

## **LABORATORUL DE SOLIDARITATE, activities 2016-2018**

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### **Projects implemented and under implementation**

#### **1. SUSY – 2016-2017**

Laboratorul de Solidaritate ALS was an implementing partner in SSEDAS - Social & solidarity economy as development approach for sustainability during the 2015 European Year of Development and beyond » pan-European project. The overall aim of the project was to contribute to finding a coherent and comprehensive solution to the global challenges that imply poverty reduction and sustainable development, ensuring a decent life for all by the year 2030. The project was implemented in 46 territories from 23 countries. ALS supported the national partner from Romania identifying examples of good practice, conducting workshops and local events on the topic of social economy; conducting training sessions; advocacy and lobbying activities on social economy.

#### **2. FinCare 2017-2019**

ALS has assisted the National Union of Credit Unions in Romania in developing and, now implementing FinCare project. Through the project social finance institutions in three European countries: credit unions in Romania and United Kingdom and credit cooperatives in Trentino Italy have joined forces to develop jointly learning and training materials for members and executives in governance and financial education. The specific intellectual outputs to be developed are: Financial education handbook/guide for coop / credit union members - families, including youth; Trainers materials for adult educators /group facilitators in financial education; Report on current situation on financial education and numeracy to low-skilled adult learners and youth in Romania and 2 case studies from Italy and one case study from Romania on financial education and numeracy to low-skilled adult learners and youth and Governance for social finance institutions; a Manual for credit union governing and management bodies; Governance trainers materials (checklists, exercises) and a member's handbook. Credit unions leaders, senior staff and trainers in Romania coming from the country regional networks and different credit union organizations will attend multiplication events on financial education and governance of social finance institutions. Credit union representatives will be involved in designing the Governance manual. ALS has designed the project and will contribute to the Financial education handbook/guide, to the Report on current situation and to one case study on financial education from Romania. It will also Report and make case studies on Governance for social finance institutions and will contribute to the Manual for credit union governing and management bodies, Governance trainers materials (checklists, exercises) and a member's handbook. Project is funded under Erasmus Strategic Partnership for Adult Education.

Partners from United Kingdom are The Co-operative Family Credit Union [www.co-operativecreditunion.coop](http://www.co-operativecreditunion.coop) and Liverpool John Moores University [www.ljmu.ac.uk](http://www.ljmu.ac.uk) and from Italy, Federazione Trentina della Cooperazione [www.cooperazionetrentina.it](http://www.cooperazionetrentina.it) and Formazione Lavoro [www.formazione-lavoro.net](http://www.formazione-lavoro.net).

### **New projects (applications submitted, currently under review)**

#### **1. CooPerformance – Agribusiness higher education for agriculture cooperatives**

ALS has supported the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest, the oldest and biggest agronomic university from Romania to develop partnerships with universities and the emerging new agriculture cooperatives sector in Romania through a joint project aimed at developing their teaching on cooperative business models in the agriculture sector. Through the project COOP RO, recently established, the only organization of cooperatives from Romania which gathers agricultural cooperatives and hopefully will also develop as an umbrella organization to represent the interest of their members at the European level in COGECA the General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives in the European Union. Partners are from Spain University of Almeria – which has a tradition of working alongside the local cooperative and social economy in its region, providing services to and learning from the cooperative (agricultural and credit) and Cajamar Caja Rural and from Germany Humboldt Universität with its Raiffeisen Chair “Economics of Agricultural Cooperatives” research focused on agricultural cooperatives. Through the project teachers from Romanian USAMV will be trained in management of farmer-led, coop enterprises in the agri-food chain, and partner universities will share experience in teaching agri-food enterprise management and cooperatives through short joint staff training events, and working/ teaching together during an Intensive Study Programme for master level students, case studies, videos, and teaching materials for the first year of the Agribusiness Master programme.

Project was submitted for funding under Erasmus Strategic Partnership for Higher Education.

#### **2. SEK: Social Entrepreneurship Key competencies**

ALS was invited as partner in a project proposed by the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), in partnership with ARIS Formazione e Ricerca from Italy, and Nove Solides from Spain. The proposed learning outcomes for training provision in Social entrepreneurship for startupper, innovator and entrepreneurs, formal VET learning units on Social entrepreneurship and VET integration guidelines and open Education Resources and assessment tools for Social entrepreneurship.

Project was submitted for funding under Erasmus Strategic Partnership for Adult Education.

## **Lecturers and presentations**

ALS President was invited as

- Keynote speaker in the 9<sup>th</sup> *International Conference for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development - Responsible Entrepreneurship. Vision, Development and Ethics* organised by the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), Bucharest, Romania University of Sheffield International Faculty, CITY College, Thessaloniki, Greece 23-24 June 2016 Bucharest, Romania;
- Guest speaker in *Bursa Binelui* the Good Stock Market (a Banca Comerciala Romanian social project) – workshop for social organisations on Social Entrepreneurship as a strategy for Organisational sustainability, November 2016;
- Guest lecturer in *Management and Digital Innovation Master programme* of the National University of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), Bucharest, Romania – class on social entrepreneurship in February 2018;
- Guest lecturer in *CooPilot project* for the session held in Romania in February 2018 at the request of the partner in Romania National School of Political Studies and Public Administration.  
COOPilot is a project led by Pour la Solidarité (Belgium), involving 10 other European partners aiming to provide new responses for youth employment in the European Union through Cooperative entrepreneurship. COOPilot is co-financed by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission.

## **Research activities**

Ancuta Vamesu and Cristina Barna (Solidarity Laboratory Romania) wrote a paper on "Romanian Credit Unions – self-organising for financial education and inclusion". The paper was selected among the three finalists of the European Microfinance Research Award co-sponsored by the Research Group "Financial Inclusion and New Entrepreneurship" of The Hague University of Applied Sciences ahead of the 14<sup>th</sup> European Microfinance Network Annual Conference 2017 which has called for papers on the potential and key role of financial education for citizen empowerment, as well as financial inclusion.

## **Other public presences**

Ambassador of European Funds Gala for the section Social Enterprises – enterprises with an impact March 2017

Member of the Jury for the socio-economic development section of the annual Civil Society Gala 2017, 2018.