



COMMUNITY WORKS!
Initiatives for a Social and Solidarity Economy

Research Report



Erasmus+



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Introduction


This report is part of “Community Works! Initiatives for a Social and Solidarity Economy” project, funded by the EU by means of Erasmus+ Programme. It is focused on Social and Solidarity Economy (from this point forward SSE) and it is targeted to young people and SSE professionals and trainers.

The project seeks to give priority to meeting human needs, the commitment with natural and social environment, fostering democracy, participation and solidarity. It sets out to promote these values especially among young people.

In order to reach the aims, especially in the field of training, we explore the following areas: identifying criteria, strategies and tools which can promote, recognize and foster SSE. This survey is part of the first step, which will allow an assessment of the situation in 5 different contexts (Greece, United Kingdom, France, Italy and Spain).

In the last decades SSE, hard to mark off due to the heterogeneity of the experiences, contexts and labels in which it occurs, has earned a central spot in the social and academic field. As a starting point, SSE is seen as a combination of socio-economical practices aiming at an ethical, responsible way of behaving and based on horizontal relationship among their members. In its practices, social participation and cooperation among people are encouraged. In most EU countries it is being considered as an alternative response to financial crisis, increasing unemployment and social inequality, and in some contexts is set up as a collective organization at a citizen level aiming to promote social transformation processes as well. Lately this kind of experience has drawn the attention of young people above all.

This survey was intended to assess the current SSE situation in the 5 contexts mentioned above. By means of the research it has been possible to identify the main features of SSE in each context, pointing out its impact at a local development level, in relation to employment



and education. It has been possible to analyze subjective dynamics supporting SSE projects, too, recognizing values, skills, knowledge and attitudes developed by people involved in SSE. This exploration was especially orientated to young people, and training needs. Lastly, the survey aims to contribute to SSE development in the areas where it is carried out.

The survey is based on a qualitative methodology, a strategy allowing the understanding of the peculiarities of the phenomenon to be examined, starting from experiences, evaluations and meanings that individuals assign to their practices. The research is made up of two stages of data collecting, which allowed for reaching the outlined goals. A first, bibliographical review to identify the main features of SSE in each context (at internal and external level). A second phase, outlined starting from the orientations emerged in the first stage, by implementing focus groups.

The bibliographical review phase has been carried out starting from an exploratory work, during which the main surveys about SSE in each context have been identified, taking the last 10 years as a reference. In case of non-availability or scarce surveys on the topic, a research about emblematic experiences connected to SSE has been carried out. These data made it possible to set a list of the main features of SSE in each country. The data collected in this phase allowed for identifying the possible experiences that would take part in the focus group in each territory.

The focus group tool is connected to a survey strategy, which allows understanding why and how people think and feel the way they do. What is sought is not an agreement, but sharing what the experiences have in common or in what they differ. On average each context picked up 7-10 participants belonging to different SSE sectors. This phase allowed for verifying some observations emerged on the basis of the first phase, as well as for deepening and directing the debate especially towards the training needs in SSE.

This report collects all the created and analyzed material, organized in three parts. A first chapter that, starting from the definition set by the 5 involved entities together, identifies the shared aspects and the main debates connected to the patterns in which SSE is expressed. A second chapter goes deeper in the main features of SSE in each context. The third chapter analyses the competences required for the development of an SSE experience, pointed out by participants, specifying especially the ones related to youth. Lastly, some final considerations will be carried out that steer the next stages of the survey.

I. Notions of SSE in the different contexts

Seeking a shared definition of what SSE is has been a complex, not easy to mark out task. Being an in-progress concept, it faces the double challenge of finding common frameworks for identification, allowing for a common front, but without imposing limits preventing the approach and articulation of on-going experiences. In connection with the used designation, although this distinction is not present in every context, there are different connotations in conceiving SSE. The use of the name Social Solidarity Economy particularly expresses an acknowledgement of the links established between terms and their practices, as well as the need to seek synergy and articulation points. This debate is not going to be addressed, since not all contexts deal with it, and it is considered more profitable to go deeper in the frameworks of conceiving the practices performed. In this regard and as a guide to this investigation, the intention is to articulate under the umbrella of the SSE expressions that share common ideas which have been agreed with the different territories.

This collective construction had to start from idiomatic differences and different ways in naming. In the investigated contexts, a heterogeneous way to express experiences is identified, which commits to have a different way to set socio-economic relations. The process of agreement has been an attempt to articulate a strategy allowing for strengthening links among experiences. The agreed definition, which allowed us for a shared framework, is expressed as follows:

"SSE is a social movement aimed at promoting an economy jointly organized to meet the needs of individuals in their multiple dimensions (including care and social participation), cooperation and mutual respect above individual profit.

It consists of a wide variety of socioeconomic practices based on a cooperative, democratic and transparent fair governance structure respecting the rights and interests of all. SSE

organizations act with social and environmental responsibility, so that their activities, products and services have a strong social and environmental commitment. Their practices are mainly developed at the local level with a global perspective.

SSE as a social movement promotes an economy made together with and for people and, therefore, participation of citizens and cooperation among related groups are crucial to foster this change in economic practice. It takes joint work in three key areas: the creation of viable alternative economic practices, active promotion and commitment to public institutions, and defense of the existing economic rights.”

This definition highlights as a key point collective organization according to the needs, based on democratic and transparent relationships, committed to social and environmental surroundings. Values such as cooperation and collaboration guide its actions. As one of the most important points of agreement, it refers to reassess the activities putting people and their needs, instead of profit, as the focus center.

Another important factor shared in most expressions is related to environmental responsibility of its activities. In some cases, the effort for this task meant significant contributions to social innovation. In most cases, joint networks are identified, in some cases in sector-based expressions, in other cases with a strong projection at state and international level.

Although this framework was identified in order to set a dialogue and work, discrepancies arise in each context as well. On the one hand, in relation to the type of experiences and set-ups, they differ in their degree of formality. In contexts such as the UK and France, the experiences with highest degree of formality have been identified, in which the words "enterprise" or "social entrepreneurship" become an identity mark. They are also experiences aimed at welfare of vulnerable populations, with a social assistance profile. Their organizational frameworks represent the most traditional forms, such as cooperatives, associations, mutual societies.

For example, in the UK social action is more important than profit. Generating social benefit has to be the goal of social enterprise. Business logic is guiding these experiences, with the creation of trading activities as a basic criterion. They also appear as alternatives to produce better performance, greater flexibility and innovative capacity. Both UK and France have social policies and laws that encourage and support SSE. In particular, its development is encouraged


as an alternative to the crisis for people who wish to carry out economic activities. The synergy with the State in these two contexts is very important, and in the current context it becomes a tool for social intervention. This objective is achieved through facilitation and encouragement of state funding to SSE enterprises at local level.

However, in such contexts as Spain, Italy and Greece, the degree of formality and the configuration become more heterogeneous. Although more formal experiences are present, with similar features to those previously mentioned, "bottom-up" experiences are identified as well, territory-based and more effective in solving everyday needs, in which members are the beneficiaries of their actions. The concept of economy spreads to other areas and needs, a new way of doing things collectively, consistent with the values of cooperation and mutual support. In these experiences a strong connection to the territory has to be underlined too.

This is particularly expressed in the Greek context, in which the last years of austerity have been fertile ground for the development of informal experiences. On the latter, the degree of public support level is heterogeneous. Overall, the experiences mark higher independence from institutional logic, in some cases questioning its role. Autonomy and self-organization are stronger in this kind of experiences.

In the Italian context, a mixture occurs between a more formal approach of social cooperatives and social enterprises for job seeking, a very important sector based on volunteering, and another more informal group connected to ethical consumerism groups. In the case of Spain as well, a hybrid configuration is present, in which a more traditional sector of social entrepreneurship coexists with new networking proposals that invest in stronger engagement with territory and its contexts.

In relation to the degree of political commitment and its investment to alternative economic models, for the first group, the more formal one, the connection with the economic system would be complementary. There is no commitment for substantial transformation, but for a more human economy which incorporates values of cooperation and mutual aid. In this sense, although the idea of social movement has been agreed, it deals with a more business-like profile with social commitment. For the second group, the issue reveals (but with different connotations depending on the kind of experience) more intense changes, and the creation of a "post-capitalist" option or of an "alternative economy".



In this regard, and particularly in some contexts (Greece and Spain), this debate leads to set apart traditional Social Economy (more related with formal experiences) and SSE experiences. The latter ones would be trying to overcome the criticism related to the loss of political commitment of the experiences, through a strong orientation towards social transformation.

Another difference in the issues occurs when identifying formal and informal experiences. The notion of *social entrepreneurship* is questioned because of its current offshoots in capitalist market, more influenced by self-sufficiency as a guiding principle. It aims to redeem and give another meaning to the concept, as a tool to bring together more formal experiences that exist within the SSE, recovering the collective spirit.

A big concern shared by all contexts is referred to the tension between the sustainability of projects in the framework of a capitalist market, and the preservation of values. In particular, the question focuses on how to support the delicate balance between the political and social values and the recognition of efficiency and economic impact. On the one hand, in more formal models some stability is recognized, in terms of integration into the traditional market, as well as the ability to influence public policy level. On the other hand, the capacity for innovation of new expressions of SSE, especially informal ones, as an agent for social change, is acknowledged. In this perspective it is put forward to discuss starting from articulation and networking as a tool to strengthen collectives.

2. Main SSE features in different contexts

This section includes the most important features of each context. It comes from the contribution of the research teams in each territory, starting from a bibliographic collection which points out the main elements of the SSE in context. Each section will begin with a brief summary of the central elements of the SSE in the context. The variables identified for all of them are: i) Forms of organization and sectors that make up the SSE; ii) Economic impact indicators; iii) Innovative practices driven by SSE; iv) Young people (18-30 years) that are involved in the companies of SSE; v) Gender perspective; vi) Relationship with the community and social movements; vii) Environmental sustainability in the ESS; viii) Training and SSE; ix) Participation and integration in networks of SSE; x) Relationship with the State and public policies. Only in rare occasions we were not able to provide data on some of these variables.

2.1. Social and Solidarity Economy in the United Kingdom

Victor Allen, Charles Lockyer, Jenna Lockyer & Lorraine Lockyer

Main features and historical background

Social Enterprise within the UK has a long history and can, in part, trace its origins back to Rochdale in the 1840s, where a group of workers in response to the exploitation and unfair conditions within local factories, established a cooperative scheme to provide quality food to the local community. The group later became the Cooperative society, which is still working and thriving today (SEUK, 2015; International Cooperative Alliance).

Another precedent is the case of the Cadbury brothers, who in the late 1800 were not only successful businessmen but leading social entrepreneurs of their day, putting the profits from business into improving the lives and living conditions of their workers and the local community. The Bournville Village Trust, founded by George Cadbury, in 1899, was the beginning of self-governing social housing. It led to greater community involvement and created a planned and balanced community providing shops, places of worship, open spaces, sports facilities, community buildings and schools along with affordable housing for the work force. Today this experience is still going strong, strengthening both community groups and social enterprises. (Bournville Village Trust & Jenkins, 2011).

Since the 1990s, there has been a resurgence of social enterprises, from national companies to local community enterprises and charities working to bring about social and environmental change through business (SEUK, 2015). Social Enterprise has become an established way of doing business in the UK, with business's able to gain accreditation through The Social Enterprise Mark (it requires at least 50% of income coming from trading and at least 50% of profits being spent on fulfilling social or environmental aims) (Social Enterprise, 2015; Jenkins, 2011).

Social enterprises have become well supported through national and regional networks. Social Enterprise UK is considered the national reference body representing the growing social enterprise businesses. They provide information and support; organize social enterprise awards for innovation and conducts regular research. Every two years a national survey is carried out as part of ongoing research into the social economy, feeding and influencing the government local policy (SEUK, 2015).

Social Enterprise has been driven by socially minded people, but also has been an increase of the importance of sustainability and social responsibility. Both local and national government has become keen to support, encourage and reduce the bureaucratic load for those wanting to promote and develop a social enterprise business. This is evident in The Public Services Social Value Act 2012, which introduced social value into government procurement and commissioning procedures. The survey mentioned above has identified that 49% of social enterprises trade with the public sector and the larger social enterprises are more likely to have the public sector as their main source of income. The majority of income however, is still trade with the general public (The People's Business, 2013).

Sectors that comprise SSE experiences

Social Enterprise in the UK is involved across all sectors of the economy both formal and informal. A survey carried out in 2013 shows the principle trading activities of social enterprises. The data would suggest a concentration within the service sector, business support, education and employment skills accounting jointly for over 50% of all businesses.

It is also indicated that amongst social enterprises less than 3 years old, there is a higher number starting up in Health care, social care and education. The report suggests this is due to a changing government agenda and the increase in social challenges due to the recession (termed 'the crisis' outside of the UK). This situation has been stimulated by the introduction of The Public Services Social Value Act in 2012, which introduced social value into government procurement and commissioning procedures at a local and national level (White, 2014). Social action is the dominant factor in Social Enterprise in the UK rather than the search for alternatives or major economic changes.

Regarding the type of organization, social enterprises consist of a variety of forms from traditional companies which include social aims and democratic principles as well as companies limited by guarantee and charities with a trading arm. There is also a community interest company, CIC, which has been created especially for social enterprises. It is a regulated company whose assets cannot be sold privately for personal profit (CIC regulator; SEUK & British Council).

Companies limited by guarantee account for 51% of all social enterprises, while community interest companies account for 17% (The People's Business, 2013).

The organizations with the longest tradition in the country are cooperatives, which date back to the 1840s. Cooperatives refer to themselves as cooperatives rather than social enterprises. They do however epitomize the social enterprise culture within this country. Cooperative values are: self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity (International Cooperative Alliance). Cooperatives in the UK go from football to fashion, health care to housing, community owned shops to credit unions, and wind farms to web design; cooperatives work in all parts of the economy as well as the more well-known supermarkets and funeral services.

Economic impact indicators

Government estimates suggest there are 70,000 social enterprises in the UK employing around a million people and contributing £24 billion to the economy. In terms of turnover, 11% turnover less than £10,000 a year and 8% turnover in excess of £5 million.

The survey also indicates the main source of income for social enterprises is the general public, despite the apparent dominance of the public sector within social enterprises (52% of all social enterprises trade in part with the public sector) it is not the main source of income (The People's Business, 2013).

In addition to social enterprises, the cooperative economy, with memberships of 13,5 million people, makes a contribution to the economy of £35,6 billion. There are over 6.000 independent cooperatives in the UK.

Innovative practices

Elliot (2013) suggest 4 ways in which social enterprises have been innovative: (i) product/service innovation, changes to what an organization offers; (ii) process innovation, changes to the ways products and services are created or delivered; (iii) positioning innovation, changes to the context in which the services are framed and communicated; (iv) paradigm innovation, changes to the underlying mental models which shape organizations' activities.

Social enterprises have also been the prominent innovators within the environmental sector. In waste management and reduction. Community energy suppliers and reduction in food miles are other innovative ideas. Tourism is another area of innovation, with local community enterprises seen as better at protecting local resources and retaining income from tourism in the local community (TSRC: 2013).

Young people's participation (18-30)

The RBS enterprise tracker survey, in association with UNLTD, suggests there is a growing trend among young people towards social enterprise as a good way to start a business. "Young people are more likely than the general population to want to start up a social enterprise (27% compared to 20%), and more likely to consider supporting social causes (70% compared to 63% of the general population)" (UNLTD).

