

## The role of social economy actors - cooperatives and social enterprises in combating rural poverty in Europe

Bucharest, 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2017

### AGENDA (draft)

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| 09:00 -<br>09:30 | <b>Registration</b>   |
| 09:30 –<br>11:15 | <p><b><i>Social economy realities and growth potential for the future action - from practices to national and EU policies</i></b><br/> <i>Panel session valuing comparative EU practices and ongoing policies</i></p> <p><b>Efficient business models and capacity building tools and services relevant to rural areas</b><br/>                 Review of lessons learned and experiences from Sweden, Spain, Italy and Romania through the eyes of participants involved in the New Crops project. Business models, policy issues and training tools developed through the project will be highlighted.</p> <p><b>How do we best connect the national practices to policy making at national and EU level?</b><br/>                 Recent policy developments in EU shall be discussed with experts active at EU level, considering closely the recommendations of the <i>2017 Recent Developments in the Social Economy</i> report, drawn up by CIRIEC on behalf of the European Economic and Social Committee and GECES call for action <i>Social enterprises and the social economy going forward</i>. Policy issues resulted from national experiences shall be debated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Contributors to the sessions:</b><br/> <i>Ashoka International, representative within the EC Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES)</i><br/> <i>Expert(s) involved in the elaboration of the CIRIEC report</i><br/> <i>Social entrepreneurs involved in the short term trainings and visits to partner countries</i></p> |
| 11:15-<br>11:45  | <b>Coffee break</b>   |
| 11.45 –<br>13.30 | <p><b><i>How can we boost social impact of cooperatives and social enterprises and make more visible their contribution to combating rural poverty in Europe</i></b><br/> <i>Parallel panel sessions building on direct experiences of practitioners and policy makers in respective fields</i></p> <p><b>Start-up and management of cooperatives. Challenges and recommendations for capacity building and policy actions</b><br/>                 Facilitated discussions shall look into best practices that can incite interest into cooperative work and efficient functioning of these organisational structures. Learning tools developed in the project can be assessed.</p> <p><b>Local Action Groups - drivers in developing rural economy. Is there room for social entrepreneurs' contribution to shaping rural economy by fitting opportunities, in line with local needs, to a sustainable business development model?</b><br/>                 Rural development program and the European Social Fund respectively should encourage and support innovation, social and sustainable economic development for rural areas, as key</p>  |

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|  | <p>financing vehicles in this sense. To what extent can we speak about their complementarity and how can we learn from others' experiences or models are focus for the debates, alongside current challenges.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Contributors to the sessions:</b><br/><i>Romanian Centre for European Policies</i><br/><i>Representatives of Romanian national authorities involved in the administration of the rural development and / or ESF allocations focused on rural and small urban areas (tbc)</i><br/><i>Representatives of national and European cooperatives and local action groups</i></p> |
| <b>13:30</b>   | <b>Lunch</b>   |
| Working language of the event: <b>Romanian</b> , with <b>English</b> translation covering the relevant sessions. |  |

The event is organized within the framework of the project **New Crops - Social entrepreneurship to create new opportunities for socially excluded people in rural areas**, funded through the Erasmus + program.

The **New Crops** project aims to provide the necessary knowledge and skills for trainers, managers and future managers of cooperatives and social enterprises that are at the beginning of their road to set up and develop successful social business organizations that produce social and economic results for their members and generate jobs in rural areas.

The project partners are: [Federazione Trentina Della Cooperazione \(Italy\)](#), [Universidad De Almeria \(Spain\)](#), [Asociacion De Organizaciones De Productores De Frutas Y Hortalizas Dealmeria – Coexphal \(Spain\)](#) and [Companion Kooperativ Utveckling Skaraborg \(Sweden\)](#).

Partner organizations have identified and promoted over 40 best practices in the countries in which they operate and 16 detailed case studies used in training materials to be promoted and distributed to all those interested.

All project results are available for consultation at [www.ies.org.ro/erasmus](http://www.ies.org.ro/erasmus).