



International Conference “Unlocking the Potential of the Social Economy for EU Growth”

WORKING GROUP REPORT

On the first day of the Conference, November 17th, 2014, a total of 10 working groups (WG) were held to discuss relevant topics that had been previously identified via a public consultation. Rapporteurs and moderators produced individual reports for each WG and they are published as they were received, without undergoing any editing process. The reports are divided into five sections (Main recommendations; Starting point; Main issues discussed; Recurrent issues; and Concrete proposals) although not all of them were completed in all WG.

In addition to individual WG reports, a document highlighting the main recommendations from all of the WG is available at www.socialeconomyrome.it.

Please note that this is a working document, not edited for form or content.

WORKING GROUP 1: POLICY SUPPORT AT NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVEL: REGULATION, STATE AID, FISCAL INCENTIVES, AND RELATED MATTERS

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Rapporteur: Monika Klimowicz (University of Wroclaw), Poland

Speakers:

1. Jean-Christophe Burkel (ULESS), Luxembourg
2. Aurélie Duprés (ENSIE), Belgium
3. Luca Dal Pozzo (CECOP-CICOPA), Belgium
4. Antonio Fici (University of Molise), Italy
5. Emmanuelle Faure (European Foundation Center), Belgium
6. Luke Fletcher (BWB), UK

7. Petra Francova (P3), Czech Republic
8. Charlotte Holmer Kaufmanas (National Center of Social Enterprise), Denmark
9. Hagen Henry (University of Helsinki), Finland
10. Mauro Iengo (Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane), Italy
11. Pier Paolo Inserra (DIES MN), Italy
12. Todor Ivanov (Euro Coop), Belgium
13. Raluca Ouriaghli (RISE) Romania
14. Placido Putzolu (AIM, FIMIV), Belgium
15. Rita Pires (Ministério da Solidariedade e Segurança Social), Portugal (GECES EXPERT);
16. Zoran Stojkovski (Center for Institutional Development-CIRa), FYR of Macedonia;
17. Amaryllis Verhoeven (DG Internal Market and Services), EU;
18. Emmanuel Verny (Ceges), France

Main recommendations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social economy enterprises see the need of new definition of the social economy as hole and social enterprises. It is necessary to take in count into the definition the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collective dimension - Democratic governance <p>In order to respect the pluralism of social enterprises the status of the social economy enterprise (cooperatives, mutuals, foundations and associations) should be implemented.</p> 2. The promotion the social economy, social enterprises and social values is very important for unlocking the potential of the sector. Different initiatives should be designed to promote the social economy, social enterprises and social values. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Label, which should be develop with the social economy actors - Create PanaEuropean website dedicated to social enterprises legal status. With data about stating and running the social enterprises in the frames of legal framework in each country. - Promote social and economic standards and values. - Create promoting agency at the European level. - Create the media network to support and promote the social economy. 3. Social economy enterprises see the need to prepare and implement the action plan which would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating inter-service social economy unity between the different DGs Commission - Social dialog with Social economy actors involved on European, national and local level is needed, adapting the existing committees to mad this possible. - Developing appropriate tax and fiscal system for the social economy enterprise - Monitoring of the use of the European funds and especially the structural funds dedicated to social economy - Developing educational policies in the frames of partnership between all the sectors; universities, public authorities, social economy entities. - Improve the place of social economy in Public procurement not only through social clauses.

