regions in Europe to foster social economy.

Future and Perspectives

Realis, the pole for social entrepreneurship, will be officially inaugurated in December 2013 under the high patronage of M. Barnier, Commissioner for the internal market and services, and M. Benoit Hamon, minister for social economy.

The social enterprise cluster, led by the region of Languedoc-Roussillon and co-financed by the ERDF, will open its doors in autumn 2013. Combining the roles of resource centre, business hub and nursery for socially responsible and economically viable young businesses, the cluster will aim to bring together all the assets needed to develop and sustain social businesses. With a surface of 3500m², it has the objective to welcome 30 to 50 businesses and to create 50 jobs per year.

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Esprit, Tuscany, Italy

Introduction

Since the late 1990s, the regional government of Tuscany has been interested in applying the European Social Fund resources to address and handle social issues concerning marginalisation and exclusion. In this perspective, the ESF Global Grant put into practice during the 2000-2006 programming period represented a pivotal experience in the

design and implementation of active labour market policies aimed at the social and work inclusion of disadvantaged people. The Intermediary Organisation that was selected and appointed to manage the Global Grant was the consortium Esprit, which later on became the lead organisation of the 2007-2013 Global Grant “Esprit3”. The regional government of Tuscany confirmed the Global Grant for the 2007-2013 period as a key instrument to realise inclusive measures, as foreseen in Objective 2 (“Regional Competitiveness and Employment 2007-2013”) of the ESF’s Regional Operational Programme.

The partnership behind the Consortium ESPRIT is composed of regional trade unions, cooperatives and the Banca Popolare Etica.

Description of the initiative

The current Global Grant for labour market insertion and social inclusion of disadvantaged people is managed by the temporary joint venture (associazione temporanea di imprese or ATI, in Italian) called Esprit3, which was selected after a public procedure in February 2009. The Esprit3 proposal designed a complex and innovative model of social intervention. For the elaboration of the project particularly three elements were taken into account:

- a) the results of monitoring and evaluation of the experiences realised during the 2000-2006 Global Grant, analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the funded projects;
- b) the results of studies and of research activity;
- c) the results of public consultations on needs, problems and expectations of the third sector in Tuscany, realised by applying (after due adjustments) a sort of Open Method of Coordination.

The aim of the Global Grant managed by Esprit3 consists in contributing to minimise the effect of different factors causing poverty (of means) and deprivation (of opportunities) in order to promote gradual social and economic inclusion as well as the elimination of situations of poverty.

Youth vulnerability and marginalisation are part of the Esprit3 programme, with respect to the interventions that the Global Grant has implemented by means of the calls for projects and few ad hoc tenders. It is to be mentioned that young people are already classified as vulnerable just considering their status. In addition to that, youngsters encounter other forms of disadvantage resulting from their subjective conditions (e.g. being a NEET, or with a low degree of education and low opportunities) or objective conditions (e.g. disability, addictions, etc.). Many of the

funded projects de facto involve young people (aged 18-35) as final beneficiaries. In any case, it is to be mentioned that the definition of young person refers, according to the regional ESF regulations, to people aged between 18 and 35, in a few exceptional cases up to 40 (for self-entrepreneurship initiatives). Esprit3 youth measures also refer to this age cluster.

In general terms, the Esprit3 Global Grant is based on the following priorities:

- centrality of disadvantaged persons;
- promotion of equal opportunities;
- promotion of the gender balance;
- establishment of a network bringing together a multitude of actors such as public institution at local and regional level, not-for-profit organisations, disadvantaged target groups, citizens etc.;
- integration of different sectors and development of networks and partnerships between employers, training institutions and social policy-makers;
- attention to the quality of outcomes.

Facts and Figures

The Esprit3 Global Grant is implemented through actions carried out by means of calls for proposals and calls for tenders, beside actions directly implemented in order to assure the good functioning of the Global Grant (e.g. networking, awareness-raising and information, studies and research, planning, management, administration, monitoring of the project). The following priority areas of intervention are covered by the Global Grant measures, consistently with the regional ESF programming documents 2007-2013:

- information, guidance and counselling, training interventions aimed at the labour market inclusion of disadvantaged people by supporting business start-ups, self-employment, job placements or first-time employment contracts;
- specialised services for guidance and counselling, and labour inclusion of disabled and disadvantaged people;
- individualised and integrated paths, by means of vouchers, for business start-ups or self-employment of disadvantaged people;
- paths for the development of an inclusive culture facilitating the employment of disadvantaged workers in already existing enterprises;
- measures in support of not-for-profit organisations in the field of the

- third sector, favouring social inclusion;
- development of support services and networks aimed at promoting social inclusion.

To date, Esprit3 has published six calls for proposals/projects, ten public procurements, and one call (with successive deadlines) to assign individual grants. Among these actions, all calls for proposals and the call to assign individual grants also addressed the needs of young people. As for the public procurements, six of them addressed directly the inclusion and labour market insertion needs of young people, especially the so-called NEETs (not in education, employment or training), young people with disabilities and young women. In total, 107 projects have been awarded, implying the involvement of 320 final beneficiaries (being disadvantaged persons), the creation of 36 start-ups (in general, micro or small social enterprises), 26 new businesses launched, and 63 third sector organisations benefiting from measures for their operations and structural consolidation.

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Social enterprise incubator of Silesia, Poland

Introduction

The Social Enterprise Incubator of Silesia has been established against the following background:

- Many individual projects mostly focused on creating new social cooperatives. *The initiators of the incubator, however, believe that multiplication of entities is not the best way to support social economy.*
- The partnership around the incubator reaches out to a wide range of non-governmental organizations willing to create social enterprises. Its objective is to *create social economy out of non-governmental organizations and their potential.*
- Projects are mostly financed by European Social Fund. *The partnership around the incubator intends to use the strong position of municipalities to create a system of social economy support that is not a 100% dependent from the European Social Fund.*

Description of the initiative

The Social Enterprise Incubator of Silesia is a social economy-oriented partnership in Poland that currently involves six municipalities and two non-governmental organisations. It was established in 2009. The partnership uses the potential of non-governmental organizations to create social enterprises. Support is available in the whole Silesia Region.

At present, the partnership is running six stationary and two mobile incubators.

The basic offer includes:

- 1) Infrastructural support: address, office, xero, camera, laptop, computer, phone and Internet;
- 2) substantive support: advisory services, trainings and workshops, coaching, study visits.

The incubator also stimulates local partnerships between labour offices, social enterprises, municipalities and business representatives.

The objective is not only to support social economy entities and their set-up by citizens, but also to create a favourable environment for such actions. This implies fostering and sustaining the engagement of municipalities when it comes to the support of social economy. All actions of the incubator must take into consideration local needs and priorities. For this reason, municipalities are considered to be the best partners.

Facts and Figures

Results after 1 year:

- 484 social enterprises supported (mostly NGOs);
- 2399 accesses;
- 3564 service units delivered;
- 146 participants in trainings and workshops;
- three local partnerships between labour offices, social enterprises, municipalities and business representatives.

Future and perspectives

The initiative has the objective to sustain long lasting partnerships with municipalities without being financially dependent of the European Social Fund.

As mentioned already beforehand, the objective is to prepare non-governmental organizations to run economic activities in order to support their social initiatives.

Good practices will be shared with other municipalities and non-governmental organizations.

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PLUSS - Future Clean, United Kingdom

Introduction

The mission of the social enterprise Pluss is simple: inspiring people with disabilities to find work and build a career. Less than 7% of people with a learning disability and only 3.4% of people who have experienced severe and enduring mental ill-health are in paid work compared with 73% of the wider population.

With a stagnant economy, and jobs hard to come by, imaginative solutions have to be found in delivering JCP (Jobcentre plus) employability contracts and supported employment services commissioned by Social Services departments. Developing sustainable micro-enterprises like Future Clean is one way of doing this.

Description of the initiative

The micro-enterprise Future Clean, established in 2010, is delivering training and employment of people with disabilities in the heart of busy communities. Pump-primed by ESF funding, it is supported by a three-way collaboration between Pluss, privately run city centre car parks (supported by the British Parking Association) and local authorities.

The British Parking Association and its private sector members are now robust supporters of Future Clean. They perceive the partnership with Pluss as “an excellent opportunity for members to engage with their local communities and support a valuable social enterprise project which not only helps disabled and disadvantaged young people to develop their skills for future employment but is also extremely environmentally friendly and flexible enough to fit in to almost every car parking environment”.

