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Mechanism for Enhancement of Synergy and Sustainability among Enterprises

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EMPOWERING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS FOR INNOVATION, INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND JOB. "SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: HAVE YOUR SAY!"

Europe is changing and new economic models are needed!
MESSE participated in the event "Social Entrepreneurs: Have your say" hosted by the European Commission. During two days in Strasbourg stakeholders from all over Europe met and discussed the challenges we are facing in our social, economic and environmental spheres through social innovation and new forms of investments.



For several years in Europe, a solid academic and scientific experience on social enterprises has been developing, a fact which has also been able to stimulate the EU institutions under several perspectives.

It can be stated that the production of European policies in support of this particular business model has started from the recognition of the economic and social value created and spread throughout Europe.

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As the Commissioner for Internal Market and Services, Michel Barnier, said: "The great battle today is for growth and employment. I am convinced that there is no lasting economic performance without social cohesion. The social economy is part and parcel of the new growth model which we are creating, which is more inclusive and greener. By virtue of their vocation, social enterprises keep their ear to the ground and are in tune with social or environmental realities. They are innovative, they are dynamic and they create jobs. We have to do everything we can to create an ecosystem that encourages them to develop further. That is the objective of the Strasbourg conference".

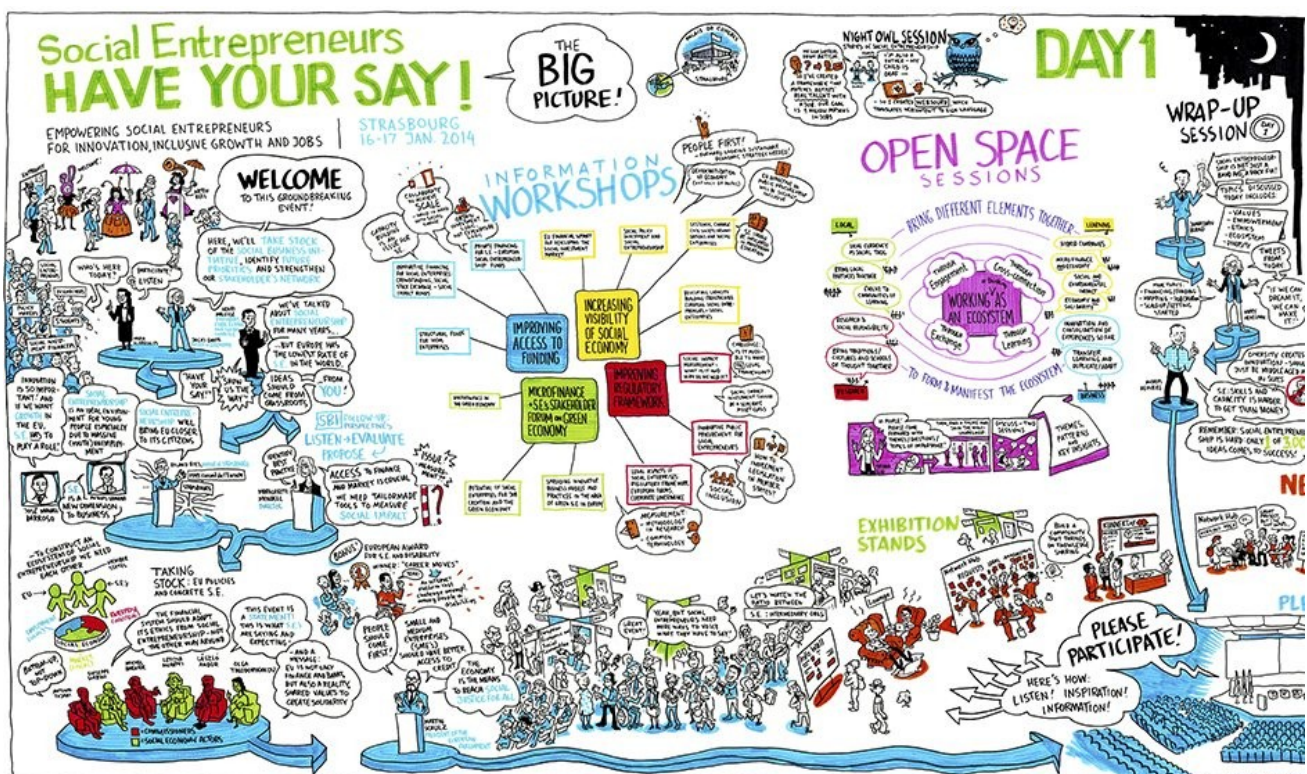
Also the European Commission' Vice-President Antonio Tajani, Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship, said: "Social businesses help the EU create a highly competitive social market economy and are engines for sustainable growth. During the crisis they proved their worth by showing strong resilience. We now need them more than ever for their job creating ability".

