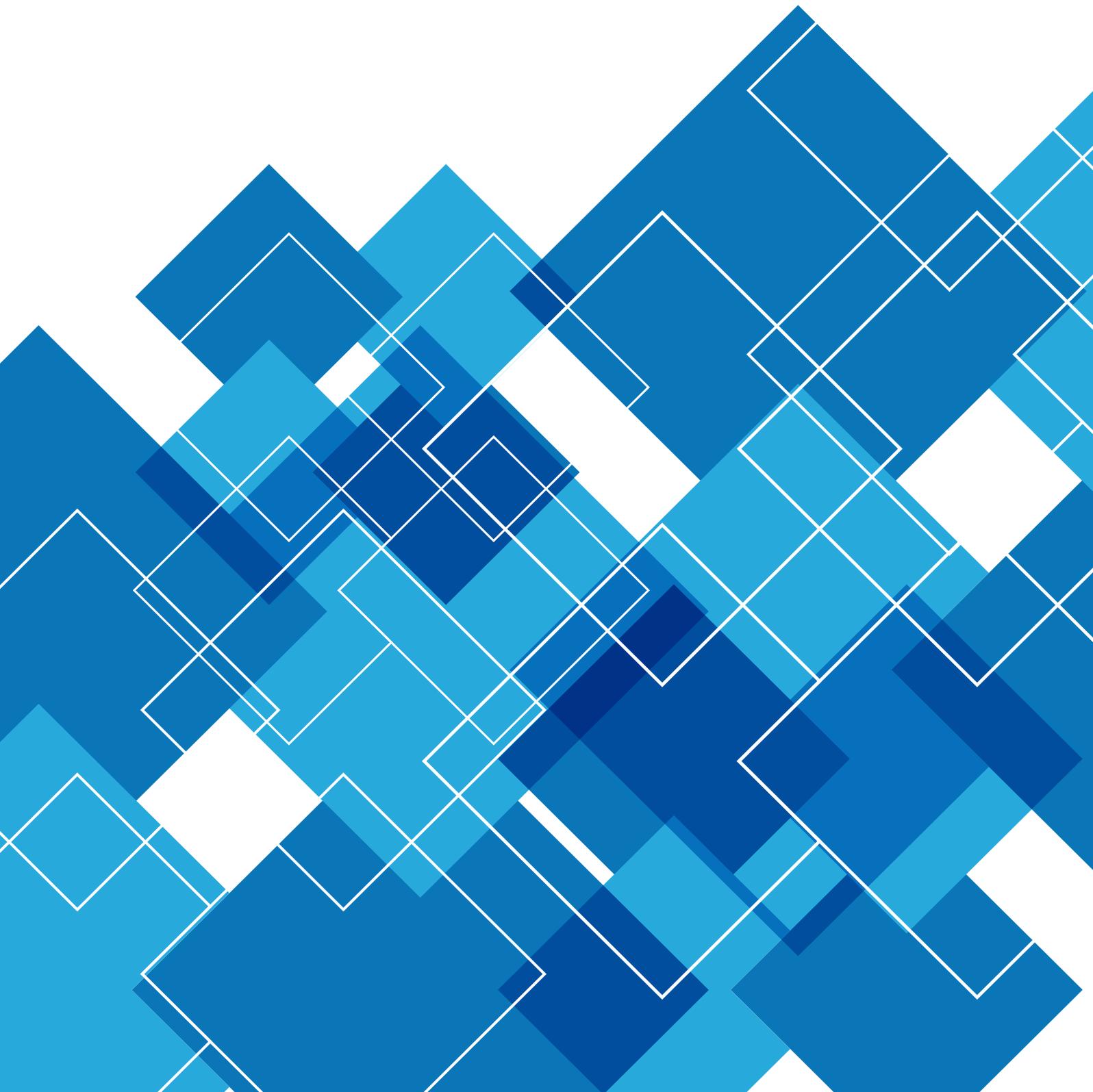


ANNUAL REPORT 2017



Social
Economy
Europe





**Social
Economy
Europe**



X GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SOFIA, 16TH APRIL 2018



X GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SOFIA, 16TH APRIL 2018



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President's Foreword

Dear members of the General Assembly and Board of Directors; friends of Social Economy Europe; it is my pleasure to present our 2017 Annual Report.

2017 has been a year of important achievements for the European Social Economy and for the consolidation of Social Economy Europe as the voice of social economy enterprises and organisations.



A key milestone in this process was the Madrid European conference “Social economy: an enterprise model for the future of Europe” that took place in May 2017. SEE co-organised this event together with our Spanish member CEPES and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security of Spain. More than 400 participants attended the conference, including social economy actors and high-level representatives of 11 European governments and of the main European Institutions: European Commission, Parliament and Economic and Social Committee. All of them highlighted their strong support to the development of the social economy in Europe. Furthermore, 10 Member States adopted the Madrid Declaration that calls on the European Commission to develop “a European Action Plan 2018-2020, adequately financed, which will promote the social economy enterprises in Europe and boost social innovation”.

In this regard, in 2017 the Commission presented its Actions and Strategy for the Social Economy and social enterprises and created an Informal Task Force on Social Economy formed by representatives of 22 Directorates General. Those are essential steps to establish a European agenda for the social economy, as well as to enhance coordination within the services of the Commission and to move towards a necessary European Action Plan for the Social Economy.

In addition, the Commission, together with the European Economic and Social Committee, the city of Gothenburg and the region of Västra Götaland, organised in November 2016, in the city of Gothenburg, a side event to the “Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth” on “What role for the Social Economy in the Future of Work”. SEE actively participated in this event to stress social economy’s contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

In short, 2017 has been an intense and positive year for Social Economy Europe and for the entire European Social Economy. A year in which we have continued to expand our representativeness thanks to the adhesion of a new member, ConcertES (Platform of the representative organizations of the Social Economy of the French-speaking Regions of Belgium), in which we have consolidated our high-level dialogue with the European Institutions, through important meetings with Commissioner Marianne Thyssen, responsible for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility; and with the Vice-President of the Commission Jyrki Katainen, responsible for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness. A year in which we have participated in more than 30 European Social Economy events, and in which we kept supporting the important work of the European Parliament's Social Economy Intergroup through the organization of three public hearings.

Our colleague and friend Jens Nilsson, MEP and Co-President of the Social Economy Intergroup, has been a key player in achieving all this. It is with great sorrow that we learnt of his recent passing. Jens was a tireless worker, an activist in favour of the Social Economy and of a fairer, more solidary and inclusive Europe; and above all; an excellent human being, vital and generous. We will miss him and we will continue working for the convictions and goals that united us.

I also want to recognise the constant work of our colleague Salvatore Vetro, representative of ENSIE (European Network of social insertion companies) in the SEE Board of Directors, who retired in 2017. Salvatore has consistently defended a closer union of social economy actors aiming to boost inter-cooperation and solidarity among them. I would like to remind that he was one of the founders of SEE. Throughout this journey, he has brought value and values to this collective project that is Social Economy Europe.

To conclude, I would like to stress that from Social Economy Europe, we believe that social economy enterprises and organisations - cooperatives, mutuals, associations, foundations, social enterprises, paritarian institutions of social protection, etc. - are a fundamental pillar to build on a future of economic and social progress for all in Europe. As stressed by Commissioner Věra Jourová during the European Parliament's debate on a European Action Plan for the Social Economy: "we want to see the social economy succeed as it offers innovative answers to societal challenges, and replies to the growing demand of citizens and consumers for a new way of doing business responsibly and sustainably".

We will continue working together and cooperating with the European Institutions in 2018 to make Social Economy one of the pillars of the future of Europe.



We dedicate this annual report to our colleague Jens Nilsson (1948-2018). He is not with us anymore, but his vision of a fair and inclusive Europe will last.