For the British Association of Supported Employment, to whom Pluss is affiliated, Future Clean is demonstrating to communities in a highly visible way that people with learning disabilities and specific mental

health conditions can and do make good employees. Without overtly campaigning for a changed world, Future Clean is articulating the business case to employ people with disabilities every time a city centre visitor parks up to have their car washed while they are shopping.

Future Clean is already doing this in eleven locations within ten local authority regions, and over the next year this is set to rise substantially as cities from Falkirk to London line up to secure a Future Clean service. None of this would be possible without the powerful alliance that has been formed around the Future Clean project between the private, public and third sectors. This alliance was formally recognised in March 2012 when Future Clean won the Parking in the Community award and again in 2013 as runner up in the Partnership Working category (beaten into second place by the team that managed the arrangements for the Olympics) at the British Parking Awards which recognise excellence in UK parking management, design and technology.

It is not just the training, the employment and the disability awareness that Future Clean is taking to the heart of the community. It is also a business with strong environmental credentials, delivering outstanding car washing results despite only using half a litre of conditioned rain water to wash three cars with no water or debris reaching the ground. In fact, the system can clean a standard sized car to a high commercial standard using just 19 centilitres of rain-water. Local authorities in particular are recognising that a highly visible city centre presence for such a business is a great way to sell the eco-message to its citizens.

Facts and Figures

Future Clean began in 2010 as a single operation on a Plymouth car park with the aim of providing training and work experience for three people. In the last year, the number of Future Clean sites has risen to ten. Alongside its original two sites, Future Clean now operates in Tiverton, North Somerset, Stroud, Norwood (London), Sunderland, Oxford, Lewes in Sussex and Truro in Cornwall. Over the previous 18 months, the project has been presented in eight regional meetings of the British Parking Association and to two local authorities in France. Up to ten additional sites are scheduled to be operational over the next year.

Exeter Guildhall's Car Park, for example, has ten designated parking bays in what is the city's most popular car park, enabling people parking there to have their car washed as they shop. As a result, the Exeter project now has nine staff members including from time to time young

people with learning disabilities still at school carrying out Saturday jobs as a way of helping them develop the confidence for work as adults.

The Plymouth & Exeter Future Clean sites alone have between them now achieved 40 paid job starts for people with disabilities. In addition, Future Clean develops skills across a range of employment disciplines, and these two sites have now delivered 33 Work Experience placements and supported service users to achieve ten Level 2 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) in Business Development & Customer Services, five NVQ Level 1s and fifteen Entry Level 3s.

Pluss is a social franchisor with various social franchisees. In order to protect the project to deliver employment to those with disabilities and disadvantage Pluss takes the lead in supporting the creation of opportunity in different areas generally facilitating the creation of the local partnerships. In Enfield (London), for example, it has enabled the local authority to come together and partner a supported employment organization. In Truro, Cornwall, the relationship is different in so much as Pluss have worked directly with the Department for Work and Pensions, Job Centre Plus to establish a local project. This has developed into a deeper and stronger relationship with the opportunity for potentially greatly enhanced and substantial social outcomes over a wider area. In Gloucester the partnership is composed of Pluss as the Social Franchisor, the local authority and a charity. In North Somerset a social housing association operates the project as the franchisee. There are many differing formats of partnership but all are working under the social franchisor / franchisee model.

Perhaps the biggest achievement of the Future Clean project has been its capacity to bring a series of diverse agendas together in a very public arena and, in doing so, effectively cross-pollinate those ideas. Commercial car parking, the welfare to work industry, sustainable environmentalism, social enterprise, city-centre management and disability services are unusual bedfellows, but each is gaining strength from the presence of the other agendas in these highly visible city-centre projects.

Future and Perspectives

The concept for Future Clean was to engineer a sustainable business model that would also achieve positive social outcomes in full public view. Its low set-up costs and its capacity to meet different funding and training models means that Future Clean`s initial ESF pump priming has already taken it a very long way, and Pluss is now actively negotiating

with other national providers on how best to roll out the model across the UK as an integral part of the UK welfare to work industry.

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Human Resources Unlimited, Gent, Belgium

Description of the initiative

The project “Human Resources Unlimited” had the objective to build a bridge between Social and Regular Economy. It focused mainly on a human resources-related subject.

“SERR Gent en Rndom Gent”, a council of the social partners in the region of Ghent (Belgium), brought together several other authorities, social economy and regular economy organizations in a close partnership. During two years, experiments to create networks between these organizations were conducted. In those innovating networks, various business opportunities based on cooperation between social economy and regular economy organizations, social entrepreneurship and sustainable human resources management were identified. The initiative aimed, through this cooperation, to help more people with few chances on the labour market that have been for a long time in social economy employment to get new job opportunities in regular economy. With the input of both social and regular economy organizations, a well-tailored methodology to coach people was elaborated by the project partnership. A main element of success was the transfer of expertise between the partner organizations which allowed for these disadvantaged persons to be coached in a much better way.

This way, different networks between social and regular economy organisations contribute to social inclusion and active participation of persons, whilst, at the same time, preventing discrimination on the labour market.

Future and Perspectives

As a result of the project, a handbook/guide with lessons learned and recommendations for other organizations who want to work together in network formats and coach persons belong to disadvantaged groups was

published. The aim is to achieve, in the long run, a multiplier effect. Several project partners will continue their networks and, doing that, continue to create business and employment opportunities.

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L'Atelier-Centre de ressources régional de l'économie sociale et solidaire, Ile-de France, France

Description of the initiative

L'Atelier, situated in the Île-de-France region, is a regional resource centre for the social and solidarity economy (SSE), created in 2007 on the initiative of the Regional Council, the Regional Chamber of Social and Solidarity Economy (CRESS), divers public authorities at regional and sub-regional level and all actors of the sector. The partnership received support from the Caisse des Dépôts and the federal state.

With the initiative and the centre, a specific instrument stimulating the development of social and solidarity economy at regional level is being tested. Six years of activity allow for a feeding of the current debate on models to be adopted and generalised in the regions.

L'Atelier provides a pool of expertise regarding the creation of social and solidarity activities in Île-de-France. It advises future entrepreneurs in social and solidarity economy in the launch and start-up of their enterprise. Moreover, the centre establishes contact between these entrepreneurs and financial and/or technical partners allowing the former to develop and concretise their social innovations.

At the same time, L'Atelier provides advice to public authorities, accompanying them in the development of policies in favour of the social and solidarity economy. This strategic function is complemented by the running of a study centre bringing together the Regional Observatory of Social and Solidarity Economy, qualitative work on social innovation, European benchmarking or again work on the future of the territory.

Finally, l'Atelier acts as an organisation promoting social and solidarity economy in Île-de-France. It raises the awareness of the larger public on social and solidarity economy in particular through themes such as responsible consumption or social entrepreneurship.

Based in Paris, l'Atelier is open to the public. It puts at disposal of

those interested a number of resources enabling persons to launch their solidarity initiative or simply to know more on social and solidarity economy.

In general, l'Atelier is open to any experience and develops its activities with a logic of polyvalence and sense of initiative. It sticks, however, to operational aspects, as this has as much influence on the development of social and solidarity economy as theoretical debates or political choices. The CRESS is the representative body of social and solidarity economy in Île-de-France. In this position, it is the major contact/referee for public authorities, in particular the REgional Council and decentralised services of the federal state, regarding the development and evaluation of all public policies having an impact on the SSE.

Furthermore, through the presence of employer organisations within the CRESS, it also focuses on employment and training within the SSE: social dialogue, training of managers, employment measures. The CRESS and l'Atelier signed a partnership agreement, focusing on activities being of shared interest that are defined at national level and necessitate a large amount of human and technical resources: Examples are the Regional Observatory for Social and Solidarity Economy or the Month of Social and Solidarity Economy (Mois de l'ESS).

Subsidiarity figures, since its creation, among the fundamental principles of l'Atelier. Being a resource centre, its role is not to “do something in place of”, but to create synergies between all actors and resources of the territory in order to create a favourable ecosystem for the development of social and solidarity economy. l'Atelier does thus not accompany the enterprises, but it steers them towards support services and participates in the qualification of these services through the actions of the Centre Régional de Ressources et d'Animation (C2RA). Furthermore, l'Atelier does not define a public policy supporting the Social and Solidarity Economy, but it organises exchanges of good practices between politicians and practitioners so as to ensure efficient policies responding to the needs of the different actors.