As a sort of "reward" for social enterprises that deal with the current economic and social crisis with more dynamism than the for-profit companies, the European Commission has dedicated a stimulating new season of policies and measures aimed at promoting social enterprises success and creating a new environment within which social enterprises can evolve with the same dignity of the traditional companies.

The "Social Entrepreneurs: have your say!" event, organized in Strasbourg on 16 and 17 of January by the European Commission, in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee and the City of Strasbourg, has been the biggest European interactive event on social entrepreneurship and social economy ever. The main aim of such a large event was to identify new policy priorities for the forthcoming Commission and Parliament in order to ensure that the efforts made in last 25 years of European policy making will continue with new inspirations arising from European social entrepreneurs and policy makers.

Almost 2.000 participants from all over Europe came to Strasbourg exploiting of this quite unique opportunity for learning about different social enterprises models and networking; twelve parallel sessions were organized to deepen major issues: public procurement, Structural Funds, financial instruments for social enterprises, etc. During the conference, European Commission took stock of the Social Business Initiative main achievements from October 2011, engaged stakeholders in an innovative and participative environment to shape the European agenda for the next years and support the emergence of best practices among stakeholders.

On the importance of identifying and mainstreaming good practices on social entrepreneurship, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor said: "Social enterprises provide hundreds of successful examples how Europe can improve its business model, with more focus on improving people's well-being and less on maximising financial gain. The social economy can create quality jobs even in difficult economic circumstances and clearly deserves EU support to grow and spread".



Highlights of the discussions were summarized by a consultant which produced a visual summary of the event.

The most ambitious aim of the event was to identify future priorities for had-hoc action to be enriched by the European Union added value in supporting scaling-up of social entrepreneurship.

Getting big events like this to deliver the desired outcomes is a complex challenge but it can be said that the presentation of the **Strasbourg Declaration on Social Entrepreneurship** has truly stimulated the participants involvement. To conclude the two-day event, a ten points call of action to realise the potential of social enterprises has been presented.

1. The EU must follow through on all the actions in the Social Business Initiative (SBI). It should develop a second phase of the SBI that broadens its scope, deepens its partnership with Member States, regional and local authorities, civil society organisations and key players in the ecosystem.
2. The European Economic and Social Committee, the next European Commission (with a dedicated inter-service structure) and the next European Parliament must take full ownership and deliver on the actions suggested in Strasbourg.
3. There must be a stronger engagement at EU, national, regional and local levels with the social enterprise community in the co-creation of new policies to support social enterprise, suited to the local context.
4. The Commission must ensure that its commitment to create an eco-system for social enterprise is mainstreamed in its policies.
5. In partnership with the social enterprise sector, Member States, regional and local authorities must fully support the growth of social enterprises and help them build capacity. For example through legal frameworks, access to finance, business start-up and development support, training and education and public procurement.
6. The European institutions and Member States should reinforce the role of social enterprises in structural reforms to exit the crisis, notably where the social economy is less developed.
7. The Commission, the Member states and regions must boost cooperation between social enterprises across borders and boundaries, to share knowledge and practices. Similarly, all public authorities should co-operate better between themselves and enhance their capacity to support social enterprise growth.
8. Public and private players must develop a full range of suitable financial instruments and intermediaries that support social enterprises throughout their life-cycle.
9. Social enterprise still needs further research and national statistical collection for a better understanding, recognition and visibility of the sector, both among policymakers and the general public.
10. In this new Europe, all players need to look at growth and value creation from a wider perspective, by including social indicators and demonstrating positive social impact when reporting social and economic progress.

As said by Commissioner Michel Barnier: *"The Strasbourg Declaration reflects the thoughts and contributions 2.000 participants from 70 countries, but also of social networks. It reaffirms the fundamental values of these structures and all their contributions to development a new European model"*.