There are a number of large organizations actively promoting entrepreneurship among young people, including Young Enterprise (particularly active within schools) and The *Prince's Trust* (providing training and grants for young people 18-30). Although many of these organizations provide training and support, they are not all exclusively promoting social enterprise.

Social Enterprise UK suggest more needs to be done to support young people to develop their social enterprise business ideas. Research would suggest that despite a desire to start a social enterprise, many are deterred by the apparent problems, including finance. The public sector is an active growth area for social enterprises and there are a significant number of social enterprises working with children and young people, providing alternative education services, training and employment services.

Gender perspective

Gender bias in leadership remains in social enterprises, with 61% of male leaders compared to 39% of female leaders (The People's Business, 2013). However, compared with other business models, female leaders within social enterprises are 20% higher. In the Third Sector it is the same, as 41% of social enterprise board members are women, compared with 12.5% of directorships in UK FTSE100 companies (Lyon & Humbert, 2013).

However, women are still under-represented compared to the proportion of the population, and compared to the overall proportion of women employed in social enterprises. Some studies suggest the current economic situation has been less favorable to women in the more deprived areas, leaving social enterprise as the only option for employment. Also noted is the fact that women's representation is higher within new social enterprises compared to those that are larger and more established. Suggesting the same androcentric bias is at work as within non-social enterprises (Teasdale et al, 2011).

Relationship with community and social movements

Community enterprises are often considered a subset of social enterprise. Communities have set up their own shops, post offices, farms, counseling services, pubs, sports and leisure facilities and a range of caring services. Also hubs for local community and social enterprises (Locality, 2015).

These community-led social enterprises are well supported through networks and by local authorities. Wrexham County Council, for instance, operates 'The Social Economy Project', in partnership with Liverpool Plus. A range of support is available including a step-by-step guide to starting and running a community-led social enterprises as well as active research to identify gaps within local services with which it actively encourages social enterprises to fill (Wrexham County Council, 2015).

There have been, for a long time, housing associations who have always had social aims built into their business practices. These are counted as social enterprises in that the profit they make from the services they provide are put back into the communities in which they operate, with improved housing and support services to residents and communities (SEUK, 2014).

Environmental sustainability

Environmental policies exist within UK social businesses and organizations, with a variety of engagement with the green agenda. Environmental credentials have become an essential badge. There are, however, a range of business that are sometimes referred to as environmental social enterprises or ESEs.

Vickers and Lyon (2013) classified these experiences in three groups: i) Small and beautiful; ii) Green knowledge economy; iii) Green collar army. The first group, related to local markets, with an activist and volunteer base, and focused on sustainable consumption. The second group, based on knowledge production and consultancy with a focus on social/environmental sustainability, and with the participation of specialized personnel, linked to academic activities. And the third group, related to the services sector (waste/resource recovery) and to work integration services, very dependent on public funding.

Training or educational practices

Concerning training in SSE, there are toolkits aimed at those wishing to start a social enterprise. These are frequently identified in social enterprise networks and support services¹.

There are also a range of organizations offering training courses although these are primarily in the practical aspects of setting up a social enterprise. The School for Social Enterprise², an organization that has been running for 15 years, stands out. The school commissioned a report³ looking at training within the UK. The report highlights the positive assessment of the training, but mentions the lack of resources and funding. The biggest difficulty factor relates to the lack of time to dedicate to a training process. That is why, currently 1 or 2 day workshops are the norm. However, courses that ran over longer periods were found to have a greater social impact and 77% of respondents expressed interest in such courses.

1 Some examples: <https://unltd.org.uk/socialentrepreneurshiptoolkit/>;
<http://disecic.org/social-enterprise-resources/social-enterprise-toolkits/>;
<http://www.socialenterprisewm.org.uk/social-value/social-value-toolkits/Many>;
<https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-social-enterprisehttp>;
www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/business/social_economy/se_toolkit.htm;
<http://www.croydonenterprise.org.uk/se-toolkit/>

2 <http://www.the-sse.org/our-courses>

3 <http://www.the-sse.org/evaluations>

There are various organizations⁴ geared to starting social businesses and marketing, but whose trainings are particularly aimed at public services. Inspireengage⁵ is one such organization that is providing training into schools, colleges and universities for teachers in how they can embed social enterprise into the curriculum. They also create opportunities for pupils and students to run their own businesses. Another organization active in schools and colleges is SEQ⁶ (Social Enterprise Qualification) which provides a framework for practical based qualifications (learning by doing). There are also local social enterprises using their skills and knowledge to train others, such as St Hildas in London⁷.

Universities are also actively incorporating social enterprise skills into their courses and some, like the University of Cambridge, offer a Masters degree in social enterprise and community development (University of Cambridge, 2008). These organizations represent only a small percentage of the training courses available. Coventry University is an example of how some universities are embracing the Social Enterprise Economy. They have established a community interest company whose purpose is to “champion the social enterprise capacity of all students, staff and alumni at Coventry University”. It supports 18 social enterprises set up by staff, students and alumni, which range from fashion to child protection (Coventry University, 2015). There are universities across the country, which are actively encouraging and supporting students to develop social enterprise skills. The University of Nottingham has developed a support programme ‘Inspire 2 Enterprise’, offering advice, training, coaching, consultancy and mentoring. The university actively encourages and supports within its curriculum placements within social enterprises which are linked to its courses (Universities UK, 2012).

Participation in networks

Social Enterprise UK, mentioned previously, is the National body for Social Enterprise in the UK. There are also other networks at a regional level⁸. Moreover, there are other networks catering for specific sections like: i) Locality⁹, specifically for community enterprises; ii) Co-

4 http://www.i-se.co.uk/training_events/; <http://www.socialenterprisesolutions.co.uk/training-courses/>
5 <http://inspireengage.com/social-enterprise-revolution>
6 <http://seq.realideas.org/doing-seq/bronze-se>
7 <http://sthildas.org.uk/free-training-social-enterprise-skills>
8 www.socialenterprisewm.org.uk/;
<http://www.nlse.org.uk/> <http://www.senw.org.uk/about-senw/>;
<http://selnet-uk.com/there>
9 <http://locality.org.uk/>

operatives UK¹⁰, which is the national trade body for cooperative enterprises. There are also local hubs connecting businesses and local networks offering supporting, and there are also individual companies creating networks.

Legal framework and relationship with public policies

The government is keen to promote social enterprise and gives advice and support to businesses both at a local and national level. More and more local councils recognize the value of communities helping themselves. They also recognize the work done by support organizations, that are providing goods and services that are filling the gaps left by local government cut backs. The Public Services Social Value Act 2012 was a response to the growing voice within local communities to place social value above financial. Social enterprises have been active within raising this agenda at all levels of government (SEUK: 2015).

The Social Economy Alliance is campaigning for a UK economy that is better for society. Political power begins to assess the benefits of supporting entrepreneurship in the social economy. Dan Gregory, director of the organization, says that “what the parties are realizing is that the social economy not only provides some of the answers to the challenges the country faces but that these ideas also have widespread appeal” (Social Economy Alliance).

There is certain stagnation in *long-established social enterprises*. They have become bogged down in the ownership of assets and resources and are struggling to grasp the intrinsic value in redistribution and collaborative lifestyles from which a socially driven economy thrives upon. However new social enterprises are growing and showing the way.

2.2. Social and Solidarity Economy in Greece


Stamatis Vlachos

Main features and historical background

Since 2009 there has been a boom in informal citizen networks and grassroots movements shaping an “alternative” or “parallel” economy in Greece. Despite the poor tradition of Greece in the field, a rather stronger “informal” civil society has emerged. In various Greek cities, informal gatherings of citizens have turned into local social movements trying to provide solutions or a new way of thinking in order to structure a new future for Greece.

This new economy is becoming more and more popular in Greek society as it spreads rapidly across the country. It aims to modify existing thinking and provide support to people in need in order to improve life in community. They also promote a fair and equitable participation, the distribution of goods and services, and the preservation of resources and assets of their local communities.

It is generally acknowledged that one of the biggest challenges for Greece in the current crisis is the rebuilding of a strong civil society. As already mentioned, the role of the informal sector in SSE in Greece towards this goal is seen to be important although its real impact cannot yet be measured. Bottom up movements and networks can provide alternative solutions and present a way of breaking the cycle of crisis. The existence and growth of such networks in Greece could potentially contribute to the development of new economic models that work in addition to the mainstream system. This is especially the case with most of the solidarity and exchange networks which are developed on a local level and are boosting local economies through the mobilization of transactions without the use of money.



Another emerging tendency concerns the redefinition of values and the gradual transformation of lifestyles. Greeks acknowledge that the social and political system has failed and by self-organizing mechanisms they try to provide a response to their needs. The existence of a large number of networks aiming to transform the current way of thinking and the adoption of new values comes as a solution to the failure of the country's social and political system.

We can also identify the concerns about developing smaller scale economies, encompassing principles such as self-sufficiency and solidarity. Last but not least, there is a clear orientation towards collective action in the last few years that shows that people acknowledge the power of acting together.

Other factors that will probably influence the further development of such networks concern the role of the state and the local public authorities as well as the support provided by private institutions and organizations. The case of TEM (the local exchange currency of Volos) is indicative as the support from the local authorities and the local private business contributed significantly in the development and spreading of the network. Among other factors of this process that should be emphasized, there is the use of information technology which has facilitated the mobilization of the Greek civil society and the spreading of the networks across Greece.

History shows that such networks usually disappear after the end of a crisis. Whether or not they will remain and produce long-term effects by helping turn new ideas into innovative and concrete actions that will have a real impact for Greece is still to be determined. Even whether these networks will maintain the same characteristics, dynamics and values is also still to be determined.

Finally, in order to think in the long run, it is necessary to examine whether or not they will be transformed into formal structures, whereby the commercial exploitation of their services would be their first priority (and this applies particularly to those networks which are currently opposed to adopting principles of commercialization and profit). Overall, these networks could be seen as marking the beginning of a more solid and sustainable future for Greece but their real impact and evolution remains to be seen, especially after the end of the crisis.

Sectors that comprise the SSE experiences

Law 4019/2011 on "Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship and other provisions" establishes and regulates a category called "Social Cooperative Enterprise (Koin.S.Ep.)", which, in turn, is divided into 3 distinct sub-categories: a) Social Cooperative Enterprises for Integration (enterprises active in the integration of vulnerable groups into economic and social life); b) Social Cooperative Enterprises for Care (enterprises aim at the production and provision of social and welfare products and services to specific population groups); and c) Social Cooperative Enterprises for Collective and Production Purposes (it refers to the production of products and provisions of services for the fulfillment of collective needs).

Within the formal field of SSE in Greece, a diverse range of activities is identified. After a top-down process social cooperatives take shape as a legal form. These organizations adopt this legal form and operate mainly in tourism, environment, agriculture, among other services, while fields of activity are catering, cleaning, recycling, marketing of local products and small gifts, services for people with disabilities, agricultural production (e.g. beekeeping), etc.

Since the 1990s, there have been several thematic collectives on issues such as: claiming urban space, or gender, environment, neighborhoods associations, youth centers and the first open squats that later turned into social centers. Especially after the students' uprising in December 2008 and big congregations and protestations in squares in 2011, there has begun to develop a network of collectives focusing on local assemblies in neighborhoods. At the same time, various networks of collectives that have no permanent members have been developing.

Most of the activities are *freely and voluntarily* conducted. Within the informal field some experiences stand out: i) Exchange and virtual currencies networks; ii) Cost cutting networks, without intermediaries; iii) Social kitchens (aimed at vulnerable population); iv) Social clinics and pharmacies (set up by doctors, nurses and pharmacists who provide their services voluntarily and for free) ; v) Social education networks; vi) Social /Cultural activism; vii) Self-management & self-control networks; viii) Networks for change (they include ordinary citizens, scientists, academics, entrepreneurs, students, artists and generally innovative and creative minds that aspire to build a new Greece).

Regarding the type of organization, most of the SSE networks share some common features among them: i) the participation of people in the networks on a voluntary and democratic basis; ii) the promotion of fair and equitable distribution of resources. iii) the development of

relationships based on solidarity; iv) a focus on a smaller scale economy; v) a different value system, which promotes concepts such as self-sufficiency, mixed with modern ideas like sustainability and ethical consumption; and vi) independence from the public authorities.

Of course, the founding declarations and basic positions that have been expressed by those collectives have strongly different profiles and multiplicity in the way they manage their issues. Nevertheless, they have commonalities that can be summarized in the texts of their self-presentation. In the following paragraphs different paradigms of SSE economy are explored and summarized in terms of their organization and composition.

Some forms of organization that have adopted the experiences mentioned above are:

i) Neighbourhood assemblies are open organizations, which are based on the principles of direct democracy, resistance, social justice and equality; they do not accept parties and factions. They are hostile to racism and fascism and are particularly involved with local issues.

ii) Open squats seek another way of life that can change participants' everyday life. Only a few function as open communities. Each one has its own particular characteristics that point to different theoretical backgrounds. In contrast, social centers are open to society, and decisions are made through open assemblies and are inspired by leftist or libertarian traditions.

iii) Collectives, the origins of these groups that operate as cooperatives seem to be very different; nevertheless, all refer to a common principle for the creation of cooperatives: Owen's utopia. There are those groups that work with money as an exchange means (always without profit for the members of the cooperative), those groups that do not use money in their exchanges (free bazaars), those that rely on the perception of "sharing" (solidarity shared kitchens, clinics and schools collectivities), and those groups that are based on other exchange means (time banks). The latter also have differences among them: there are those that have accepted euro as a unit of measurement of an equivalent exchange value and those that do not accept it and set prices based on working time or value in kind given by each manufacturer for the product.

iv) Labour collectives are based on the common need to solve the "labour" problem. Most are groups that are trying another way of labour - a collective one, established on a relation of respect and solidarity. Their birth comes from collective struggles within a sector of labour

(e.g. Food, typography, publishing, etc.). Finally, there are labour collectives born of the unemployed who had simultaneously the need to intervene politically in the workplace and convey the ideas of self-organization.

v) Community clinics: there has been a big *development of multifaceted activities* in health issues that starts from the creation of community clinics to entire clinics targeting at the uninsured and other inhabitants of many cities. These clinics offer free primary healthcare to those socially excluded, Greeks and immigrants, pushing the state to ensure for free care, hospitalization and rehabilitation, wherever it is necessary.

Economic impact indicators

Regarding the formal SSE sector in Greece, there has been no record to date of the number of enterprises, there is no official information about the activities and effectiveness of the actions developed and there are no official statistics. Given this lack of official data, our review was based on related literature and previous surveys that were conducted in the country. According to the statistics available, compared to other European countries, the contribution of Social Economy remains at significantly low level. More specifically, Greece has the lowest percentage among the E.U. member-states. Employment in the field of Social Economy represents only 1.8% of total employment and 2.9% of salaried employment. Greece has approximately 8.400 cooperatives with approx. 950.000 members, 1.500-2.000 volunteers, with only 200-300 of them having active participation, out of which 115-200 of them are activated in the field of environment and ecology.