The way of governance l'Atelier pursues is the fruit of human and regional particularities. It can still develop further, as in a similar situation in the region of Haute-Normandie. The current discussions around a new regional and national strategy for the development of the Social and Solidarity Economy evaluates thus also the existing models of governance with a view to allow for the largest possible opening for cooperation between the different actors providing support to the Social

and Solidarity Economy. The added value of the model of resource centres for the social and solidarity economy such as it has been developed in the Ile-de-France region, is based on several pillars: Interaction with local public policies, i.e. shared governance creating opportunities for dialogue between local authorities, networks and social economy actors, whilst conferring legitimacy to this work. Three words do summarize this model: legitimacy, autonomy, creativity!

Future and Perspectives

Conscient of the great success in the creation and evolution of the resource centre for SSE, which proves to be at the same time polyvalent and legitimate, operational and creative, l'Atelier would like to contribute to the establishment of similar types of structures. They could lead a number of concrete policies on the ground (local hub for economic cooperation, franchises and new products, creativity parcours), whilst distinguishing themselves from other institutions having tasks demanding more formality and framing (approbation, financing, regulation)...

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Plateforme de Finance et d'Épargne Solidaire (Platform for Solidarity-based Finance and Savings), Pays de Montbéliard, France

Introduction

Solidarity-based savings are the opportunity to finance economic activities that promote social inclusion and sustainable development.

The Pays de Montbéliard Agglomération, a French county, federates different partner structures on the platform Finansol, an approved association collecting the solidarity-based savings in the Franche-Comté region:

- a) The Caisse solidaire de Franche-Comté provides microcredits in order to facilitate the economic insertion of the socially excluded persons of the banking system.
- b) The Pôle local d'économie solidaire is a body offering technical, financial and human support to the project leaders creating economic

activities.

- c) Cigales are clubs of investors generating united venture capital in order to invest in companies or associations that prove to benefit, with their activities, the territory and its inhabitants.
- d) Cagnotte Solidarité Emploi has the objective to ensure access to finance for project leaders that are job-seekers without personal investments.
- e) Nef (société coopérative de finances solidaires) offers professional and associative loans in the field of ecology, social inclusion and culture.
- f) Habitat et humanisme doubs & jura aims to create retrofitted or new housing for lonely persons or families with low incomes.
- g) Terre de liens acquires farmlands to allow farmers' installation and to develop an environmentally-friendly agriculture.
- h) Oiko crédit finances economic projects in developing countries, thereby favouring economic growth, social justice and the autonomy of the poor regions of the world.

Finansol aims to inform, collect solidarity-based savings and raise the awareness of people on the importance of the latter.

In this framework, the platform organizes debates and conferences, presents its activities in trade and bio fairs etc. It organises encounters with specific groups and actors such as companies, but also schools. A monthly basic event is organized to welcome the general public, to collect solidarity-based savings and to redistribute them following the specific priorities of each organization.

Within the platform, human resources (permanent staff and volunteers) as well as technical resources are mutualised.

Each organisation is the ambassador of the others.

Facts and Figures

The total of private savings of French households amounts to 3 500 billion euros . Even though the amount of solidarity-based savings grows (recently by 32,9 % over one year!!!), they represented in 2012 only 4,71 billion euros, that is 0,1 % of these savings...

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Conferenza permanente delle autonomie sociali COPAS, Tuscany, Italy

Introduction

The statute of the region of Tuscany reinforces the principle of horizontal subsidiarity with a view to bringing citizens' organisations and public authorities closer together. To this purpose, based on regional law 20/2007, the Regional Council created the Permanent Convention of Social Players (COPAS) which delivers its opinion on different initiatives in the framework of the programming of regional policies. The establishment of COPAS responds to the necessity to involve qualified representatives of civil society. The Council is composed of representatives of associations and social co-operatives.

Description of activities

COPAS formulates advisory opinions on main documents regarding programming of policy measures promoting social and economic cohesion in the region. Moreover, the Council plays a proactive role when it comes to monitoring the impact of these measures. It is made of representatives of associations and social cooperatives. It is the first organization in Italy representing "social subsidiarity" within a regional legislative assembly.

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Global grant - small subsidies, Apulia region, Italy

Introduction

A Global Grant is a means foreseen by the Council (EC) Regulation 1260/99 and aims to promote specific actions for local development. Each Global Grant involves choosing a management organism – the Intermediary Organisation - which manages the implementation of the planned measures, in order to reduce bureaucracy, facilitate access and streamline the actions.

Description of the initiative

“Global Grant–Small Subsidies (GG)” is an initiative promoted by Apulia Region under the ESF programme. It has the objective to develop local economies by promoting employment for disadvantaged people and providing financial facilities.

GG started at the end of the 2000-06 operational regional programme on the initiative of the Cooperative Associations. Apulia Region responded to the challenge in time and therewith avoided the automatic withdrawal of funds.

Partnership and real sharing of responsibility was established with the creation of the intermediary organization (IO). A newly created legal person and temporary business association, the “Social Enterprise for Development” had been selected by the Apulia Region as the entity to manage and administrate the implementation of the measures related to the global grant and therewith to take on a series of powers usually attributed to Public Administration. It is committed to the goals of the operational programme and secures the full amount of the global grant under bank guarantee. “Social Enterprise for Development” emerged out of a partnership initiative and joint application of the Agency for Promotion of Social Cooperation APE, a non-profit organization belonging to Legacoop, and FONDOSVILUPPO spa, the mutual fund of the confederation of cooperatives Confcooperative Puglia. In the context of the call for proposals of the public authority, applicants had to show how they would respond to the Apulian needs in terms of employment and social inclusion of disadvantaged people.

Social Enterprise for Development aims to promote and realize activities corresponding to the following objectives of the operational regional programme:

- create jobs;
- improve training;
- reinforce the social inclusion of disadvantaged;
- enhance the capacity of third-sector organisations to provide services to vulnerable people;
- reduce bureaucracy;
- strengthen different financial instruments.

Following the first successful funding period, Apulia Region launched a further global grant, which has been allocated 6M€ in an agreement

signed with the same intermediary organisation. Activities already in progress are scheduled to continue until December 2014.

Facts and Figures

Within the first funding period, the initiative had a great success. It allocated a total amount of 8.200.000 € to different measures, trained 1.357 people, offered 148 persons work experience, helped 48 persons into employment, stimulated 21 new enterprises start-ups and 20 endowed with proper capital assets.

Also in the second funding period, Global Grant obtained excellent feedback from the territory. Citizens have been able to benefit from the positive results obtained by structures that have received the aid of small subsidies, used the improved level of competitiveness and the increased skills of the operators that were trained during the training sessions. An important element of success has been and is the concrete possibility to start-up enterprises. In times of crisis, the cooperative proved a viable and sustainable type of enterprise and therewith also a type of entrepreneurship representing a possible way out of the crisis.

Concerning the scale and type of interventions provided through this initiative, it is believed that the cross-cutting approach is to be considered of high quality. In fact, Global Grant enables to associate the training of staff with the ability to implement a company infrastructure, which strengthens the organization and makes it more competitive, both in terms of skills and functional aspects.

Future and Perspectives

The partnership will further benefit from the well-established network of the partner companies Confcooperative and Legacoop, the two most important national federations of cooperative enterprises. Furthermore, the impact on the ground will also be guaranteed by the concept of proximity that has always distinguished and characterized cooperative enterprises. In particular cooperative enterprises that operate in the non-profit sector (i.e. social cooperatives), can offer a wide range of services directly required by the people in the area.

Contact: Confcooperative Puglia - tricarico.g@confcooperative.it

Description of the initiative

The mission of the service “Sostegno Integrato Inserimento Lavorativo – S.I.I.L. (Integrated support for job inclusion)” is the targeted employment of disabled, especially those with psychic and mental disabilities, and disadvantaged people in general through mediated inclusion programs and supporting/guidance activities for their integration into the labour market.

The service was designed and implemented for the first time in the late 90^s in the district of Lugo. At the end of the decade, the model was transferred to the area of Faenza and Ravenna. In 2000, social cooperatives were integrated into the S.I.I.L. operating system. Moreover, the Council of the Province of Ravenna declared the model transferable. In 2010, the new hybrid umbrella organization “Fare Comunità” was constituted to manage S.I.I.L.