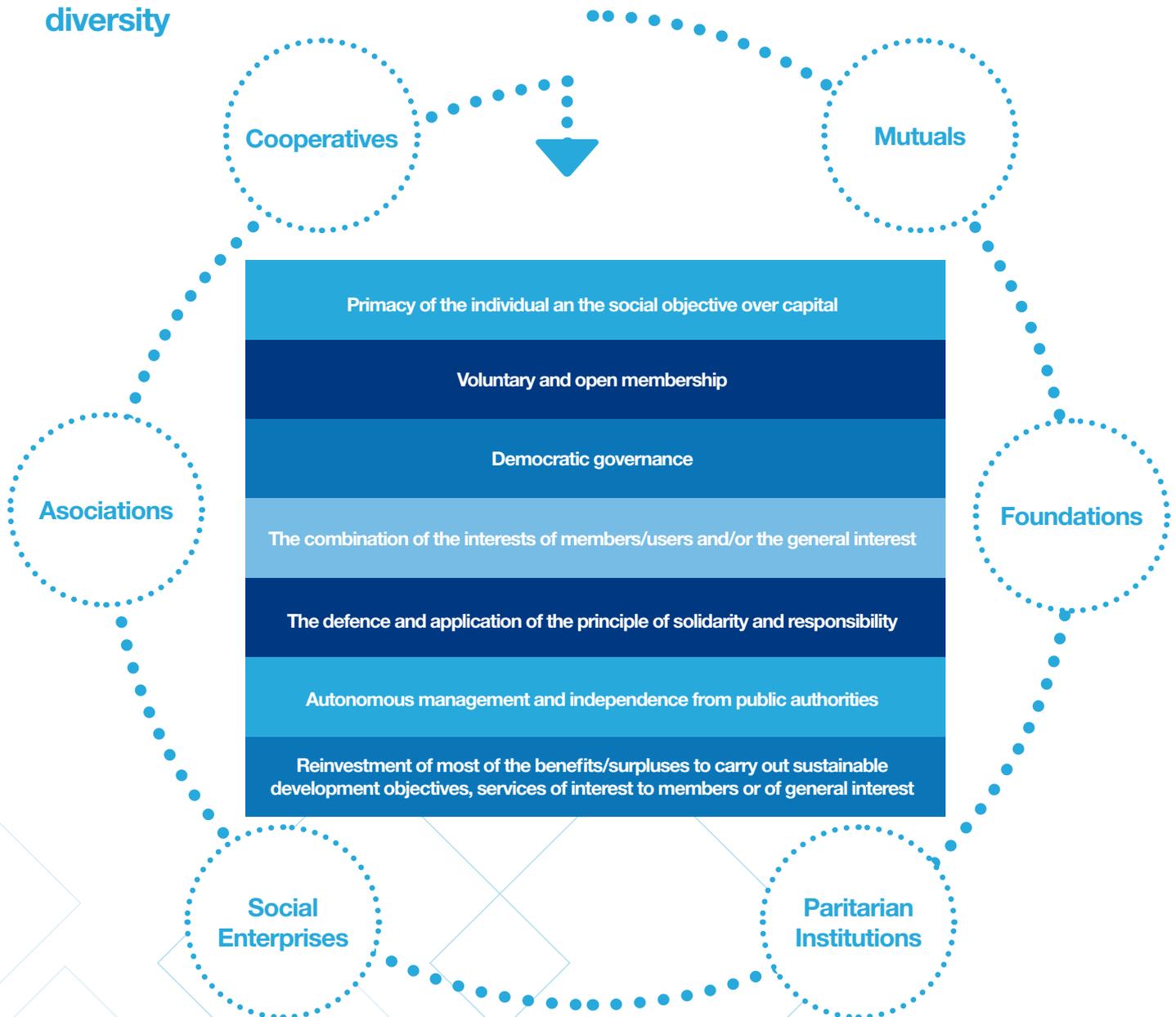
With Jens in our minds, we will keep working for the growth of the Social Economy as a key driver of economic and social progress in Europe.



Social Economy

The Social Economy refers to a wide diversity of enterprises and organisations –cooperatives, mutuals, associations, foundations, social enterprises, paritarian institutions of social protection etc.- that share common values and features such as the primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital, a democratic governance, and the reinvestment of most of the profits/surpluses to carry out sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or of general interest.

United in diversity





According to the European Parliament, the social economy is one of the pillars of the European social model which “plays an essential role in the European economy, by combining profitability with solidarity, creating high-quality jobs, strengthening social, economic and regional cohesion, generating social capital, promoting active citizenship, solidarity and a type of economy with democratic values which puts people first, in addition to supporting sustainable development and social, environmental and technological innovation”.

The social economy is formed by enterprises and organisations of all sizes -ranging from SMEs to large companies and groups- that operate in all the economic sectors such as: industry, education, healthcare and social services of general interest, agri-food, ethical and cooperative banking, insurance, renewable energy, re-use and recycling, retail and consumption; housing, tourism, culture and leisure, building, professional services, digital economy, etc.

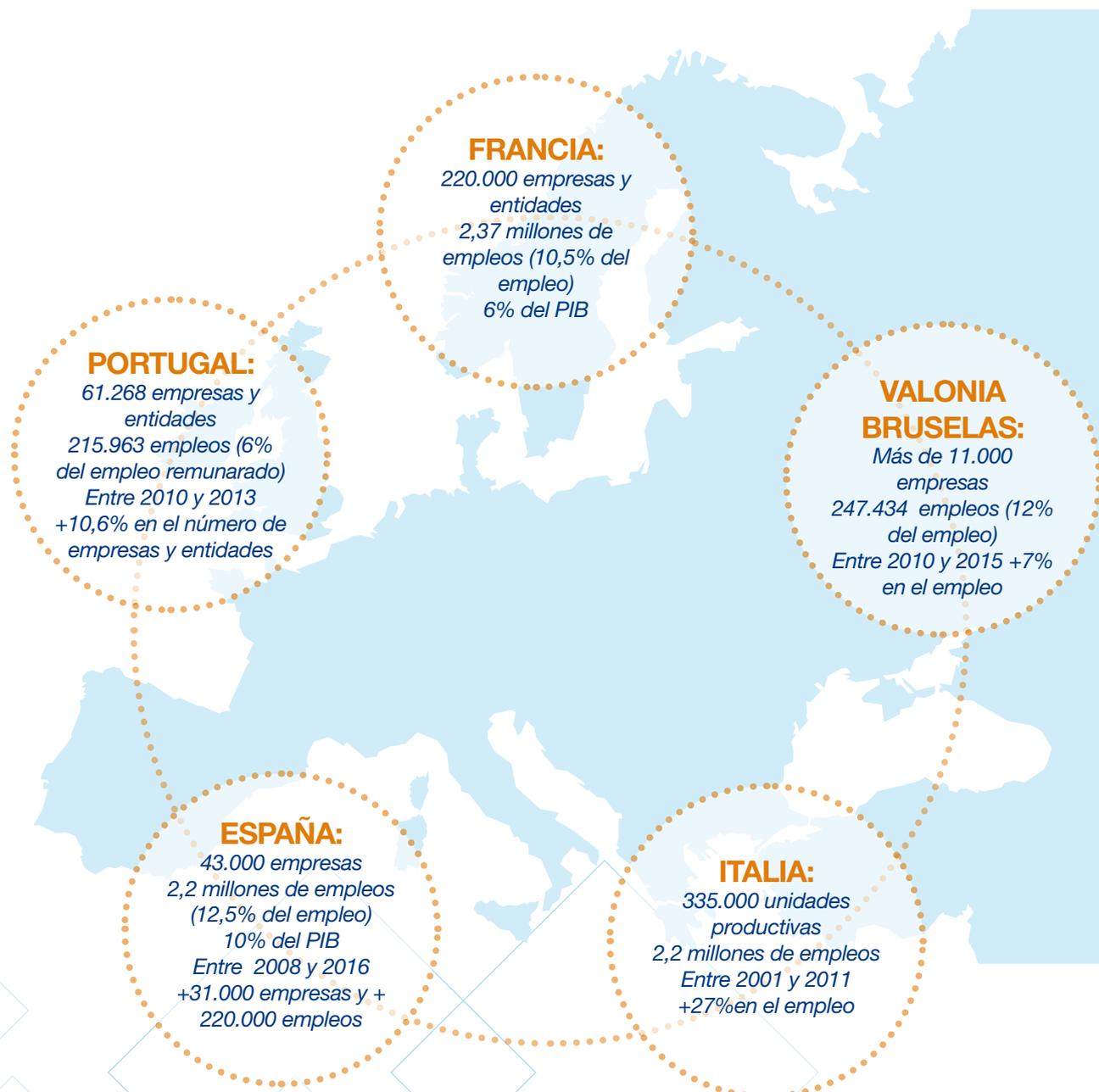
Because of its strong social commitment, the Social Economy offers innovative solutions to the main economic, social and environmental challenges of our time.