There is no data about informal experiences, but two emblematic experiences are mentioned, to make visible its impact on Greek society. The first example is The Potato Movement, which was launched in 2012 and spread very rapidly across Greece. It is a grassroots socio-agriculture movement which consists of Greek farmers selling potatoes directly to the public. With the help of local volunteers ranging from ordinary citizens to local mayors — and the internet — the farmers began to organize direct consumer markets in various cities around Greece. The movement also expanded to other agricultural products, such as rice, flour, onions etc. and also launched its own brand and label (“without intermediaries”). The Potato Movement became so popular because it had a significant impact for both the consumers and producers. On the one hand, the consumers benefited from the low prices of the goods which they were

buying directly from the farmers. On the other hand, the stores cut prices not only on potatoes but also on other goods in response to the cheaper prices that were offered directly by producers. The Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) reported a 24,6 per cent drop in potato prices from March 2011 to 2012. There was a positive impact for the farmers too. By selling their products directly to consumers the farmers could be paid in cash straight away, instead of receiving cheques six months later, as is the case when selling their products to traders and intermediaries. Moreover, the rapid and wide scale adoption of the movement surprised the government and the other political parties that promised to support its development. Although it started as a small movement, it quickly grew to a nationwide self-organized initiative which has had an empowering effect on Greeks, not only as consumers, but also as citizens and voters.

The other example is the Local Alternative Unit (TEM) which was launched in 2010 in the city of Volos, on the East Central coast of Greece. It is a digital exchange unit which is used for transactions that take place within the framework of the local Exchange and Solidarity Network which covers the entire prefecture of Magnesia. The network grew very quickly and now includes more than 1.200 members, among them teachers, doctors, babysitters, farmers, hairdressers, etc. who interact with each other online. All transactions are recorded in a special electronic system, so that any network member is able to offer or search for products and services in any given time. The concept is simple. The members sign up online and get access to the specific database where they can offer or search for services or products. The exchanges are conducted with the use of TEMs which are transferred into and out of each other's' accounts online.

For individuals with no access to internet but also for those who are afraid of the internet, the network regularly organizes open markets and provides assistance to citizens in registering themselves as members and exchanging goods with the use of TEM. These spaces also provide an opportunity for people to gather, exchange views and opinions and familiarize themselves with this alternative means of exchange. The network's organizers have established a close collaboration with the local municipal services so that they can have access to trading points hosted in the city. It is very important that the municipality of Volos actively supports TEM through awareness raising and promotion activities. The network also provides its members with printed vouchers of the TEM which can be used like cheques. Several shops and local business participate in the network by accepting these vouchers in exchange for a discount on the price in Euro, or they support them by offering facilities or equipment to the network.

In terms of impact, TEM has enormous benefits for the local community. It represents a radical solution as its members can purchase products and services without using traditional currencies. It should be emphasized that the network does not aim to substitute the official state currency, but rather to provide a supplement for people who cannot meet their own needs. Therefore, TEM is an alternative way of supplementing lost income or of satisfying the everyday needs for living. In addition, for most of its members, such a barter system fosters a new sense of community.

Innovative practices

Regarding the formal sector, the main innovative elements, characterizing the KoiSPE co-operatives, are that they ensure the compatibility between economic and social objectives (they empower mentally ill people, providing them with economic activities and social integration and facilitating their participation in the decision-making process). They also enhance the mobilization of the local actors and the local community, exploit the potentiality of social capital development at local level and contribute to the local economy through the production and delivery of the local products.

Another interesting sector is Agro-tourism, an innovative operation in Greece which gives the local community the opportunity to develop, maintain its folklore, bring back to life long-forgotten skills and crafts and produce traditional products (woven items, embroidery, preserves, jams, pasta, aromatic herbs, etc.). It also helps in the revival of local customs and the organization of traditional events. In general, the agro-tourism cooperatives contribute to the local economic and social development. In achieving the aims of agro-tourism, the contribution of women's cooperatives is of primary importance.

Regarding now the informal sector of SSE, there are numerous innovative practices to be found that are classified according to the categorization made above. The following are examples that illustrate the contributions made:

i) Exchange and virtual currencies networks: exchanges networks that try to overcome the limitations imposed by the authority measures through the creation of local currency or time

banks. *Time-exchange*¹¹, *Ovolos*¹², *TEM*¹³, *Free-economy*¹⁴, *Xariseto*¹⁵, *Dose-pare*¹⁶, are some examples of these networks. There are also exchange spaces such as the bazaar Skoros, a meeting point for exchange of knowledge and practices. These networks promote solidarity and cooperation, strengthening anti-consumerist values. There is also the case of *Fosouli*¹⁷, a network of unemployed youth, who exchange products and services using the virtual currency Fasoulas.

ii) Another example of innovation are the trading networks without intermediaries. Apart from the Potato Movement previously mentioned, there are collective buying networks, working in the direct relationship between consumers and producers. Some examples are: *Inipirouni*¹⁸, *Omotrapezoi*¹⁹, *Argonautas*²⁰, *Anosi-voluntarios*²¹.

iii) Social kitchens. Starting from the idea of a collective kitchen, these experiences create spaces of community and mutual support. Some experiences that have been identified are: *El Chef*²², *The Other Human*²³; *Xanadu*²⁴ *Helping.gr*²⁵

iv) Social Clinics: Networks of self-organized health professionals that provide free care to economically disadvantaged people, specially oriented to primary health. They also push the government to improve health care at all levels. (*Athens Solidarity Social Clinic*²⁶; *Social Clinic of Solidarity of Thessaloniki*; *Ethiatreio*²⁷).

v) Education networks. They are very common in Greece, especially in the pre-university period, offering tutoring and extra support lessons. Networks of teachers have been organized to give this support free of charge, as the crisis has made access to these private services more

11 <http://www.time-exchange.gr/>
12 www.ovolos.gr
13 <http://www.tem-magnisia.gr/>
14 <http://network.free-economy.gr>
15 <http://www.xariseto.gr/>
16 <http://dwsepare.ning.com>
17 <http://fasouli.wordpress.com/>
18 <http://www.inipirouni.gr/>
19 <http://omotrapezoi.blogspot.gr>
20 <http://agronaftes.blogspot.gr/>
21 <http://www.anwsi.gr/>
22 <http://www.elchef.gr/>
23 <http://oallosanthropos.blogspot.gr/>
24 <http://xanadu.espivblogs.net/>
25 <http://www.helping.gr/active.aspx>
26 http://www.mkoapostoli.com/?page_id=1165
27 <http://www.ethiatreio.com/>

difficult. Networks like *Tutorpool*²⁸ have been made to allow the exchange of knowledge and materials; it is a tool to ensure equal opportunities for students.

vi) Networks of cultural activity: people linked to art and culture have been organized to offer and share their art in an accessible way through different projects. Experiences such as the School of Social Music of Athens and Tesalónica²⁹, which offers free music lessons; Social Theatre Shop³⁰, an organized group of actors that perform plays in exchange of food to share, The Caravanas3 project³¹, which produces short documentaries, picture books, stories and narratives through which alternative forms of life are displayed; Journey Without MAP4³², a network that promotes self-education in the arts; Arte5 bank³³, a collective of artists who use their work to discuss about money, exchange and the economy.

vii) Self-managed networks: self-organized groups of people with shared interests and needs, that try to promote other ways to manage their lives. Experiences such as Apo Koinou³⁴, an organized citizens' movement in relation to the decrease; Atenistas³⁵, an open community of Athenian citizens who try to take another look at the city; the Nea Guinea³⁶ initiative, with the ultimate goal of regaining control over the basic things necessary for a decent life, promoting self-sufficiency in relation to the market; Saligaros³⁷, a network of citizens aiming at investigating the possibilities and the building techniques with natural materials. Its main tool is the self-education and the teamwork; and the 136 Movement³⁸, a citizen initiative that opposes privatization of water resources in Thessaloniki.

viii) Networks for change, citizen-based networks aiming at transforming the living conditions of the Greek people. Grassroots movements that seek to approach the construction of alternative ways of life. Forward Greece³⁹ stands out, and has the goal to change the process of policy formulation in Greece; Repower Greece⁴⁰, a popular initiative staffed by volunteers and open to everyone who seeks to confront the negative perceptions of the world of Greece;

28 <http://tutorpool.gr/>

29 <http://koinwnikowdeio.blogspot.gr>

30 <http://www.ntng.gr/default.aspx?lang=en GB & page = 36 y newsid = 550>

31 <http://www.anotherworldishere.com/en/the-caravan-project/>

32 <http://taxidixwrisxarti.blogspot.gr/>

33 <http://trapezatehnis.blogspot.gr/>

34 <http://apokoinou.com>

35 <http://atenistas.org/>

36 <http://neaguinea.org/>

37 <http://saligari.espivblogs.net/>

38 <http://www.136.gr/>

39 <http://www.mprosta.gr/>

40 <http://www.repowergreece.com/>

Reload Greece⁴¹, an initiative of a group of young Greeks in London, which is aimed at promoting social innovation, community action and entrepreneurship in Greece.

Gender perspective

Today more than 90 female co-operatives exist in Greece. The literature review indicated that there are several types of cooperatives: the typical (that produce traditional products and seek funding from European programs for expansion), the creative (that emphasize the commercialization of products in the cultural field), the passive (that stand at the present situation of the cooperative without seeking changes), and the conservative (that produce traditional products and rent rooms).

The establishment of the women's agro-tourist cooperatives and the first stage of development were greatly supported by the General Secretariat for Gender Equality through subsidies and the provision of know-how and systematic training courses. The women's agro-tourist cooperatives operating today are mainly in light industrial and workshop manufacture of goods derived from the processing of agricultural products and/or of cultural heritage artifacts as well as of organic farm products.

Official data on revenues from rural tourism in Greece do not exist and are hard to obtain from the owners. According to the existing studies researched, rural tourism in Greece is a small-scale tourism developed by cooperative firms, linked to activities such as accommodation, eating, catering, outdoor activities, tours with eco-tourism and cultural interest, recreation, folk art workshops, etc. The women's enterprises are mostly small or medium size; the number of members varied, starting from 5 persons up to 25.

Findings of different research on the demographic profile of Greek rural women confirm that this type of entrepreneurial activity is, in fact, a main employment alternative source for the middle aged (the majority of the cooperatives members are between 35 and 54 years old). Married women with a low educational level seem to have found through cooperatives the way to obtain professional identification. We must bear in mind that rural tourism in Greece is a supplementary niche market and thus offers apparently low incomes to those involved.

41 <http://www.reloadgreece.com/>

Relationship with community and social movements

At the local level, SSE plays a significant role in the development of the local economy. For example, it can reduce transaction costs such that there can be mutual understanding instead of the need for formal contracts. The role of social enterprises running managed workspaces and offering training and advice to the self-employed is a good example of the three sectors working together and building local social capital for the benefit of the community. Similarly, it is noticeable how much of the work in which social enterprises is engaged is work based on trust: childcare, domiciliary care, estate security, etc. The quality of this work is enhanced also by local knowledge and a sense of belonging to the community: local people doing local work. The examples of the relation of SSE with the community are not only numerous but they are so much intertwined the one to the other that they are virtually indivisible, especially when they come from bottom-up process paradigms.

Regarding the relation with other social movements, a study of Petropoulou (2010), mentions a multifaceted influence among SSE groups in Greece. He talks about various social movements that illustrate these collectivities with special reference to movements in Latin America (especially the Zapatistas and the de-growth), the Spanish Revolution of 1936, the French and the U.S. May in 1968, the Environmental Movement, the Indian non-violence movement, the Paris Commune (1871), whereas there have also been evident the influences of the feminist movement and left critical thinking.

At a national level, references are limited to ancient Athenian democracy, the national resistance of the 1940s, the cooperative and the environmental movement, the anti-dictatorship uprising of 1973 and the student “uprising” in December 2008.

Nevertheless, most members of SSE in Greece refuse to follow as a reference any particular movement (with the exception of some political collectivities inspired by movements in Latin America and the very old Greek cooperatives). Their refusal to embrace a vision are not due to the lack of a strong vision to change society but rather their need to experience directly what is being born. They try to live from the concrete experience that they develop; they do not intend to be classified or identified with traditional movements.

Environmental sustainability

Even though there are numerous organizations involved with environmental sustainability, it is mentioned the case of agro-tourism as a field that encompasses a broad spectrum of activities both within the formal and the informal sector of the SSE. Agro-tourism has developed in the EU and in Greece as a form of tourism in rural areas and includes a cycle of activities, services and opportunities for leisure and culture. These are provided by farmers and generally by people living in regional areas, with the aim of attracting tourists to their regions, in order to improve their income. The aim of agro-tourism, as defined by the EU and Greek agricultural policy, is to contribute to a reversal of the climate of abandonment pervading the countryside, particularly due to the shrinking of agriculture, and to create favorable conditions for the development of new entrepreneurial activities. Through the mobilization of local resources (human, natural, financial), an attempt is made to set into operation a mechanism of local development through a total planning process. To this aim, a balanced tourism that respects and benefits the communities is intended, restoring the interpersonal communication between visitors and locals, and promoting environmental protection.

Training or educational practices

The training programs promoted by the EU for the development of agro-tourism are emphasized. After 1998, many European projects and initiatives helped women in Greece in their activities (NOW, EQUAL, LEADER), which showed particular growth after 2000. It is not surprising that training interventions were adopted as a response to the pressing need for supporting the viability and effectiveness of cooperatives. Those programmes constitute the main support mechanism and source of funding, subsidizing the establishment of women cooperatives, as well as training and other activities. The entrepreneurship training program was part of a broader framework of interventions. This effort was supplemented by financial incentives centered on helping rural women to undertake entrepreneurial roles and actions and to find a professional identity.

At this point, it is worth noting that in spite of labour oversupply in today's market, the Social Economy sector has been facing a significant problem finding specialized personnel to cover its needs. New professional roles such as the social manager, experienced administrators of

similar agencies, and personnel in new professional fields created by developing activities in the Social Economy. This situation highlights the need to train specialized personnel with certified qualifications. It is quite clear that education is a significant factor for the development of the Social Economy, as it is the most suitable means for understanding its particular characteristics, and disseminating its concepts and practical applications.

At a university level, there are teaching modules on social entrepreneurship offered by a number of universities, including the Panteion University, the Harokopeio University, the Agricultural University of Athens, the National University of Athens, (vocational training) the Athens University of Economics and Business and the Department of Social Administration of the Democritus University of Thrace.

In addition, ASHOKA promotes social entrepreneurship, by presenting social enterprise models that can be replicated or adapted for the Greek context.

Participation in networks

In the modern context of SSE, one of the most crucial matters confronting Social Economy agencies is networking and developing alliances both within the Social Economy sector and outside. Networking is essential both in matters of negotiation and promotion, and for marketing the products and developing joint business activities and initiatives. It should however be noted that networking has remained low in Greece, both locally and nationally.

Furthermore, it appears that a number of bodies implementing programmes to combat social exclusion in Greece are trying to find ways to develop partnerships and organizations able to implement a multi-dimensional approach required by these problems. In this context, certain types of initiatives have been established in Greece in recent years: EKKE's Social Economy Observatory was set up in 2012 and aims to become a repository of research, documentation and support for social entrepreneurship but is still in its early stages; the Impact Hub in Athens provides co-working space and support services to social enterprise start-ups. ASHOKA provides transfer of competences and experience from their world-wide network. There is also a number of consultants that claim to provide support to budding social entrepreneurs.

In many cases, different types of social enterprises have joined forces and supported by various programs (e.g. accompanying Support Services), technical support and grants (e.g.

programs for self-employment of Manpower Employment Organization - OAED, EOMMEX, entrepreneurship programs, programs in the framework of the LEADER or Integrated Programs for Rural Development). In many cases, these organizations adjust the providing services to the specific needs of the entrepreneurial initiatives with social purpose. An important step towards the design and development of support activities in the sector of the Social Economy was also the implementation of the Equal launched in 2002. The Initiative was first referred to the Social Economy as a distinct field of entrepreneurship and employment (through Measure 2.2. “Strengthening the Social Economy”).