S.I.I.L. proposes its services to the territory as a support for workers and enterprises in order to:

- a) help enterprises fulfill their obligation concerning employment of disabled people (as stated in the Law nr. 68/99);
- b) experiment work integration of persons who have difficulties in approaching the world of the labour market;
- c) identify positive matches between the disabled/ disadvantaged worker and the enterprise, in order to have a reciprocal satisfying experience;
- d) favour work inclusion using periods of training and preparatory internships;
- e) support work integration with skilled operators.

The partnership approach is fundamental for the realisation of the service. The networks composing the S.I.I.L. partnership are formed at different levels. First of all, there is a network of institutions and financiers bringing together the Province of Ravenna, eighteen Municipalities, AUSL Ravenna (Local Health Authority) and INAIL (national insurance for work-related injuries). Secondly, a network of operators is composed of public employment agencies, social cooperatives, vocational and training centres, territorial social services and AUSL services (Mental Health Department and Addiction services).

Facts and Figures

The innovative aspect of the S.I.I.L. service lies in the integration approach.

Activities benefit from the professionalism and competences provided by social services operators, VET operators, social co-operators and those public employment agencies who participate directly or in partnership to the service activities.

Beneficial is also the strategic integration of human and economic resources brought in by different entities, institutions and organizations (Provincial authorities, Municipalities, Local Health Services, social enterprises).

Currently, following a consolidation process of formal and informal relationships, social economy and public institutions appear to work on an equal footing and through forms (e.g. Consorzio Fare Comunità) that are determined by the needs of the process itself, more than by the status and routines of the stakeholders involved.

Social economy is thus not a mere service provider, but a partner in the analysis of the needs and in the definition of the solutions applied to respond to these needs. Therefore, the network created in these years is one of the most important outcomes of the project, as it represents clearly the partnership among social economy actors and public entities (local administration, public social services, etc.) that work together for social inclusion and integration into the labour market of the people at risk of exclusion.

Future and perspectives

The S.I.I.L. project has opened the way for other experimentations, in order to underline its generative capacity and to respond to needs and the importance assigned to it by public authorities and the private sector (profit and non-profit).

“S.upporto E. A.ttivazione – percorsi per l’inclusione lavorativa delle persone svantaggiate” (Support and Activation – paths for work inclusion of disadvantaged people), financed in the framework of CBC Programme Italy-Slovenia 2007-2013: this initiative foresees the implementation of the S.I.I.L. methodologies to a different target group (are involved the categories listed in the European Regulation nr. 800/2008).

K.N.O.W. Keys for New Opportunities of Work – WORK-ABLE and R.A.M. (active research for work with motivational support) is an initiative dedicated to disabled people, promoting their empowerment

and development of skills. It aims to assist these persons in the active research of work with the support of a psychologist and of mediation operators who will work on their motivation and ability to present themselves on the labour market.

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Foundation Dopo di Noi, Ravenna, Italy

Description of the initiative

Dopo di Noi Foundation offers solidarity and concrete support to the families of people with disabilities, ensuring treatments, love and assistance to their loved ones.

The foundation was established in 2002, with public and private resources, from the general will of the Association for the Families of Persons with Disabilities.

Dopo di Noi pursues an idea of “special solidarity” that combines courage, care and responsibility: “Courage” refers to close relatives and their ability to think from a viewpoint that goes beyond everyday life. Secondly, “care” does not mean dependence but possibility of emancipation and growth for the disabled. Finally, the Foundation pursues the idea that assistance does not involve only family but that it is a responsibility of the whole community.

Dopo di Noi aims to go beyond present and individualism, from a viewpoint of social sustainable development that is able to welcome and nurture diversities.

Facts and Figures

Dopo di Noi Foundation counts 30 Charter members. Among them figure the Province of Ravenna, the City of Ravenna, the City of Russi, the health authority of Ravenna, Cooperative Association, category Associations, social Cooperatives, production and work Cooperatives, Associations of disabled people, a nurses association and others.

One of the main priorities of Dopo di Noi Foundation has been the construction of a residence for disabled people without a family or with family/care problems in Torri di Mezzano (Ravenna). This structure has

been operative since 7 April 2008. The building (a former school) was given to the foundation by the City of Ravenna as an extended loan for 50 years. Main contributions received for retrofitting came from Emilia-Romagna Region, charter members, supporters of the Foundation and several banking foundations.

Today, the residence houses fifteen adults with physical or mental disabilities. During the day the house can host many other disabled persons. It is a qualified structure, according to Emilia-Romagna standards. Its main aim is to host, for medium/short-term periods, disabled people who do not have any familiar resources and to satisfy their needs through rehabilitation, training, socialisation, assistance and care.

The residence is an “open structure”. This means that full use is made of public and private territorial/social resources that foster integration and exchange between the residence and the territory.

Law 6/2004 and the L.R./Emilia-Romagna 11/2009 gave Dopo di Noi the possibility to train assistance administrators lending support to disabled people and their families.

Future and perspectives

Amongst other initiatives, Dopo di Noi foundation is planning to create a vegetable garden on a piece of land close to the residence and to organise some activities with its guests.

Contact: Foundation Dopo di Noi - info@dopodinoi.org

Centre de développement de la région de Tensift-Marrakech, Morocco

Description of the initiative

The Centre de développement de la région de Tensift-Marrakech (CDRT, Regional Development Centre of the region Tensift-Marrakech) has the objective to promote social cohesion in its region and Morocco through cultural and artistic activities based on solidarity.

In this context, it mainly aims:

- a) to reinforce capacities of citizens in general (politicians and larger civil society, with a specific emphasis on women and youngsters);

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- b) to implement of pilot projects on sustainable development;
 - c) to assume a role as observer, stimulating debate on major questions and challenges the region is faced with.

Since its creation, the CDRT was always able to create efficient partnerships between different actors in the region (local authorities - politicians and administration, universities, guilds, civil society actors), but also at national and international level.

Facts and Figures

Examples for the three types of action undertaken by the CDRT:

- 3) Capacity-building: organisation of three universities for youngsters (universités de jeunes) to train and raise the awareness of 120 youngsters regarding social and solidarity economy; alphabetisation of 580 craftsmen and 300 farmers and women stemming from rural areas; training and work integration of girls and young women; training of politicians.
- 4) Implementation of pilot projects: elaboration of a guide on activities generating a revenue in the region; participative territorial diagnostics of 37 rural municipalities; substitution of traditional polluting ovens of pottery kilns in Marrakech by gas ovens.
- 5) Reflection and debate: organisation of meetings to stimulate debate on main challenges in the region.

Future and Perspectives

Recently, in cooperation with the German Confederation for Adult Education (Deutscher Volkshochschulverband - DVV), the CDRT established the university of knowledge and training (Université des Savoirs et de l'Apprentissage de Marrakech - USAM Marrakech), which is a milestone in the development of the CDRT and an important step towards new initiatives.

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Małopolska Pact for the Social Economy (Małopolski Pakt na rzecz ekonomii społecznej), Malopolska, Poland

Introduction

One of the most important tasks in the development and support of the social economy in Poland is the creation of regional pacts based on the principle of public-social-private partnership. Malopolska has a great potential when it comes to both traditional and innovative forms of social economy. Here in Malopolska, since the international conference “Social Economy - Krakow 2004” attempts are being carried out to develop methods and forms of cooperation in this domain. Not without significance is also the participation of Malopolska institutions in implementation of the EQUAL Programme. The high quality of the undertaken activities justifies the reason for which the first Polish Regional Pact for the Social Economy was signed in this region.

Description of the initiative

The Malopolska Pact for Social Economy, Poland's first regional pact, signed in Krakow on 12 March 2008, is a public-private social initiative. Amongst its signatories figure the Regional Centre for Social Policy in Krakow (an independent unit that operates as a separate budget entity of the Malopolska Provincial Government), the Municipality of Mogilany, the Municipal Office of Wieprz, representatives of public administration and a number of foundations and social cooperatives representing the social economy sector.

The originators of the Pact, agreeing on the fact that the crucial requirement for social development is the activity of citizens and their individual involvement in the shaping of their own welfare, found it necessary to seek such solutions and mechanisms that:

- a) will ensure participation in the society to every of its members;
- b) will minimize the repercussions of social problems;
- c) will provide the opportunity for sustainable and stable development in accordance with the principles of equality and social justice.