After the event, the Commission is hoping that the community which support social enterprises development across Europe will continue to grow, becoming bigger and bigger, so that Europe will achieve inclusive growth in line with the 2020 vision.

Speaking about the Conference and its final output, commissioner Barnier commented: *"The EU has committed itself to fostering social enterprises. Now we need make it happen"*.

More than **865 persons** have signed the **Strasbourg declaration** so far
and everyone is asked to do it at the link

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index_en.htm .



MESSE Lead Partner, Veneto Region, participated to the Conference and shared the project vision on relevant topics such as cooperation between public authorities to enhance the social entrepreneurship policies across Europe.



HANNOVER STUDY VISIT DIARY

On 4 and 5 February 2014 the MESSE study visit to Hannover took place. Overall, 23 participants from 8 different countries met together to have a closer look at German social enterprises and discuss as to what the major elements are that primarily make the specific social enterprises to Good Practice examples.



The first site to visit was Hannoversche Werkstätten gem. GmbH (The Hannover Workshops), a limited company operated as a public utility. Ms Vera Neugebauer, Managing Director, held a company presentation, then taking the audience on a captivating tour through the workshops of Hannoversche Werkstätte together with her colleague, Ms Christine Herbrig, PR Manager.

Based in Hannover-Kleefeld, **Hannoversche Werkstätten** was founded in 1997 as the successor company to the Hannover Centre for the Disabled (Behindertenzentrum Hannover, BZH) which had been set up in 1977. Aiming to create good opportunities for people with disabilities to develop their personal and vocational skills, Hannoversche Werkstätten has been placing its focus on three main areas: working, living, and gastronomy.

Within the field of vocational training, Hannoversche Werkstätten aims at qualifying people with disabilities for professions available on the general job market. Within the area of assisted living, Hannoversche Werkstätten offers support to disabled people, enabling them to lead an independent, self-determined and dignified life. The largest institution of its kind in Hannover and its surrounding area, Hannoversche Werkstätte currently employs roughly 1.000 people in the workshops and about 250 members of staff for group supervision, specialist services and administration.



Covering an extremely broad area of training fields and activities, Hannoversche Werkstätten is not only working cross-sector, but is also continuously boosting the cooperation between for-profit and not-for-profit business. This is being ensured, for example, by a number of employees currently working with corporations like Continental AG, while being paid however by Hannoversche Werkstätten. Moreover, since Hannoversche Werkstätten sells their self-manufactured products on the market, there is not only a steady need for competitiveness, but also for observing high quality requirements. It is for these reasons that Hannoversche Werkstätte's quality management system has been certified according to the DIN EN ISO 9001:2008 standard. Thus, operational procedures within all ranges of work are assured to correspond to internationally recognized standards.

But during lunch at Hannoversche Werkstätte the participants could see all for themselves. Trainees working in the area of gastronomy prepared a three-dish meal for all employees and guests of Hannoversche Werkstätte. While for the personnel making lunch meant nothing more than business as usual, having lunch at the canteen posed a great opportunity for all MESSE participants to get a real insight in the workaday life of Hannoversche Werkstätten.



© Photo: <http://www.hw-hannover.de/>

The study visit continued by returning to the venues of Ada-und-Theodor-Lessing-Volkshochschule Hannover, where Mr Peter Thomsen introduced the Working Partnership (AG) Resohelp.

A well-established contact point for (ex-) prisoners in Hannover, Resohelp has been working for more than 40 years on counselling and supporting delinquents, sentenced prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families to gain social rehabilitation and reintegration. Resohelp's aim is to offer extensive information and support on managing the various issues encountered by their clients, ranging from prevention of detention, flat-hunting, and allowance of claims all the way through debt counselling and other individual problems.

Furthermore, Resohelp is acting as an interface between the clients and different institutions or persons (e.g. the Public Prosecution Service, the Job Center / Employment Agency, landlords, and many other charities), thus increasing their area of impact. This cross-sectoral work is being supported by Resohelp having the legal status of a Working Partnership (Arbeitsgemeinschaft) founded by 8 charities and institutions: the Diakonisches Werk – Local Committee Hannover e. V.; the Caritas Association of Hannover e. V.; the City of Hannover, Department of Social Affairs; the Prisoner Welfare Association of Hannover; the Head of the Correctional Facility of the City of Hannover; the Catholic Church Office of the Correctional Facility of the City of Hannover; the Association of City Churches of Hannover; and the Job Center of Hannover Region.