Legal framework and relationship with public policies

According to Greek legislation, social cooperative enterprises, legally attributed with commercial capacities, are established as agencies of social entrepreneurship. Both natural and legal persons can take part in such enterprises, with the right to one vote, regardless the number of the cooperative shares they hold.

All Greek laws on cooperatives stipulate that the ministries supervise social enterprises (e.g. women's agro-tourist cooperatives, Koi.S.P.E. or Koin.S.Ep.) Law 921/1979 and the following legislative initiatives provided for the emergence of social enterprises better formulated to cope with pressing issues on maintaining cohesion, enhancing employment and providing for an acceptable quality of life for volatile social groups. Nevertheless, since the introduction of the Limited Liability Social Cooperatives some years ago, no serious attempts were made to enrich social entrepreneurship institutional capacity with innovative organizational forms.

Law 4019/2011 on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship now provides for the institutional recognition of Social Economy in Greece for the first time. By introducing new forms of social entrepreneurship, such as the Social Cooperative Enterprise, it enriches the available organizational forms for economic self-expression. Under Law 4019/2011, Greece now possesses an integrated range of cooperatives potentially capable of materializing conventional visions of the Social Economy, through detailed, operational and inclusive recognition. Nevertheless, neither Law 4019 or the Greek administrative system are able to address long standing issues regarding the structure of Social Economy in Greece. Law 4019/2011 for the first time introduced the concept of Social Economy enacting its presence. Though limited in scope and non-articulated to the existing institutional framework, agenda-

setting processes and funding modalities, the introduction of the concept of Social Cooperative Enterprises should be considered a major step towards the institutionalization of Social Economy in Greece, though still suffering from major deficiencies (Nasioulas, 2011).

Regarding the participation of local government organizations, and particularly the enterprises, their status of operation reveals that:

- a) either they are single-share enterprises, and therefore they legally represent all population groups,
- b) or they are corporations, with the participation of any natural or legal person, and therefore the aforementioned stipulations would apply.
- c) or they are developmental enterprises, which apart from representing local government and collective, social and production schemes, their goal is exclusively to promote the entrepreneurial actions at local level.

Social Economy enterprises and local government can cooperate at local level. The institutional framework enables local government to assign fixed-budget projects and services, through a flexible procedure, so as to enhance the initiatives of such enterprises, which can contribute to local and regional development.

However, no matter how peculiar this might sound, the biggest enemy to social innovation in SSE is the political system and the state administration in Greece. Regrettably, this also includes the format of the currently introduced Law 4019/2011 on Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship, which many say it was constructed in favor of various groups related to the politico-state system and the funding mechanisms tightly controlled by it.

As a result, since the late 90s, an onslaught of civil non-profits and associations were created in order to take advantage of the massive EU funding channeled through politically regulated channels, eventually de-constructing social capital and humiliating the field, its people and their causes. As a result, a totally weird image has emerged. Social innovation in SSE has rested outside official, typical and regulated fields, even though informal collectivities do not illustrate an adequate presence, yet having a rich past and a vibrant atypical influence in society.

2.3. Social and Solidarity Economy in France

Sylvain Abrial, Mireille Mourier & Sylvie D'Arras

Main features and historical background

Confronted to a never-ending economic, social and environmental crisis, the duality “market economy/state economy” is not sufficient anymore to imagine and implement new forms of entrepreneurship. New forms that would rehabilitate civil society and citizen commitment in its capacity to think and act for development of territories in all realities: economic, social, environmental and democratic governance.

This path is not completely revolutionary nor utopist. It has been daily implemented for decades by actors of the SSE, composed of a thousand initiatives, very diverse in their realities. As mentioned by Claude Alphandéry from the Labo ESS: “Social and Solidarity Economy and/or social entrepreneurship are founded upon essential characteristics: an economic project serving social utility, serving man, men and their humanity, ethical values, democratic functioning and dynamic of endogenous development founded on territorial anchorage.”

These initiatives, whatever the status for developing their projects, both economic and social or environmental, open new paths. All of them try to produce, consume and decide in a different way and to develop economic projects more respectful of persons, environment and territories. Bernard Maris, economist in Charlie Hebdo, could have said, if he was still among us, that SSE seeks to create value without redirecting the currency (money) from its essential function, consisting in facilitating economic exchanges between people.

The law on SSE, voted by French Parliament in July 2014, aims at recognizing an economic model, which reconciles “performance” and “social justice”. This strength, both economic and social, represents in France 215 000 employers and 2,3 million employees, therefore 10 % of

employment, and its generates 5% (90 billion Euros) of added value (INSEE, National Institute of statistics and economic studies, November 2014). But these economic indicators don't take volunteering into account.

Sectors that comprise SSE experiences

From an historical point of view, issuing from the double stream of social economy on the one hand and solidarity economy on the other, SSE has strongly developed, among others, in healthcare, social, medical-social, educational, socio-educational, socio-cultural and recreational sectors and more generally in the field of care and support to "vulnerable" populations. Nowadays, reinforced by the new legal framework and the pregnancy of mass unemployment, destructive for individuals and social cohesion, actors of SSE wish eventually to commit into the whole sectors of production of goods and services of the market sector, following a logic of "producing, consuming and dividing up wealth in a different way".

The history of SSE in France has been building up for a big part in reaction to excesses of industrial capitalism of the early 19th century, around 4 main forms of organizations:

- i. Cooperatives: 23.000 organizations, employing 580.000 people for a turnover of 61 billion, excluding the 80 commercial cooperatives (e.g. Leclerc)
- ii. "Mutuelles" (mutual benefice insurance company): 1.700 organizations employing 110.000 people for a turnover of 33 billion.
- iii. Associations: 1,3 million organizations employing 1,8 million people for a turnover estimated 70 billion.
- iv. Foundations: 3.200 foundations, employing 65.000 people for 17 billion euro's capital.

Lastly, SSE companies, of all status together taking into account all kinds of organization, represent 4,8% of French organizations, 10,7% of jobs and 9,1% of added value (relating to National Inner Product). But, some SSE companies, "wandering" both on democratic or ethical level, have led a big number of SSE actors to claim the slogan: "Status doesn't equal Virtue". That is to say that if legal status, specific to SSE sector, represent real barriers reducing the risk of illegal practice, they don't guarantee at the end that values specific to this field aren't being forgotten or flouted.

Under pressure both of certain SSE actors, claiming for “exemplary practice” than “conformity to status”, and of the necessity to meet with other European countries on shared practices and vocabulary, a new vocabulary is being born: “social entrepreneurship”. This concept gives value to the fact that each company, whatever its status, can be part of this particular field of SSE, as long as it respects the fundamental ethical principles of SSE. In the frame of the SSE law of July 2014, a competence would be given to state for agreeing these companies, entitled as SSE companies (Decrees of Application concerning the agreement modalities are still on waiting list at that day).

Economic impact indicators

In 2013⁴², the 4 “families” of social economy – cooperatives, Mutuelles, associations and foundations – employ 2,3 million people for a total income distributed of 60 billion euros. They generate 90 billion euros of added value, coming mostly from selling activities, which makes Social Economy jobs represent 10% or more in the PIB (Inner Brutto Product). But the real weight of social economy is rather around 6 or 7 %, this being divided quite equally in 2 parts: foundations and associations on the one hand, cooperatives and mutuelles on the other hand.

In such conditions, different movements are developing to claim for new indicators at macro-economic level. First of all, the idea consists in better estimating the effects of evolution of the economic activity, taking into account the levy it imposes on resources. The idea is also to appreciate the evolution of well-being and social and environmental health, hiding behind the quantification of monetary wealth. The challenge is to take into account the costs of growth on the one hand, and on the other hand to appreciate the input of all initiatives contributing to wealth.

⁴² http://www.alternatives-economiques.fr/fic_bdd/article_pdf_fichier/1385639335_1311Rapport_de_mission_a_Benoit_Hamon_Evaluation_ESS.pdf Septiembre 2013.

Innovative practices

In this section two among thousands examples, describing the contribution to social innovation of SSE in France, are highlighted.

Innovation in entrepreneurship

Oxalis⁴³, pioneer in cooperative companies in France, bringing together about 120 shareholder-employee-entrepreneurs. It is one example of cooperatives, which created a new form of guidance to entrepreneurship, with the aim of setting individual entrepreneurs free of the technical creation of enterprise, through a collective system to mutualize risk-taking. The idea is to allow them to devote themselves to what is crucial: their job and the commercial relationship. However, the structural decision-system is being shared and every entrepreneur of the cooperative can be part of the internal democracy.

One innovation in terms of entrepreneurship is the use of a specific contract (Contrat d'Appui à la Création d'Entreprise), allowing a new entrepreneur of the cooperative to develop his/her activity, while receiving unemployment compensation till the moment the activity is viable to get first salary. To bring this system of organizations to higher levels, these big cooperatives also cooperate within bigger networks (e.g: Manufacture Coopérative is a movement created by Oxalis and Copaname⁴⁴).

Innovation in local cooperation

A new way of working together is developing in France: the so-called "Tiers-lieux" that can be translated by "third-places": co-working places, hosting different activities, mutualizing resources, space and time in order to facilitate cooperation between different entrepreneurs or SSE organizations. In Saint-Etienne⁴⁵ (Rhône-Alpes), 7 "tiers-lieux" are being registered, under different forms. Any independent worker, actor of SSE, can co-work there permanently or periodically. These places are sometimes being defined as "places of improbable meetings, with improbable people but close to home".

43 <http://www.oxalis-scop.fr>

44 <http://manufacture.coop>

45 <http://coworking-saint-etienne.fr/les-tiers-lieux/>

Young people's participation (18-30)

(The collected data come from the National Observatory of SSE-CNCRES⁴⁶) Over 435.000 young people work in a SSE organization, mostly in associations of social action, in banking and insurance. They represent also active forces of several sectors like Sports and Leisure and Health.

Employers look for “acculturation” to values and practices of SSE. This can be measured by employers in different ways: experience, volunteering, internships (long- or short term), and student project management.

Whatever the sort of experience, it is considered as important to be translated into competences. De facto, during recruiting of a young person, elements taken into consideration are motivation and competencies. Separately, such criteria don't necessarily distinguish SSE from other sectors of economy. However, when employers explain why such criteria are important to them, then SSE features start to appear: autonomy in project management and sense of initiatives, particular governance of organization.

Another study refers to young people's perception of employment in SSE – *Avise 2014*⁴⁷, which analyzes the motivations for the integration of young people in SSE organizations. Among different expectations of young people towards employment, 3 main criteria: i) to have a stable job; ii) to do something useful for society; iii) to be financially autonomous.

89,3% of young people questioned think that working in SSE allows them to feel useful in society (56,3% in public sector and 24% in market sector). They describe working conditions as “human”, with less hierarchy and some multitasking. They underline their involvement in SSE organizations, thanks to democratic governance. 85,1% of young people working in SSE say they are satisfied with their job, more compared to those in public or market sector (73,2%).

Brakes for integration of young people in SSE

The study quotes a lack of knowledge of SSE, especially among non-graduates. SSE is also being perceived as a less stable sector, with less revenue (compared with public sector, and above

46 <http://www.economie.gouv.fr/files/emploi-jeunes-ess-cncres-rapport.pdf>

47 http://www.jeun-ess.fr/wp-content/uploads/Avise_Jeu_20140407_syntheseEtudeEmploiJeunESS_v.1.2.pdf

all market sector). Only 42,3% of young people think SSE “allows them to evolve professionally”, against 76,2% in private market sector. But young people remain open to SSE although they lack information.

Gender perspective⁴⁸

More than 67% of SSE employees are women, much more than in public sector (60%) or other sector of private economy (40%). The presence of women in SSE is strongly linked to positioning of SSE in traditionally more feminized activities (teaching, social action, health, finance). However, these women access less than men to high responsibility positions and have more part time jobs. Wage inequalities are less in SSE than in other economic sectors. The gap between revenues of men and women in equal positions is less (8%) than in private sector (13%). Gaps become larger in an important way within cooperatives (15%) and mutuelles (25%), while they tend to reduce in associations (6%).

Relationship with community and social movements

At this point the relationship established by actors in the informal sector of the SSE (but also some of the formal one) with some of the following social movements (only a few are shown here) stands out:

Colibris⁴⁹: movement created by Pierre Rabhi for building a more ecological and human society, starting from the point that everyone can do his/her little part at local level to change the world.

Loire en transition: A local antenna of the bigger movement for energetic transition, dealing not only with environmental issues but also with new forms of citizen actions, local, based on exchange of know-how's, of competencies and on non-monetary exchanges (including a local currency, developing in Saint-Etienne).

48 http://www.cress-rhone-alpes.org/cress/IMG/pdf/panorama_de_l_ess_-_edition_2012.pdf
49 <http://www.colibris-lemouvement.org/colibris/notre-mission>

Urban gardening, shared gardening: are developing more and more and represent the basis of citizen-action, very much connected to the “think global, act local” perspective and to SSE values. In these experiences it is also possible to find dynamics of social inclusion.

Design and public action in public spaces: In Saint-Etienne (but not only there) more and more SSE actors propose direct interventions on the public space for giving to citizens new spaces and forms of expression towards public policies, concerning their city, mixing disciplines. In Saint-Etienne, being the international capital of design, initiatives are developing to integrate designers, sociologists, facilitators, artists, urbanists, in order to empower citizens in the conception of public policies, which is very much connected to values of SSE. E.g.: association “Cartons pleins”⁵⁰.

Training or educational practices

Some examples at local level:

i) Practices of guidance for initiatives leaders: processed by CREFAD⁵¹ (network of associations for popular education).

The individual is at the core of the idea, the goals and the values, from the origin. The orientation of the project promoter is then made up, starting from this fine-tuned presentation: then it can be oriented to a cooperative (collective project), or to an employment cooperative (individual project), or to the creation of an association. This is done starting from the promotion and explanation of the most suitable legal form of the project promoter. The “tailor-made” approach prevails upon processes and implies creativity and commitment from the project promoter.

ii) Vocational Degree in Coordination of SSE projects and University Diploma in SSE for a sustainable development, whose main features are:

Pluridisciplinarity of teachings: crossed views and critical approach of public policies and public measures.

50 <http://www.carton-plein.org/index.php/carton-plein/demarche/2/>
51 <http://www.reseaucrefad.org/crefad-loire>

Heterogeneity among trainers: researchers-teachers, professionals in the field and ex-students from the curriculum (talking about their professional pathways).

Evaluation of the training and adjustments, made by a so-called “improvement-council” (trainers and representatives of students).

Implementation of a mentored project, aiming at self-learning and a collective production, not project-centred but with a focus on teamwork, means of co-construction, active listening and floor-taking, compromises, decision-making processes.

iii) For civic services (young volunteers: AFEV association - Association of students in city⁵²).

The heart of their educational practice is peer education: to propose to young people a framework of engagement, that allows them to play an active role, to be part of a project into society. Competences linked to this discovery and this learning will be transmitted to other young people. Empowerment is also at the heart of this educational practice: the young person increases his/her abilities throughout self-esteem, initiative and control. Notions like participation, engagement but also a feeling of personal competence, of motivation towards social and citizen action are also triggered.