All this requires the cooperation of public authorities, NGOs and entrepreneurs in the development of social entrepreneurship, which guarantees social reintegration of economically disadvantaged people.

The signatories of the Pact declared that each of them, within their own

actions and competences, will take measures to promote social economy and contribute to the creation of mechanisms to facilitate its functioning. The Pact is designed to promote the idea of social economy and to support and strengthen the entities involved in this field. Its objectives and activities are manifold:

- improvement of the knowledge of social economy among the inhabitants of Malopolska and those who want to establish and/or support such business;
- improvement of the information flow within the social economy (among different social economy operators);
- elaboration of the institutional and legal framework to facilitate the development of social economy entities and to allow closer cooperation of actors involved in the development of the social economy in the framework of joint projects and initiatives;
- development of financial mechanisms promoting the development of social economy entities in Malopolska.

Finally, the Pact promotes certification of Malopolska's social economy entities, recently granting them the promotional trademark "Pro-social Purchase".

The joint activities initiated within the Pact contribute, in the long term, to the development of a strong brand of Malopolska's social economy.

Facts and Figures

The Pact is open to all organizations, institutions and companies that are ready to work for the social economy in Malopolska. It operates based on the following four groups: A *legal group* was set up to consult on legal frameworks. It serves as a platform to develop recommendations and submit comments on draft legislation and existing regulations.

The *monitoring group* was established to develop monitoring of the conditions of the social economy sector in Malopolska. In 2010, a team consisting of members of the Centre for Evaluation and Analysis of Public Policies (Jagiellonian University) and the Foundation for the Economy and Public Administration elaborated a concept for the monitoring system by identifying the most important areas that need to be further analyzed.

The scope of this monitoring includes:

- a) monitoring of investments regarding human resources (number of beneficiaries and employees, their features, demographics, type of contract, working hours, earnings), financial resources (sources

- of funding and their share in the overall revenue, budget, profits), resources in-kind (properties/premises, machinery, office equipment);
- b) monitoring of processes: organizational structure, short-term planning and long-term development of the organization, human resources development (employees' career path), identification of factors associated with participating nature of the entities, decision-making methods;
- c) monitoring of results.

The purpose of the *Social Economy Support System Group* is to establish a sustainable support infrastructure for start-ups and social economy entities operating in Malopolska. Under this system, within the Sub-measure 7.2.2 of the Human Capital Programme, projects that are complementary in their responsibilities and functions and that operate in the Malopolska sub-regions were created. In each sub-region, information and consultation points are located. One of them specialized in providing services to meet the needs of the entities belonging to the cooperative sector and NGOs engaged in economic activities, while the other is responsible for services tailored to the needs of other stakeholders, e.g. non-governmental organizations and social inclusion bodies (such as social integration centres). The projects are coordinated at the level of the Malopolska Pact for Social Economy. Project partners are involved in the activities of the group.

The *Marketing Group* was established in September 2012. The main task of its members is the participation in the certification of products and services of Malopolska social economy entities. The selected entities are awarded with the "Pro-social Purchase" trademark.

The purpose of the label is, on one hand, to give customers the opportunity to purchase products and services of the social economy and thus let them participate actively in important social activities. On the other hand, the label is a way to encourage certified social economy entities to maintain their quality and competitiveness.

The signatories of the Pact also cooperate beyond regional borders. They participated, for instance, in the National Meetings of the Social Economy in Warsaw, Poznan, Lublin and Krakow in the years 2009-2012 as well as in a study visit to Andalusia (Spain).

Joint initiatives of the Pact include:

- the Social Economy Fair Trades (2009-2013) where the Pact had co-responsibility for the organization and promotion of the event;

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- the Social Economy Week at Malopolska’s Universities (2010-2012) where the Pact co-operated with selected signatory organizations (universities) regarding the organization of the event and technical support;
 - the Pro-social Purchase Promotional Trademark –the Pact participates in the certification of services and products offered by the social economy entities in the region;
 - Malopolska’s Social Entrepreneurship Leader Competition (2011-2013) where the Pact has a seat in the Jury;
 - Malopolska’s Social Economy Entities Products and Services Catalogue – the Pact distributes the publication;
 - the implementation of the Social Economy Support System;
 - the elaboration of the Regional Plan for the Development of Social Economy in the Malopolska Region for 2013-2020, based on activities of the Strategic Group, took part in the elaboration of the plan’s main objectives.

The activities of the Malopolska Pact for Social Economy are recognized and appreciated by the Ministry of Economy. In 2012, the ministry awarded the project regarding the Academy for Social Economy Development with the European Award for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship (category of Responsible Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Enhancing Social Inclusion).

Future and perspectives

In the framework of the implementation of the National Programme for the Development of Social Economy, the Pact will perform the actions of the Regional Committee for the Development of Social Economy and it will be coordinating activities undertaken in the Malopolska region in the field of the social economy sector.

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Małopolska Social Economy Support System, Malopolska, Poland

Introduction

The Social Economy Support System in Malopolska is an innovative instrument aimed at systemic, coordinated and best possible actions to meet the needs of social economy entities. Within the European Social Fund, professional institutions supporting the social economy sector of the region are being set up. Moreover, measures were elaborated that allow the potential of social economy to be exploited in the area of social policy and other public policies.

Description of the initiative

The Social Economy Support System in Malopolska was developed by the beneficiary projects of the Human Capital Programme, Sub-activity 7.2.2. On the initiative of the Malopolska Management Board, action had been undertaken to coordinate the implementation of the projects selected to best suit the needs of the social economy entities in the region. Institutions implementing the selected projects developed principles of cooperation, that were formalized through the signature of an agreement on 14 July 2010.

The main objective of the Social Economy Support System is to create a professional and comprehensive support infrastructure for emerging and active entities of the social economy.

Main provisions of the aforementioned agreement encompass:

- the division of Malopolska into five sub-regions to provide easy access, for all potentially interested parties and individuals, to the institutions that support the social economy;
- the establishment, in each of these sub-regions, of at least two information and consultancy desks for social economy entities;
- the division of projects following the needs of the customers of the services: services for the cooperative sector, for non-governmental organizations conducting economic activities, and other services for social economy entities provided by other projects.

As part of the Social Economy Support System, the projects have been developed in such a way that they are complementary to each other.

Their implementation is coordinated at the level of the Malopolska Pact for Social Economy.

The complementarity of the projects lies in the fact that the services that they provide to support the social economy sector are shaped in such way to ensure maximum satisfaction of the needs of specific target groups. The idea is that the co-operative sector and non-governmental organizations engaged in economic activities should be supported by an institution that has the greatest potential and experience in the development of such entities - namely the Cooperatives' Lustration Union. At the same time, other types of entities belonging to the target groups, such as social inclusion bodies and social integration centers, are customers of support provided within the projects that are implemented by institutions with extensive experience in the field of the third sector, such as BIS Foundation, Tarnowski Foundation and others.

Furthermore, the Social Economy Support System established information and training centers that are operating in the whole Malopolska region. All contractors agreed to carry out joint activities related to the promotion of the social economy.

An important element of the Support System are the grants of up to 20 000 PLN for individuals wishing to establish or to join in cooperatives. The grants are available at the Regional Centre for Social Policy in Krakow since 2011. Individuals can apply for financing on the basis of a business plan that was elaborated in collaboration with experts whose services are funded in the framework of selected projects. Also, individuals receive support in the form of advisory trainings provided within all the projects of Sub-activity 7.2.2 of the Human Capital Programme.

Facts and Figures

From 2007 to 2012 the Malopolska Social Economy Support System consisted of six projects carried out by eleven institutions.

At present it consists of two projects carried out by six institutions with huge experience regarding animation of the social economy.

The activities of the Support System resulted in the creation of 26 social cooperatives and 169 work places.

Future and Perspectives

From 2012 until 2015 only two institutions are responsible for the coordination of the Social Economy Support System in Malopolska. In addition, the system is correlated with the Malopolska Pact for Social

Economy which has established an operational group for the Social Economy Support System. Soon, in the context of the implementation of the National Programme for the Development of Social Economy, the Pact will fulfill the tasks of the Regional Committee for the Development of Social Economy, which means that the Social Economy Support System will be a part of the latter as well.