In Mr Thomsen's presentation, it became apparent Resohelp's great contribution toward helping (ex-) prisoners and offenders develop social skills, such as self-esteem, self-responsibility and self-care, and at the same time take on social responsibility. By helping delinquents and former prisoners reintegrate within their social communities and gain social rehabilitation, Resohelp is bringing benefits to the communities themselves.

After the presentation, Italian participants expressed the wish to establish contact to Resohelp, paving the ground for future exchange.

At last, it was time to go visit another, rather unique, social enterprise, placed at the heart of Hannover's City: FairKauf e.g.

Found by regular customers to be one of Hannover's most impressive social enterprises, **FairKauf**, Hannover's largest department store for second-hand goods, turned out to be combining ethic and economic principles in a highly successful manner. Mirroring their basic principles, FairKauf's success translated into achieving both social and economic goals.



© Photo: <http://www.hw-hannover.de/>

During the five and a half years since their foundation, FairKauf's number of employees increased steadily, as well as their number of vocational trainees and apprentices, almost all of them belonging to disadvantaged groups. On the economic side, FairKauf's success meant being able to survive and continuously grow during a time when many other department stores were closing their doors. Remarkable as this might be, even more striking appears the fact that FairKauf has been managing to do so without having the support of public funding. Following their motto **Earn money to do good (not the other way around)**, FairKauf serves as a good example for a new, successful social business, which shows that a true commitment to social principles paired with business competence and business skills prevail over a difficult financial environment.

Following a presentation by Mr Detlef Klein, honorary project manager, and Mr Jörg Matthaai, steering board member, the MESSE participants were given a guided tour through the five floors of the department store, then taking the opportunity to look for special, fair-trade, souvenirs. **'I have found a little saving box for my son, just like the one he loved but broke last year'**, one of the participants, a mother, happily reported, proving FairKauf's economic concept right once more.

The MESSE study visit in Hannover ended for the participants by enjoying the view from FairKauf's small terrace in the fifth floor over the City at dawn

FOCUS ON NEW EUROPEAN FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Tips on funding opportunities for social enterprises.

Get ready for the new programme period 2014-2020!



ERASMUS+

The Erasmus+ program aims to boost skills and employability, as well as modernizing Education, Training, and Youth work and is managed by the European Commission - Directorate General for Education and Culture in collaboration with the National Agencies.

The overall objective of the program is to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy in the field of education as well as to the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), as well as the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education and the development of the European dimension in sport, in particular the one at amateur level.

The program brings into a single framework of financing various EU programs for education, training and youth areas from the previous period 2007-2013, like the **Lifelong Learning** and **Youth in Action** and other international cooperation programs in higher education (**Erasmus Mundus**, **Tempus**, **Alfa**, **EduLink** and the program for cooperation with industrialized countries). It also provides specific support for the sport.

With reference to social enterprises, it is possible to present projects of individual mobility for learning purposes and other project types for the cooperation between institutions for innovation and the exchange of good practice in the field of education, professional training and orientation.

For more information about the program, visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.htm

COSME

The program aims to improve the competitiveness of enterprises and in particular of the SMEs. This program partly replaces the previous CIP program, with regard to support for enterprise and entrepreneurship.

It is managed by the European Commission – the General Directorate for Industry.

COSME aims to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the EU enterprises, in particular SMEs, as well as to promote the culture of entrepreneurship and the creation and growth of SMEs.

The program includes following actions:

1. Actions to improve access to finance for SMEs in their start-up , growth and transfer
2. Actions to improve access to markets
3. European Enterprise Network that provides integrated support for the EU SMEs who want to explore the opportunities offered by the internal market and from the third countries
4. Actions to improve the framework conditions for the competitiveness end sustainability of the EU enterprises, in particular SMEs
5. Actions to promote entrepreneurship

For more information about the program please visit the web site:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/initiatives/cosme/index_en.htm

EaSI – Employment and Social Innovation

EaSI will support Member States efforts in the design and implementation of employment and social reforms at European, national as well as regional and local levels by means of policy coordination, the identification, analysis and sharing of best practices.