The Social Economy is an enterprise model for the future of Europe.



Social Economy in figures

According to the European Economic and Social Committee' study "Recent of Evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union", published in 2017, there are 2.8 million social economy enterprises or organisations in Europe, that employ 13.6 million people and represent the 8% of the EU's GDP.





Social Economy Europe

Social Economy Europe was 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 the "Social Economy Europe".



SEE Board of Directors, Bratislava, December 2016

Social Economy Europe (SEE), is the voice of the 2.8 social economy enterprises and organisations in Europe.

Our mission:

- Represent the interests of the Social Economy in the European Union so that the main EU policies promote and take into consideration this enterprise model;
- Promote the dialogue and the inter-cooperation between our members and develop new services of common interest;
- Boost the visibility of the economic and social impact of the Social Economy and of the values and principles that define this virtuous enterprise model;
- Support the Member States and the national organizations aiming to promote the Social Economy development.

Our vision:

SEE believes in a European Union that is determined to promote economic and social progress for their peoples, and that acknowledges its key role as global social economy leader. We believe in:

- A diverse economy at the service of people. A democratic, sustainable and inclusive economy, strongly committed to society;
- A more favourable ecosystem for the development of the European Social Economy, that will keep offering innovative solutions in response to societal demands.
- Social Economy's active participation in development and implementation of the main socio-economic policies of the European Union.



Our members





AEIP: European Association of Paritarian Institutions
www.aeip.net



AIM: International Association of Mutuals
www.aim-mutual.org



AMICE: Association of Mutual Insurers and Insurance Cooperatives in Europe www.amice-eu.org



CASES: Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social
www.cases.pt



CEPES: Confederación Empresarial Española de la Economía Social www.cep.es



CONCERTES: Plate-forme de concertation des organisations représentatives de l'économie sociale (Belgium)
<http://www.concertes.be>



EFC: European Foundation Centre www.efc.be



ENSIE: European Network of Social Integration Enterprises
www.ensie.org



ESS-France: Chambre Française de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire www.ess-france.org



FEBEA: European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks and Financiers www.febea.org

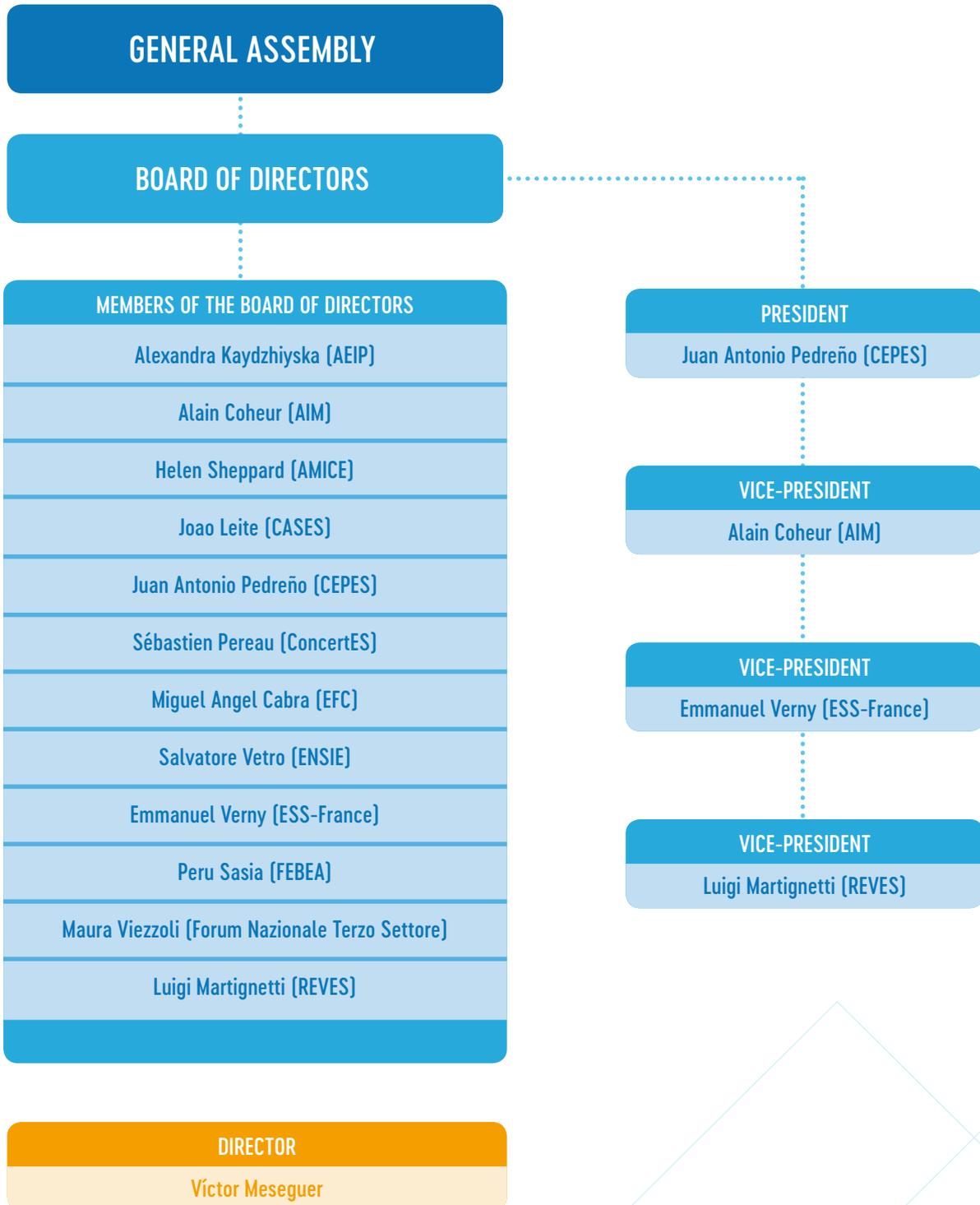


FTS: Forum Nazionale Terzo Settore (Italy)
www.forumterzosettore.it



REVES: European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy www.revesnetwork.eu

Governance



Activity Report 2017

5.1

Main achievements of the European Social Economy in 2017



January
Brussels

SEE meeting with
Commissioner Thyssen.

Social Economy Intergroup public hearing
“60th Anniversary of the Rome Treaty: Social
Economy’s contribution to economic, social
and territorial cohesion in Europe”.

March
Brussels





April
Ljubljana

Conference “Scaling-up social economy enterprises in south-east Europe”.



May
Madrid

Adoption by 10 Member States of Madrid Declaration “The Social Economy, a business model for the future of the European Union”.



June
Brussels

European day of Social Economy Enterprises of the EESC.



September
Luxembourg

9th ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy.

**October
Strasbourg**

The Social Economy Intergroup met Vice-President Katainen and Commissioner Thyssen.



**October
Madrid**

Social Economy Intergroup meeting with Vice-President Katainen and Commissioner Thyssen.



**November
Lisbon**

National Portuguese Social Economy Congress.



**Noviembre
Gothenburg**

Side event to the European Social Summit "What role for the Social Economy in the Future of Work?".

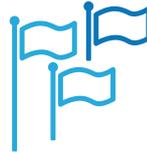


5.2 Social Economy Europe 2017 in figures



2

Meetings with European Commissioners.



2

Meetings of the Monitoring Committee for the Luxembourg Declaration.



1

New member (ConcertES).



3

Public hearings of the European Parliament's Social Economy Intergroup.



4

Meetings with the European Commission's Heads of Unit responsible for the Social Economy.



1

European Conference on Social Economy (Madrid).



811

New Twitter followers.



30

Social Economy events in Europe.



3

Board of Directors meetings



2

General Assemblies

5.3

The Social Economy representation to the European Union

5.3.1.

