



BUCHAREST | ROMANIA | 2019

Call for papers

7th CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy
Social and Solidarity Economy: Moving Towards a New Economic System
Bucharest, Romania, 6th – 9th June 2019

CIRIEC International - International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy in collaboration with Solidarity Laboratory (member of CIRIEC International), The University of Bucharest - Faculty of Sociology and Social Work and The National University of Political Studies and Public Administration - Faculty of Management launch the Call for papers for the 7th CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy to be held in Bucharest, Romania, 6th – 9th June 2019.

Scope and topics:

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a renewed global commitment to not only end poverty and hunger but also to achieve universal social protection, reduction of inequalities and environmental sustainability, all requiring fundamental changes in the way our economies function. The Agenda recognizes that business-as-usual is no longer an option noting the key role of the diverse enterprise and civic sector, and of the cooperatives, civil society and philanthropic organizations which are part of what is called 'social and solidarity economy' (SSE). The United Nations dedicated Task Force noted that realizing the SDGs represents a challenge of enormous proportions and that, at this juncture, it is crucial to look at the SSE and see what its role in realizing this 'transformational vision' could be.¹ The 7th CIRIEC's international conference can contribute significantly to this reflection.

¹ *Realizing the 2030 Agenda through Social and Solidarity Economy* - Position statement of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy

Held for the first time in Central and Eastern Europe in a post-communist country, marked by major political, social and economic changes during the last century, Romania that has recently re-discovered the virtues of the social and solidarity economy, the conference aims to generate a renewed scholarly interest in these topics in the region Romania. By bringing together the global CIRIEC network of senior and early-stage researchers interested by the whole range of the social economy components (cooperatives, mutuals, associations, foundations), it will be a unique opportunity for the West to meet East and to contribute with the results of studies to a transformational vision for a world meeting its sustainable development goals.

The CIRIEC Conference will be the occasion to address the following topics:

1. Workers owned enterprises (including experience of privatized enterprises in former communist countries) and the future of decent work

Employee-owned enterprises are based on the paradigm that workers jointly own, manage and control their enterprise. This makes them very specific enterprises, in many cases being more productive than the traditional companies. Workers owned enterprises represent a viable alternative to conventional businesses and will grow in significance as private businesses fail and workers lose their jobs in the private sector, or are facing situations such as stagnant salaries and inequalities. The recent global economic crisis has provided new arguments for the forms of worker organizations in businesses and enterprises, which demonstrated to be more resilient and clearly showed the competitive advantage of 'non-delocalized' jobs. Cooperatives are an option for self-employed workers, self-employment being widespread among workers in the Global South, and becoming more prevalent with workers in the Global North, including freelancing and independent contract workers, who lack stable employment relationships but also give to economy workers and new entrants into the labour market. This section intends to share research on dynamics of this sector, innovations, best practices and policies in the field of workers owned enterprises. Studies on the dynamics of converted enterprises, their productivity, survival rate, impact of recently passed legislation that puts financial and legal support systems in place to facilitate such enterprise restructuring are welcome.

In this section we also propose to review results of last decades' management and employee buyouts and in particular the *experiences in the privatization process of former communist countries* since 1989 irrespective of the corporate form of the companies. Also experience of *consumer buyouts* – transformation in cooperatives of public companies may be investigated.

2. Role of social economy in providing sustainable livelihoods in rural areas and in food sustainability, sovereignty and access

This section welcomes papers on food sustainability, sovereignty and access – role of farmers and consumers in the agri-food chain governance, farmers and consumers cooperatives and new rural movements. Agricultural markets and farming have changed considerably over the last decades and agricultural production faces increasing social and environmental challenges. Family farms are a central

element of rural livelihoods yet their viability is under threat, many not economically viable, and farmers, important strategic and economic players in the food supply chain, often working independently of each other, with little collective bargaining power to help them defend their interests against other parts of the chain, such as food processors and retailers. From the first cooperatives of farmers emerged in the Austro-Hungarian Empire focused on providing credit to members, there are now many cooperatives all over the world which have been in business for more than 100 years, while in many countries this model still has not taken root or has been disrupted by historic circumstances. Papers are expected to investigate ways in which cooperation contributes to securing the future of the rural livelihoods, facing difficulties such as small farm size, fragmentation of landholdings, ageing farm population & lack of new entrants. Successes and failures in the co-operative farming model may be investigated and factors explaining ways they use to overcome some of these constraints to growth. Various relationships between producers and consumers taking forms of organizations in the social and solidarity economy may be investigated and their role in dealing with today's challenges of food poverty / access, sustainability and ultimately sovereignty, as well as the role of co-operatives and social enterprises in providing access to services and goods for people in rural and small, isolated areas and communities.

