



Workshop 2

Social Economy and youth entrepreneurship for a sustainable and fair recovery

2 March 2021 | 10:00 – 12:00 | EESC - Brussels



Organised by:

Social Economy Europe (**SEE**), **Cooperatives Europe** and
the EESC's Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption (**INT**)

Draft programme

10:00-10:15

Opening remarks by:

- **Giuseppe Guerini**, spokesperson of the EESC Social Economy Category and President of CECOP-CICOPA Europe
- **Ann Branch**, Head of the Job Creation unit at DG EMPL, European Commission



10:15-11:25

Round table on Promoting social economy entrepreneurship for young people across Europe

Moderated by **Heleen Heysse** (Cooperatives Europe) and **Víctor Meseguer** (Social Economy Europe)

- **Student and teacher from a cooperative school in Spain**
- **Brando Benifei**, MEP (S&D, IT), member of the Social Economy Intergroup
- **Nicolás Dimarco**, Argentinian Federation of Cooperatives in the tech sector (FATTIC)
- **Petro Darmoris**, Chief Operating Officer at the Ukrainian Social Academy
- **Ana Aguirre**, Co-founder and worker owner of **TAZEBAEZ** cooperative
- **Caroline Ferguson**, National Coordinator of “*Mon ESS à l'école*”
- **Q&A**

11:25-12:00

Closing remarks by:

- **Alicia Homs MEP (S&D, ES)**, Member of the Social Economy Intergroup
- **Juan Antonio Pedreño**, president of Social Economy Europe
- **Jean-Louis Bancel**, President of Cooperatives Europe
- **Ulla Engelmann**, Head of the Social Economy unit at DG Grow, European Commission

Concept note

What is the social economy?

The social economy is the driving force of societal innovation: made up of enterprises and organisations of different sizes, such as cooperatives, associations, foundations and mutual and social enterprises, among other forms specific to each Member State.



These are diverse enterprises and organisations united around common values and features like putting people and the social objective before profits, being democratically run, contributing to social objectives, reinvesting most of the profits in the sustainability of the organisation, as well as principles of solidarity and responsibility.

There are **2.8 million** social economy enterprises and organisations in the EU, **employing 13.6 million people**, and accounting for **8% of the EU's GDP**.

The social economy is an important and recognised part of the EU's socio-economic landscape, bringing innovative solutions to today's biggest common challenges. Enterprises and organisations in the social economy create quality jobs and strengthen social inclusion through collective entrepreneurship and work and the social integration of disadvantaged people; they promote the circular economy and the green transition; they contribute to local and rural development because they operate locally and are community- and needs-focused, and they provide access to housing and quality social services. In addition, they are viable, as they reinvest the majority of their profits in the sustainability of the organisation, and for this reason, among others, such as collective ownership, they have proven to be resilient to economic turbulence.

Cooperatives are one of the social economy's business models, which are owned by their members, who have an equal say in how the cooperative is run and share the profit the business makes. Cooperatives are active in every sector and come in all shapes and sizes. They are ethical businesses that work for the benefit of the community now and in the future.

Cooperatives, as key social economy players, offer solutions to many of Europe's challenges by responding to people's needs.

Social economy and youth entrepreneurship

Young people today are more and more socially and environmentally aware and responsible. Many young people are seeking jobs that reflect their values, which are meaningful, contribute to society and take sustainability into account. The concept of individual success is being challenged by a paradigm shift towards cooperation – to provide collective answers to collective challenges. Self-employment is on the rise, especially in the platform economy, but this can come with social protection risks for entrepreneurs and workers.

In this context, social economy business models, such as cooperatives, mutuals, associations, foundations and social enterprises, represent an opportunity for young citizens to access the labour market and start their own business.

However, many young people in Europe today are not aware of the existence of social economy business models and sometimes do not have access to information on how to start their own social economy enterprise. This is why there is a need to build a conducive environment and find ways to support young entrepreneurs.

Objectives of the workshop: "Social economy: a way forward for youth entrepreneurship"



This workshop, organised by Social Economy Europe and Cooperatives Europe, aims to gather experiences from young entrepreneurs in the social economy and cooperatives, bring knowledge from educational institutions, spark an exchange on EU initiatives aimed at supporting youth entrepreneurship in the social economy and generate learning through exchanging good practices.

Social Economy Europe (SEE) is the voice of the **2.8 million social economy enterprises and organisations** in the European Union. Created in November 2000 under the name of CEP-CMAF – the European Standing Conference of Cooperatives, Mutuals, Associations and Foundations – with the purpose of establishing a permanent dialogue between the social economy and the European institutions, in 2008 CEP-CMAF changed its name and officially became Social Economy Europe.

Cooperatives Europe is the European cross-sectoral organisation representing more than 176 000 cooperative enterprises in Europe, from 34 European countries. Our 84 members are diverse and active in all economic activities (industry and services, energy, housing, agriculture, banking, consumer and social innovation).