Madrid European Social Economy Conference

On the 23rd May 2017, Social Economy Europe co-organised alongside with the Ministry of Employment and Social Security of Spain and the Spanish Social Economy Confederation (CEPES), the European Conference “Social Economy: an enterprise model for the future of Europe”. The event took place at the National Art Museum Reina Sofía and was attended by more than 400 participants.



Participants at Madrid Social Economy Conference

It is important to highlight the participation of high-level representatives of 11 European governments, strongly committed to the development of the social economy in Europe: Fátima Báñez, Minister for Employment and Security of Spain; Nicolas Schmit, Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Economy of Luxembourg; José Antonio Vieira da Silva, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security

of Portugal; Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for Public Administration of Sweden; Rania Antonopoulos, Alternate Minister for Labour of Greece; Tadej Slapnik, State Secretary responsible for establishing dialogue with civil society; Daniela Gheorghita Barbu, State Secretary at the Ministry for Labour and Social Justice of Romania; Luigi Bobba, State Secretary at the Italian Ministry for Labour and Social Policies; Ivan Kondov, the Ambassador of Bulgaria in Spain; Mark Anthony Micallef, the Ambassador of Malta in Spain; and a representative of the Government of Cyprus.



Nicolas Schmit, José Antonio Vieira da Silva, Juan Pablo Riesgo, Luigi Bobba, Ardalan Shekarabi and Tadej Slapnik



Daniel Sorrosal, Ann Branch, Juan Antonio Pedreño and Ulla Engelmann

In addition, Georges Dassis, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); Ramón Luis Valcárcel, Vice-President of the European Parliament; Jens Nilsson, MEP and Co-President of the Social Economy Intergroup; Manuela Carmena, Mayor of Madrid; Ulla Engelmann and Ann Branch, the European Commission Heads of Unit responsible for the social economy; Giuseppe Guerini, President of CECOP-CICOPA Europe, as well as high-level social economy representatives from all over Europe, actively participated at the event.

Video-messages of Commissioners Elżbieta Bieńkowska (Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs) and Marianne Thyssen (Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility) were screened. In their messages they stressed the important role of the social economy to build a future of progress for all in Europe, as well as “its capacity to respond to the growing demand”.

The representatives of 10 Member States - Bulgaria, Cyprus, Slovenia, Spain, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Sweden-adopted the Madrid Declaration “The Social Economy, a business model for the future of the European Union”, in which they “call the European Commission to develop a European Action Plan for the Social Economy 2018-2020, adequately financed, which will promote the social economy enterprises in Europe and boost social innovation”.



Family picture: High-level representatives of 11 Member States

Furthermore, the 10 Member States requested the European Commission to strengthen the role of the social economy in the European Pillar of Social Rights and within the ongoing debates of the future of Europe. In short, in line with the previous intergovernmental declarations (Luxembourg Declaration -2015- and Bratislava Declaration-2016-), Madrid Declaration on Social Economy demonstrated the willingness of a growing group of Member States to cooperate in order to boost the social economy in Europe.

In his speech SEE and CEPES president, Juan Antonio Pedreño, invited the European Institutions to move forward towards more ambitious EU policies for the social economy. Moreover, he underlined the strong commitment of the European Social Economy to build a future social, economic and territorial cohesion in Europe, as well as to contribute to a more sustainable, responsible, democratic, inclusive and solidary economy.

5.3.2. European Commission

- **Gothenburg side event: “What role for the Social Economy in the future of work?”**

On the 16th November 2017, took place in Gothenburg the side event to the “Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth” on “What role for the social economy in the Future of Work?”. The event was co-organised by the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the city of Gothenburg and Västra Götaland region.



SEE President speech at Gothenburg’s side event on Social Economy

The main objective of the event was to present social economy’s social and economic impact, as well as its potential to contribute to the achievement of the main objectives of the European Pillar of Social Rights: equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion.



Family picture of Gothenburg side event on Social Economy

Social Economy Europe actively participated at this high-level event through a delegation formed by SEE President, Juan Antonio Pedreño; Claudia Fiaschi (Spokesperson of the Italian Third Sector Forum), Maura Viezzoli (Member of SEE Board of Directors on behalf of the Italian Third Sector Forum), Joao Leite (Member of SEE Board of Directors on behalf of CASES), Víctor Meseguer (director of SEE) and Carlos Lozano (coordinator of international relation of CEPES).

In his speech, SEE President stressed the strong commitment of the European social economy to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and to the achievement of its main objectives.

The spokesperson of the Italian Third Sector Forum spokeswoman presented the important role of the social cooperatives and the Third Sector to integrate the most vulnerable people into society and the labour market, to provide high-quality social services of general interest and in general terms to promote an active and responsible European citizenship.



The Minister for Employment and Integration of Sweden, Ylva Johansson, meets SEE President Juan Antonio Pedreño

- **SEE Meeting with Commissioner Marianne Thyssen**

On the 20th January 2017, Social Economy Europe met Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility.

The Commissioner was accompanied by Baudouin Baudru, expert at the Commissioner's cabinet responsible for the social economy, and Ann Branch Head of Unit for Jobs Creation at DG



Víctor Meseguer, Juan Antonio Pedreño, Marianne Thyssen, Patrizia Bussi, Baudouin Baudru and Ann Branch

Employment. Social Economy Europe was represented by its President, Juan Antonio Pedreño; Patrizia Bussi (Director of the European Network of Social Integrations Enterprises, ENSIE), and SEE director.

The meeting served to present Social Economy Europe to the Commissioner, as well as to have an exchange of views on the European policies for the Social Economy, and to offer SEE's support to develop a European Action Plan for the Social Economy.

Commissioner Thyssen emphasised that the European Commission is determined to encourage the development of social economy enterprises and organisations. As an example of the Commission's commitment she mentioned the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative, and the decision to dedicate a part of the European Fund for Strategic Investments (Juncker Plan) to increase the resources of the financial instruments aiming to improve access to finance for social economy, from 193 million euro under the EaSI programme to about one billion euro.

- **European Commission actions and strategy for the social economy and social enterprises**

The European Commission presented in 2017 its Actions and Strategies for the Social Economy and Social Companies 2017-2018, based on the Council Conclusions on Social Economy (December 2015), the report of the European Commission' Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship "Social enterprises and the Social Economy going forward" (October 2016) and the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative (November 2016).

The European Commission actions are structured into 5 pillars:

- Access to funding;
- Access to markets;
- Improving framework conditions;
- Social innovation, technology and new business models;
- International dimension.

In this regard, to ensure the coordination between the services of the Commission to implement this transversal action, an Informal European Commission Task-Force on Social Economy was created, formed of representatives of 22 European Commission Directorates General.

To follow-up of the implementation of the actions and contribute to their effectiveness, Social Economy Europe met on 4 occasions with Ulla Engelmann, the Head of Unit, responsible for Clusters, Social Economy and entrepreneurship (DG GROW); and on one occasion with Ann Branch, the Head of Unit responsible for Jobs Creation (DG EMPL).



SEE meeting with Head of Unit Ulla Engelmann and her team



Head of Unit Ann Branch participation at SEE's General Assembly 2017

Furthermore, SEE actively participated in several events -organised by the European Commission- aimed at debating and spreading the actions, such as:

- ➔ **The event on “New technologies and digitalisation: opportunities and challenges for the Social Economy and social enterprises”, co-organised by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee on 12 May 2017 in Brussels.**



European Commission' and EESC' event “New technologies and digitalisation: opportunities and challenges for the Social Economy and social enterprises”



- ➔ **TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument of the European Commission) “Regional Seminar on Social Economy and social enterprise policy”, organised in cooperation with DG Employment and the Union for the Mediterranean.**

SEE director Víctor Meseguer took part in the seminar, alongside with representatives of the governments of Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia and Turkey, to present the importance of creating and strengthening social economy representative organisations capable of establishing a productive dialogue with public administrations to develop effective social economy public policies. Moreover, he emphasised the important role of the Euro-Mediterranean Social Economy Network (ESMED) to promote the cooperation between the different social economy representative organisation of the Euro-Mediterranean region.



