



ACTIVITY REPORT

2016

RIPESS Europe - Solidarity Economy Europe is the European branch of the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Solidarity Social Economy. Born from the 4th Globalization of Solidarity meeting in Luxembourg and founded in Barcelona in 2011, it now has 35 members in more than 20 countries of the EU.

RIPESS Europe brings together European regional, inter-regional, national or sectoral organizations of the solidarity economy. It has integrated ECOSOL / Socioeco.org into its activities to give better visibility to the solidarity resource website www.socioeco.org. An Advisory Council made up of researchers contributes to the constitution of the historical and theoretical heritage of the network.



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The commitments of the Solidarity Economy Europe network

In February 2016, following its participation in the European SSE Forum in the European Parliament, the RIPESS Europe Coordination Committee drew up its **action plan for the years 2016 to 2018**, which was then discussed and validated during the General Assembly (GA) that took place in Villarceaux (Paris) in June 2016.

Two strategic objectives...

1. **Nurture a movement of social transformation**, oriented towards a systemic change of the current socio-economic system towards a more democratic, ecological and solidarity one.
2. **Reinforce convergences by systematizing the meeting of change forces** at the heart of a constellation of alter-economic movements.

...based on three dimensions

1. Internal dimension

- Consolidate the membership network
- Search for and welcome new members (especially in the East and North of Europe)
- Facilitate inter-cooperation among members
- Promote the Panorama of the SSE

2. International dimension

- Active presence on the Board of Directors of RIPESS International
- Opening to the participation of more European members in working groups
- Connection with the Mediterranean and Africa

3. External dimension

- Alliances and convergences with other alter-economic movements
- Communication, media and knowledge sharing
- Close relationship with Socioeco and any other tool
- Institutional relations with local and European authorities

INTERNAL DIMENSION

Network consolidation and search for new members

The 5th General Assembly of RIPESS Europe took place from 20 to 22 June 2016 at the Bergerie de Villarceaux, thanks to the hospitality of the FPH Foundation. Several new potential members and observers participated. Five new members joined the network: Italy's Rete di Economia Solidale (Tavolo RES) and Trentino's Regional Network (Trentino Arcobaleno), German's Technology Netzwerk Berlin, the Finnish Solidarity economy network (Commons.fi) and Enercoop, as a sectoral network with the innovative experience of energy cooperatives.

During the opening session, Claudia Neubauer presented the FPH and its position on the SSE. Jean-Louis Laville put into perspective the potential of the SSE to develop responses to the increasingly serious attacks perpetrated by the globalized neo-liberal system on economic, ecological and social balances. The GA was held in an atmosphere of openness and conviviality. The Coordination committee welcomed this new energy contribution and the rejuvenation of those present who wanted to be involved in the dynamics of the network. The inter-cooperative processes are beginning, they involve exchanges of knowledge, cross-border projects, but also economic cooperation between SSE initiatives.

RIPESS Europe has made significant progress in the Eastern European countries. In September, Hungary organized a co-ordinating committee meeting with a very rich field visit to the structures of the Hungarian network, which made it possible to share more about the forms of development of the SSE in the Budapest region. While Hungary and Romania were members since the founding of RIPESS Europe, others such as the Croatian platform entered with the GA in Berlin (2015).

The Czech Republic, Bulgaria and the Baltic countries are also interacting with the network and we have started to establish new contacts in Poland. An opening to Scandinavia was initiated via the Finnish Solidarity Economy network and their work on the commons. A prospective visit took place in Estonia and Latvia during the Autumn of 2016, and in the Czech Republic a retreat took place in February 2017.

The Portuguese network has been formalized (RedPES) and will officially become a member in the next GA. A visit to the XES (Catalonia network) organized in December 2016 established new forms of collaboration, particularly around the communication tools and the meeting of SSE officials of the Municipality of Barcelona. Participation in the Congress of the Spanish network REAS in Bilbao and a Coordination committee meeting in Madrid at the beginning of 2017 were opportunities to work on several themes and to strengthen the links as well. The links with Greece have grown as well, as the member organization offered to organize the next congress in Athens (9-10-11 June 2017).

Inter-cooperation

Several attempts at European projects (where RIPESS EU was always invited as a partner organisation) were made during the year. One of these, led by ADPES (member of RedPES, Portugal) finally was funded and started in September 2016 and is expected to end in mid 2018. The project is entitled "SSE.e: affirming a new paradigm through IVET Curricula innovation ". The key message of the project is "Social and solidarity economy is increasingly emerging as a vibrant and promising

model in Europe and in many parts of the world. Lifelong learning can be a tool for social change because it has great potential for transforming younger generations into citizens and professionals better able to cope with today's social changes. The partners aim to collect the available information (based on a questionnaire designed by RIPESS Europe). Then, experimental training modules will be tested with the young people in a system of exchanges between the partner structures and an evaluation will be conducted, the results of which will be presented during a transnational seminar”.

