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(Points for Panel Discussion, Trento, Sept. 2005)

Suggested themes for research

1. Social and economic history research

(Support for research on the pre-Communist co-op tradition)

2. Mapping the current situation

(Pilot studies mapping the scope of existing social enterprises, their structure, aims, impact, problems, needs)

3. Links with research centres in other countries

(Mutual research projects with countries with a longer social economy tradition)

Suggested themes for research – continued

4. Legal structure development

(New legal definitions and formats need to be developed for social economy organisations)

5. Public and municipal funding mechanism research

(Funding approaches based on best practice abroad, incl. non-profit re-investment trusts)

6. Enabling organisation creation and networking

(Support for the creation of enabling organisations – to assist with know-how, finance, access to infrastructure such as office or work space)

Education

To spark interest in the idea of the social economy, a bottom-up approach to training may be appropriate:

practitioners as teachers, government and municipal officials as learners (field trips and study trips)

Other target groups for short courses on “what is social enterprise”: non-profit, pastoral, community workers, environmentalists, farmers, journalists, the unemployed

Formal university courses: local social entrepreneurs contributing expertise, placements in social economy organisations