At the university level, experiences it is worth mentioning:

i) UVA: University of Associative Life⁵³

UVA aims to facilitate associative life and its development on local territory (Saint-Etienne and department Loire), with initiatives in areas of training courses, sharing of competencies and experiences, reflection and research.

ii) Vocational Degree in Coordination of SSE projects and University Diploma of SSE for a sustainable development: see paragraph I.

iii) SSE Chair in University Lyon 2⁵⁴

52 <http://www.afev.org/saint-etienne/topic/index.html>

53 <http://portail.univ-st-etienne.fr/bienvenue/presentation/l-universite-de-la-vie-associative-u-v-a--143433.kjsp>

54 <http://www.univ-lyon2.fr/formation/masters-2/l-economie-sociale-et-solidaire-486139.kjsp>

Seventeen partners gathered within the university (regional associations, foundations, solidarity companies, mutuelles, cooperatives, trade unions) in order to provide with research, initial education, further education (e.g. Master II SSE), a specific laboratory and also an award, “Enterprising differently in Lyon 2”.

Participation in networks

In France networks can be identified mostly at a local level and in sectors within SSE. Some remarkable examples:

Cooperative companies (SCOP = Cooperative and Participative societies⁵⁵) are bounded by a national and regional network (URSCOP), providing with guidance, visibility, lobbying, internal advantages (support to holidays, parenting, kids’ education) for their employees, training pathways, exchange of practices. Big associations of “popular education” are organized in national and regional lobbying networks (CNAJEP and CRAJEP)⁵⁶. They are consulted by governments regarding new laws/measures to be taken about youth, non-formal education or citizen action.

Mutuelles are being organized into a national movement, with local antennas, “*La Mutualité Française*”⁵⁷, gathering 600 health mutual benefit insurance companies which protect 38 million people.

In Saint-Etienne and in Rhône-Alpes region, actors of the SSE are often brought together for special events, supported either by the municipality or the Regional council. A big part of them are registered into a regional digital platform “Rhône-Alpes solidaires”⁵⁸ where they can publish their events and job offers.

CRESS: Regional Chamber of SSE is an association representing movements and trade unions of employers in SSE (associations, cooperatives, mutuelles).

At European level, SSE organizations are part of RIPESS.

55 <http://www.scop.org>; <http://www.les-scop.coop/sites/fr/>

56 <http://crajep.rhonealpes.org>; <http://www.cnajep.asso.fr>

57 <http://www.mutualite-loire.com/index.php/presentation-des-mutuelles.html>

58 <http://www.rhone-alpesolidaires.org>

Legal framework and relationship with public policies

In France, in recent times, a special interest has raised about SSE, to the point that "Hamon law"⁵⁹ was voted in Parliament on the 31st July 2014. The ambition by this government consists of "encouraging a change of scale for SSE in all its aspects, in order to build with enterprises of SSE a more solid strategy of growth, richer in employment, more sustainable and more socially fair". This law is set down in a big document containing a hundred articles and is divided into 9 main titles.

The objectives of the law are: i) to recognize SSE as a specific enterprising model; ii) to consolidate the network, governance and financing tools of SSE actors; iii) to reinforce policies of local sustainable development; iv) to give back empowerment to employees; v) to provoke a cooperative shock.

2.4. Social and Solidarity Economy in Italy

Michelangelo Belletti & Matteo Miglio

Main features and historical background

The recognition of cooperation and mutualism, with the 1946 constitution, gave the kickoff for the process of SSE in Italy.

We can say that in certain areas of the social sphere rights were acquired in 4 stages (political rights with the universal suffrage, civil rights with workers' statute, social rights about disadvantaged, poor people and people with disabilities, citizenship rights in connection with welfare rights), boosting entrepreneurship in SSE.

In the last 20 years Italy has been witnessing the development of several practices of SSE. Some of these practices have proven to be very effective in terms of economic sustainability, and have therefore been improved and reproduced in different regions and territories. There are more than 6,5 millions of Italian citizens doing volunteering activities in different fields, and more than 12 million of Italians are members of a cooperative. So we are speaking about a very big system.

This economic solidarity has been a sort of slow revolution that rose as a spontaneous bottom-up reaction to some great shocks that Italians suffered. Among these it is worth to highlight: the 1986 Ukraine Chernobyl nuclear plant accident, which made Italians think about the quality of the environment and food, in addition to corruption scandals involving a high percentage of parliamentarians, that increased mistrust in representative democracy; the bankruptcy of Parmalat Corporation in 2003, which turned out to be a real fraud for thousands of small shareholders, committed with the complicity of some major banks. Italians realized that the leading financial system was not there to support them, but for its own benefit.

People began building their own trade, credit, insurance, and food systems. Some mayors of small/medium cities and some small to medium entrepreneurs, who grasped the value of responsibility and sustainability, slowly joined the movement. From the academic world some began considering the solidarity world beyond its volunteering aspects, thus conceiving important tools to convert principles into practices. All of these changes began to take place in spite of the reluctance of both political and economic systems.

All the experience gained from the '70 with the cooperatives condenses in Law n.381/91, which created a new type of cooperative: the social cooperative. Two cases: a) the cooperative gives services to the community (educative, social, sanitary, cultural...) employing professionals; b) the cooperative which employs at least 30% of disadvantaged people and can work in all the enterprise sectors. In the same year the volunteering sector has a new law, Law n.266/91. It's a "framework law" in which the State describes the principles and the main elements of the voluntary associations and demand to the regions for a more specific legislation.

As a background, two experiences that set the course of SSE are to be identified. In 1994 the first MAG (Mutua Autogestione) starts, at first and foremost a partnership between people based on the relationship of trust with shareholders and financed organizations. It is responsible for collecting the money of the shareholders in the form of capital to finance economic initiatives providing with opportunities for self-managed, ethically viable funds, and to provide loans with low interest rates. In the same year the MAG's and the social cooperatives world decided to create an ethical bank. For this reason, the association "*Verso la Banca Etica*" was created. In 1998 this association starts Banca Popolare Etica, specialized in ethical and alternative finance. Italy is a pioneer in these kind of experiences relating the world of finance with SSE.

Other pioneering experiences are GAS (Solidarity Purchase Groups) that were established in Fidenza. They are grassroots networks that collectively organize direct provisioning, mostly of food and other items of everyday use (such as detergents and basic toiletry), but increasingly also of textiles and "alternative" services such as renewable energy, sustainable tourism, or even dental insurance. This movement is currently growing and numbers more than 150.000 people involved so far. Retegas.org is the GAS national network, whose Charter explains that "solidarity" means cooperation and sympathy with producers, environment, and other GAS members, or "gasistas" as they call themselves.

With the accumulation of experiences and practices in recent decades, in 2006 and through Law 155/2006 Law a definition of social enterprise has been introduced to the Italian legal system. The first general aspect that has to be highlighted is that social enterprise is neither a new legal form, nor a new type of organization, but a legal category in which all eligible organizations may be included, regardless of their internal structure. Therefore, the eligible organizations could in theory be co-operatives, investor-owned firms or traditional non-profit firms. In this regard, Italian law is a general law on social enterprises and not a particular law on a specific kind of social enterprise. In 2015 a new law for the entire third sector is being discussed in Parliament, in which the new social enterprise will be established and also other forms of social activities.

Sectors that comprise the SSE experiences

Most of the observed experiences can be grouped in three kinds of organizations:

A. *Social cooperatives*: there are two types, the “a” and the “b” one. The “a” ones are providing to people and communities a lot of social, educational, health services. They are composed of professionals who are members of the organization. The “b” ones are enterprises which are working in all the fields of economics, but with a special goal: to give a job opportunity to disadvantaged people (disabled, former addicted, in prison...) who are members of the enterprise.

B. *Associations*, especially two different types: social promotion associations and volunteering associations. Both of them are connected with all the sectors defined in point A. The differences are about the professional workers: in the first case the members can be employed by the association (with some limits); in the second case the members have to provide services on a totally voluntary basis and for free.

C. *Informal groups*: there are a lot of informal experiences, such as the time banks (but over time they were transformed in associations, so they are not informal) or groups which help socially excluded people, or the first forms of GAS (solidarity purchase groups). In general, all these informal situations are quickly transformed into formalized structures, mainly in associations, or they disappear.

Regarding the sectors in which entrepreneurship is performed the most, it is possible to find:

Housing: this sector involves two different cooperative enterprise types, the social cooperatives (more involved in giving a housing solution for disadvantaged people who cannot be members of the cooperative) and the housing cooperatives (traditionally, giving housing solutions for their members, more for the middle classes). There are also associations and private foundations involved in it, especially connected with Caritas or other catholic institutions.

Clothing and food: this sector involves some big associations at a national level. The most important in this field is Fondazione Banco Alimentare which collects food from the citizens in big campaigns and then offers it to disadvantaged and poor people. In the same way Fondazione Banco Farmaceutico exists, which collects medicines for poor people, or other organizations that collect used clothes to sell which raises money for poor people.

Culture: a lot of small museums are managed by cooperatives.

Care and education: in the care and education sector the main organizations are social cooperatives (type “a”, which provide services of care, education, assistance, sanitary, culture...) and volunteering associations. They are organizing and managing kindergartens, schools, leisure time activities for children and elderly people, intercultural projects with migrants, etc.

Leisure: in leisure time a lot of activities are linked with sports. Sport amateur associations under big national associations (like UISP, AICS, CSI, PGS...) are very important. At the same time, some cultural activities in leisure time are managed by associations and cooperatives thanks to some agreements and financial support from local public bodies.

Finance: in Italy there is a big tradition of ethical finance; from BCC (Cooperative Credit Banks) to MAG (financial cooperatives which collect money from the communities to finance directly the 3rd sector) and Banca Etica (the ethical bank who is opening also a Spanish branch).

Job insertion for disadvantaged people: it's something done by the social cooperatives (type “b”), providing a job opportunity to disadvantaged people (at least 30%). They are working in all the economic fields with big success in job insertion of disadvantaged people.

Economic impact indicators

Data about the effects of SSE in Italy are collected at national level by the last census done by ISTAT in 2014.

Measured in millions of euros, it accounts the contribution of cooperatives (107.849), social cooperatives (11.157), non-profit (53.783); enterprises with a cooperative as the owner (25.043). The main economic source of social enterprises comes from public bodies (36.2%), the sale of goods and services (23.2%) and the contributions of members and donors (25.6%).

Regarding the use of resources in social enterprises: i) more importance is given to salaries of staff in the organizations with productive aims (average 35%, 61,8% in the social cooperatives); ii) high expenses for salaries, higher in the sector of social assistance (47,5%), health (46,4%), training and research (42%); iii) more expenses for salaries in connection with the size of the organization.

About the sustainability of the organizations: i) social cooperatives with more than 250.000 euros of revenue are solid and have economic margin: total revenues for 10,1 billion, invested capital of 8,3 billion, equity for 2.06 billion; ii) cooperatives (excluded the social ones) have revenue for 84,3 billion, invested capital for 105,9 billion, and equity for 25,5 billion.

Regarding the importance of social economy inside the productive system at the end of 2011, SSE contributed 7, 55% of organizations (355 045 social enterprises) and employed 10.65% of workers (2,208,046). In particular, foundations and social cooperatives have increased the percentage of workers (*lavoratori*) and organizations (*organizzazioni*) the most.

Innovative practices

Among the many innovative practices in the Italian solidarity economy revolution, four of them stand out as the most relevant ones:

Type "b" Social Cooperatives

Social cooperatives were established by a 1991 national law with the aim of favoring social integration especially through social, health and educational services. The specific intent was to integrate people with any kind of physical or mental disability into the economic fabric.

Type "a" social cooperatives are those providing people in need with social, health and educational services. Type "b" cooperatives instead, and here lays the real innovation, can work also in other economic fields (such as agriculture, commerce, industry and services) and must hire at least a 30% of people with disabilities in their staff. The social cooperatives established in order to do this work, in turn, received some tax incentives.

Ethical Banks

Before, only 29% of nonprofit organizations had access to the credit system. They were rich in human capital and ideas, but poor in financial resources. In 1995 some of the main Italian nonprofit organizations joined together to develop a cooperative in order to raise money and start an "ethical bank". Their aim was to raise enough money to establish a bank that would: a) provide the needed credit for the non-profit world; b) meet the need for transparent and ethical investments. The success came in 1999 with the opening of *Banca Popolare Etica* (Ethical Popular Bank). The BPE provides its customers with all the usual services, but with a totally different inspiration: to be ethically oriented, even while being a for-profit organization. It provides financial support for good ideas with social value in several sectors of solidarity economy, regardless of their financial guarantees. It supports activities such as: international cooperation, social cooperation, environmental protection and cultural activities. The experiment has succeeded, and new offices all over Italy are now opening. Today it has over 36,000 shareholders and 5,200 beneficiaries. This success is due to people having come to understand that a fair and ethical financial system is an integral part in developing a fair and sustainable community.

The main organizational challenges BPE is facing are: i) to actually implement ethical practices, not just to talk about ethics; ii) to be competitive in a non-ethical global arena; iii) to meet the expectations of shareholders and clients by actively supporting nonprofit projects with high social value; iv) to promote social change; v) to educate people to a more responsible use of money; vi) to find innovative and rewarding ways to invest peoples' savings that are beneficial to their region; vii) to define guidelines and operational tools to assess the social value of investments; viii) to create cooperation among shareholders, managers and employees.

Purchasing Groups

GAS (Gruppo di acquisto solidale – Solidarity Purchase Group) are groups of people (20 families, on average) who organize to purchase directly from the producer. The first GAS was created in 1994, and the official network now numbers over 850 GASs (Retegas.org).

The main aim is not only to save money but to establish strong consumer-producer relationships grounded in a real sense of one-on-one trust. In this kind of relationship convenience is gained through cooperation instead of competition. In many cases, the consumers and the farmers/producers become partners, joining together in both the planning and decision-making processes as well as sharing in both the benefits and risks.

The GAS network has achieved much: healthy food and less waste of food (less quantity, more quality); saving money; farmer/producer self-sustainability through a shorter food chain; more human relationships, cultural diversity, and a stronger sense of community; environmental (less waste), landscape, and biodiversity protection.

DES (*Distretti di economia solidale* – Solidarity Economy Districts) have been created too, which involve not only GAS's, but also local producers, institutions, all of which are committed to create a more human-friendly economic and social environment.

The confiscated mafia assets

In Italy, mafias have always made very profitable business. One of the most effective tools against organized crime syndicates is to strike at their patrimony by confiscating their assets (real estate properties and firms of all kinds). So far, some 11,360 assets have been confiscated, including 1,400 firms. In an effort to manage such a huge quantity of assets, a special government agency (ANBSC) was created. Once these assets are “officially” confiscated, they are entrusted to cooperatives, local authorities and to non-profit organizations that, in turn, use them either to produce and sell goods (especially wine and food), or to deliver social services to the community.

Young people's participation (18-30)

There aren't researches that studied this topic specifically (for SSE enterprises in the whole sense). Available data come from the research about the third sector carried out by Unicredit

foundation in 2012. In this it is possible to see that the employed people involved in third sector organizations devoted to productive activities (social cooperatives) with less than 30 years old are the 12,3%, the employed ones involved in advocacy activities (all the volunteering associations) under 30 years old are 14,9%.

Gender perspective

In general, Social Economy is made by organizations very committed to the gender perspective, especially because women represent the majority of the total number of workers and also of volunteers working in the social sector.

Several actions are made in the field of conciliation between the different spheres of the life (work and family): part time job (it is more common to see people with a part time job, for example mothers with little children, in social economy than in the private sector), kinder garden in the offices, or other solutions for helping mothers and fathers to take care of their children.