EaSI integrates and extends the coverage of three existing programmes:

- Progress (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity),
- EURES (European Employment Services)
- and the European Progress Microfinance Facility,

and is managed by the European Commission – the DG Employment, Social Affairs, Inclusion.

Together with the European Social Fund, the Fund for the European Aid for the most Deprived and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, EaSI forms the fourth pillar of the EU Initiative for Employment and Social Inclusion 2014-2020.

Progress Programme

For the period 2014-2020, the 'Progress' element of EaSI will continue its current activities (analysis, mutual learning and grants) and will have a specific budget for **social innovation and social policy experimentation**. It will intervene in three thematic areas:

- Employment, with particular reference to the fight against youth unemployment;
- Protection and Social inclusion, including the reduction and prevention of poverty
- Working conditions

EURES

With the new proposal, the overall EURES system will be strengthened beyond 2013:

- the EURES core activities at cross-border level will be financed under the EaSI Programme, while the national EURES activities can be financed under the European Social Fund in order to support workers' mobility and help companies recruit abroad
- at EU level, the EURES Portal will offer modernized self-service tools for jobseekers and employers. EURES will be used to create and develop **new targeted mobility schemes**. It will notably allow for the development of Your First EURES Job scheme.

Microfinance facility and Social Entrepreneurship

The new programme will:

- **extend the support** given to microcredit providers under the current European Progress Microfinance Facility (launched in 2010)
- provide funding for **capacity-building** of microfinance institutions
- support the development of the **social investment market** and facilitate access to finance for **social enterprises**.

For more information about the program please visit the web site:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081&langId=en>

Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme

The **Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme** is meant to promote and protect specific rights and freedoms of persons deriving from EU law.

In particular, its specific objectives are:

- to promote the prohibition of discrimination (based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation), including the prohibition of discrimination enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- to prevent and combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance;
- to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities;
- to promote equality between men and women and the integration of gender equality;
- to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and women, as well as to other groups at risk, and protect victims;
- to promote and to protect the rights of the child;
- to contribute for ensuring a high level of protection of personal data;
- in the internal market to protect the rights of consumers and those deriving from the freedom of enterprises.

The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme will replace three current funding programmes:

- Fundamental Rights and Citizenship,
- Daphne III
- two strands of the Progress Programme - Anti-discrimination and Gender Equality.

For more information about the program please visit the web site:

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/index_en.htm

HORIZON 2020

Following the Socioeconomic Sciences and Humanities path build under FP5, FP6 and FP7, the increasing demand coming both from policymakers and practitioners and the adoption of the European Union's Europe 2020 strategy for smarter, more sustainable and inclusive growth, social issues have been definitely brought to the fore into the Horizon 2020, the European Union research framework for 2014-2020. With its € 80 billion, the programme is intended to strength innovation and research excellence with social innovation playing a major part. The social issues are streamlined throughout the whole programme but they are mostly preminent in Part III – Societal Challenges. This section collects all the proposal opportunities to respond to the following policy priorities and societal challenges identified in Europe 2020:

1. Health, demographic change and well-being
2. Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research, and the bio economy
3. Secure, clean and efficient energy
4. Smart, green and integrated transport
5. Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials
6. Inclusive, innovative and secure societies

Proposals are expected to build out a multi-sector and interdisciplinary research approach focusing on theory building, local welfare systems and services, poverty reduction, combating inequalities and changing life-

styles. Calls are published under the Horizon 2020 Participant Portal and a useful search tool by keyword is available for all practitioners looking for open calls.

For more information about the program please visit the web site:

[Horizon 2020 participant portal](#)

[Horizon 2020 Part III - Societal Challenges website](#)

[Horizon 2020 keyword search tool](#)

FOCUS ON... INTERREG EUROPE

The European Union works to reduce disparities in the levels of development, growth and quality of life in European regions through its Cohesion policy. It promotes actions to make the European territory more innovative, more sustainable, and more inclusive. This is the EU policy agenda called EU2020 strategy.

While the large majority of the funds designated to reduce these disparities are managed nationally, the EU and member states believe that regional development can be improved through cooperation across borders.