3. Commons – historic, restored and new, collaborative commons

Recent decades have witnessed the emergence of new approaches on development and management of public and common goods. The works of Elinor Ostrom and her disciples have sparked increasing interest in the merits of common goods, their source of wise management of natural resources through participation-driven actions. From traditional natural commons still existing in some parts of the world to new common goods created through open, participatory production and governance processes, the topic of commons is generating a growing literature. *"We are just beginning to glimpse the bare outlines of an emerging new economic system--the collaborative commons"* is the opinion of economist Jeremy Rifkin. This section welcomes papers covering common goods, traditional natural commons, collaborative commons and other new approaches.

4. Social and solidarity economy eco-systems – governance, networks, visibility and policies

Research has shown that a thriving social economy sector comes out of particular reciprocal relationships between governments and social economy enterprises. The OECD has developed a framework of what could be considered an enabling policy framework with components such as: the legal and regulatory framework, access to finance, access to markets, business support, and training and research. There is a constant search for empowering eco-systems towards social economy enterprises that may include enabling government policies as social economy enterprises may contribute to achieving common policy objectives, not only create economic value but also have an added value by addressing challenges that

have not been addressed satisfactorily by the public or private sectors. This theme welcomes researches on building effective eco-systems for social and solidarity economy. We propose a forum for participants from all over the world to exchange researches, experiences and programmes and to discuss on how to create, enable and empower eco-systems supporting SSE, the role of key actors and networks in such eco-systems, design of support schemes, regional initiatives, cooperation initiatives etc.

The recent CIRIEC report on Social Economy in the European Union² notes as the main trend in the recent evolution of the social economy its consolidation in European society as a *pole of social utility* between the capitalist sector and the public sector, with its plurality of actors: cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations and other similar companies and organisations. For over two decades, the European institutions (Parliament, Commission and Economic and Social Committee) have recognized the SSE's capacity for correcting significant social and economic imbalances and helping to achieve various objectives of general interest. This theme welcomes also papers on public policies and SSE eco-system and the SSE as a fundamental pillar and keystone of the European Social Model.

5. Dimensions of social and solidarity economy sector - statistics of the social economy

The visibility and the recognition of the social economy represent an important long-term research direction for CIRIEC International. In 2006 CIRIEC elaborated for the European Commission the Manual for drawing up Satellite Accounts of Companies in the Social Economy³ as a complement to the 2003 UN Handbook of Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts⁴. Since then, several countries have experimented the satellite accounts. CIRIEC's research efforts on the weight and size of the social economy continued with a series of studies looking at international perspectives for the production of statistics for the social economy⁵. Various efforts at international and European levels are made to clarify the different concepts of social economy / third sector, their components - cooperatives, not-for-profit organisations..., and different attempts have been made to develop tools to measure its size, structure, composition, sources of support, trends, and various impacts on economic and human development and well-being, innovation.

² CIRIEC study *Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union* for European Economic and Social Committee (2008, 2012, 2017), Directors: Jose Luis Monzón & Rafael Chaves

³ "Manual for drawing up the satellite Accounts of Companies in the Social Economy: cooperatives and mutual societies" (Professor Jose Barea, Professor Jose Luis Monzon, Study Co Directors, CIRIEC Centre International de Recherches et d'Information sur l'Economie Publique, Sociale et Cooperative, Universite de Liege, 4000 Liege, Belgique), 2006.