Relationship with community and social movements

In SSE we can see a big commitment with the communities. Volunteering organizations (V.O.) are usually very connected with the social environment for the part in which they are answering to some needs of people. These entities are connected and helped by provincial centers called *Centri di servizio per il volontariato*, that are financed by the bank foundations. These centres aim to help volunteering organizations in improving their professional training, to increase their skills in communication, to acquire resources for their activities.

The social cooperatives are usually started inside the local communities and usually they are very much recognized by the people as organizations able to help the people and provide services and social goods to the social environment. Some new perspectives from this point are connected to the presence of a multi-stakeholder governance (workers, volunteers, investors, families, other interested subjects). The presence of this governance seems to give the possibility to combine different points of view that increase the vision of the organization about new answers to local needs. A second new tendency is called "Community Social

Enterprise”, in which a community and the public bodies of the field organize themselves in a social enterprise (usually an association or a social cooperative) to analyze and answer the emerging social needs. The idea is that the public bodies are not able to do it alone, and neither can the non-profit organizations. It is necessary that all these actors work together and use an enterprise in order to be efficient and productive.

In the last years there are more and more community foundations, born thanks to the initiative of Cariplo Foundation in Milan, especially in the north of Italy. Those foundations have the aim to collect money from the community to give back in community projects. Some of them use a way to finance projects in which the money they give is directly connected with the money the beneficiaries are able to raise (each euro collected from the community means one euro plus from the foundation).

Concerning the relationship with social movements, in Italy at a national level (and from this, at a regional level) an umbrella organization exists, called “Forum del Terzo Settore” (third sector forum) which represent all the organizations who recognize themselves as part of the third sector.

Environmental sustainability

The sustainability theme is important in Italy since the rising of “Conto Energia”. The possibility for the private sector to invest in clean energy and measures for energy saving is achieved through monetary benefits (some tax discounts and the possibility to receive financial compensation for the electricity produced and put on the net). The sector of SSE which started to work with it was the cooperative one, especially the farm cooperatives and the social cooperatives for job insertion. A very interesting experience was carried out by *La città essenziale!*⁶⁰, social consortium in Matera which has created a system in which they promote the use of solar and photovoltaic panels, installed and maintained by workers of social cooperatives working on social inclusion. on the roofs of public bodies (municipalities, provinces, schools, hospital...). The money saved by the public body with the green energy is invested in social and care services.

60 <http://www.lacittaessenziale.it/index.php?>

Training or educational practices

We can say that some sectors of SSE have the possibility to have resources for the training: i) in volunteering sector, “Centri di servizio per il volontariato” (centers providing services for volunteering) are giving resources for training and also are organizing training and educational practices for them; ii) social cooperatives have some Interprofessional Funds, specific to finance training courses inside the organizations. Those funds are managed by a board composed of the national associations of cooperatives and the national trade unions. The most important is Foncoop.

In general Universities are not prepared to study the SSE sector. But in the last 20 years some small steps have been made. There are 2 universities (Bologna and Trento) which have a specific degree on Social Economy, cooperatives and non-profit organizations; in those places also two “think tanks” have been created: AICCON⁶¹ and EURICSE⁶². In other universities (Milano Bocconi, Milano Cattolica) there are master degrees on the topic. These courses and the associations are linked with the federation of the social cooperatives (Federsolidarietà) and in general with the cooperative movement.

In 2013 a group of organizations and some professors coming from universities, specifically in the field of economics, founded SEC (Scuola di Economia Civile - Civil Economy School). This organization provides training courses, seminars, publications on the theme of SSE. In the group of founders we can find: a federation of cooperatives, the federation of cooperative credit banks, ACLI association (Christian workers’ association), the University of Sophia. In this moment, more and more Universities are including a specific course on non-profit and social economy in their degree on Economics. Unfortunately, it is only one course inside a very classic and liberal economic mainstream.

Participation in networks

In Italy some networks in the different fields are present. For GAS (Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale) there are some networks who can put together different experiences: DES (social economy

61 <http://www.aiccon.it>

62 <http://www.euricse.eu/it/>

district), created in order to share experiences, to promote initiatives and to create useful tools for all.⁶³ For social cooperatives and social enterprises several umbrella organizations exist: CGM⁶⁴, the biggest consortium of social cooperatives; Ideeinrete⁶⁵, on the hand of the entrepreneurial side; Confcooperative Federsolidarietà⁶⁶ and Legacoop Sociali⁶⁷, the representative associations at national level for social cooperatives and social enterprises. At a local level there are several “centri di servizio per il volontariato” (service centers for volunteering associations), all coordinated by CSVnet⁶⁸. All the third sector is represented and work together in the “Forum del Terzo Settore”⁶⁹ (third sector forum), organized at national and regional level.

Legal framework and relationship with public policies


In relation to the legal framework including SSE, it is possible to identify a variety of regulations and laws.

At a national level, the social enterprises are envisaged under a national law (n.155/2006). Social cooperatives are foreseen under a national law (n. 381/1991), while some regions with a special legislation are defining in a very specific way the fields of working for the social cooperatives. The volunteering associations are foreseen under a national law (n.266/1991) and in each region usually there is a specific law applying the national rules, adapting them to the peculiarities of the local reality.

The other kinds of cooperatives are under the general civil code, and they have some specific regional legislation. In 2015 in Parliament a proposal of law is being discussed, in which the new social enterprise and other kinds of social activities too will be established: a law proposal to change the third sector, simplifying the rules and the financial issues.

In relation to the link with the State, as it has been outlined in the previous chapters, the connection between State grants and organizations in the SSE is quite important. Most social

63 https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Distretto_di_economia_solidale
64 <http://www.cgm.coop/index.php/en/>
65 <http://www.ideeinrete.coop/numeri.php>
66 <http://www.federsolidarieta.confcooperative.it/default.aspx>
67 <http://www.legacoopsociali.it>
68 <http://www.csvnet.it>
69 <http://www.forumterzosettore.it>



cooperatives are financed by public bodies. The voluntary service associations are less dependent by the grants of the public bodies because they haven't to pay salaries, but some of them need it for institutional activities. The informal SSE organizations, for example GAS, are completely independent because they are totally financed by their members in the purchase activity.

2.5. Social and Solidarity Economy in Spain

Monica Haas Caruso & Daniela Osorio Cabrera

Main features and historical background

In the Spanish State, SSE appears as a possible and actual reality for another economy. Recognized as a derivation and articulation of the tradition of the Social Economy (mainly composed of cooperatives and *mutualities*), it is identified as a revival of socio-economic experiences in recent decades. Beyond nominative issues, it is recognized in the SSE, the possibility to re-politicize and strengthen an alternative to the prevailing economic system (Estivill, 2009).

These experiences stand out because of their local dimension and territorial reference, joining traditional experiences of Social Economy with new forms of community-based organization, which allow the resolution of basic needs in context. The legal form takes on a secondary role, emphasizing the alternative practices based on the values of cooperation, mutual support, democracy, equity and sustainability (García, 2010).

Trading channels that link activities of production, distribution, consumption and financing, acquired an inter-cooperation dimension, which allowed them to articulate at regional level, starting with Social Markets - a tool that allows for strengthening of the sector and the possibility to operate outside the capitalist system. One of the features that seems to define the SSE in Spain is the reference to an identity construction from the commitment to the manifesto 'Carta de la Economía Solidaria' (Charter of the Solidarity Economy). But also, the REAS network (Network of Alternative and Solidarity Economy) has a commitment to design indicators and instruments (for social auditing or balancing) that enable verifying the level of commitment of the organizations with the principles of the Charter (Pérez-Mendiguren & Etxezarreta, 2015).

In times of crisis, SSE is considered one of the sectors that have better tolerated its effects (García, 2010), and is presented as an opportunity to improve gender relations and equal opportunities for women (Mansilla, Grezner, Alberich, 2013; Larrañaga, Jubeto, Díez, 2014). Although work remains to be done, the experiences of SSE increasingly support the line of responsibility and work organization towards the sustainability of life.

In terms of training, we find a growing offer of training and postgraduate courses, and SSE is occupying a growing place in the interests of vocational training for young people. Some proposals coming from Barcelona, the Basque Country, Valencia and Zaragoza stand out. In relation to the issues linked to the SSE are management, communication, community development, tourism, environmental sustainability and ecological agriculture.

The importance given to the establishment of networks in SSE is one of its main characteristics and at the same time, one of its identifying aspects that make it stand out from the Social Economy. In the Spanish context we find AREAS, composed of more than 300 organizations and businesses in the Social Economy, grouped in territorial and sectoral networks. It participates at a European level through RIPESS-Europe (Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy), the network that unites the national networks, sectors and other entities of the European continent.

In March 2011, the Spanish State adopted the Law on Social Economy with the basic objective of setting up a legal framework to provide visibility and recognition to the Social Economy, giving it a greater legal certainty through the actions of definition of the Social Economy. In Catalonia, the Xarxa d'Economia Solidària (Network of Economic Solidarity) is working on the development of a draft law about SSE. This group has been working to develop a proposal after the Catalan Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the government to draw up and adopt a law on SSE.

Sectors that comprise the SSE experiences

Within the more formal experiences, and the long-standing tradition in the world of the Social Economy, we emphasize the classification of García (2009):

Agricultural cooperatives: represent 42% of the final agricultural production, highlighting the fruit and citrus sectors. Regions featured are: The Valencian Country, Andalusia and Catalonia, currently also devoted to tourism.

Consumer cooperatives: dedicated to processing goods or services for consumption. They have an important role in the training and awareness of consumers. In recent times, new ecological consumer cooperatives have arisen, not necessarily constituted as cooperatives.

Credit union: we refer to banks of proximity, which maintain a link with its societal base and are committed to the territory in which they operate. There are approximately 90 credit cooperatives. At present, coop57 and Fiare are acquiring an important role.

Associate work cooperatives: In this case, are groups of people who found a company to create jobs. According to data from the last five years, 225.000 people are working in these ventures. Within the group, social initiative cooperatives stand out, offering services for members, aiming at their cultural, social and labor market integration.

We also identified service cooperatives, bringing together small and medium-sized businesses, professionals, merchants, shippers and craftsmen to obtain raw material and products. Housing cooperatives, which have seen less development, closely linked to sheltered-housing, although nowadays there are proposals such as a system of relinquishment (Sostre Cívic).

Labour societies: corporations or limited liability companies, whose social capital is majority-owned by workers with a permanent and full-time contract. They are very much linked to the labour movement. They are not societies of people, but of capital. They are mostly dedicated to the services sector. Andalusia and Madrid have the highest concentration of this type of business.

Mutuals: are non-profit entities, of democratic governance that exercise voluntary insurance activity, supplementary to the mandatory social security system. The majority of mutuals are in Catalonia and the Basque Country.

Companies of insertion: arise as a response in the late 80s, against social exclusion processes, linking groups of neighbors, Christian groups and foundations. Depending on the type of management these are considered SSE or not. They are considered SSE when they adopt democratic governance. The types of services that they develop are cleaning, recycling, and construction. Statewide, 2382 people work in insertion and 1681 in structure.

Regarding the most important sectors that encompass the SSE, activities that particularly stand out are related to: recycling and recovery, credit and financial activities, transport, agriculture and livestock, support, training and advice for the creation of employment and self-employment, trade, consumption, social intervention and creation of industrial enterprises and service companies (Socias & Horrach, 2013).

At an informal level, and related to the impetus of the crisis in the region, we find new forms of self-organization of the needs that incorporate the values of solidarity, democracy and environmental sustainability. We emphasize the presence of consumer groups (which may or may not adopt the cooperative format), joint purchasing groups, co-parenting groups, barter networks (group of people and entities exchanging products, services and/or knowledge). They are also appearing in the sector of free culture, adopting new information technologies (García, 2010). In rural areas, we find communities which are organized based on economic self-sufficiency and that obtain agricultural products, generate monetary resources, and develop craft products, rules for the distribution and consumption (García, 2009). Also highlighted at the urban level, is the presence of social vegetable gardens, as well as the shared management of spaces for people who develop different economic activities (co-working) (Miedes & Sánchez, 2014).

Economic impact indicators

In relation to the data linked with the experiences of SSE, and taking into account its formal heterogeneity and the novelty of some experiences, we emphasize the registration data of the formal entities, related to the tradition of the Social Economy.

According to data from the Social Security, on March 31 2010, 376.569 people were registered in the General Social Security Plan in a total of 38.505 cooperatives and labour companies (Guide of COO).

The distribution of this figure between each of the legal forms of Social Economy is as follows:

- A total of 23.129 cooperatives with 288,643 people engaged
- A total of 1.945 labour corporations with 26.459 people engaged
- A total of 13.431 labour limited partnerships with 61.467 people engaged

The SSE facing the crisis:

During the last period of the crisis, which began in 2008, fewer cooperatives and labour companies have closed than business within the commercial sector. During the economic recession, the sector of SSE increased in number, in partners, in turnover and in capital. The data provided by Spanish Ministry of Labour, corresponding to 2008, confirms that, and indicate that, while the number of trading companies decreased by 7% compared to 2007, the number of cooperatives only decreased by 1.7 %. In addition, these even managed to increase the rate of employment with 0.12 % of the total workforce in the Spain (García, 2010).

Innovative practices

By understanding social innovation as a new response to social problems on the basis of new forms of resource mobilization, we find in the SSE one of the most notable features (Miedes & Sánchez, 2014). The creation of innovative products and services to satisfy the needs stand out (e.g. groups of co-parenting, that allow to improve the management of upbringing), as well as the development of innovative technology that allows for example the reuse of urban waste (Guerra, 2012). We also identify tools that improve marketing and cooperation relationships between the constituent entities, as well as evaluation tools and tools for the continuous improvement, of which we highlight the followings:

Social market

It is defined as a stable network for the exchange of goods and services that links entities of SSE, responsible consumers and ethical savers-investors, so that they can cover a significant part of their needs. This helps strengthen and make the sector and an alternative form of socio-economic relations visible.

Social audit

We refer to assessment tools that allow us to identify the entities' progress and criteria, in relation to the principles and values of the SSE, as well as a tracking tool to improve the weaker aspects. The most consolidated instruments are: the Social Balance launched in 2008 by the Catalan Xarxa d'Economia Solidària (Network of Solidarity Economy), and the Social Audit tool

which since 2006 is consistently applied by REAS Euskadi and REAS Navarra (Pérez & Etxezarreta, 2015).

Young people's participation (18-30)

While we have not identified research related to the SSE, we can mention as significant the constitution of the REJIES (Spanish Network of Young Researchers in Social Economy). The aim of the network is to unite all young Spanish researchers in the field of SSE, to establish partnerships, sharing resources and experiences. It is also an opportunity for training in common themes (methodology, publication strategies, preparation for joint projects). This network includes the participation of young researchers in Social Economics from the University of Barcelona (UB), University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), Polytechnic University of Madrid (UPM), University of Seville (US), University of Valencia (UV), Mondragon University and University of Zaragoza (UZ).⁷⁰

Gender perspective

In relation to the studies found that indicate the situation of women in the environment of the SSE, they mention this sector as favorable in relation to the participation of women in the workplace. On the one hand because it allows them access to job categories more equitable than in the capitalist market, as well as leadership positions, and it offers an easier conciliation of personal and family life with work (Mansilla, Grezner, Alberich, 2013; Larranaga, Jubeto, Díez, 2014).