The INTERREG EUROPE programme, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), is designed to support policy learning among public authorities to improve the performance of policies and programmes for regional development. It allows public authorities across Europe to exchange practices and ideas on the way public policies work thus finding solutions to improve their strategies for their own citizens.

How will it work?

The INTERREG EUROPE programme has a budget of €359 million ERDF for the 2014-2020 period.

INTERREG EUROPE will work on the following four topics, all related to regional development:

1. Research, technological development and innovation;
2. Competitiveness of SMEs;
3. Low carbon economy;
4. Environment and resource efficiency

INTERREG EUROPE will finance two actions:

1. Cooperation projects: partnerships of public organisations coming from different countries in Europe work together for 3 to 5 years to exchange their experiences on a particular policy issue. Each region involved in the cooperation project will produce an Action Plan. This specifies what will be done in the region to ensure that the lessons learnt from the cooperation are put into action. Projects are also asked to monitor what happens to the Action Plan, to see how well the cooperation has worked. Calls for project proposals will be launched throughout the programming period.
2. Policy Learning Platforms: a space for continuous learning where any organisation dealing with regional development policies in Europe can find solutions to improve the way they manage and implement their public policies in the four topics above.

Who can access funding?

Organisations based in the 28 EU member states, Norway or Switzerland are eligible for INTERREG EUROPE funding if they are:

- National, regional or local public authorities
- Other institutions governed by public law (e.g. universities, regional development agencies, business support actors, etc.). Each country defines which institutions are eligible according to national regulations.

For more information about the program please visit the web site:

<http://www.interreg4c.eu/programme/2014-2020/>

MESSE CONFERENCES ACROSS EUROPE

Don't miss any of them!

Stakeholders from Eu are more than welcome!

If you're running a social enterprise, if you're a policy maker or an opinion leader and want to visit some interesting realities in Europe don't hesitate to contact the MESSE partner in your region and join us!!

For information about MESSE Mentor activity

feel free to write us:

messe-project@gmx.de

or visit our project website

<http://messe-project.eu/index.php/information/regional-mentors.html>

3rd International conference,
Sofia— Bulgaria
9 July

Final conference,
Venice, Italy
24 September



MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mentoring the Social Entrepreneurship in the light of the Knowledge Society

In the previous edition of the “MESSE Newsletter”, there has been a presentation of the effort of the MESSE Partnership to develop – as a Standardization Document – the profile of a “Mentor of Sustainable Social Entrepreneurship” (*THE MESSE PROFILE: An approach for defining typological attributes and systemizing the mentoring processes in Social Economy*).

Among the issues that were put in this article, there have been:

- Where a Mentor of Social Entrepreneurship could come from (consultants, entrepreneurs, executives of large companies, executives of NGOs, officers of Public Organizations and Entities, officers of Financial Institutions, etc.)?
- The significance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in a Mentoring process for Social Enterprises, since on the one hand a Mentor should be - by definition - a person sensitized on CSR issues, while on the other hand a Socially Responsible attitude and behaviour should be an inseparable part of the creation and operation of a Social Enterprise.

A case which could be taken as an example “merging” both of the aforementioned issues is the case of Multinational Corporations. Synoptically:

- Multinational Corporations affect at a great extent the business functions (production, marketing, decision making, etc.) of local enterprises – satellite firms, suppliers, subcontractors, etc. – in the countries in which they operate. Further, they rank amongst the main “knowledge providers” of these enterprises, while they also significantly influence their organizational behavior and culture.
- Especially during the recent periods, Multinational Corporations undertake considerable action towards Corporate Social Responsibility issues, both in terms of financing relevant actions and of developing “internal” relevant know-how and corresponding mechanisms and systems.
- On the other hand, during the last decades:
- Knowledge and learning mechanisms became critical factors of society to such an extent, that the EU labelled it “a transition to a new type of society” (The Knowledge Society), whilst declared it (2000 Lisbon EC) as one of its prime focus areas.
- Entrepreneurship ranks amongst the main factors for socio-economic development, whilst Regional Competitiveness has been recognized and declared as a major goal.
- The “3rd Sector” (Social Economy) has been recognized as a potential driving force for sustainable socioeconomic development, especially under the crisis circumstances confronted by the governments and the citizens of various EU countries.
- The concept and practices of “Social Innovation” (which in many cases overlaps with Social Entrepreneurship) are widely emerged in the socioeconomic systems worldwide.