Starting point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The most important issue to start the public policy is to define the objective and the field of action. - To do so the main issues to be able to support the social economy on the European or national level is to agree about a clear and shared definition. - On the European level, social economy's actors and the EESC reckon that the description of social enterprises needs to be further clarified to give clarity to the concept and models. - Legal forms as well as status for mutual, associations, cooperatives, and foundations on European and national level, let the social economy to organize and recognize the social economy sectors - But defining is not enough, than it can be useful to support social economy and social enterprises by Organizing: - Designation of a Representative organisation – this organisation receive support (subsidy) to Promote social economy and Represent SE enterprise - Create an ad hoc council that received the mission to give advice to the Commission, in the EESC? - The social economy intergroup in the European Parliament should be renewed as a tool of concentration between the stakeholders of social economy and the parliament - Set priorities and make a plan of action is essential - The diversity of the sector is important for the recognition and preparing the correct action at the national and European level.
Main issues discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The understanding of the shape of the social economy sector in European Union countries is fundamental. - Social enterprises changer the legal form existing in the country to make it more suitable to their function. - Legal status (for associations, mutual, foundations and cooperatives) is a the organizational structures of social enterprises that can operate in different shapes of the existing legal forms in each countries. - The priority is to think about the legal status first than the legal form. - There is a need of visibility of social enterprises in European Union countries. - Unlocking the potential of social economy sector needs different tools and regulations - Legal regulatory aspects - Mapping social enterprises - Social enterprises are political concept - Principal finding there are enormous account of legal forms of social enterprises in European Union countries. - The social economy organizations need proper tools and regulations dedicated to their specific role or function. - The framework of foundations is not integrated. They need the same rules to act and cooperate on the common market. - Some initiatives are not well dedicated.

- Cross-border foundations have many problems to state operating in another country because of the differences in the definition of legal forms.
- Legal framework for mutual in EU, needs and state of questions: Mutual societies: a statute to unlock their growth potential
- Mutual societies are crucial for social protection and cooperation values in the European Union countries.
- The gap of European regulations makes it impossible to become international for MS.
- The mutual society status would unlock the potential of the MS.
- Cooperatives are economically effective and social objectives focuses organizations.
- The cooperative road map is important for the growth of the cooperatives movement in EU and need to be followed.
- They give the back to the community person is in the need of cooperatives actions.
- Cooperatives have different forms but they are very important in the economy because of the income they create in the European economy and create jobs.
- Really important is more develop is the cooperation the distribution of the income is better. The measurement the redistribution of GDP is based on the number of the cooperatives in the regions. The higher the number of the cooperatives is the better the GDP is redistributed.
- The main point the job market opportunities increase in the frames of the cooperatives.
- The some markets will help welfare state policies they increase the possibility of decreasing the cost but they should be taken out of the competitiveness.
- Adequate taxation rules can be crucial for the growth of the cooperatives.
- New possibilities to take some of the services from the market to the cooperatives movement.
- To have statistical data that could be share at the EU and national level.
- Cooperatives law is important because of the regulations at EU

It will make easier to act for the cooperatives.

- We need to define the policy aims for the development
- There is a need for the participation in the decisions and democracy and is shown in the cooperatives movement.
- The legal structure approach is important for the public policies addressed to the cooperatives
- Common principles have to be crucial for creating the legal frameworks for the cooperatives.
- We need the law to visibility of the social economy organizations at the EU and national level
- Legal law makes legal identity.
- The regulations for cooperatives at the EU level become very important for the cooperatives movement in European Union countries.
- The legal status is fundamental for the recognition of the social economy entities as much cooperatives as the others organizations.
- Legal status may be understood as legal category.
- The regulations at the EU can create a legal status of social economy entities.
- Social enterprises are: the objective of the social enterprises is crucial to define the social enterprises. The activities are important for the definition of the social enterprise. The governance of the social enterprises is also very important to define the social enterprises.
- We have to move forward not to stay at the Strasburg declaration but to create regulations that will move forward the social economy movement in European Union.
- New sort of legal forms for social enterprises in Luxembourg.
- The number of social enterprises is higher and higher.
- Social entrepreneurs do not feel safe because of the lack of the law regulations.