5.3.3. European Parliament

A) European Parliament's Social Economy Intergroup

The European Parliament's Social Economy Intergroup, formed by 80 MEPs of 6 political groups, is a European Parliament informal body of key importance when it comes to mainstreaming the social economy perspective into the legislative and non-legislative work of the European Parliament. Furthermore, it serves to ensure a permanent dialogue between all European Institutions, Member States and the social economy sector.



Members of the bureau of the Social Economy Intergroup with Patrizia Toia and Alain Coheur

The bureau of the Social Economy Intergroup is formed by 5 Co-Presidents: Jens Nilsson (S&D, SE), Ramón Luis Valcárcel (EPP, ES), Beatriz Becerra (ALDE, ES), Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL, FR) and Sven Giegold (GREENS/EFA, DE); and two Vice-Presidents: Elena Gentile (S&D, IT) and Sofia Ribeiro (EPP, PT). Social Economy Europe is in charge of the Social Economy Intergroup secretariat.

- **Meeting with the European Commission Vice-President Jyrki Katainen and with Commissioner Marianne Thyssen**

On the 24th of October 2017, the bureau of the European Parliament's Social Economy Intergroup met at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, the European Commission Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Jyrki Katainen, and the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne Thyssen.



Jens Nilsson, Jyrki Katainen, Marianne Thyssen, Sofia Ribeiro and Juan Antonio Pedreño

The meeting served to have a fruitful debate on the Commission's actions and strategy for the social economy, whose implementation will end in 2018, as well as on the need to move forward towards a more ambitious European policy for the social economy, given its extraordinary potential as a driver of economic and social progress in Europe.

In this regard, the bureau of the Social Economy Intergroup, in accordance with Vice-President Katainen and Commissioner Thyssen, requested to Social Economy Europe to produce a paper on "The future of EU policies for the Social Economy: towards a European Action Plan". This document will be submitted to Vice-President Katainen and to Commissioners Bieńkowska and Thyssen in 2018.

The Social Economy Intergroup was represented in the meeting by MEPs Jens Nilsson, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Sven Giegold and Sofia Ribeiro. The Vice-President and the Commissioner were accompanied by Antti Timonen (member of VP Katainen's cabinet), Baudouin Baudru (expert at Commissioner Thyssen's cabinet), and Ulla Engelmann, Head of Unit for Clusters, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship at DG GROW. Social Economy Europe actively participated at this meeting through its President and its director.



Jens Nilsson, Jyrki Katainen, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Sven Giegold, Sofia Ribeiro and Juan Antonio Pedreño

- **European Parliament's debate on a European Action Plan for the Social Economy**

On Thursday 5th October 2017, the plenary of the European Parliament, held in Strasbourg, debated with the Commission -represented by Commissioner Věra Jourová- on strengthening EU policies promoting the growth of the social economy.



Jens Nilsson, Vera Jourová, Izaskun Bilbao and Marie-Christine Vergiat

This debate was requested by 39 MEPS, from 5 political groups, that co-signed a parliamentary question on A European Action

Plan for the Social Economy. Social Economy Europe, responsible as the organisation in charge of the Social Economy Intergroup secretariat, supported this initiative.

Jens Nilsson MEP (S&D,SE), precursor of the parliamentary question, recalled in his intervention that over the last years the Council, through its Conclusions on Social Economy, the European Parliament, through several reports; Member States, through 3 intergovernmental declarations, Luxembourg, Bratislava and Madrid; the EESC, the Committee of the Regions and the Commission Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES), have consistently requested more ambitious EU policies for the social economy, such as a European Action Plan. He emphasised that this strong support is due to social economy's proven contribution to sustainable growth for all, high-quality jobs creation, social inclusion and to a more democratic economy based on the reinvestment of most of the profits.

Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, stressed “we want to see the social economy succeed as it offers innovative answers to societal challenges, and replies to the growing demand of citizens and consumers for a new way of doing business responsibly and sustainably”. Jourová recognised that “there is untapped potential and barriers which hamper the development of the sector in many countries”. Therefore, she explained that the Commission decided last year -under the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative- to launch new concrete actions to stimulate the development of the social economy. In this regard, she stressed that launching a European Action Plan for the Social Economy would be premature: “we want to deliver what we have promised and, then, let us see if more needs to be done”. To conclude, Commissioner Jourová stressed: “we will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure that the voice of the social economy is heard across the whole Europe”.

MEPs Marie-Christine Vergiat (GUE/NGL, FR), Izaskun Bilbao (ALDE, ES), Anne Sander (EPP, FR), Jozo Radoš (ALDE, HR), Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE, HR), Seán Kelly (EPP, IE), Andrejs Mamikins (S&D, LV) and Danuta Jazłowiecka (EPP, PL), took also the floor to call on the Commission to move forward towards an ambitious European Action Plan for the Social Economy. Furthermore, Marie-Christine Vergiat emphasised that the social economy is formed by enterprises and organisations of different sizes, from SMEs to large companies, that operate in all economic sectors.

- **Social Economy Intergroup public hearings**

In 2017, the Social Economy Intergroup organized three public hearings in cooperation with Social Economy Europe.

On the 7th of March took place at the European Economic and Social Committee, in Brussels, the public hearing on the “60th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome: social economy’s contribution to economic, social and territorial cohesion in Europe”. The main speakers were: Jyrki Katainen, Vice-President of the European Commission; Georges Dassis, President of the EESC; Karl-Heinz Lambertz, Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions; Jens Nilsson and Marie-Christine Vergiat, MEPs and Co-Presidents of the SEIG; Sofia Ribeiro, Vice-President of the SEIG; Juan Antonio Pedreño, SEE President, and Luigi Martignetti and Alain Coheur, Vice-Presidents of SEE.



Juan Antonio Pedreño, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Jyrki Katainen, Jens Nilsson, Georges Dassis and Karl-Heinz Lambertz, Brussels, 7 March 2017



On the 27th June took place at the European Parliament, in Brussels, the public hearing on “The Impact of EU tax policies on the Social Economy”. The main speakers were Jens Nilsson and Marie-Christine Vergiat, as Co-Presidents of the Social Economy Intergroup; Maria Teresa Fábregas, Director for indirect taxation and tax administration of the European Commission; Giuseppe Guerini, President of CECOP-CICOPA Europe and member of the EESC and of the Board of Directors of Cooperatives Europe; and María Pilar Alguacil Marí, Professor of Financial and Tax Law at Valencia’s University.



A Social Economy Intergroup public hearing

Finally, on the 27th September 2017 took place at the European Parliament in Brussels the public hearing on “Social Economy’s contribution to Europe’s ecological transition”. On this occasion the main speakers were Jens Nilsson and Sven Giegold, as Co-Presidents of the Intergroup; Sofia Ribeiro, as Vice President; Megan Richards, Director of Energy Policy at the European Commission; Dirk Vasingtjan, President of the European Network of Renewable Energy Cooperatives (RESCOOP); Michal Len, director of the European Network of social enterprises active in reuse, repair and recycling (RREUSE); and Daniel Sorrosal, Policy and institutional relations Officer of the European Federation of Ethical and Alternative banks and financiers (FEBEA).

B) SEE President speech at the European Parliament’s hearing on Statute for social and solidarity-based enterprises

On the 22nd March 2017, SEE President, Juan Antonio Pedreño, made a presentation at a joint hearing organised by the Committees of Employment and Legal Affairs of the European Parliament on “A Statute for social and solidarity-bases enterprises”.



SEE President speech at a joint hearing of the European Parliament



Joint hearing of the EP’s Employment and Legal Affairs Committee on “A Statute for social and solidarity-based enterprises”



SEE President defended the need to develop a European legal framework for all social economy enterprises and organisations, unlocking their potential to grow and to operate cross-border in the single market. Furthermore, he proposed to consolidate in a communication from the European Commission (on a European Action Plan for the Social Economy) a common understanding of the social economy, in line with Luxembourg' Declaration on social economy, adopted in 2015 by 6 EU Member States, as well as to set-up a European recommendation establishing the main principles and characteristics of the social economy, and its main legal forms.

C) 2nd EU Forum on Social and Solidarity Economy

On the 9th November 2017 took place at the European Parliament, in Brussels, the "2nd European Forum on Social and Solidarity Economy", organised by the European United Left/ Nordic Green Left parliamentary group (GUE/NGL).