Inter-cooperations among members and beyond also were initiated, with a campaign and commercial exchange (SOLI-OLI) established between Greek networks and co-operatives and Belgian, German and Czech SSE initiatives.

A cross-border SUDOE project between Barcelona and Toulouse (and maybe Madrid) is under study.

The Panorama of the ESS

A four-day working meeting with several members from nine countries was organized in Florence in March 2016 and allowed for the enlargement of the working group on the Panorama of SSE in Europe. We have advanced on the public policy part, but less on the identification of coherent data at the pan-European level. One can not but notice the difficulty of encouraging the structures to respond without a continuous relaunch. This revival was made during the GA of Villarceaux, but the process has not succeeded sufficiently. In the absence of "structural" means, on the one hand we seek convergences with other networks and research centers, on the other we will make a specific project and a search for diversified funds.

Collaborations have been established with the SSEDAS / SUSY partnership (www.solidarityeconomy.eu), which has worked in 24 countries in Europe and used the RIPESS Panorama questionnaire as a basis for its research in 55 territories.

We also worked with the "transformap" mapping group based in the German countries (in coordination with the ESSGlobal interoperability group of RIPESS). An extended meeting on the theme of collective mapping and interoperability / data exchange and methodologies took place in March 2017, again in Florence (hosted by Solidarius Italy).

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Presence in the RIPESS Intercontinental Board

Following the election of Judith Hitchman as President of Urgenci, Josette Combes (MES) was elected by the GA alongside Jason Nardi to represent RIPESS EU in the RIPESS International Board, in substitution of Judith (who was elected to represent Urgenci in the Board). The GSEF (Global Social Economy Forum), held in Montreal in September 2016, brought together several members of the network, who participated throughout and where able to hold meetings such as one about RIPESS LAC (Latin America and Caribe). The RIPESS Intercontinental Board of directors was held in this context, advancing on several issues. This event was the occasion for a cross-membership between the GSEF and RIPESS Intercontinental, with potential developments through the C.I.T.I.E.S. platform.

RIPESS EU participates in several international working groups, particularly those on vision and education (GT1), relations with institutions (GT2) and communication - networking - mapping (GT3). The latter is facilitated by the RIPESS EU.

RIPESS EU is committed to actively participate in the development of the program for the next international meeting in 2018 and the co-organization of the World Social Forum on Alternative Economies, in cooperation with the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) and other networks. Some members are involved in international work, notably UFISC and Urgenci, who have followed the work of the RMB (Rencontres du Mont Blanc), the SSE Pilot Group and the UNSSE Task Force.

During the 2016 General Assembly in Villarreux, we launched a reflection on a connection with the Mediterranean which has begun and will continue through member networks (RIUESS, INEES, ISE, URGENCI to start). On the occasion of the symposium organized by RIUESS (SSE Inter-University Network, member of the RIPESS EU), a meeting with members of RAESS took place in May 2017, with the aim of working on (formal and popular) education and public policies, and find common tracks of collaboration.

In 2016, the United Nations ILO (International Labour Organisation) organized its Academy on SSE (<http://socialeconomy.itcilo.org>) in Costa Rica. Jason Nardi (Solidarius) was invited to represent the European network. There are many opportunities to work with the organization, based in Turin and Geneva.

EXTERNAL DIMENSION

From the outset, RIPESS Europe participated in the construction of the first European Forum for Social and Solidarity Economy (EFSSE 2016 - www.efsse.org), organized by the parliamentary group of the GUE in the European Parliament. For the first time, the SSE had the possibility to debate in the EP, an initial meeting which initiated collaboration, including with other networks, and continues in 2017 with a new forum scheduled for end 2017. We also participated to the Social Economy Intergroup of the European Parliament, to show the presence of solidarity economy, but until today without a concrete return.

In Thessaloniki (Greece) the Workers' enterprises movement organized a meeting (28-29 October 2016) during which a wide panorama of the forms of takeover of enterprises by their workers was presented. The RIPESS EU was invited to present the links between SSE and self-managed companies and was represented by Josette Combes and Georgia Bekridaki.

At the Social and solidarity economy fair in Casablanca, Morocco (14 to 16 July 2016), Eric Lavillunière presented how energy and citizen transition initiatives contribute to the development of solidarity economy. It also made it possible to be invited by the Royal Academy of Morocco from 18 to 20 October in Marrakech, in preparation for COP22, to present these citizens' initiatives at a plenary conference.

