



**Organisation for Economic Co-operation and  
Development**



**Local Economic and Employment  
Development Programme**

## **“SOCIAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL INNOVATION”**

**A capacity building seminar  
for policy-makers and practitioners**

**The OECD LEED Trento Centre for Local Development**

**14 – 19 November 2004  
Trento, Italy**

**Draft Programme**



**1. Background:** Experience from OECD countries shows a rich variety of organisations that have developed alongside for-profit enterprises and public organisations, pursuing a range of missions from productive goals to advocacy and grant-making activities. What these organisations share, and what sets them apart from for-profit enterprises is the overall aim of their activities, which excludes the pursuit of profit as an ultimate goal and its distribution to the owners. At the same time, such organisations present a wide variety of goals and objectives, which can be synthesised along two axes:

- The entrepreneurship axis: some of these organisations carry out entrepreneurial activities, although they are not-for-profit, others pursue different functions: aggregation of preferences and needs, re-distribution, advocacy.
- The beneficiaries' axis: some not-for-profit organisations benefit the founders and the owners, providing them with goods and services; other benefits people or groups, excluding the founders, other mix the interests of founders/owners and external individuals.

While the resulting framework is complex, and often subject to different national cultures and legal frameworks, this range of not-for-profit economic activity can be usefully termed “social economy”.

The historical experience of OECD economies therefore provides evidence of the great potential of “social economy” organisations (co-operative societies, mutual organisations and other non-profit organisations such as foundations and associations) in support of local economic development. Most importantly, social economy organisations fulfil the following objectives:

- They contribute to reducing market failures and their consequences on the welfare of people and communities in poorly-functioning markets.
- They help foster social cohesion in the presence of both market failures and well-functioning markets.
- They can provide public and merit goods using resources other than public resources.

At the same, experience from the Central Eastern and South Eastern European countries shows that reforms towards functioning democratic societies and market economies have resulted in growing inequalities in the standard of living and a sharp rise in poverty. As physical and social infrastructure deteriorated, with rising consumption prices and a changing labour market, the potential of “social economy” organisations remained untapped for a number of reasons, including:

- The prevalence of transition myths, which have so far focused on the creation of a market economy, underestimating the role of ‘alternative organisations’ as vehicles for economic development, both at national and local levels.
- The adoption of models of non-profit organisations, mostly based on the US experience (operating in functioning markets and the presence of donors as grant-making foundations).
- Cultural opposition and political distrust towards certain organisational models (co-operative form). Social cohesion is mainly limited to family and friends networks and economic activities focused personal benefits rather than activities capable of producing positive externalities on society at large.



- The lack of suitable legal frameworks for social economy organisations (co-operatives and other non-profit organisations).

The one-week course therefore seeks to deepen participants' knowledge base on the role and potential of social economy organisations in promoting local development, with a special focus on the issues relating to Central, Eastern and South Eastern European Countries.

**2. Target Countries:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Slovak Republic and Ukraine

**3. Participants' Profile:** Two participants will be selected in each country. Participants from each country will represent both the national policymaking community and innovative social economy organisations working at the local level. This will ensure a dialogue between national stakeholders in the social economy and social innovation field. To this end, local level practitioners will be identified from a range of experiences, including:

- co-operatives (housing, producer, credit, social, etc.);
- micro credit institutions;
- associations working in social service delivery and support;
- social enterprises.

**4. Seminar Contents:** The seminar will be structured along the following themes:

- Defining and understanding the social economy: the historical evolution of the Social Economy in Western Europe;
- The economic and social rationale for the social economy;
- The new role of social economy organisations in welfare service provision and labour market integration;
- Tools for social economy and social innovation: lobbying strategies and networking, information and communication technologies, local partnerships, financing and European Structural Funds;
- Work on case study development with tutors.

**5. Seminar Objectives:** The seminar is aimed to allow participants to gain a deeper understanding of the role and potential of the social economy, and of the tools and strategies it employs to promote social cohesion at the local level. Seminar objectives are:

- To review and assess common methodologies and experiences in social economy organisations across OECD countries, enhancing awareness of the potentials of social economy organisations in sustaining local development and in fighting social inequalities and enhancing social cohesion and solidarity behaviours in transition countries.
- To gain insights on why and how social economy organisations succeed or fail.
- To establish a common set of approaches and tools for the social economy, in the prospect of singling out possible evolution paths for social economy organisations in transition countries.
- To support the endogenous capacity building process in local development and social economy.



**6. Methodology:** Participants will be asked to prepare a case study, detailing their project in the field of social cohesion and social innovation, prior to their arrival, and will work to further develop their case study throughout the seminar week.

The first part of the seminar will include presentations from leading experts, tracing the evolution paths and rationale of social economy organisations in OECD countries. This section will cover an analysis of the range of organisations specific to the social economy, ranging from tradition co-operative models to more recent forms of social co-operatives and other non-profit organisations (NPOs). Classroom sessions will be enriched and contextualised through study visits to Trentino social economy organisations, allowing participants to gain a broad and hands-on overview of the social economy in practice.