In this context, the “logical sequence” is simple:

- Social Partnerships (and other small enterprises) confront problems not only related to financing issues, but also restricted access to information and new knowledge, high production cost, low capacity of penetrating new markets, complexity in relevant regulatory frameworks, overall economic trends and conditions, etc., that constitute a complex external environment for any firm.
- Knowledge Society itself “forces” towards knowledge – based, innovative and extroverted forms of entrepreneurship, creating the need for transfer of knowledge, know-how and –in general– for transplantation of intangible assets.
- Multinational corporations (and other big companies and organizations of various types and categories), constitute -at a great extent– significant “holders” of such intangible assets; however, when they act towards supporting the community, they most usually stress rather on a “charity” approach (donations in money and/or in goods, allocation of staff to confront short term needs, etc.), than on a knowledge and know-how transfer basis. This leads to valuable contribution in terms of immediate support, but on the other hand to poor long termed impacts and benefits.
- If such “knowledge holding” organizations, already active in Social Responsibility issues, start adopting in a systemic and systematic way a “knowledge – sharing” approach with the community – especially with the 3rd Sector operators – they could become valuable, highly effective Mentors for Social Enterprises to move towards rational operation and increased competitiveness, whilst simultaneously to acquire, improve and mature their CSR characteristics which, as aforementioned, is by definition an integral part of the existence of any social partnership.

Based on these perspectives, while developing the MESSE Profile, the Partnership works towards tracing the core issues related to the valorization of Multinational Corporations (and other “Knowledge Holding” firms and organizations) in the Mentoring processes - especially of those dealing with Social Entrepreneurship and Social Economy in general.



Mentoring Toolkit -

An educational material produced by MESSE—will be available soon on <http://www.messe-project.eu/>

**EXPERT POINT OF VIEW:
INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH****BY ANNIKA LARSSON, SENIOR ADVISOR PUBLIC HEALTHS, EAST SWEDEN REGION**

MESSE as a project within the INTERREG IVC develop its actions as part of fulfilling the Europe 2020 Strategy. MESSE focuses on Social Entrepreneurship and thus on entrepreneurship as a tool to involve more people in working life. People involved in working life, as employees does have better health than unemployed. By putting forward the possibility to employment for vulnerable groups public health issue are also highlighted. In Europe 2020 Strategy EU strives to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. One of the five ambitious objectives – is on employment which is also an important determinant of health. A healthy population is also good for growth.

In 2008, the World Health Organization (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) concluded that social inequalities in health arise because of inequalities in the conditions of daily life. The fundamental drivers that give rise to them are:

- inequities in power,
- money and resources.

The Commission argued that social and economic inequalities underpin the determinants of health: the range of interacting factors that shape health and well-being.

In 2013 EU published a report which demonstrates marked differences in the social determinants of health Across EU Member States and inequalities in health between social groups.

Irrespective of which indicator of socioeconomic status concerning - education, income and material deprivation - reporting poor or very poor general health and long-term health problems tends to be rare in the most advantaged group and more common in vulnerable groups. The situation in the most vulnerable groups tends to increase.