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Coompanion, Gothenburg, Sweden

Description of the initiative

Coompanion is a development agency focusing in particular on creation of and/or assistance to cooperatives (in Sweden: cooperative economic associations). It operates all over Sweden and has offices in 25 different places.

In Gothenburg and the Västra Götaland region, for example, Coompanion plays a role as catalyst and works hand in hand with both the City, the ten districts of Gothenburg and the Region of Västra Götaland. The ongoing partnership has given Coompanion resources to develop counselling and support services for entrepreneurship in the social economy.

In 2012, 67 companies started with the assistance of Coompanion, more than 50% of them being cooperatives and seven work integration social enterprises.

Together Coompanion and local authorities took the initiative to establish a global agreement between the social economy and the city of Gothenburg which consists of seventeen commitments. One of these commitments is to develop new financial solutions for social enterprises. This gives the existing Kreditgarantiförening, a cooperative association providing finance to social enterprise, the opportunity to grow. The association was set up by Coompanion in cooperation with other social economy actors in Västra Götaland and the Region of Västra Götaland.

The city of Gothenburg has just decided to allocate 10M SEK (approx. 1M EUR) to finance social enterprises.

Finally, the existing partnership between Coompanion, Gothenburg city and the region of Västra Götaland has resulted in the creation of an

incubator for work integration social enterprises.

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East Sweden co-operation, Ostergotaland, Sweden

Introduction

To the knowledge of the partners of the East Sweden partnership, the idea of creating a regional model for integrating unemployed into the labor market by means of social economy is unique in Sweden. There is a consensus for this model between all political parties as well as between local and regional authorities and social economy organisations. The objective is to find pathways of cooperation, to make better use of resources and direct the way towards structural changes. Together actors will pool their resources and throughout different partnerships and projects find innovative solutions in order to launch an East Sweden model in the year of 2015. The model will include measures for education and learning, start-up support, business development support, financing and a clear evidence-based method for work integration social cooperatives. The unemployment rate today shows that, for different reasons, approximately 40.000 persons in East Sweden region do not find themselves on the labor market. This leads to costs of approximately two billion euro. In society there is an urge for new and innovative ideas and solutions. Work integration social enterprises (WISE) have been identified as one possible solution. At the same time there is a general shift towards contracting out welfare services within the frame of public procurement. This shift opens up for new local partnerships and collaboration between public sector and social economy.

Description of the initiative

The Regional Council has been commissioned by its members (thirteen municipalities and the County Council) to create a functional region with economic growth and competitiveness. Mandated by the government, it has developed a vision for the future of the region, as well as goals and strategies for how to attain this. In the regional development strategy (RUP) towards 2030 the East Sweden region included the objective to

support work integration social enterprises (WISE) as one innovative way to fight unemployment. Investment in social economy and WISEs means action towards smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

In the East Sweden region, several actors are currently support structures for WISEs: Coompanion, SERUS, Kooptjänst K ekonomisk förening (Kooptjänst) and Se Upp. Coompanion is a cooperative development agency combining knowledge about broad social needs and the requirements of small business with competences in democratic entrepreneurship and local development. *SERUS* is a cooperative with broad international and national contacts. It also provides assistance to businesses in civil society and the social economy. *SERUS* works with a broad focus in order to assist authorities as well as organizations and businesses with a variety of services, including the development and implementation of projects, provision of business advice, but also lobbying activities. *Kooptjänst* is a social enterprise which offers resources in the start-up phase of social enterprises (including financial support for its members) and assistance in the administration and management of projects. *Kooptjänst* consists of eight local units, several areas of business and 35 employees. It is looking for an organizational form that combines cooperative advantages with the resources of a Consortium. *Se Upp* - social economy partnerships in Östergötland - is a non-profit organization formed to support not-for-profit organizations such as cooperatives, economic and non-profit organizations and social enterprises. The purpose of *Se upp* is to be the coordinating actor at regional level in the promotion of the social economy. *Se Upp* is member of *PLUS*, which gathers networks for social economy in the NUTS 2 region East Mid Sweden, consisting of Östergötland, Örebro, Västmanland, Sörmland and Uppsala. *PLUS* - Partnership for Local Development and Social Economy - has emerged in recent years as a platform for the development of the social economy to create growth and sustainable development in the region. It is primarily about raising awareness for the social economy, strengthening its competitiveness, creating sustainable jobs as well as stimulating local and regional partnerships.

Facts and Figures

Work integration social enterprises (WISE) link entrepreneurship with the individual's needs for work and the community's needs for services. WISE aim to integrate people who have difficulties in finding a job. They re-invest their profits and are organizationally independent of the public

sector. WISE are governed by the principle of one member one vote. In Sweden there is no legal status, no specific legislation nor legal norm that differentiate social enterprises from other private companies. Also specific tax benefits do not exist. In 2012 there were about seventeen WISE in East Sweden employing around 110 persons as well as giving 370 persons the possibility for job training or internships. In the report “Arbete för Alla” (in English “ Work for all”), conducted and coordinated by the East Sweden Region, the most important statement is that the social economy and work integration social cooperatives have an inherent potential to lower unemployment rates locally. This report was the point of departure for a strategically established collaboration that would stimulate structural change in order to render the public sector and its ways of supporting the social economy more effective. Together, all actors mentioned beforehand will pool their resources and, throughout different partnerships and projects, will find and contribute to solutions. The East Sweden model will include education and learning, start-up support, business development support, financing and the promotion of a clear evidence-based model for the work integration social cooperative (consortia model but with one juridical person).

Future and perspectives

After the “Work for all” report the Regional Council took action. A political spokesperson and a civil servant were commissioned to work on the regional objective concerning work for all, considering the social economy and its potential in a more strategic way. One part of this work is the elaboration of an East Sweden Model. The model will generally increase opportunities for greater entrepreneurship among the social economy actors. Another aim is to develop long-term support structures based on local needs. The model will be based on the existing collaboration between the different actors in the social economy. Giving specific tasks and human resources also enables us to participate in external partnerships as well as invite actors to regional based partnerships.

The project “MESSE – Mechanism for Enhancement of Synergy and Sustainability among Enterprises” runs throughout 2011-2014. Partner representing both social economy and the public sector in eight countries are working together with the aim to develop regional and local activities and to share good practices. The international partnership involves local actors and will have an impact on the final shape of the aforementioned partnership model. Since 1 January 2013 the Regional Council started

partnerships within the framework of the regional structural fund. The initiative aims to realize the regional goals formulated in the East Sweden model. The project gives a direct incentive to local authorities to get involved. The participation of the region in both projects will contribute to partnerships between the public sector, social economy and the local businesses. The objective of increased cooperation between social economy actors and the public sector is to find innovative and more efficient pathways of cooperation as well as to make better use of resources and stimulate important structural changes.

Contact: Regional Council, East Sweden Region - office@ostsam.se

Partnerships at national level

SoPro-Social Production for Sustainability, Austria

Introduction

Against the background of a necessary system change in Europe's economy – regional economic cycles instead of outsourcing to the Far East; sensible reutilization of enterprise waste instead of wasting resources – a rethinking process takes place in economy and politics. In Austria there are enterprises assuming social responsibility, in Hungary it is especially important to create employment in the expanded labour market, also because it has one of the lowest employment rates in Europe.

These efforts are supported by the initiative “SoPro HU-AT”. The model of social production arises from supported cooperation between economic enterprises, public clients and social enterprises. Contacts with 1000 enterprises and successfully implemented procurement (products, services) are the practical basis for future training of procurement experts (SoPro consultants) and create the environment of a cooperation oriented towards quality and appreciation.

Description of the initiative

The project “SoPro HU-AT - Soziale Produktion für die Umwelt; Umweltschutz und Nachhaltigkeit im Zusammenwirken von Wirtschaft und Öffentlicher Hand mit Sozialbetrieben” (“SoPro HU - AT. Social Production for the Environment. Protection of the Environment and Sustainability through cooperation between the public sector and economy with social enterprises”) has been developed within a working group consisting of three governmental departments of Lower Austria and project initiator KOMUNITAS OG. It has been implemented successfully in a large number of best-practice examples. Until 2014, nine organizations from Austria and Hungary cooperate within the project. The initiative aims to deepen and expand practical cooperation between public clients, economic enterprises and social enterprises, to create and develop sustainable products and services of high quality, furthering their marketability, so that they become sources of inspiration for sustainable regional economic activity.