⁴ *Handbook of National Accounting - Handbook on Non-Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/91 Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division Studies in Methods Series F., No. 91 United Nations New York 2003 https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesf/seriesf_91e.pdf

⁵ CIRIEC, Marie J. Bouchard and Damien Rousselière - *The Weight of the Social Economy. An International Perspective*, Peter Lang, 2015; CIRIEC study *Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union* for European Economic and Social Committee (2008, 2012, 2017), Directors: Jose Luis Monzón & Rafael Chaves.

Current national accounting rules, do not acknowledge the SSE as a differentiated institutional sector, making it difficult to draw up regular, accurate and reliable economic statistics on the agents composing it. The ILO has raised the issue of the lack of reliable and comparable statistics on cooperatives in most countries of the world for many years and is working towards developing guidelines on the measurement of cooperatives, both in terms of employment and economic value added, while The United Nations have updated the Handbook on Non-profit Institutions to include measurement of related institutions and of volunteer work.

This theme welcomes papers on ways to overcome the challenge of the institutional invisibility of social and solidarity economy, its causes - unclear conceptual identity making difficult its identification in the legal systems of the various countries.

Also, it welcomes researches about developing systematic statistics on the social economy sector and its different components - cooperatives, not-for-profit organisations..., definitions and indicators used, recent developments, reflection on the national systems of accounts SNA, international perspectives, specific challenges concerning the data (availability, comparability and reliability) and ways to overcome them, as well as options of integrating social and solidarity economy measurement into existing national and international statistical systems.

6. New technologies, platforms, on-line collaboration leading towards a New Era of social and solidarity economy

John Maynard Keynes prophesized that *“a point may soon be reached, much sooner perhaps than we are all of us aware of, when these [economic] needs are satisfied in the sense that we prefer to devote our further energies to non-economic purposes”*⁶ The newest technologies are making goods and services more accessible and easier to co-produce, turning many of us from consumers to prosumers of for instance renewable energy through harvesting technologies on individual homes and buildings, for food-coproduction production through community supported agriculture, and food distribution through food coops and so on.

Cooperatives and social enterprises are growing in various services and production sectors as they provide local alternatives to global businesses. They have long been active in the energy sector both in the production and distribution. The energy transition has generated a growing sector of renewable energy cooperatives, with data showing that for instance in the European Union as much as 45% of the energy could be produced by energy cooperatives by 2050 all in a context of increasing prices and energy poverty. Papers documenting and investigating these developments are welcome in this section.

The cooperative management model maybe the best suited to collectively manage common resources produced in such a highly collaborative economy, both equitably and sustainably. This section welcomes

⁶ Keynes, John M. 1931. Essays in Persuasion, Project Gutenberg eBook, 2011, p.358–74

papers approaching the these trends and developments and their impact on SSE evolution or transformation - emerging shift toward a possible New Era of social and solidarity economy in the context of the new technologies, platforms, open source technologies, energy and on-line collaboration.

7. Inclusive finance and finance for social and solidarity economy enterprises

The social finance sector including credit unions and cooperative banks, social micro-finance institutions, social investment funds, mutual insurers and other forms of participatory funding such as crowd financing, are key to providing financial inclusion to significant segments of population all over the world. Many low income people are facing phenomena as over-indebtedness and financial and social exclusion, in many cases due to the lack of financial education. Considering this context, the section intends to advance the research in social financing alternatives - credit cooperatives (especially rural credit cooperatives), credit unions, microfinance programmes, ethical banking initiatives, crowd funding, etc. Also, social and solidarity economy enterprises themselves face important barriers in accessing financial resources. We welcome papers from academics and practitioners related to researches, case studies of financial services for vulnerable people and for social enterprises, best practices of social finance and hybrid finance packages, investment and financial funds for social enterprises etc.

