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# The Strasbourg Event and the EESC Social Enterprise Project



Social Economy Category Meeting

2014-03-14



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## **EESC and the Social Enterprise Agenda**

- EESC has significant **expertise** of social economy
- Substantial **opinion work** on the topic
- Actively **involved** and **engaged** with the Institutional Social Business Agenda
- Commission launched **Social Business Initiative 2011**
- **GECES** high-level group formed



## The Social Business Initiative (SBI, 2011)

- **Describes** Social Enterprise (as stated in the Commission's Social Business Initiative) as sharing the following **common characteristics\***:
  - Earning income by **trading**
  - Have a **social** or **societal objective** of the common good as the reason for their economic activity, often in the form of a high level of social innovation,
  - **Profits** being mainly **reinvested** with a view to achieving this social objective,
  - A method of organisation or ownership **system** reflecting their mission, using democratic governance or participatory principles or focusing social justice.
- Identified **areas of action**:
  - Improving access to **funding**
  - Increasing **visibility** of social entrepreneurship
  - Improving the **legal environment**



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# Strasbourg Event – “Social Entrepreneurs – Have Your Say!” January 16-17, 2014

- **Objectives**
  - Take stock of SBI progress
  - Identify new priorities
  - Network
- **EESC co-organiser** together with Commission (MARKT, EMPL, ENTR) and city of Strasbourg



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# Strasbourg Event – “Social Entrepreneurs – Have Your Say!” January 16-17, 2014

- 30+ EESC delegation
- Close to **2000 participants**, plus 2000 online
- **Participative model** → plenary, workshops, world café, open space...
- **Harvesting** results throughout



Results online: [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2014/0116-social-entrepreneurs/index_en.htm)



## Results

- **Visibility** – for agenda, for the EESC
- Crucial **input** for the future policy agenda
- **Strasbourg Declaration** handed over to Commissioner Barnier
- Declaration open for **signatures**
- Clear **political support** → high-level speakers, event in two years again?
- Starting point for **EESC project**





## EESC Project Approach

- Approved on experimental basis **July 9, 2013**
- Emphasizes the “**implementing ideas considered important**” for the EESC rather than a classic EESC opinion work
  - Can include several instruments (complement and not duplicate)
  - Ensure proposals are feasible
  - Demonstrate proposals are supported by various stakeholders
  - Introduces specific recommendations and feasible actions
  - Builds on EESC opinion work
  - Decision-makers and partners must be identified and involved
- **Questions remaining** – validation of results, communication etc.



# Social Enterprise Project INT/735

- **Approved** December 2013 as *“Action for the implementation of the Strasbourg Declaration”*
- **Aims:**
  - Take stock of Strasbourg event results
  - Define new and concrete actions to be implemented following the Strasbourg declaration
- **Expected outputs:**
  - **High-level meeting** EESC President and Commission President
  - **Other**; publication, “hub”, reports?
- Project **method** is open
- Project **timing** → February- November
- **Project group** consists of 9 EESC members with one project coordinator
- Project managed by the **INT-section secretariat**





## Project Method – 4 Steps

4: Present to EESC, new Commission and Parliament (October-November)

3: Translate evidence to policy recommendations to the EU Institutions (July-September)

2: Gather evidence and identify solutions at local level (March-June)

- Fact-finding, best practices, going-local...

1: Chose and validate SD Principles (February-March)

COMMUNICATION



## Some Initial Actions

- **Project launch now!**
  - To **EESC members** at plenary
  - **Web site** (documents, progress, forum, events etc.)
  - Declaration in all **languages**
- <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.social-entrepreneurship-make-it-happen>
- **Polling** and **trending** using the database with 2700 actors
- **Video** competition



## Some Initial Actions

- Participation of PG members at **local events**
  - Finland, Greece, Turkey, Croatia, England...
- Participation of PG members at **European events**
  - Intergroup, Commission conferences, GECES...
- **Cooperation with institutions** (Commission, Committee of the regions, European Parliament etc. )
- Consultation and involvement of various **social economy stakeholders** – EESC, European actors etc.



# Reviewing the Strasbourg Declaration (SD)

- **Two components**
  - Strasbourg Declaration
    - p.1: “value statement”
    - p.2. principles
  - Initial ideas and suggestions from participants
- **The base to the EESC project**
  - Priorities chosen March 24
  - Principles to be illustrated through going local missions
  - But also draw from experiences, EESC opinions on the subject and ideas from key stakeholders



# Strasbourg Declaration

1. **Develop a second phase of the SBI** (broaden scope, partnership with Member States, regional/local authorities, civil society).
2. EU Institutions : **ownership and deliver on the actions.**
3. Stronger engagement at EU, national, regional and local levels to co-create **new policies to support social enterprise.**
4. Creation of **an eco-system** for social enterprise **mainstreamed in Commission's policies.**
5. **Partnership** (sector, Member States, regional and local authorities) to support social enterprises and help them build capacity (legal frameworks, access to finance, business start-up and development support, training and education, public procurement).



# Strasbourg Declaration

6. EU institutions and Member States to **reinforce the role of social enterprises in structural reforms to exit the crisis.**
7. Better **cooperation between social enterprises** to share knowledge and practices & Better cooperation **between public authorities** to support social enterprise growth.
8. **Suitable public and private financial instruments** and intermediaries to support social enterprises throughout their life-cycle.
9. **Further research and national statistical collection** for a better understanding, recognition and visibility of the sector.
10. Inclusion of **social indicators** and positive social impact when reporting social and economic progress.



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## **Ideas to involve the Social Economy Category**

- How would you like to engage?
- Follow-ups in your country?
- Possibilities to tie in project to events in your country?
- Your ideas and input to project?
- Engage with the Forum!



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# Social Entrepreneurs – Make It Happen!

