

CIRIEC-Brasil, activities 2016-2018

This report will cover the activities carried out by CIRIEC-Brasil, since the last CIRIEC's International Congress in France (Reims, 21-23 September 2016), the current activities and the future planning for the next two years 2017-2018.

CIRIEC-Brasil was constituted at the beginning of 2015, with headquarters based in the city of Campinas, State of São Paulo, where most of its members are located. In 2016, during the 31st CIRIEC's International Congress, Brazil was chosen to host the 6th International Research Conference on Social Economy, which occurred, in late 2017, in the city of Manaus, in the middle of the Amazon rainforest.

For this event, 313 participants enrolled and 340 articles were submitted, coming from 21 countries: Argentina: 9; Belgium: 3; Brazil: 238; Canada: 2; Chile: 2; Colombia: 13; Ecuador: 5; France: 5; Germany: 2; Holland: 1; Italy: 1; Japan: 1; Mexico: 3; Paraguay: 3; Portugal: 5; Russia: 1; Spain: 12; United Kingdom: 1; United States: 1; Uruguay: 2 and Venezuela: 1.

For CIRIEC International, but especially for CIRIEC-Brasil, the event in Manaus was a great visiting card bringing CIRIEC closer to several public entities such as SENAES (National Secretariat for Solidarity Economy, linked to the Ministry of Labor and Employment), the State Government of Bahia, which is becoming a project partner. Several universities and research centres studying the topic of Solidarity Economy and Cooperativism have been approached in this occasion.

The Manaus Conference was the occasion to introduce CIRIEC to the Brazilian political and academic society, but also to realize that theoretical discussion, in Brazil, still needs to improve in terms of quality. In analyzing the submitted papers, we noticed that 95% of the texts were case analyzes, such as studies of some isolated solidarity projects, not bringing any theoretical debate about social and solidarity economy or cooperativism. In most of the texts, there was confusion between theoretical theory or referential with historical evolution of Solidarity Economy in Brazil and in the rest of the world.

This led to a more in-depth reflection on what is and is being discussed in Brazil. Many critics, especially from European countries, that the Brazilian academic debate is poor and ideological are true and have been proven by the papers presented. The main reason lies in the poor training of Brazilian researchers and to the organs of political representation of these solidarity projects that have an exclusively ideological performance that cares little for structural or economic aspects of the enterprises.

From the analysis of the international relations point of view, the Manaus event allowed to strengthen ties of friendship with several countries and national sections of CIRIEC, including Brazil on the world social economy and cooperativism agenda and allowing for higher flights.

CIRIEC-Brasil is in the process of reorganizing its accounts and initiating a solid national expansion project. A campaign of membership has been started, the Brazilian Journal *Cadernos CIRIEC-Brasil* will be soon launched and the 1st Brazilian Congress of Social and Solidarity Economy is being organized. CIRIEC-Brasil is also in permanent dialogue with CIRIEC-Colombia and other Latin American researchers to strengthen the network of contacts to enable the future expansion of CIRIEC to other Latin American countries.

But neither internal expansion nor external expansion will be done on their own. All the national sections of CIRIEC have to be approached to elaborate joint activities, seeking not only economic survival, as in the case of CIRIEC-Brasil, but the possibility to become a reference entity to overcome the precariousness of Brazilian research in social economy and supportive.