- The definitions of the SE have to identify the sector.
- The work in Luxembourg is to draft the regulations at the national level to implement it next year 2015.
- The progress of the creating the structure for the social enterprise in Luxembourg.
- In Denmark they have proved that they can ask as market companies and gain the social objectives.
- There is a strong cooperation between social economy enterprises and public authorities which is crucial for the development of the social enterprises sector.
- The correct and common definition of the social economy enterprises should be established.
- Political will is needed to develop the implementation of the regulation in Romania
- SEE and work integration need recognition, financial support regulatory support, taxes access to public procurement and monitoring of the European level of structural funds on social economy and social objective.
- Monitoring committee at the European level to of Structural funds
- Creating label for social economy principals criteria suggested by Social Economy Europe
- There is no public support for social economy in Romania and the social
- Governance and social economy in the local development and research.
- To develop social economy we need to develop democratize and participatory policy.
- We need to coordinate our policies and understand what is going on at the national level.
- To prefer and to incentivize long-term projects
- To promote the research for the social economy to go beyond the traditional approaches in the economy and policy.
- The draft was prepared to be presented to the Macedonia Government
- The definition of the social enterprises has been prepared in the regulation
- Unemployment is a huge problem in Macedonia.
- Establishing for a social enterprises in Macedonia.
- Current legal forms of the III sector have the opportunity to be recognized as Social Enterprises. But market organizations with the social objective are also included in the regulation in Macedonia.
- The mainstream policy towards the social enterprises at the European level helps to create the regulations in Macedonia.
- In Croatia they are more focused on programs for the social enterprises than the legal frameworks.
- Access for funding for social initiatives is very limited in Macedonia; much more the funding is for the NGOs than the social enterprises.
- Respect the diversity of the structure of social economy in European Union
- Education policies if, we need to develop social economy we need to develop it from the inside and outside.
- Show the social value.
- Visibility policy from inside and outside policy.
- Marketing and addressing it to the public.
- Media partner and the support.
- Education on social economy involving different actors.
- Promoting the social economy values.
- Works on regulations for the social enterprises has been taken in Czech Republic.
- The recommendations from the Government indeed are that it should cost nothing, which is almost impossible.
- Pure business and NGOs –two types of social enterprise in Czech Republic.
- Cooperation between Post-communistic countries is needed because the situation in the countries.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SE they respond to community need and they adopt very democratic model. - We need tax environment for the social economy entities. - The social enterprises definition is needed to prepare the tools for the Se and it is needed for the appropriate politics solutions. If they do not recognize correctly the sector they will not prepare the appropriate instruments. The case of Italian cooperatives has been given to show that there is a need to prepare the international cooperation in the preparing the regulations for the social enterprises.
<p align="center">Recurrent issues that came up during the discussion</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Pan-European legal form, as social economy/social enterprise form is not easy to adopt it will take time. But a clear and common definition is urgent and required. The subtype in existing legal forms and status (associations, mutual, foundations, cooperatives) would be the solution for the diversity of the legal forms of social economy entities. - At the national level too status and legal forms are required. - Social entrepreneur is crucial in its role for the process of unlocking the potential of social enterprises. - Policy needs to build tools to unlock the potential. - The non-European Union countries (candidate countries) are also interested in participating in the decision making process of the creating the legal frameworks for social economy. - The European legal frameworks are very important for the entities cooperating with other European and non-European countries. - The need to help to set up the social economy entities. - Social economy is a local economy so it is important to foster the local development. - Create the new jobs in the field of social economy. - Social economy is able we need infrastructure and the support policy. - New policies at the national and European level are needed. - One of the main key is to have clear indications and statistics which show the contribution of the social economy and cooperatives in Europe. - The specific European status of associations, foundations, mutuals and cooperatives would be/is essential tool for their development in the international market. It would allow for the provision of complementary health and social protection, which the full benefits of governance and solidarity principles which are characteristic of mutualism. - Social economy should be involved in all the dimension of social dialog.
<p align="center">Concrete proposals discussed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need of new definition of the social economy as whole and social enterprises. There is the need to take into account the following criteria: collective dimension and democratic governance - In order to respect the pluralism of social enterprises the status of the social economy enterprise (cooperatives, mutuals, foundations and associations) should be implemented. - Create a European action plan for supporting the social economy enterprises - Create interservice social economy unity between the different DGs Commission - Develop appropriate tax and fiscal system for the social economy enterprise - Improve the place of social economy in Public procurement not only through social clauses

- Monitoring of the use of the European funds and especially the structural funds dedicated to social economy
- Developing educational policies in the frames of partnership between all the sectors; universities, public authorities, social economy entities.
- Social dialog on European, national and local level is needed for example in working on the implementation
- Promotion the social economy, social enterprises and social standards and values.
- Label, which should be develop with the social economy actors
- PanaEuropean website dedicated to social enterprises legal status. With data about stating and running the social enterprises in the frames of legal framework in each country.
- Create promoting agency at the European level
- Create media network to support and promote the social economy

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact info@emes.net and socialeconomyrome@lavoro.gov.it