Some figures from Spain in 2009 indicate that three out of five people working in a cooperative were women. In relation to the sectors they occupy, there is a clear horizontal segregation, marked by the sexual division of labour: "the sectors of the industry, construction and mechanics are highly masculinized (in the three sectors, the percentage of non-mixed male cooperatives exceeds 40%); the transport and agricultural sector are also masculinized, although the phenomenon is not as marked as in the above; the service sector to companies

70 <http://rejies.es>

and individuals presents a more uniform gender distribution, and trade, social care and education sectors are highly feminized (the case of the education sector stands out, where non-mixed female unions pose 52% of total)" (Mansilla, Grezner & Alberich, 2013).

It is interesting to note the presence, in some cooperatives, of the notion of co-responsibility, not only for women: "*the collective decision of the organization of work (work days, working hours, holidays, financial compensation and hours for working overloads); more equal conditions among the people who are members of the cooperative and the female salaried workers; the participation of people at risk of exclusion; the inclusion of the labour, family and personal networks in the provision and organization of the care of children and family; a broader conception of the conciliation of the personal, family and work life - which incorporates, not only the care or the punctual needs for physical reasons, but also one's personal and labour development (temporary leave of absence for own personal projects); the notion of care incorporated into the organization of the team and work; the communication, conflict prevention and resolution, and participation*" (Mansilla, Grezner & Alberich, 2013).

The investigations also stress the need to make a follow-up of the progress in this core idea, recommending the Social Audit tool as the basis for further progress (Mansilla, Grezner & Alberich, 2013; Larrañaga, Jubeto & Díez, 2015).

Relationship with community and social movements

In relation to the social-community link, while it is part of the principles of the traditional cooperative model, we find a diversity of applications and expressions in this regard. The experiences that arise in the last decade are those more closely related to the community environment and in conjunction with other social movements. Particularly, from more informal practices (protest platforms, groups of production and consumption, fair trade networks, systems of social currencies, ecological vegetable gardens, time banks) composing networks of resources, collaboration and learning. A Social Economy, which combines traditional formulas with other informal modes of economic organization, more diversified (Mierdes & Sánchez, 2014).

Regarding the links with other social movements, we can recognize in relation to the tradition of the Social Economy, the link with the worker and neighborhood movement, in the same

way that nowadays are closer to those considered new social movements like the environmental, alter-globalist, 15M or feminist movements, to the extent that common points were found with other critical economies (feminist, ecological, Marxist, libertarian and socioeconomic economies). This connection has strengthened because of the current context of the crisis but also because of the need to rescue the movementist dimension which stands out in the SSE of Spain (García, 2010).

Environmental sustainability

On this point, we did not find data that mentioned the effects of the environmental impact of the SSE activities. We can speculate on a positive impact by taking into account the SSE's principles and in particular from areas of activity such as the agro-ecological cooperatives, green energy businesses, and responsible and fair consumer practices. They provide not only products or services, but also a tool of awareness and social responsibility. In this sense, the push that is being done to the proximity economy and the short circuits particularly stand out.

Training or educational practices

On a general level, we find various educational practices that are developed in Spain, aside from those associated with universities. In particular, there are courses at private institutions, some of them linked directly to the SSE.

One of the most significant practices identified, that is more closely linked to the tradition of the Social Economy, but that also begins to pay attention to the SSE, is the Spanish section of the CIRIEC, which has some of the most active and internationally known members of this network. This network has its epicenter in Valencia, in the institute IUDESCOOP, which provides administrative and technical support to CIRIEC-Spain. We also found, as a result of the decentralization of the various regions, the ENUIES network, which brings together institutes and university centers which do research on Social Economy. It also includes some reference centers belonging to Social Economy business groups such as the Instituto de

Estudios Cooperativos LANKI (Institute of Cooperative Studies LANKI) of the Mondragon University (Barco, 2011).⁷¹

Another highlighted practice refers to the Observatorio de la Economía Social⁷² (Observatory of the Solidarity Economy). OES was founded in 2004 by a set of entities and professionals who are experts in the social sector and the solidarity economy. It is a non-profit association that aims to study, research and promote the solidarity economy as a model of economic development based on the respect for the individual, with a sustainable development perspective and as a means of social and territorial cohesion.

Also highlighted in recent times, is the work done by the Institut de Govern y Polítiques Públiques (Institute of Government and Public Policy)⁷³ of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and its growing progress in the studies of SSE.

At university level, a significant number of proposals for training have arisen across Spain in the last decade. While some make reference to the term Social Economy and others integrated both fields starting from the SSE, the place they are gradually occupying is remarkable, indicating the importance and need for training. We highlight the proposals of postgraduate courses in Barcelona, the Basque Country, Valencia and Zaragoza. In relation to the topics, the courses are linked to management, communication, community development, tourism, environmental sustainability and ecological agriculture.

According to a study in the Basque Country (Elizaga, Morandeira & Santaolalla, 2012), about the students' interest in the topics of SSE, which is considered low, this is attributed to the lack of knowledge on the subject and thus leads them to have no interest in it. "There is a link between motivation and awareness about these issues by teachers and the relationship and interest of the students. It is clear for universities that only if there is a niche of professors who believe in and are interested in the SSE, they will be able to capture and spread the motivation to the students who are the influential and workforce of tomorrow" (Elizaga, Morandeira & Santaolalla, 2012).

71 <http://www.mondragon.edu/es/estudios/master/economia-social-y-empresa-cooperativa/>

72 <http://oesolidaria.org/sobre-oes/>

73 <http://www.uab.cat/web/entidades-agregadas/institutos-y-centros-de-investigacion/instituto-centro-de-investigacion/instituto-de-gobierno-y-politicas-publicas-igop-1345467957854.html?param1=1345659465858>

Participation in networks

The importance given to networking in the SSE is one of its main features but also one of its identifying aspects that make it stand out from the Social Economy. Networking allows joining forces and sharing resources, but also obtaining benefits in terms of economic and community efficiency (Elizaga, Morandeira & Santaolalla, 2012).

On the basis of cooperation between various European countries, the RIPESS-Europe network (Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social and Cooperative Economy) was created in 2011 to bring together the national, sectoral networks and other entities of the European continent. In Spain, the REAS network is composed of more than 300 organizations and businesses of Social Economy, grouped in regional and sectoral networks. It is a network that was created in 1995 and brings together thirteen regional networks (Andalusia, Aragon, Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Castilla y Leon, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia and Navarre) and two sectoral groups: AERESS (Spanish Association of Recouperators of the Social and Cooperative Economy) and the ethic banking project of Fiare (Pérez-Mendiguren & Etxezarreta, 2015; Askunze, 2013).

At the local level one can also verify various cooperatives of first and second degrees that make up sectoral and regional networks of inter-cooperation and mutual support. For example, we can cite two experiences that have seen (and still see) a major territorial growth, but have managed to maintain their principles of participatory democracy and are still rooted to the territory.

On the one hand, there is *Som Energia*⁷⁴, a non-profit, green energy, consumer cooperative, which was created in 2010 by 150 members and today has more than 19,800 members in the 17 administrative regions of Spain.

On the other hand, one can cite *Coop57*, created in 1996, when a group of Catalan people who had lost their work due to the closure of the company where they worked, create a financial entity with the aim of promoting economic projects that could create quality jobs, especially applying cooperative models. Coop 57⁷⁵ carries out an organizational, growing and networking

74 <https://www.somenergia.coop>
75 <https://www.coop57.coop>

developing model, through which each territory self-manages and organizes in territorial sections. Today it has five sections in Spain.

Legal framework and relationship with public policies


In March 2011, the Spanish State adopted the Law on Social Economy with the "basic objective of setting up a legal framework that involves the recognition and better visibility of the Social Economy, giving it a greater legal certainty through the actions of the definition of the Social Economy" and established a few guiding principles: (i) primacy of the people and the social purpose over the capital (autonomous and transparent management, democratic and participatory); (ii) application of the results obtained from the economic activity, mainly in terms of the labour provided and the activity carried out by the members; (iii) promotion of internal solidarity and solidarity with the society that fosters a commitment to the local development, equality of opportunity between men and women, social cohesion, labour insertion of people at risk of social exclusion, generation of stable and quality employment, conciliation of personal and family life and labour life, and sustainability; (iv) independence from the public authorities (Law 5/2011, of March 29, of Social Economy).

In the Catalan sphere, the Xarxa d'Economia Solidària⁷⁶ is working on the development of a draft law on the SSE. This group has been working to develop a proposal after the Catalan Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the government to draw up and adopt a law on SSE.

In relation to the links between the SSE and the institutions of the State, we can mention that which has been established with the tradition of the Social Economy. According to some papers found, Spanish case is an example of cooperation between the State and the Social Economy (Barco, 2011). In particular, we highlight the collaboration in the development of policies and their implementation in the regions of Andalusia and the Basque Country.

At the executive level, there is a consultative body, the Consejo para el Fomento de la Economía Social (Council for the Promotion of the Social Economy), created through the law 27/1999, in July 16, which is an advisory and consultative body for activities related to the

76 <http://www.xes.cat/pages/xs100.php>



Social Economy. Regarding the legislature, there is no specific commission or grouping of any kind in any of the houses. With regard to the 17 administrative regions of Spain, in the majority of those in which the Social Economy has a relevant presence, the Directorate-General is the referent within the regional executive.

The identified research (Barco, 2011), also mentions the difference between the recognition from the public authorities, in relation to SSE, in its more informal side.

This situation began to change in recent times, particularly in favor of the work that begins to take shape at a regional level and by local governments, which are starting to give more relevance to the stimulation and development of the SSE. The Catalan case is a good example, where a new law of SSE is being discussed, a series of works are being fostered by the local government, such as the publication of the *Guia d'Economia Social i Solidària per a l'Administració local* (Guide of Social and Solidarity Economy for Local Administration).

3. Proposals to improve training in SSE

SSE training's main characteristics are its values, principles and the way of doing things with a critical look at the current economic model, with the intention to do it differently. Transparency, democracy, equality and respect are the values that guide the practices that increasingly take more space in new projects, or new ways of collective auto-organization. First of all, SSE proposes a critical look to think through the processes of training from the logical aspect of accumulating knowledge. SSE projects development is understood from logic of processes and in relation to the development of fundamental competencies.

Discussions are revealed here in relation to the training for people who make up the most diverse groups in SSE practical experiences. The material analyzed emerges from the meetings of different focus groups conducted in each territory. Some of the competencies (attitudes, skills and knowledge) that will be pointed out here should be developed in the following Intellectual Outputs: a 'portfolio' of competencies, the training modules, and the virtual game, according to the project schedule.

3.1. Regarding competencies

Cooperative competence

The ability to work collectively is one of the first issues addressed, that is, the cooperative competence. Incorporating various aspects related to cooperation, this competence refers to the integration of the different points of view, the recognition and acceptance of plurality. It turns out to be a necessity to learn to make decisions collectively, managing the required time for this task; bearing in mind that time and collective rhythms are usually very demanding and require skill in handling.

In the processes of cooperative work, we seek to take into account the development of the capacities to work together for the same purpose. The idea of collaborative and complementary tasks that do not compete with each other, promotes individual and group development, and enables the growth of the group and the search for synergies. This also works with the notion of process, wherein the group perceives the group dynamics that has a natural progression and needs constant adjustment.

Although it has been a recurring theme in several countries, interestingly it is also possible to verify that teamwork may not be a priority. This group argues that their expectations and experience suggest others who share the same ethical values are happy to share and not to be precious about their skills or their time; they are naturally inclined to working together.

Related to cooperation, one also finds the notion of co-responsibility. In the exercise of the participative democracy it becomes indispensable to take part in the collective decision-making processes. The horizontalness of the decision-making processes is compatible with the absence of hierarchy; and involves that everyone has to take shared responsibility.

Political competence

Participation in collective projects is linked to a way of understanding and constructing social relationships and as a way of solving daily needs, be these labour, subsistence or related to the environment, and responding to them in a self-managed and autonomous way. This has to do with the development of social sensitivity and awareness and an attitude moving from "I" to "Us", developing a sense of what is happening around and beyond our microcosm.

Being in touch with what's happening in the country in terms of collective organization allows a view of micro and macro dynamics. There is the need to develop the political competence and the ability to understand, analyze and connect challenges collectively; and know and share the elements of context and act in small-scale dynamics.

In some cases, one no longer seeks to change the world but simply do one's part, change one's own world, one's own way of doing things. Political consciousness gives coherence to ethical attitudes and the fact of doing for the common good. Taking responsibility for the way in which each lives his life and how that affects others. A sense of shared responsibility.

Meanwhile in the post-modern world, the place of the political subject is also the place of complexity. Taking the values and principles that are put to the test in daily practice, it is sometimes necessary to occupy this place and be able to be there, although it is not so easy. It requires the ability to deal with complex situations in a shared manner and discuss and question the issues addressed, without losing focus.

Leadership competence

Working on leadership in the collective spaces, has to do with the roles that each participant plays in the very different experiences related to SSE. This proposes an idea of leadership not related to positions of power, but poly-centric dynamics. Develop internal training tools and the rotation of roles to distribute this capacity for leadership. Work towards facilitating participative processes and the coordination of meetings.

Developing leadership competencies means: knowing how to recognize and appreciate the individual competencies that can serve the collective purpose; the ability to unite people, create the conditions for collaborative work and manage the multi-disciplinary approach;

know how to understand and balance the time of dedication and commitment that each person assumes in the various collective practices, to prevent the processes of 'burnout'; know about participative processes and tools for decision-making.

Related to this point there is also the ability to coordinate actions, such as the ability to observe, evaluate and adjust. Working with clear and realistic goals and expectations is as important as knowing how to share them, and knowing how to participate and communicate ideas. The discussion and implementation of collective agreements can be provided by a good understanding of all the forces that make up the field of decisions.

The challenge is to build a vision where every member can contribute their perspective, enabling a better understanding of the situation and the possibility of making joint decisions. Although the awareness of the vision of all is favored, often you need to be able to depart from personal opinion, so that the entire group can take the necessary steps forward.

Emotional competence

Collective work requires the perception of others in their emotional dimension, that is, the notion of how to self-manage one's own emotions. There is a need to learn to manage the emotional dimension that group work requires, which allows sharing and managing singularities.

Within this dimension there are some skills that have to do with the culture of the group. For example, active listening, emotional intelligence, the ability to empathize, the capacity to offer, give and take along with other skills related to the organization and group dynamics. It is also considered important to know and work in terms of conflict resolution, mediation and non-violent communication.

Related to this aspect is also cited the ability to focus on the human factor, as opposed to a dominant economic system that dehumanizes, isolates and weakens people. In this sense, we speak of the ability to see oneself beyond one's professional role and also see others, as people. Feel love for what you do, do it with inspiring integrity and interdependence.

Entrepreneurial competence

The spirit of entrepreneurship was the primary factor in some countries, where it was considered essential to develop this capability. This reflected the need to unite it to creativity, to a positive attitude and to the practical skills of entrepreneurship or auto-organization, which promote achievable and sustainable development.

They may seem contradictory, but it is considered interesting to develop two important features. On the one hand, the ability to dream and be a visionary, with a certain degree of thoughtlessness that allows developing creativity and the taking of risks; and secondly to have a close sense of reality, to really know what will work and also be able to recognize and accept what will not.

Also referred to is the importance of determination. Determination to succeed and to live according to what one believes, through the way of working, negotiating and collaborating with others. The determination that comes from the practice of experiencing what is coherent with the beliefs, values and lifestyle of oneself.