8. Potential of social and solidarity economy in new European member states

With a disrupted history, Social and Solidarity Economy in Eastern Europe is still an emergent field, but with positive trends in the last years. As it is stated in the recent EESC study⁷, many Eastern EU countries face the barrier concerning the lack of awareness and understanding of the social economy, social enterprises and other related concepts in society, public debate and in academia. Statistics also show a SSE divide right in the heart of Europe - while the paid employment rate in the social economy at EU level is 6,3%, the same indicator in the 'new' member states remains to an average of 2.5%. This is just one indicator which shows persisting disparities within Europe which have, among other significant consequences, triggered large-scale migratory flows from East to West within the EU. This trend is contrasting the objective of forging an integrated European space where social and economic inequalities between the EU-15 and the 12 new Member States in Eastern and Southern Europe are diminished and eliminated. In the same time, a lot of new ideas, new approaches and social innovations are coming from Eastern Europe, demonstrating a high

⁷ CIRIEC study *Recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union* for European Economic and Social Committee (2017), Directors: Jose Luis Monzón & Rafael Chaves.

potential of SSE development in the future years. This theme intends to assess the potential of SSE in Eastern countries and the necessary ecosystem to develop and consolidate social economy sector and its integration with European networks, a dynamic that could contribute to increased cohesion in Europe.

This theme also welcomes papers looking at the dynamic of welfare regimes, socio-economic context and social Enterprises in this part of Europe. Over the 2008-2012 period, the SEE has shown a remarkable capacity to face up to the negative consequences of the current cycle of depression and made a significant contribution to the three main priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In terms of innovation, the SSE is pioneering the launch of new products and initiatives that fight social exclusion effectively, as social economy enterprises have shown through their experiences in many European countries.

9. Social innovation and education generating social change and impact

This theme welcomes papers debating on how social innovations and the actions of social and collective entrepreneurs are contributing to positive change and social impact. What is different about the profile of social entrepreneurs who collectively start and run successful social economy enterprises and make a difference through social innovations? What are these entrepreneurs' values? What different ways do they use for combining business efficiency with social impact, and how they succeed in creating sustainable social value? Further, the theme invites research work on initiatives of institutions, specialist support networks and umbrella organizations, civil society organizations and social economy enterprises conducting social entrepreneurship or cooperative education & training. Education represents an important pillar of the necessary infrastructure for boosting social and solidarity economy. Only through social enterprise and cooperative education and training, encouraged and supported values at the core of social economy will be cultivated into integrating social enterprise business model within the education system at all levels (particularly at secondary level and in higher education). This theme intends to share best practices, models, case studies, projects results, ongoing researches in the field of social enterprise and cooperative education and training.

You can present your contributions in two ways:

- **In person:** oral presentations (max.15 minutes).
- **Poster presentation** (only if it is recommended after peer-review process).

Key Dates:

- **Abstract submission deadline:** 15 December 2018
- **Acceptance notification:** 25 January 2019 (at the latest)
- **Final paper submission deadline:** 15 May 2019

Submission Guidelines:

Abstracts (in English) are to be sent by 15 December 2018 using **Online Registration System**.

Abstracts (2-3 pages) and papers (10-20 pages) have to be related to the general topic and subthemes presented above.

The notification of accepted abstracts will be made through Online Registration System by 25 January 2019 at latest.

After acceptance by the Scientific Committee, final versions of the papers (in English, French or Spanish) are to be sent by 15 May 2019 at latest.

Instructions for papers & abstracts:

- Abstracts in English and papers in English, French or Spanish
- Max. length: abstract (2-3 pages) – papers (10-20 pages).
- Compatible formats: Microsoft Word (.doc, docx).
- 12-point max. font, double spaced, 2.5-cm margin all around. References may be single spaced.
- Be sure to number the pages.
- Key words and References.
- JEL Codes

Publication:

- **Conference Proceedings - E-Book with Conference Programme and Extended Abstracts**, with ISBN.

Selected accepted papers of registered participants will be published – in their long version in:

- **Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics** (CIRIEC International)
- **Revista de economía pública, social y cooperativa** (CIRIEC-España)
- **Économie et solidarités** (CIRIEC Canada)
- **International Review of Social Research** - <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/irsr>
- **Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy** – www.managementdynamics.ro
- **Review of Applied Socio-Economic Research** - www.reaser.eu
- **Quality of Life Journal** - <http://www.revistacalitateavietii.ro/indexEn.html>

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- **Contact:** Conference Secretariat: office@solidaritate.eu
- **Conference Web-site:** <https://www.solidaritate.eu/index.php/ciriec-2019/>

We look forward to seeing you in Bucharest on 6th – 9th June 2019!