Alain Coheur, Marie-Christine Vergiat, Peru Sasia and Éric Lavillunière

Social Economy Europe actively collaborated in the organisation of the event alongside with several of its members - ENSIE, FEBEA and REVES - and with other social economy representative organisations such as: Cooperatives Europe, CECOP-CICOPA Europe or RIPESS Europe.

Mr. Peru Sasia, President of the European Federation of Ethical and Alternative Banks and financiers (FEBEA), participated in the official opening of the Forum on behalf of Social Economy Europe, alongside with Alain Coheur, Vice President of SEE and co-spokesman of the EESC' Social Economy category. SEE director, Victor Meseguer, presented and moderated one of the plenary sessions of the forum.

D) Others

Throughout 2017 Social Economy Europe has had multiple bilateral meetings with Members of the European Parliament, aiming at ensuring the support of the main political groups to the proposal of a European Action Plan for the Social Economy.



SEE President meets the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Ramón Luis Valcárcel



Carlos Lozano, Ramón Jaúregui Atondo, Juan Antonio Pedreño, Sergio Gutiérrez and Víctor Meseguer



5.3.4.

The role of Member States in promoting the Social Economy

- **Monitoring Committee Luxembourg Declaration**

The Government of Spain took over in 2017 the rotating presidency of the Monitoring Committee of the Luxembourg Declaration. The Committee is formed by representatives of several EU Member States that are strongly committed to the development of the Social Economy in their countries and in the whole European Union.



Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of Luxembourg Declaration, Gothenburg, November 2017

Social Economy Europe participated in the two meetings of the committee held in 2017. The first meeting was held in Madrid on the 15th March 2017. The main purpose was to prepare the Madrid European Conference on “Social Economy: an enterprise model for the future of Europe”, as well as the Madrid Declaration on social economy, adopted by 10 Member States.

The second meeting took place on the 16th November in Gothenburg, on the occasion of the side event “What role for the Social Economy in the Future of Work”. High-level representatives of the Governments of Spain, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Greece, Portugal and the Slovak Republic participated. The Slovenian Government was appointed at this meeting to assume the presidency of the Monitoring Committee in 2018.

- **Scaling-up Social Economy enterprises in South-East Europe**

On 24th and 25th April 2017 took place at the Brdo centre, close to Ljubljana (Slovenia), the event “Scaling up Social Economy enterprises in South East Europe”, organised by the Government of Slovenia.

High-level representatives of 9 European Governments, mainly from south-east Europe, participated at the event; as well as sector representatives from several countries in the region.

The Governments of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania and Luxembourg adopted the Ljubljana Declaration on “Scaling up social economy enterprises in SEE: towards a stronger and structured cooperation between EU and South East Europe”.





SEE director, Víctor Meseguer, underlined the potential of the social economy enterprises and organisations for economic development and social cohesion. He also stressed the need to build strong Social Economy organisations to encourage the development of the sector and to ensure its representation towards public authorities. Then, he congratulated the Slovenian Government and the Slovenian Social Economy Association for its commitment to the Social Economy growth in Europe.

- **Bilateral meetings**

Throughout 2017 Social Economy Europe had multiple bilateral meetings with high-level Member States representatives committed to the development of the Social Economy in Europe. SEE remains at the service of Governments and organisations promoting the Social Economy to support their efforts.



Tadej Slapnik, Nena Dokuzov, Juan Antonio Pedreño and Víctor Meseguer



Luigi Martignetti, Juan Antonio Pedreño, Rania Antonopoulos and Emmanuel Verry



5.3.5. The European Economic and Social Committee

- **Second European day of Social Economy enterprises**



On June 28th 2017, took place in Brussels the 2nd European Day of Social Economy Enterprises, organised by the European Economic and Social Committee.

The event focused on the contribution of the Social Economy to: new economic models, the integration of migrants and territorial cohesion.

Emmanuel VERNY, Vice President of Social Economy Europe and General delegate of the French Chamber of Social and Solidarity Economy (ESS-France), participated in the closing remarks of the event together with Jens Nilsson, Co-President of the Social Economy Intergroup, a representative of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the Union, and Slawomir Tokarski, Director at DG Grow.



In his speech, Verny requested the development of an ambitious European Action Plan for the Social Economy.

- **Study on the recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union**



On June the 8th 2017, it was presented at the EESC Category meeting, the study on The recent evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union, elaborated by CIERIEC International, under the direction of José Luis Monzón and Rafael Chaves.

The study points out that the European social economy is formed by 2.8 million enterprises and organisations, that employ more than 13.6 million people in the European Union. It also demonstrates that there are more than 232 million members of cooperatives, mutuals and similar entities in the EU.



- **Other activities of the European Economic and Social Committee with the active participation of Social Economy Europe**
 - ➔ **Public hearing on “The external dimension of the Social Economy” (14/03/17)**
 - ➔ **Experts meeting on “New Sustainable Economic Models” (16/05/17)**
 - ➔ **Joint event of the EESC and the Committee of the Regions on “The contribution of Social Economy enterprises to cohesion and resilience in cities and Regions” (11/10/17)**



SEE director speaks at the hearing on “The external dimension of the social economy”



5.4 Other events

- **Portuguese National Social Economy Congress**



Aldina Fernandes, José Albino da Silva, Juan Antonio Pedreño, Luís Gomes and Miguel Angel Cabra

During 2017, preparatory sessions of the Social Economy Portugal National Congress 2017 were held across Portugal. Its main objective was the creation of a Portuguese Social Economy confederation. Social Economy Europe participated in the events organised for this purpose in 2017.

On September the 8th 2017, SEE President participated in the session “Social Economy: the people’s economy”, held in Évora. On November 14th, in Lisbon, he participated in the final session of the “National Social Economy Congress” attended by more than 400 people, to speak about “The challenges of the Social Economy in the European Union”. On the occasion of this important Congress – opened by the Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal, José Antonio Vieira da Silva – the constitution of the Portuguese Social Economy Confederation was formalised.

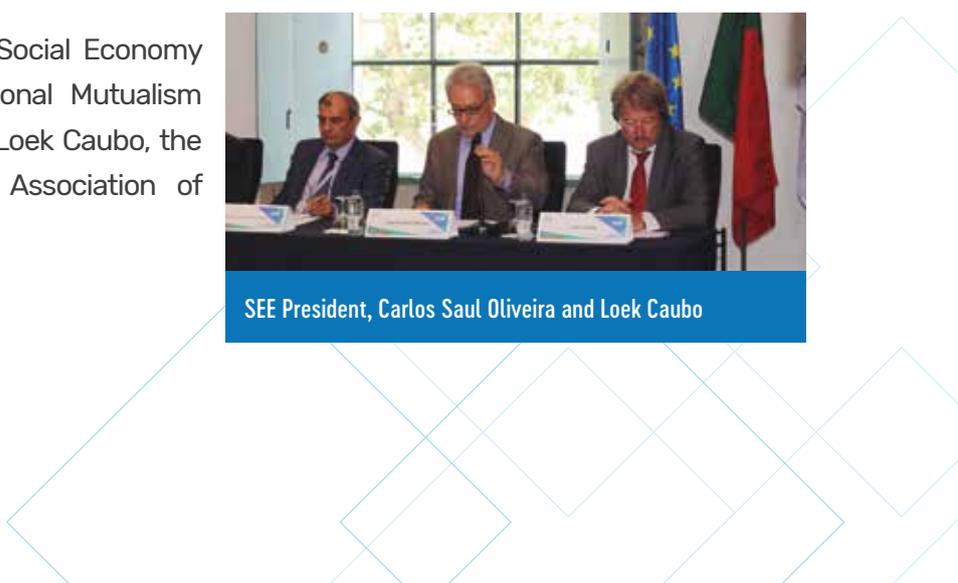


Participants at the National Social Economy Congress held in Lisbon

On the 7th of July, the President of Social Economy Europe participated in the “XII National Mutualism Congress”, held in the city of Oporto. Loek Caubo, the Vice-President of the International Association of Mutuals (AIM) also participated.



