



## 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](http://www.socialeconomyrome.it).

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

### WORKING GROUP 2 THE ROLE OF EU STRUCTURAL FUNDS FOR SUPPORTING SOCIAL ECONOMY

**Moderator:** Paweł Choraży (Director of the Department of the European Social Fund - Ministry of Infrastructure and Development), Poland

**Rapporteur:** Dorotea Daniele (Diesis), Belgium

**Speakers:**

1. Gerhard Braunling, Germany
2. Lippe Koivuneva (Ministry of Employment and the Economy), Finland;
3. Maria Jeliaskova (University of Sofia), Bulgaria;
4. Marie-Anne Paraskevas, (European Commission - DG Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labor Mobility), EU.

5. Giuseppe Daconto (Alleanza delle cooperative Italiane), Italy;

Main recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Synergies and coordination between different sources of funding and different support measures and structures should be increased.</li> <li>- Structural funds and public policies should have an enabling role, because social economy should remain independent.</li> <li>- An integrated strategic approach designed, implemented and assessed through partnerships is key.</li> <li>- Other crucial elements are flexibility, quality, transparency, accountability and focus on results of programmes and projects</li> <li>- Transnational cooperation is needed at all levels: between MAs (Managing Authorities), stakeholders and between MAs and stakeholders. Transnational networks promote mutual learning and transfer of good practices and their activity should continue in the new programming period.</li> <li>- Social economy should be recognised as a major actor of social innovation and social experimentation.</li> </ul>
Starting point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The workshop worked both on the content of Structural Funds Operational Programmes and on the participation of SE stakeholders in the programming process.</li> <li>- Concrete examples of support measures for SE were mentioned as good practices.</li> <li>- The general framework of structural fund was presented. In the new programming phase 2014-2020 both ESF and ERDF support SE within different priorities. A dedicated priority to SE accounts for 3% of ESF allocation, but SE is supported under different priorities.</li> </ul>
Main issues discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partnership: the EU code of conduct on partnership obliges MSs to involve all stakeholders in programming, implementing, monitoring and evaluating phases. At national level good examples of partnership were presented by SE organisations.</li> <li>- Coordination among funds and among and within different levels (national, regional, Managing Authorities, different stakeholders)</li> <li>- Need for flexibility and less beaurocratic burdens</li> <li>- Quality, transparency and accountability of programmes and projects</li> <li>- Need to focus on results and social added value (especially for final beneficiaries)</li> <li>- ESF should promote social innovation and experimentation as tools to answer to new needs of the sector (often ESF rules “kill” innovation)</li> <li>- Structural funds should facilitate access to diversified types of finance according to needs of social enterprises (e.g. grants, equity, loans, guarantees)</li> <li>- Capacity building of different actors (mutual learning, transfer of competences)</li> <li>- Access to new market (e.g. public procurement social clauses)</li> <li>- Different fields and models of support for start-up and growth: incubating, mentoring, social franchising, spin-off, etc.</li> </ul>
Recurrent issues that came up during the discussion

Main needs to promote within structural funds:

- Intersectoral approach
- Access to finance
- Social innovation and social experimentation
- Enabling ecosystem
- Focus on demand (answer to social needs)
- Room for SE in all sectors of structural funds (guidelines for eligibility)

**Concrete proposals discussed**

- SEN (Social Entrepreneurship Network – [www.socialeconomy.pl](http://www.socialeconomy.pl)) analysed 17 good practices from 8 countries in several thematic areas – finance, public-social partnership, support infrastructure, visibility & identity, start up support)
- National systemic projects to promote data collection and visibility of SE (ESF Italy – Azioni di Sistema)
- Global grants and Jeremie ESF loans to fund the sector (Global Grant Apulia – Italy, Jeremie<sup>i</sup>, Lombardy – Italy)
- The Polish Group of Systemic Solutions for Social Economy Sector<sup>ii</sup>
- Cooperation with for profit enterprises in the provision of welfare services

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact [info@emes.net](mailto:info@emes.net) and [socialeconomyrome@lavoro.gov.it](mailto:socialeconomyrome@lavoro.gov.it)

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<sup>i</sup> [http://www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/files/ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/public/\\_MRR\\_Better\\_Future/LR\\_Jeremie\\_ESF\\_v1\\_0\\_071111-k\\_prezentaci.pdf](http://www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/files/ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/public/_MRR_Better_Future/LR_Jeremie_ESF_v1_0_071111-k_prezentaci.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://socialeconomy.pl/node/100>