Social production means:

- regional economic activity focusing on *sustainability*,

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- with a *social* component,
 - an active process of consultation/cooperation in procurement procedures between economy, agriculture, public institutions and social enterprises/social projects (“SoCoPro“ = Social Co-Production) “procurement processes at eye level”,
 - a focus on quality and value of products and services.

The process of procurement starts off with the product idea (innovation requirement), and it is oriented along strategies for strengthening of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which can be implemented successfully and reliably through cooperation with social players.

Many sustainable projects and products used by public and private clients have been developed by means of social production. Among them figure, for example, a painting box with the Colours of the Earth, including a sustainable system of ordering and delivery for schools, or the initiative of waste container recycling into snow shovels. Projects for the private economy range from transforming truck canvas into bags, disassembling and reassembling of monitors and computers within the framework of a “regional social computer cycle”. At least 100 further products and services were/are created: from individual USB sticks, wine packages made out of waste material, a marketing concept for raised beds for herb gardening and worm composting boxes over the production of special clothing for wheelchair users to a complete communal service package for green space and collection centers for secondary materials.

The results show that all participants benefit from the model of “social production”:

- Social enterprises and the people working there generate a higher amount of own resources, useful work and have a broader offer regarding qualification of their employees.
- Businesses and public institutions receive sensible, CSR-suitable products and services from the region instead of cheap no-name products from the Far East.
- Environmental concerns are met by recycling or even upgrading waste from enterprises into new quality products and by the promotion of eco-design of new products.

Future and Perspectives

The project partners intend to expand “SoPro” as a model-project in Europe. The objective is to promote, inter alia, simple and creative

solutions regarding regional partnership, high quality products and services based on specific principles and a more sustainable society in general.

The idea of “social production” will be further extended in the coming years, and be implemented at international level. The basis for these activities is the platform “socially produced”.

This platform will be presented to the public within the framework of the ETC project “SoPro HU-AT”. Tasks and aims of this platform are:

- a) consultation on social co-production: Negotiation between enterprises/public institutions and social enterprises;
- b) development of a trademark, later on administration of the trademark;
- c) international linking and internationalization;
- d) acquisition of and service provision to clients and partners;
- e) public relations.

Facts and Figures

Two Examples to show what “SoPro” can do:

Waste Bin Recycling

Around one million waste containers made out of plastics are placed in Lower Austria. The average life-span of plastic waste containers amounts to 10/15 years. Containers which can no longer be used are currently often disposed in waste disposal, and thus in waste combustion or in industrial combustion processes. This also entails costs.

In the framework of SoPro, used waste containers are turned into recycled snow shovels and other recycled products in a material-conserving process by means of a procedure that is patent-registered throughout Europe. These recycling processes are solely performed in social enterprises. To date, more than 15.000 products have been produced by recycling used waste containers.

The “treasure chest” with sustainable effect

Emmaus St. Poelten produces the “soil colour painting box” for the Department of Rural Development of the Province of Lower Austria, more precisely for the division of soil protection. “We intended to achieve a good result, and this implies implementation in a social enterprise”, states Dr. Erwin Szlezak, manager of the soil campaign.

Since 2007, upon recurring orders, the carpenters of Emmaus St. Poelten, where mainly long-term unemployed persons are working, have produced more than 1.000 painting boxes for colours made out of soil. The Emmaus-workers are responsible for the whole process-cycle from

production, assembly and pasting of the case, filling and labeling the glasses, as well as adding information material to the painting box in order to sell and distribute the boxes to everyone.

Contact: Platform “sozial produziert” - rybaczek@komunitas.at

Structural partnership between social economy players and the federal State, Belgium

Description of the activities

In Belgium, the federal government maintains a permanent dialogue and cooperation with social economy.

The administrative service responsible for these partnership activities in the field of social economy is SPP Intégration Sociale, which is in charge of programming and actions regarding the fight against poverty, social economy and policies of big cities. SPP Intégration Sociale coordinates social economy-related activities in Belgium on the basis of a partnership agreement between the federal government, the regions and the German-speaking Community.

A main principle in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of policies in the field of social economy is the involvement of stakeholders. Activities of the SPP Intégration Sociale in the domain of social economy include:

- calls for projects in the field of social economy;
- promotion of projects on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), e.g. the project “Quadrant” in the framework of which learning networks were established in cooperation with the Belgian chambers of commerce;
- admission and recognition of pilot projects in the field of social economy;
- admission and recognition of federal work integration enterprises;
- monitoring of the system of allocations for integration into employment;
- the organisation of conferences on social economy and related issues;
- the elaboration of publications such as the guide on the use of social considerations in public procurement.

For all these activities, SPP Intégration works in close cooperation with actors from the social economy, in particular with SAW-B, the

Frenchspeaking federation of social economy enterprises (representing social economy from Wallonia and Brussels at the federal level), VOSEC, the Flemish platform for social economy (representing the Flemish social economy at the federal level) and Social Economy Europe, a platform representing and promoting social economy at European level.

Partnership is based on an eye-level relationship between the aforementioned actors, given that all actors involved have mutual needs and interests:

- The federal administration needs social economy actors to shape and support its policy.
- The organisations representing social economy rely on the administration for political and financial support.

The partnership fulfills a role of interfederal coordination of measures related to social economy and its promotion. Against the background of an increasing regionalisation, it proves indispensable also when it comes to implementing or reacting to initiatives at European level. This role of coordination was reinforced in 2009 with the nomination of a delegate of the SPP Intégration Sociale to represent Belgium in the Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES) of the European Commission.

A structural concertation is carried out once a trimester. Different topics that are of relevance for the social economy sector are discussed and concrete proposals formulated.

Together, the partners undertake actions to inform the sector and the larger public, raising the awareness of the latter with regard to the added value of social economy.

The three organisations representing social economy monitor developments of legislation/measures at EU level having an impact on social economy and respond to consultations by the European Commission in agreement with the SPP Intégration Sociale.

Examples demonstrating the success of the partnership are also the European conference “Social economy and the strategy Europe 2020 - the local added value and territorial roots”, organised under the Belgian Presidency of the European Union and attended by representatives of governments and social economy from 17 EU member states, as well as the elaboration of the guide on the use of social considerations in public procurement.

Contact: SPP Intégration Sociale - <mailto:julien.vangeertsom@mi-is.be>

Barka Foundation, Poznan, Poland

Description of the initiative

Barka Foundation was created in 1989 as a response to increasing social problems in Poland during transformation years. Many persons approaching Barka had a low level of education and no work skills. Today, all of them are involved in social enterprises.

Barka helps develop the potential of the socially excluded individuals and also enables those who have successfully overcome their social problems to support others in need, following the philosophy of mutual help. Barka started its activities with the creation of a network of self-sufficient communities based on organic farming. Until today, Barka Foundation has helped to establish and sustain 40 new farms, the goal for each being to become a fully self-sufficient cooperative.

Financial support from the ESF Initiative EQUAL was instrumental for Barka in scaling up its operations, which today mobilize more than 5000 people.

From 2000 until 2004, Barka was involved in the creation of a legal framework for social economy in Poland (Act on Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons; Act on Activities of Public Benefit and Volunteerism; Law on Education and Social Employment; Law on Social Cooperatives; Law on Accessible Housing; Project of Law on Social Enterprise). With the support of this legal framework, over 200 Centers of Social Integration and 400 social cooperatives have been established in Poland.

Facts and Figures

Key results of Barka activities include:

- over 200 Social Integration Centres, helping disadvantaged people to create their own employment by becoming self-employed or by setting up a social co-enterprise;
- about 100 public-private partnerships established in local communities across Poland bringing together local partners for combating poverty;
- new cooperation structures & pacts between social enterprises, social integration centers and local authorities for committing stakeholders and for utilizing resources of local authorities to create

job opportunities.

Contact: Barka Foundation Poland - sadowsky@barka.org.pl

The Intermediate Labour Market Employment Programme (Wales Council for Voluntary Action), Wales, United Kingdom

Description of the initiative

The Intermediate Labour Market Employment Programme in Wales is a concept developed since 2000 in partnership between social economy and government. It aims to tackle unemployment through 'transition' employment. Key element are paid work placements of a duration of three months, during which beneficiaries receive different kind of support and monitoring. The added value of cooperation with the third sector is fully exploited, as results go beyond reintegration into the labour market, job creation and qualification of individuals.