SEE President, Carlos Saul Oliveira and Loek Caubo



- **9th ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy, Luxembourg**

The 9th edition of the Academy of Social and Solidarity Economy of the International Labour Organization took place in Luxembourg from the 25th to the 29th September 2017. On this occasion, the theme of the academy was the Social Economy and the future of work.

On 28th September, the President of Social Economy Europe participated in the plenary session “Co-construction of public policies on Social and Solidarity Economy and participatory governance”. Pedreño presented his experience as President of the European representative organisation of the Social Economy and of the Spanish Social Economy Confederation (CEPES). Furthermore, he presented the key role played by CEPES, to support the elaboration of the Spanish Law on Social Economy.



Roberto di Meglio (ILO) interviews Juan Antonio Pedreño



Nicolas Schmit, Ulla Engelmann and Juan Antonio Pedreño at the 9th ILO Social and Solidarity Economy Academy

- **“A strong pillar of Social Rights for the economic and social progress of Europe”, Brussels**

A strong Pillar of Social Rights for the economic and social progress of Europe.

A common ambition of workers, enterprises and civil society

27 September from 3pm to 4pm
European Parliament, Room P3C050

Languages: English and Spanish



On the 27th September took place at the European Parliament, in Brussels, the event on “A Pillar of Social Rights for the economic and social progress of Europe: A common ambition of workers, businesses and civil society”, co-organised by Social Economy Europe, the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the European Social Platform, CECOP-CICOPA Europe and the European Movement.

The aim of the event was to support the proclamation and effective implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The main speakers were: Juan Antonio Pedreño, President of Social Economy Europe, and Luca Visentini, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation; Kélig Puyet, Director of the Social Platform; Bruno Roelants, General Secretary of CECOP-CICOPA Europe; Petros Fassoulas, General Secretary of the European Movement International; Ann Branch, Acting Director at DG Employment and Head of Unit for Job Creation of the European Commission; and MEPs Jens Nilsson, Maria Joao Rodrigues and Brando Benifei.



- **European Day of Social Economy of Navarra**

On the 28th of November, the European Conference “Social Economy: a driver of innovation for the people” took place in Pamplona. It was organised by CEPES Navarra (Regional Social Economy Organisation) in cooperation with Social Economy Europe, the delegation of the Government of Navarra in Brussels and the Committee of the Regions.



During the event, Uxue Barcos, President of Navarra, gave an award to Ulla Engelmann, European Commission’ Head of Unit responsible for Clusters, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship, for her commitment to the development of the sector all over Europe.



Furthermore, Ms. Engelmann visited a successful social economy enterprise: “MAPSA”, a worker cooperative which is part of Mondragón Corporation.

- **8th Mont-Blanc 2017 meetings, Archamps**



Victor Meseguer, Juan Antonio Pedreño and Peru Sasia

On 6, 7 and 8th of December 2017, Social Economy Europe participated in the 8th Mont Blanc Meetings, held in Archamps (France).

Social Economy Europe was represented by its President, Juan Antonio Pedreño, its Vice-presidents Emmanuel Verny (ESS-France) and Alain Coheur (AIM), Peru Sasia, President of FEBEA and member of SEE Board of Directors; and by its director, Victor Meseguer.

- **European Conference on the Integration of migrants in the labour market, Turin**

On the 10th of April 2017, SEE Vice-President and General Delegate ESS-France, Emmanuel Verny, participated at the European Conference on the “Integration of migrants in the labour market”, held at the ILO Academy in Turin.

Verny presented the important role of the social economy to support the social and labour integration of migrants.

The event was also attended by representatives of the European Trade Union Confederation and of the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.



SEE VP Emmanuel Verny during his speech



- **Social Economy events in Greece**

In 2017, Social Economy Europe travelled twice to Athens to take part in Social Economy events:

◆ On September 23rd, SEE director, Víctor Meseguer, participated in the event on “Co-operatives and Social Economy in Greece and in the world”, organised by KAPA network devoted to support the Greek cooperative movement. Meseguer presented the European social economy concept, crystallized, among other official documents, in the Council Conclusions on Social Economy (adopted in December 2015). He also presented the Spanish, French and Portuguese Laws on Social Economy and emphasised the key role of social economy representative organisations to support the growth of the sector.



SEE Director speech at the Greek Fair of Social and Solidarity Economy enterprises, Athens

◆ The Greek Forum of Social Entrepreneurship invited the Director of Social Economy Europe, Víctor Meseguer, to participate at the Fair of Social and Solidarity Economy held in Athens from the 1st to the 3rd of November 2017. Social Economy Europe took the floor in a workshop on “Networking and collective representation” and in a debate on the new “Greek Strategy for Social and Solidarity Economy”.



Participants in the Greek Fair of SSE enterprises

- **New Economy and Social Innovation Forum, Málaga**



SEE Director speech at NESI Forum 2017

On the 19th of April 2017, Social Economy Europe participated, through its director Víctor Meseguer, in the Forum of the New Economy and Social Innovation, held in Málaga (Spain).

The event was attended by representatives of economic and social movements promoting a more responsible and sustainable economy at the service of people.



Social Economy Europe 2017 in pictures



SEE Board of Directors, December 2017



Daniel Sorrosal during his speech at the event on "Local development and Social Economy", held in Mula, Murcia



SEE dinner in the framework of the Strategic Meeting 2017



SEE Board of Directors



Minister Fátima Báñez and the Mayor of Madrid, Manuela Carmena, at the event "Social Economy: an enterprise model for the Future of Europe"



SEE President, Ariane Rodert and EESC President Georges Dassis



Roberto Di Meglio (ILO) interviewing SEE President Juan Antonio Pedreño



Antonio Fantasia (Caritas Europa) and Erdmuth Klaer (REVES) at the EU Day of Social Economy enterprises



Nuria Fuentes, Juan Antonio Pedreno and Juan Hernández



Víctor Meseguer and Carlos Lozano at the event on "Local development and Social Economy"



IX SEE General Assembly, Madrid, May 2017



SEE President, the President of CECOP, the President of Cooperatives Europe and the President of CICOPA





Minister Ardalán Shekarabi greets SEE President



Ramón Luis Valcárcel, Fátima Báñez and Juan Antonio Pedreño



Luigi Martignetti and Roberto Di Meglio



SEE Director, the Mayor of the city of Bonares and Charo González Vidal during the REVES Awards 2017



Minister José Antonio Vieira da Silva is welcomed by SEE President at his arrival to Madrid European Social Economy Conference



Annexes

Annex I

Madrid Declaration “The Social Economy, a business model for the future of the European Union”

Madrid, May 23, 2017

There are currently 2 million social economy enterprises in Europe, employing more than 14.5 million people, roughly 6.5% of the work force in the EU-27 and 7.4% in the EU-151, and representing 8% of EU GDP².

The common values of the social economy, such as the primacy of people and the social objective over capital, democratic and/or participatory governance, reinvestment of most of the benefits to ensure the long-term sustainability of the enterprise and the provision of services to their members and local communities, actively contribute to social cohesion and hence to an innovative, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, in addition to the creation of quality employment in Europe.

These common values also contribute to a future of economic and social progress and are key to achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular with regard to the social and labour inclusion of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, as recognised by the EU Council Conclusions “The promotion of the social economy as a key driver of economic and social development in Europe” (December 7, 2015). This document, together with those prepared by the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, constitute a rich heritage on which to build a European policy for the Social Economy, which translates into concrete measures in favour of development.

It should also be noted that social economy shares the values and guiding principles contained in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially of Goal #8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and a decent job for all”, according to

1 Source: European Commission (2013) « Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship Social Europe Guide », Volume 4).

2 « Social enterprises and the social economy going forward: A call for action from GECES », October 2016.

REX/472 opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee and the conclusions of the public hearing “The external dimension of the social economy” held in Brussels on March 14, 2017.

Member States and European institutions are aware of the social economy dimension and have expressed their commitment to the sector through the Rome Strategy “Unlocking the potential of the social economy for EU growth” (18 November 2014). They are also committed to adopt the recommendations contained in GECES’ General Report 2016 “Social enterprises and the social economy going forward”.

