



## 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 3. COLLABORATING WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND NOT ONLY

**Moderator:** Miguel Angel Cabra de Luna (ONCE), Spain

**Rapporteur:** Patrizia Bussi (Ensie), Belgium

**Speakers:**

1. Diana Dovgan (CECOP), Belgium
2. Felice Scalvini (City of Brescia), Italy
3. Gianfranco Marocchi (Idee in Rete), Italy
4. Jean-Marc Brulé (L'Atelier), France
5. Julien Van Geertsom (Belgian Federal Public Planning Service), Belgium
6. Krzysztof Herbst (FISE), Poland

7. Francesca Battistoni (Rena), Italy
8. Luigi Martignetti (REVES), Belgium
9. Alice Pittini (Housing Europe), Belgium
10. Teresa Marzocchi (Emilia Romagna Region), Italy
11. Diego Dutto (Self C.S.), Italy
12. Jean-Claude Mizzi (DG Internal market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Commission) EU

<b>Main recommendations</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The national and regional authorities in partnership with social economy actors must increase awareness of the possibilities of the new public procurement directives through the creation of <b>support centers</b> which can provide trainings, information and concrete examples about <b>social and environmental criteria, reserved contracts for disadvantaged and disabled groups, reserved contracts for health, social and cultural services and the most economically advantageous tender criteria.</b></li> <li>- The social economy sector calls on the European Commission to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a Social Business Initiative, in which a European plan for putting in value the potential of social economy for EU growth is taken into account.</li> <li>• Update the <b>Guide on Buying Social</b> and provide guidance on interpretation and implementation of the new public procurement rules through <b>Commission Staff Working Documents</b> addressed to Member States and public authorities, which should include quality criteria, social considerations and rules for social economy as a dedicated chapter.</li> <li>• <b>Organize exchange of best practices between Member States and stakeholders so that they can</b> learn from each other and work together to improve existing practices and the future transpositions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Public procurement is a critical booster of inclusive employment and growth but it is not the only channel. <b>The collaboration between the public sector and the social economy sector can be developed through alternative channels outside public procurement in the provision and continuity of high INNOVATIVE quality social services such as financing such services, granting licenses, authorizations, or pursuing joint initiatives, respecting the principles of advertising, transparency and non-discrimination.</b></li> <li>- Public procurement rules mobilise almost 20 percent of the EU's GDP and should therefore be <b>accessible to social economy players across the board, on an equal footing</b> with other players.</li> <li>- Other possibilities to build partnerships between the social economy sector and public sector must be well regulated and be not just exceptions. In this framework, the social economy actors and public authorities call on the national and regional authorities and on the Social Economy Parliamentary Intergroup to work on these opportunities at their own competence levels.</li> <li>- The successful partnerships between social economy actors and public authorities must be included in the mid-term review of the Strategy 2020 since these embed social added value towards sustainable, smart, inclusive growth.</li> <li>- Stakeholders must structure their actions and positions about these issues in an efficient way.</li> </ul>
<b>Main issues discussed</b>

- In the transposition phase, Public Authorities need information, must be trained with practical, concrete notes.
- Member States should also create some local support, help centers in order to assist the local authorities to write and follow-up the tenders.
- Some important (sometimes new) possibilities can be found in the new directive: the MEAT concept replaces the lowest price criteria (which it's always anyway applicable) + reserved contracts for organization employing 30% of disabled and disadvantaged persons (art 20) + reserved contracts for health, social and cultural service with a dangerous point concerning the length of the contract: just 3 years (art 77).
- Art 20 and 77 are not compulsory for MS.
- In the framework of PP, there is the possibility to have national rules that promote non-profit organizations.
- Also the evaluation of PP is a crucial phase: an external/independent evaluation is suitable.
- Local and regional authorities need to answer to persons' needs together with social economy actors and not only through public procurement but also through other cooperation channels. This entails the possibility to operate in a non-competitive but transparent way in order to manage services that are characterized by innovation.
- There are other examples of collaboration between public authorities and social economy organisations, especially in Italy, but the problem is that they do not have legislative support and frame. In general, social economy organisations need laws that underline their role as actors of general interest (references also to the Social Business Initiative).
- It's also important to underline the social impact and the added-values of social economy in order to be successful.
- The strategy of social economy has to be included in the EU2020 mid-term review.

#### **Recurrent issues that came up during the discussion**

- Support mechanisms are needed to accompany local authorities, social economy enterprises and businesses to make the most of the opportunities for social objectives in the implementation of the directive.
- Other ways of collaboration (not PP) are important and need legislative frameworks.
- The collaboration between social economy organisations and PA have to answer to society and people' needs.

#### **Concrete proposals discussed**

L'Atelier (France) = charities whose members are public authorities and members of SEE . This is financing by the Region county and other PA.

- It provides support services for the construction of social economy initiatives. It is a resource center that develops a network of social economy organisations.
- Belgian Federal Public Service Social Integration, Fight against poverty, Social Economy and Big cities policy = Different activities: structural consultation with SEE actors (meeting every 3 month); support to SEE actors in lobbying actions at EU level; launch of call for innovative projects; CSR topic = to raise companies' awareness + 'Football + Foundation'.
- Informative Guide for Authorities in order to use Social consideration in PP with concrete examples and creation of 2 groups: purchasers and social economy (how to work together to make a proposal)

Brescia City (Italy) =

- Competition is not good. Change of vision: it's the whole city which is in charge of the services.

- Città a zero gare: not public procurement but cooperation
- The call for tender will have the list of general objectives, features that the organisations must have but no description of the services. When the City will receive the answers, it will not choose one organisation but a group of organisations (asking also for the possibility that they have to bring in private money) which will work together in order to prepare and organise the service.

Zoia district, Milan (Italy) =

- Call for tenders in the social housing sector which includes also social considerations for social activities (respect of the environment, creativity...)
- Social and green procurements in public tendering : training and employment opportunities for local inhabitants and disabled/disadvantaged groups.

Open Tuscany (Italy) = how to digitalize services

- Develop participative management

Social Platform and its members guidelines in order to help PA and social economy actors in the transposition and implementation of the new PP directive.

Bad example – Finland:

- The city is member of one WISE, work integration social enterprise – disadvantaged people were sent by the public employment service.
- After 3 years Finland discovered that they were out of state aids rules and the PA decides to cut the budget and close the WISE.

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)