The partnership is composed of local authorities, the Welsh European Funding Office, the Welsh Government, UK Government, Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), the third sector, local authorities, the Welsh European Funding Office and others, with an ever growing number of partners.

Beneficiaries of the programme are people facing the greatest challenges to getting back into work, including people that are long-term dependent on government benefits, people with a disability, ex-offenders, people with drug and alcohol problems, young people not in employment, education or training (NEET), lone parents or people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Jobs have been created in a number of fields. These include more conventional domains, employment in modern sectors (graphic design, software development, social media, PR and marketing), but also domains such as sports, arts and crafts, horticulture or youth work.

This diversity enables the partners of the initiative to meet the differing interest, talents and abilities of the people that are supported.

Facts and Figures

- Over 5000 job opportunities were created.
- Over 50% of people sustained employment beyond the transition

period, others went into self-employment, further education or volunteering.

- A 49% of people in sustained employment had previously been out of work for over 6 months, a further 28% of people had been out of work for over a year, and 83% of people said they were in the type of job they wanted.
- The Programme changed the lives of over 5.000 people in Wales.
- The concept was mainstreamed into the major Welsh Government policy for tackling unemployment.

Contact: Wales Council for Voluntary Action - help@wcva.org.uk

Partnerships at inter-regional/ European level

ICS Med - MEDCOOP: Building a Mediterranean Cooperative System, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, France

Description of the initiative

In 2010, the Marche region (IT) and the confederation of cooperatives LEGACOOOP (IT) saw in the EU programme MED for the development of the Mediterranean area an important opportunity to implement actions contributing:

- a) to the promotion of innovative solutions regarding main problems and weaknesses affecting cooperatives;
- b) to the creation of a solid transnational network of public and private stakeholders which would coordinate the development of cooperatives from an innovation point of view.

Together with local authorities, foundations, cooperatives and universities from Portugal, Spain, Greece and France they launched the project “ICS Med - Building a Mediterranean Cooperative System”, which, more specifically, aimed:

- to promote the strategic position of the cooperative system in the Mediterranean area in the global economy, reinforce its innovation capacity, its competitiveness and opportunities for the creation of clusters;
- to define competitive strategies for innovation and related opportunities for cooperatives in the Mediterranean area;
- to encourage the transfer of knowledge within the cooperative system Med.

The project also included a comparative analysis of local public policies to support cooperatives and the identification of innovative practices such as PTEC and SCIC in France.

In 2013, the project led to the establishment of the European association Medcoop. The objectives of the association are manifold. Among them figure the internationalisation of the cooperatives’ business, the promotion of innovation (in terms of technology, organisation, products and processes), stimulation of a horizontal and vertical integration of the value chain, the identification of new market niches and opportunities and development of methods to seize the latter, as well as the development of technical skills, professional and human resources.

Instruments of the association include an online observatory, a community

of knowledge and a business community.

To date, the association already counts a number of members from different countries, among them cooperatives, but also local authorities and universities. It is a multi-stakeholder platform and therewith also open to traditional small and medium enterprises, NGOs and other players.

Contact: Marche Region marina.maurizi@regione.marche.it

Annex: Table summarizing presented experiences

Country	Title	Key words	Type of partnership
Partnerships at a micro level / at local level			
FR	“Les amis du Zeybu”	Solidarity purchasing/ Alternative currency	SE-PA-C
DE	TAPiG	Integration of migrants	SE-PA-PE-CS-U- Others
FI	Community theatre “Halfway to somewhere”	Theatre/Integration of long-term unemployed	SE-CU-PA
FR	SCIC Gâtinais Bois Energie	Wood energy	SE-PA-PE-C
FR	Odyssée de l’Espoir	Culture/Artistic creation (integration of disadvantaged persons)	SE-PA-CU-C
IE	Barka Ireland	Integration of homeless migrants	SE-PA-CS
IE	Private Leasing and Retrofit of Private Houses	Social housing/Energy	SE-PA
IT	CASA COLVERA	Active inclusion and community care for the elderly	SE-PA
IT	Promotori di solidarietà	Co-programming of social services	SE-PA
IT	Fondazione di Comunità di Messina	Integrated development of local communities	SE-PA-PE-CS-C-CU- U-B-Others
PL	Association Zielona Linia	Integrated development of local communities/ Civic education	SE-PA-C
PL	Programme of cooperation between the city of Torún and social economy	Promotion of the social economy/ Vocational training and social integration of disadvantaged	SE-PA
PL	Social Cooperative OPOKA	Training/employment for unemployed/ disadvantaged persons	SE-PA
PL	Social Cooperative Poznanianka	Employment and housing of indebted and other disadvantaged persons	SE-PA

Country	Title	Key words	Type of partnership
PL	Local partnerships for the social market economy	Employment of disadvantaged persons/Social housing/History and culture	SE-PA-PE
PL	Local Partnership in Lwowek Wielkopolski	Activation of citizens/Strengthening of the local community/Integrated development of local communities/Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-PE-CS-C-U
PL	Lubaczow-our place to live	Employment/Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-CS
PL	Spółdzielnia Cooperative	Professional and social activation of persons at risk of exclusion	SE-PA-Others
PL	Social Economy Support Centres	Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA
PL	Social Economy Partnership Czarnkow	Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-PE-CS-B
UK	Barka Foundation UK	Integration of homeless migrants	SE-PA-CS
Partnerships at regional level			
FR	REALIS-Active Network for Social Innovation in Languedoc-Roussillon	Promotion and development of the social economy/Social Innovation	PA-SE
IT	Consortium ESPRIT	Employment and social integration of disadvantaged persons/Promotion and development of the social economy/Cooperation in the framework of the Structural Funds	SE-PA-B-TU
PL	Social Enterprise Incubator of Silesia	Promotion and Development of the Social Economy	SE-PA-CS

Country	Title	Key words	Type of partnership
UK	PLUSS - Future Clean	Employment of persons with disabilities	SE-PA-PE
BE	Human Resources Unlimited	Cooperation between social economy and other private enterprises/ Sustainable management of human resources	SE-PA-PE
FR	L'Atelier-Centre de Ressources régional de l'économie sociale et solidaire	Promotion and development of the social and solidarity economy	SE-PA-B
FR	Plateforme de Finance et d'Épargne Solidaire	Solidarity-based Finance and Savings	SE-PA-B-CS
IT	Conferenza Permanente delle Autonomie Sociali (COPAS)	Co-Programming of social policies	SE-PA-CS
IT	Global Grant - Small Subsidies	Employment for disadvantaged groups/Promotion and Development of the Social Economy/ Cooperation in the framework of the Structural Funds	SE-PA
IT	S.I.I.L. - Integrated Support for Job Inclusion	Employment of persons with (mental) disabilities and other disadvantaged groups	SE-PA
IT	Foundation "Dopo di Noi"	Assistance to persons with disabilities and their families	SE-PA- PE-CS
MA	Centre de développement de la région de Tensift-Marrakech (CDRT)	Integrated development of local communities/ Culture and Education	SE-PA-PE-CS-U
PL	Małopolska Pact for the Social Economy	Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA

Country	Title	Key words	Type of partnership
PL	Małopolska Social Economy Support System	Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-CS
SE	Coompanion Gothenburg	Promotion and development of the social economy/New financial instruments for the social economy	SE-PA
SE	East Sweden Cooperation	Employment/Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-CS-PE

Partnerships at national level

AT	SoPro-Social Production for Sustainability	Sustainable production and service delivery/ Social Innovation	SE-PA-PE
BE	Structural Partnership between Social Economy and the Federal State	Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA
PL	Barka Foundation	Integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market and society/Promotion and development of the social economy	SE-PA-CS
UK	The Intermediate Labour Market Employment Programme	Employment of disadvantaged persons	SE-PA-CS

Partnerships at inter-regional/European level

IT/ES/PT/GR/FR	ICS Med-MEDCOOP: Building a Mediterranean Cooperative System	Promotion and development of the social economy in the Mediterranean area	SE-PA-U-CS
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 = REVES award winner

B=Banks

C=Citizens

CS=Civil Society

CU=Cultural organisations/Artists

PA=Public authority

PE=Private Enterprise (not belonging to the social economy)

SE=Social and

Solidarity Economy

TU=Trade Union

U=University and other educational establishments

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