As for the second strategic choice, the "Convergences" by systematizing the meeting of the forces of change at the heart of a constellation of alter economic movements ", during the year 2016 Many activities: with the movement of the Commons in the European Commons Assembly, thanks to the initiative of Commons.fi the new Finnish member. The links between Common and ESS will be further explored in the future and an internal RIPESS working group has been created.

Another convergence activity has been established with the organizers of the NESI FORUM (New Economy Social Innovation - www.neweconomyforum.org). RIPESS Europe decided to participate as a co-promoter and bring the vision and practices of the SSE, with several speakers and participants. In 2016 the process of preparation was followed, starting from a meeting in London. The Forum took place in May 2017 in Malaga, with over 600 people participating from several "alter-economic" movements.

Advocacy

Beyond the speeches at various events and institutions, RIPESS Europe has worked on two documents, involving several members of the network and the Advisory Board. The latter produced an initial document on SSE and social innovation, which was shared and discussed with all members (and presented to the EFSSE in Brussels) and finalised in Spring 2017. Another document was produced at the end of 2016 on the European Pillar of Social Rights, in response to the European Commission's public consultation, thanks in particular to the contribution of UFISC.

Communication

During the year, communication work was strengthened with a small multilingual team that edited the website, the newsletter (much improved) and communications to network members. A first brochure for the presentation of the network, which was distributed during the main events, was also produced.

Socioeco participated actively in the communication of RIPESS EU by contributing to the publication of the newsletter, by feeding the website, social media and by continuing the work of mapping public policies.

Perspectives

As outlined in the Action Plan 2016-2018, we will focus on all aspects of communication and visibility, renewing the website and producing new media. Collaboration with research institutes, universities and other networks will be more intensive, as well as with cultural actors and the independent and cooperative media, with a European meeting in the GA in Athens.

Finally, training will be developed, especially to work on advocacy and different forms of networking.

Meetings Agenda

Date	Place	Title / subject of the event
28/01	Brussels	EFSSSE 2016 : European SSE Forum. European Parliament
29/01	Brussels	CoCo Guidelines and work plan 2016
4-6/03	Florence (Italia)	Panorama.Group of work - Relaunch of the data collection process and enlargement of the group
9-11/03	Mexico City (Mexico)	Participation in a RIPESS and Urgenci Roundtable on Habitat III Consultation
2-4/04	Barcelona (Spain)	Participation of RIPESS Europe in the Right to the City and Habitat III Consultation
28-29/04	Prague (Czech Republic)	Social and Solidarity Economy Conference organized by SUZY
11-12 /05	Timisoara (Romania)	First Forum ESS Romanian
18/05	Paris (France)	CoCo Ripess Organization GA 2016
18-20/06	Paris (France)	EMES-Polanyi International Symposium
20-22 /06	Villarceaux (France)	5th General Assembly meeting Ripess Europe
5-8 /07	Besançon (France)	Participation in the Summer University of Social Movements and International Solidarity (UEMSSI) Animation of a seminar (3 workshops)
09-10/07	Villarceaux (France)	EDGE Funders meeting
14-16/07	Casablanca (Morocco)	Social Solidarity Economy Forum
09-14/08	Montreal (Quebec)	World Social Forum
7-10 /09	Montréal (Quebec)	Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF) CA RIPESS International
16-18/09	Ostrava (Czech Republic)	European Meeting of CSA (Urgenci)
23-24/09	Geneva (Switzerland)	Meeting and public event with APRES-GE
26-27/09	Budapest (Hungary)	Visit to the Kifesz + CoCo ripess
18/10	London (UK)	NEF seminar and public event organized by ISE
18-20/10	Marrakech (Morocco)	Royal Academy of Morocco. Preparation COP 22
24-26/10	Tallin (Estonia)	Meetings and seminar with local organizations and Ministry of Economic Cooperation
26-28/10	Rezekne District (Latvia)	Meetings and seminar with local organizations
28-29 /10	Thessalonique (Greece)	Second euro-Mediterranean meeting of the workers' economy
10-12/11	Bilbao (Spain)	REAS Congres
10-13/11	Vratsa (Bulgaria)	Empatheast - Regional Meeting on Alternative Economies and Development
15-17/11	Brussels (Belgium)	European Commons Assembly / European Assembly
21-25/11	San José (Costa Rica)	SSE Academy (ILO – Nations Unies)
25-26/11	Dijon (France)	Alternative Economy days
29//11	Rome (Italy)	First transnational seminar of the Erasmus Project + "SSEE Mapping opportunities and constraints for affirming SSE in IVET curricula"
6/12	Brussels (Belgium)	Preparatory meeting for EFSSE 2017
16-17/ 12	Barcelona (Spain)	Meeting with the XES international and communication commissions. Meeting with Jordi Via ESS delegate at the Municipality of Barcelona