In some countries there is the need to clarify certain notions, working properly with the principles of the SSE, and proposing a re-conceptualization or redefinition of its concepts, enabling an appropriate collectivized vision. It signals that we must give a new meaning to or return to the origins of the concepts linked to the SSE and its values as a starting point.

In this light, it is committed to working on competencies that have to do with the management, development and sustainability of social projects. It argues that, rather than identifying a previously established framework, it manages a box of resources allowing the production of series of training resources, but related to the needs of the specific collective project.

In this way we could understand the necessity to have available a number of resources that have to do with the basic skills and knowledge that any venture needs to make it work and succeed.

General competencies to create and develop a venture in SSE

Management competencies

- Understanding business or self-organization structures and systems, which are to be used within the company or the collective project
- The ability to delegate and prioritize
- Planning, organization and administration skills
- Strategic management skills
- Problem solving skills
- Knowledge of the history, the institutional and legal framework of the SSE
- Knowledge of legal requirements to establish a business, taxes, insurances, civil liability, etc
- Basic computer skills

Economic and financial competencies

- Economic and financial management skills
- Knowledge of public and private funding
- Basic knowledge of accounting

In some cases, you have to overcome a difficulty in order to reach a more tangible sphere of a project. Resistances between ethical practice, the project's sustainability and profits are generated.

Communication competencies

- Oral and written communication skills, both internal and external to the organization
- Ability to develop inter-cooperative networks. Invest in building relationships of mutual support and assistance, based on complementarity
- Ability to maintain focus on the project's purpose: customer, user or collaborator
- Skill in managing social networks and new technologies
- Ability to work on the political and institutional impact
- Knowledge for the realization of social marketing. It is just as important to work on technique as content; communicate outside of the SSE world, without its jargon

3.2 Methodological strategies

This point highlights the need for generating teaching and learning processes that considers the factors to be adopted in the way they are developed.

Work contents that emphasize or focus on the notions of territory, context, and community participation


This point highlights the need for generating teaching and learning processes that considers the context in which they develop, as a main factor. Identification of experiences related to SSE, recognition of the territory and its characteristics, will allow one to analyze the possibilities of the development of a proposal and its adaptation. It helps to identify the needs of the community in which it develops and what are the mediums to sustain it.

Keep questioning the training processes to avoid falling into conventional economic strategies

Generate a critical process of the training which permits identification of the mechanisms that can make us appropriate to the logics of the competitive market and of self-sufficiency. Be attentive to the construction of teaching and learning processes that keep us alert to the co-optive mechanisms.

The project-based learning, based on clear objectives

Promote processes to implement the values and ways of doing things collectively, based on a strategy of identifying needs and context analysis. The possibility to learn how to develop a project from concept to execution. Practice oriented on objectives, work in relation to what we want to achieve, based on questions that help assess and place yourself. Work on the



capacity to develop realistic, current, dynamic, integrated and articulated strategies in the local territory.

3.3. Youth training needs

In most countries there has not been an indication for a specific need with relation to the training of young people; meanwhile various aspects have been addressed.

Generate processes of experiential training from an early stage, learn by doing

It is pointed out the need to stimulate experiences of experiential training in SSE which can be introduced in stages from an early age. The proposal is that a person starts creating spaces of solitary work, where things are done collectively and responsible is shared. A normalized way of doing things differently from the beginning. The self-management of extracurricular activities is suggested as a way to allow the students to approach self-occupation experiences within the training little-by-little. Self-management, collective decision-making, common learning and work planning are suggested. It is also suggested to promote experiences that give visibility to the values that are built, based on experimentation.

It is also committed to the integration of a transversal module to be spread from primary school to university. To promote the experimentation of the SSE practice in unions, associations, as well as through role plays. We believe in an innovative, participatory, self-managed, educational approach focused on the student; work based in critical thinking and practical activities.

One more reason for working with SSE from an early age is justified, when in every country it has been observed that this path is one of the main reasons leading people to engage in SSE. The personal journey in associative life leads to the establishment of a commitment to the diverse organizations of general interest, which are usually constructed from adolescence to

adulthood. People seek a convergence of personal and professional motivations: a process that takes time.


Visualize and systematize SSE practices in the territory

It is possible to gain higher order thinking skills from studying SSE practices, identifying those being developed in a regional context, or close to the areas where the trainings are being implemented. Rather than working on pre-established content, one can identify and systematize experiences developed in context. It intends to theorize about practice and put names to things. This strategy can serve two functions, on one hand in relation to self-esteem and the recognition of what is being done; and the other in relation to the construction of a common language. Systematizing and documenting in this way facilitates new ways of saying things and transmitting that knowledge. Working this way also facilitates the construction of common and shared networks.

Visualization and systemization also aims to identify collaborative practices that exist in its territory (not necessarily linked to SSE). In particular, it intends to consider the expressions that come from peers which are also fertile spaces for exchange (for example, community gardening, sports teams, rehearsal spaces where they come into contact with music bands, other groups and networks, spaces to exchange trading cards and video games). Also mentioned is the possibility of opting for intergenerational and inter-cultural exchange. Beyond the tools, the training and seminar methodologies used are equally as important, together with the narrations from other groups of people that are within the realm of the SSE, promoting the opportunity to learn about how people manage to find their way and do things.

Collectively work the emotional dimension

Regarding the tools to work on, it is suggested not to lose sight of the emotional aspects that make up the construction of collective relations. In this sense, it is suggested to also incorporate the reflection on tensions and contradictions that make the construction of what is common, overcoming the hegemonic logic of the system functioning. To provide support during the different stages of the collective process, the motivations, assuming contradictions,



ambiguities and difficulties. It is understood as the only way to do it collectively, to relationally construct oneself from the respect.

Incorporate playfulness in methodology

Here also, is highlight the aspect of fun as a fundamental tool in learning, particularly related to young people. Games are understood as a tool to facilitate processes and the empowerment of those involved. The methodology used should be based on the collective game.

4. Final thoughts

As it has been demonstrated in this study, despite the diversity of contexts and nominative forms, common factors are identified, both in its form of expression and SSE training needs.

To finish, some remarks as a synthesis that become the guidelines for future phases of the project. In the different contexts analyzed it is recognized that there is an increase in interest in the areas of SSE training. While still expressed marginally, we recognize an increase of educational opportunities in this field. It is important to highlight the experience gained in the sector by SSE enterprises themselves, which becomes a very important source of information to go deeper. Most of the contents developed so far are orientated to the training for the creation of a business or social venture.

In the majority of cases at university level, SSE training refers to specific modules or courses in disciplines such as economics or social sciences. France and Spain's context are those which have developed more along this line, in recent years. Although the most important tradition in education is related to Social Economy, there are increasingly more expressions of SSE-oriented training. In this area too, and particularly in Italy and France, there are proposals of mixed training that attempt to combine theory with practice for SSE professionals. Training seeks to capture and pass on the accumulated learning by individuals involved in ventures and with an orientation towards processes and practices.

As was developed in Chapter 4, we recognize a series of competencies and SSE training needs that must be looked into further. Firstly, the need for teaching-learning dynamics that are based on processes and content tailored to the specific needs of the contexts in which training takes place. Group work and context analysis are essential when you begin to think of any training process on SSE.

Regarding the necessary competencies needed to develop a SSE experience, there have been identified those general, related to the creation and management of the ventures (economic, administrative and communication); and then those specifically related to the development of the SSE experiences. In this sense, it mentions the competencies related to leadership and emotional relationships management and as a strategy for constructing horizontal and cooperative relations. The cooperative dimension is fundamental and that is why it is necessary to work on the basis of shared responsibility. What stands out about the political component in ventures is the need to develop a critical spirit to keep the analysis of the context and the commitment to the social environment. Finally, it is noteworthy that, although all contexts have mentioned the difficulties that SSE is facing from a gender perspective, no pedagogical suggestions to work on it are proposed. We highlight this point, to be considered in the following stages.

This research has been able to identify, in most contexts, the special interest that young people have in relation to the SSE. The motivations that these experiences generate range from the social commitment to the visualization of possible and desirable job prospects. While there is not much training offered in this line, little by little we begin to visualize strategies and proposals. Particularly in this investigation and finally, we should highlight the guidelines referred to in this study. Firstly, the stimulation of early experiences linked to the SSE. As is also mentioned, in relation to the content, the work from the systematization of practices in context and close to the target population. In this way, we can not only generate a practice-based learning, but also facilitate the intergenerational and cultural exchange of each context. Finally, and no less important, it is necessary and fundamental that this work incorporates the emotional and playful dimension in the whole learning process.

The deepening of these lines of work and the implementation of training experiences in this regard may be a key contribution to the continued articulation and generation of synergies towards building the Social and Solidarity Economy.

5. Gratitude to the participating businesses & organisations

United Kingdom

Glass Half Full. Ltd company

Midlands Centre for Mindfulness & Compassion. Community Interest Company

Creative Optimistic Visions - Community Interest Company

EnV. Coventry - Community Interest Company

Coventry University Social Enterprise

Greece

Solidarity Association of Kiki

Metropolitan Social Clinic of Hellenikon

Time Bank

SYN-ZW Cooperative, Athens

Participative Neighborhood Initiatives of Athens

European Village. Cooperative café in Plato's Academy

Cooperative and Solidarity Economy Festival organizing team

Citizens Initiative on Unconditional Basic Income (Greece)

Kangaroo Permaculture

E.P.E.K.S.A. Scientific Society for Social Cohesion and Development

PER.KA. Urban & suburban Crops Group

France

Bank "Crédit coopératif"

Jardins d'Oasis, NGO

CABESTAN

OXALIS, CAE

Développement et humanisme, SCOP

AFEV, national association for young volunteers

MAIF

CREFAD Loire, NGO

RIPESS

Max Weber sociology laboratory (university)

Italy

Cooperativa Sociale Il Cammino.

Cooperativa Sociale Domus Laetitiaie.

Raggio Verde s.c.s - Botteghe commercio equo e solidale.

Banchiere Volante Banca Etica s.c.

Gruppo di Acquisto Solidale (GAS) Il Girasole di Novara.

Nondisolopane impresa sociale.

Spain

Cooperativa La Ciutat Invisible.

Cooperativa Labcoop.

Cooperativa Arç.

Cooperativa més Opcions.

SETEM Catalunya.

Cooperativa Fleca L'Aresta.

Ateneu Cooperativo de Nou Barris.

Cooperativa ETCS Estratègies de Transformació Comunitària Sostenible.

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Training Resources:

1- Barcelona, España - Universidad de Barcelona – Máster en Agricultura Ecológica

www.ub.edu/agroecologia/masterae/26,presentacion.html

2- Barcelona, España - Universidad de Barcelona – Máster en Economía Social y Dirección de Entidades Sin Ánimo de Lucro www.il3.ub.edu/es/master/master-economia-social-direccion-entidades-sin-animo-lucro.html

3- Barcelona, España - Universitat Abat Oliba CEU – Máster Universitario en Gestión y Comunicación de Entidades Sociales y Solidarias

www.uaoceu.es/es/estudios/masteres/master-en-gestion-y-comunicacion-de-entidades-sociales-y-solidarias

4- Barcelona, España - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona – Postgrau en Economia Cooperativa www.uab.cat/web/postgrau/diplomatura-de-postgrau-en-economia-cooperativa/informacio-general-1203328491238.html/param1-2299_ca/param2-2004/

5- Barcelona, España - UOC - Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. Instituto Internacional de posgrado – Posgrado Diseño para la sostenibilidad www.uoc.edu/masters/esp/web/cooperacion_humanitaria_paz_y_sostenibilidad/sostenibilidad/postgrau/disseny-sostenibilitat/

6- Bilbao, España - Universidad del País Vasco - UPV/EHU – Máster de Economía Social y Solidaria www.ehu.es/es/web/erg/content/-/asset_publisher/8dGK/content/master-de-economia-social-y-solidaria?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ehu.es%2Fes%2Fweb%2Ferg%2Fhasiera%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_6eXz%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_pos%3D1%26p_p_col_count%3D2

7- Cáceres, España - Universidad de Extremadura, España – On-line Curso de Perfeccionamiento en Economía Alternativa y Solidaria www.unex.es/organizacion/secretariados/postgrado/funciones/cursos/perfeccionamiento/economia%20alternativa%20solid

8- Huelva, España - Universidad de Huelva – Doctorado en desarrollo local y economía social http://uhu.es/noticieros/posgrado/files/POD_PI_Desarrollo_Local_Econom%3ADa_Social.pdf

9- Huelva, España - Universidad de Huelva – Experto en Economía Solidaria y Emprendimientos Sociales http://www.uhu.es/formacion_permanente/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=63&Itemid=115&lang=es

10- Madrid, España - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, CIADE – Cursos para emprendedores sociales <http://www.ciade.org/>

11- Murcia, España - Universidad Católica de Murcia – Master universitario en desarrollo social – online <http://www.ucam.edu/estudios/postgrados/desarrollo-social-a-distancia/plan-de-estudios/guias-academicas-por-cursos>

12- San Sebastián, España - Universidad del País Vasco – Master Universitario en Economía Social y Solidaria http://www.ikasketak.ehu.es/p266-shmastct/eu/pls/entrada/plew0050.htm_nextp_sesion=&p_cod_idioma=CAS&p_en_portal=S&p_cod_centro=908&p_cod_master=557&p_anyo_acad=act&p_menu=2

13- Sevilla, España - Escuela de economía social – Búsquedas de fondos europeos y multilaterales para entidades de la Economía Social, autónomos y Pymes

<http://www.escueladeeconomiasocial.es/formacion/busquedas-de-fondos-europeos-y-multilaterales-para-entidades-de-la-economia-social-autonomos-y-pymes>

14- Sevilla, España - Escuela de economía social – Curso on-line: FINANZAS ÉTICAS Y ECONOMÍA SOCIAL: ¿Cómo financiar las empresas de Economía Social?

<http://www.escueladeeconomiasocial.es/formacion/finanzas-eticas-y-economia-social>

15- Toledo, España - Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha - UCLM – Postgrado Iberoamericano en Cooperativismo, Economía Social y Solidaria <http://ess.sirse.info/>

16- Tudela, España - Uned de Tudela – Curso on line: Principios para una economía justa II edición 2014 <https://extension.uned.es/actividad/7684>

17- València, España - Instituto Universitario de Economía Social y Cooperativa IUDESCOOP de la Universitat de València – Diploma en Dirección y Gestión de Empresas de Turismo de Interior y de Desarrollo Local <http://www.iudescoop-formaempleo.es/cursos-postgrado/diploma-turismo-desarrollo-local/organizacion-y-direccion-del-diploma-2/>

18- Valencia, España - Instituto Universitario de Economía Social y Cooperativa IUDESCOOP de la Universitat de València – Doctorado en Economía Social <http://www.iudescoop-formaempleo.es/doctorado/caracteristicas-generales-del-doctorado/>

19- Valencia, España - Universidad Politécnica de Valencia – Curso Economía Social y Solidaria y Desarrollo Comunitario

http://www.cfp.upv.es/formacion-permanente/cursos/economia-social-y-solidaria-y-desarrollo-comunitario_rsstrue-cid30200

20- Zaragoza, España - Universidad de Zaragoza – DOES - Diplomado de Especialización en Dirección de Organizaciones de Economía Social <http://www.unizar.es/does/>

21- Máster en Economía Social y empresa cooperativa Grupo Mondragón.
<http://www.mondragon.edu/es/estudios/master/economia-social-y-empresa-cooperativa/>

22- Dossier de herramientas pedagógicas en ESS
http://www.socioeco.org/bdf_dossier-37_es.htm



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