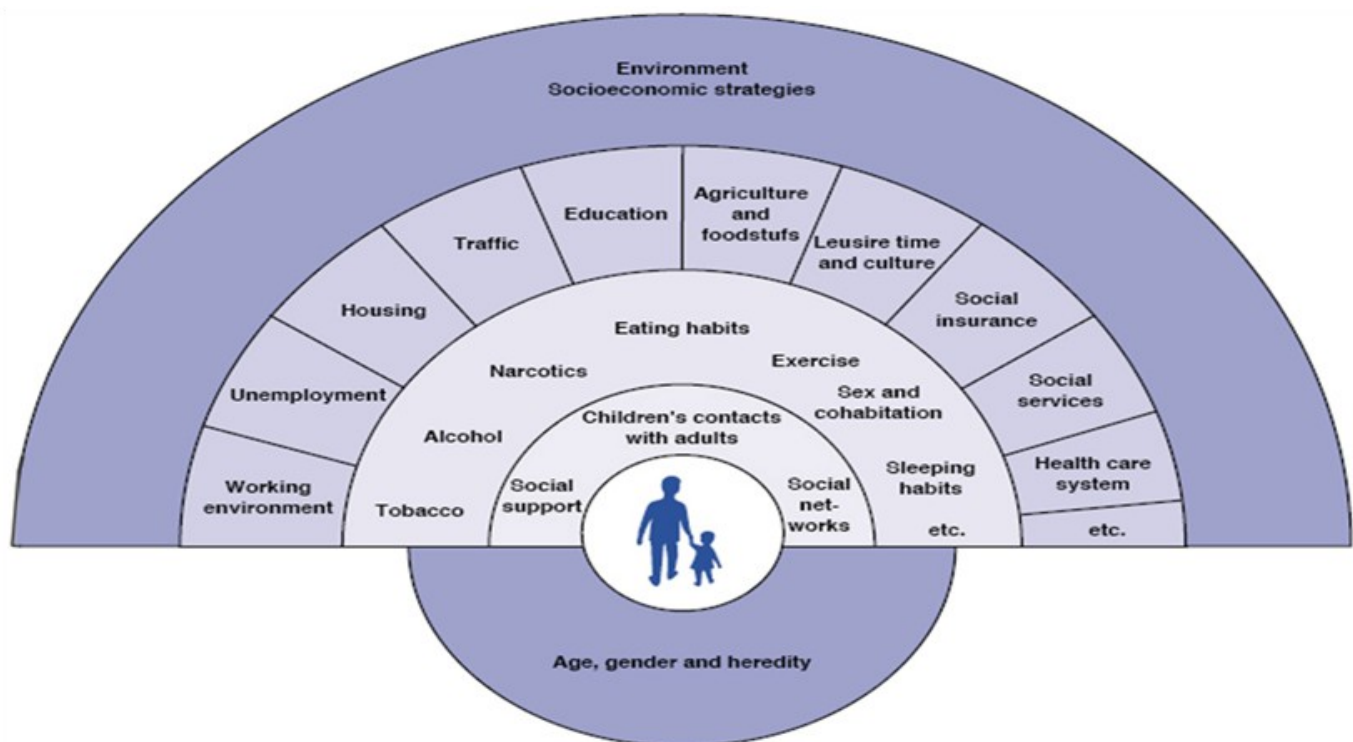
The analysis supports the findings of the WHO CSDH (1) that social inequalities in health arise because of inequalities in the conditions of daily life and the fundamental drivers that

give rise to them. This review found many examples of associations between risk factors for health, including tobacco use and obesity, and socio-economic circumstances. This reflects that lack of control, stress and reduced capabilities - all strongly associated with social disadvantage - have an impact on both health and health-related behaviors.

One of the conclusions in the report is that people with lower education levels are more likely to be unemployed, thus increases in welfare spending act to reduce social inequalities among the non-employed and have a clear potential to contribute to the reduction of health inequalities based on education and material deprivation.

The reports above highlights socioeconomic differences as the cause of increased health inequalities and argue for interventions that reduce the differences.

The context of people's lives determine their health, see picture below:



Dahlgren and Whitehead 1991.

In Östergötland a Public Health Commission has started, according to the model from WHO. It will analyze the health situation in the county from a cross-sectoral knowledge and experience perspective. The commission shall proceed from the national public health goals and operate during the years 2012-2014. The commission shall analyze the health situation based on socioeconomic, environmental, gender, diversity/nondiscrimination and life-cycle perspectives. The commission shall propose efforts at the county, municipal and neighborhood level that create conditions for better health on equal terms for everyone who lives and works in Östergötland.

One of the key factors identified by the Commission for Health Equity is for people to be able to support themselves. Therefore Messe also can be seen as a public health project. The project aim, to develop support structures for Social enterprises, intends to increase the number of workplaces in the social economy and thus in the end allowing more people access to a work. A social enterprise applies to people who have difficulty getting a job due to a disability or long-term unemployment. Today we see increased sickness in these groups. Having a job increases people's chances of empowerment thus increasing their opportunities to control their own lives and thus leads to better health.

We want to continue this discussion in our next meeting in Sofia. Hope to see you on my more in-depth seminar followed by a fruitful conversation with you all.

PARTNERS' WORK IN PICTURES

"Social entrepreneurs: have your say" event in Strasbourg, project study visit in Hannover and Local Focus Group in Hungary.



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