In the second half of the week, participants will be divided into 3-4 groups, on the basis of their profile and interests, in order to work more closely on case study development. Each group will be accompanied by a tutor to a relevant social economy organisation or policymaking institution, where participants will exchange best practices on specific tools and strategies relevant to their work. The next day, participants will select 3 out of 6 parallel sessions on tools for the social economy in order to further develop their case study, with the support of the tutor. Individual and group work on case study development will aim at integrating the know-how gained, leading up to the final presentation of results in the closing session.

**7. Working language:** The working language of the seminar will be English.

**8. Cost of participation:** The following costs of participation are covered by the LEED Programme:

- Tuition and training materials;
- Accommodation and meals in the training premises;
- Study visits to relevant organisations in the Autonomous Province of Trento

**The LEED Programme can not cover costs of travel between the participant's home country and Trento, or medical care and insurance during the stay in Italy.**

A limited number of full grants for travel costs are available. These grants will be awarded based on an assessment of applicant's case study, motivation letter and curriculum vitae.

**9. Applications:** **For Practitioners/Local initiatives** selection will be competitive, based on their application. This should include:

- a duly completed *Case Study Form for Local Initiatives*
- a letter of motivation
- curriculum vitae.

Applications should be sent by email to [Paola.Babos@oecd.org](mailto:Paola.Babos@oecd.org) or by fax (+39.0461.277650) no later than **1 October 2004**.

Applicants will be notified within the following two weeks.

**For National Policymakers**, these will be nominated by the competent Ministry/Government Agency by **3 September 2004**.

Nominees should then send their curriculum vitae, and the duly completed *Case Study Form for Policymakers* to [Paola.Babos@oecd.org](mailto:Paola.Babos@oecd.org) or by fax (+39.0461.277650) no later than **25 September 2004**.



**10. Contact details:** For further information, please contact:  
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<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Subject</b>	
<b>SUNDAY EVENING</b>	17:00 – 18:00	Presentation of Participants	<b>INTRODUCTION LEED AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT</b>
	18:00 – 18:30	Introduction to LEED Programme and Local Development (why it matters, what is it, who are the drivers)	
	18:30 – 19:0	Setting the learning objectives	
<b>MONDAY</b>	9:00 – 10:30	Defining the Social Economy in Western European countries	<b>INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL EVOLUTION</b>
		Historical evolution of the Social Economy	
	10:30 – 11:00	Coffee-Break	
	11:00 – 12:30	Historical account continued	<b>STUDY VISIT AND CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS</b>
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	
	14:30 – 18:00	Study visit to traditional Cooperatives	
18:00 – 19:00	Presentation of Participants' case studies		
<b>TUESDAY</b>	9:00 – 10:30	The new role of social economy organisations– The economic and social perspectives	<b>THE RATIONALE OF THE SOCIAL ECONOMY –<i>the economic and social perspectives</i></b>
	10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
	11:00 – 12:30	Continued - Welfare services and labour market integration	
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	<b>STUDY VISIT AND CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS</b>
	14:30 – 18:00	Study Visit to new forms of social economy organizations (Social Cooperatives and other innovative NPOs)	
	18:00 – 19:00	Presentation of Participants' case studies	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	9:00 – 10:30	Presentation of legal and organisational typologies in Western Europe	<b>LEGAL FRAMEWORKS</b>
	10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	<b>WRAP-UP ON FIRST PART</b>
	11:00 – 12:30	Conclusions on conceptualizing the role and potential of the Social Economy Introduction to Case Study Work	
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	<b>MATCHED STUDY VISITS</b>
	14:00 – 18:00	Matched Study Visits to organisations/institutions of interest to participants (3-4 groups)	
	18:00 – 19:00	Presentation from rapporteurs and discussion	
<b>THURSDAY</b>	9:00 – 10:30	Lobbying strategies and networks	<b>TOOLS</b>
		Human Resources in Social Economy Organisations	
	10:30 – 11:00	Coffee-Break	
	11:00 – 12:30	Information and Communication Technologies	
		Alliances and productive networks	
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	
	14:00 – 15:30	Local Partnerships	
		Financing and European Structural Funds	
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee Break	<b>CASE STUDY WORK <i>individual work</i></b>	
16:00 – 18:00	Individual Case Study Development with tutors		



<b>FRIDAY</b>	9:00 – 10:30	Individual Case Study Development with tutors	<b>CASE STUDY WORK</b> <i>individual and group work</i>
	10:30 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
	11:00 – 12:30	Case Study Development – work in study visit groups	
	12:30 – 14:00	Lunch	<b>PRESENTATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS</b>
	14:00 – 16:00	Presentation of Final Case Studies	
	16:00 – 16:30	Evaluation, Networking and Follow-up	
<b>SATURDAY MORNING</b>	8:00 – 12:00	Departure of Participants	