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# **Social Economy in the Czech Republic – Slow Emergence**

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## Key Players of SE Promotion

- # EQUAL Projects in the Czech Republic (7)
- # Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- # Open Society Fund Prague
- # Civil Society Development Foundation
- # Union of Czech and Moravian Producers' Cooperatives
- # Union of Czech Towns and Municipalities
- # SKOK – Association of Social Service Providers
- # Social Policy Department of Charles University Prague  
plus 2-3 other Universities in CR
- # Governmental Committee for NGOs

# Steps taken during last year

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- # EQUAL Projects (7) plus OSF expert and CSDF expert established National Network. Major task: mainstreaming of the social economy ideas and practise, until March 2008
  - # NGOs lobbying to involve support for SE in the 2007 – 2013 Programming Period (partially successful at the MOLSA )
  - # nation-wide conferences covering the SE topics (5-6)
  - # seminars and workshops
  - # SE became the university subject
  - # articles in press
  - # Act on Social Services establishing a system of accreditations for service providers based on pre-defined standards (MOLSA)
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## Existing problems

- # De-motivating system of social and unemployment benefits
- # Concept of SE still not widely known
- # Legislative framework – does not recognise social enterprise
- # Underdeveloped business environment in non-profit sectors
- # Privileged position and lobbying of contributory organisations established by municipalities
- # Absence of research basis and statistics on SE
- # Absence of favourable financial framework

## **Opportunities to introduce SE in the Czech Republic**

- # Demand for services at local level sharply increased
- # Existing elements of sustainable „small“ economy
- # Existing local employment potential
- # Awareness of SE raising
- # Social Act ( new legislation for social services)
- # EU Documents, 2007-2013 Planning Documents
- # Determined organisations with know-how ,  
EQUAL National Network

## **What Next – EQUAL National Network Plan**

- # Dissemination and Mainstreaming
- # Lobbying (policy makers and legislation)
- # Promoting new SE projects
- # Promoting training schemes
- # International and national networking
- # Awareness raising
- # Training programmes