In this context, the Luxembourg Declaration “A roadmap towards a more comprehensive ecosystem for social economy enterprises” (December 4, 2015) is a milestone representing the agreement by Luxembourg, France, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain to promote social economy policies based on common values.

These efforts continued with the Bratislava Declaration “The social economy as a key player in providing effective responses to current societal challenges in the EU and the world” (December 1, 2016), signed by the aforementioned Member States plus Cyprus, Romania, the Czech Republic and Greece.

The Ljubljana Declaration (April 25, 2017) aims for stronger and structured cooperation between EU and South East Europe. It supports the creation of a network of social economy organizations on the regional level and states that the European Union and the countries of SE Europe should take appropriate actions to create an ecosystem for social economy enterprises in the process of tackling the emerging challenges concerning migrants and refugees.

Therefore, taking into account the previous statements, the signatory Member States:

- ◆ Reaffirm our support for the recommendations contained in the previous declarations on common understanding and support for diversity in the forms of social economy, on the need to take into account and promote the particularities of the social economy enterprises in the Single Market, on the importance of including and supporting the social economy enterprises through programs, projects and funds and on innovative and sustainable development of an adequate financial ecosystem.
- ◆ Emphasize the importance of developing and implementing satellite accounts, following commonly accepted international models, in order to determine and make visible the effective contribution of the social economy enterprises to economic growth and social cohesion in the European Union.

- ◆ Agree that the national and European policies to support entrepreneurship, should consider social economy entrepreneurship as a formula for the creation of inclusive employment and a fairer, more equitable and sustainable society.
- ◆ Believe that the participation of the social economy in educational activities, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning should be encouraged and that the possibility of promoting and including social economy entrepreneurship within curricula at different educational stages should be considered.
- ◆ Express the desire to promote high-level shared mechanisms of coordination for policies and measures in favour of the social economy and to deepen mechanisms already in place between Member States, both bilaterally (e.g. in the Iberian collaboration between Portugal and Spain) and multilaterally (e.g. Luxembourg Monitoring Committee) as well as with non-EU countries (such as the regional collaboration with Southeast European countries or with Ibero-American and South Mediterranean countries). All with the aim of promoting and developing social economy enterprises in the European Union policies related to the internationalization of social economy enterprises, the international cooperation for development and the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- ◆ Call the European Commission to include in its working plan for 2018 a European Action Plan 2018-2020, adequately financed, which will promote the social economy enterprises in Europe and boost social innovation. This action plan should address the economic and social development and social cohesion of all citizens, with a particular emphasis on the disadvantaged and vulnerable ones, and should involve – through specific system actions – all actors operating in the social economy.
- ◆ Invite the European Commission to strengthen the role of social economy and its economic and social values taking into account the principles included in the European Pillar of Social Rights and the positive contribution of social economy enterprises in tackling current social and labour market challenges faced by the EU, in the context of the White Paper on the Future of Europe (COM(2017)2025 of 1 March 2017).



Annex II

Recommendations of 1st National Portuguese Congress on the Social Economy

Lisbon, 14th november 2017

The signatory entities, meeting in Lisbon on 14 November 2017, following the preparatory sessions held on 17 February, 18 April, 2 June and 8 September in Lisbon, Póvoa do Varzim, Mangualde and Évora, respectively.

Aware that they represent a significant proportion of the cooperative and social sector, as provided for in the Portuguese Constitution and the Social Economy Framework Law and accepting its principles, values, ethics and specific forms of operation and governance, Considering that the Social Economy is made of People, for People and with People, it is crucial that the work of participating entities is always mindful of the need to arm the values by which they are governed, their own identity and the mission that guides them.

Assured that the business model for the social economy, based on freedom of organisation, autonomy and democratic management, the generation and redistribution of surpluses and the creation of social capital, for the general good, and the fact that they are closely embedded in local communities makes them agents of paramount importance to the Portuguese economy and society, as drivers of social and geographical cohesion.

Recalling that, according to the 2016 satellite account for the social economy, published by the National Institute of Statistics (INE) and the António Sérgio Cooperative for the Social Economy (CASES), based on 2013 data, the 61,268 entities in the sector account for 6% of all full-time paid employment in the economy and 2.8% of wealth creation (GVA), and that, in comparison with 2010, these data reflect the sector's growth, resilience, transversality, capacity to create and retain employment that is dignified and not delocalised.

Conscious of the fact that they are part of an even larger European family, recognised by European governments - a recognition codified in the Council of the European Union's unanimous adoption in December 2015 of the conclusions entitled 'The promotion of the social economy as a key driver of economic and social development in Europe', and in a broad range of reports, opinions and working documents on the social economy published by European institutions (Commission, Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions)



And knowing that they are also part of a global social and solidarity-based economic movement that engages millions of citizens across the world, within which they see their duty as being to prioritise Lusophone and Ibero-American communities

Hereby state and recommend that:

- 1 By virtue of their diversity, transversality, identity and proven track record across time and geographies, these social economy stakeholders have a key role to play in national policymaking. Thus, government departments and social and economic consultative bodies, particularly the Social and Economic Council (SEC), should be consulting these stakeholders for their views on their own business sector and the wider national economy, on an ongoing basis.

To facilitate this consultative process, without prejudicing the independence and initiative of each entity, they have set up a representative body, the Portuguese Social Economy Confederation (PSEC). The confederation's statutes have already been approved in principle.

- 2 The social economy stakeholders are economic partners and should not be subject to discrimination when they want to act in a given field of activity. They reject any legal obstacles to their proper functioning and believe that their work should be evaluated on the basis of criteria that take into account their specific form of organisation and governance.
- 3 The social economy stakeholders are of the opinion that public policies should include social economy initiatives that contribute to building equality, health and employment, whilst helping to stabilise and sustain communities. All such initiatives should pay particular attention to the more disadvantaged, those whose situation is socially precarious, delivering both solidarity and compliance with the principles and values established in article 5 of the Social Economy Framework Law.
- 4 The social economy stakeholders maintain that priority should be given to implementing a coherent social economy education policy at all levels of the education system. This implementation would include awareness initiatives, professional training, exchanges between organisations and transnational cooperation. From elementary school onwards, children and young people would see that there are ways of organising and working that are based on people and social economy principles.

- 5 The social economy stakeholders would like to see research into the social economy being encouraged and they recommend that a documentation resource to support this research be set up and then deployed through all the latest means of communication.
- 6 The social economy stakeholders recommend that specific funding mechanisms be set up to support these training and research activities, which would be managed through PSEC.
- 7 The social economy stakeholders produce regular statistical reports on the economic and social reality of the social economy. The social economy satellite account, now produced biennially, provides indicators pertaining to the associative side of organisations and volunteer work.
- 8 The social economy stakeholders believe that the information carried by both the generalist and specialist media regarding their reality and their work should be improved and expanded. To this end, they propose to study active forms of communication that will enhance the united voice that has resulted from the setting up of the confederation, without prejudicing the direct communication of each social economy family.
- 9 The social economy stakeholders are aware that a true social economy sector can only be built through partnership, whether between the various families or with other sectors that own the means of production. They specifically recommend the drawing up of programmes that contribute to local development through properly coordinated partnerships with local authorities.
- 10 The social economy stakeholders, cognisant of the Constitution and ordinary law and their enshrinement of the principle of positive discrimination, believe they have the right to benefit from a tax regime that is appropriate to their nature and the ends they pursue.
- 11 The social economy stakeholders seek the dismantlement of barriers to the development of the type of financial activities that are intrinsic to the social economy. They also want to see financial solutions implemented that address the specific needs of these stakeholders.
- 12 The social economy stakeholders recommend that other organisations be prevented from improperly using the word 'social' or the other forms specific to social economy entities, as enshrined in the Social Economy Framework Law, as a means of accessing funds, programmes and projects.

- 13 The social economy stakeholders do not recognise themselves in the concept of “social company” that, in form, is based on the commercial company and they recommend that this concept be defined and clarified in the Social Economy Framework Law.
- 14 The social economy stakeholders maintain that the Social Economy Framework Law should be complied with, notwithstanding any future revision of the same, and recommend that the process of adapting ordinary law to this Law be concluded.
- 15 The social economy stakeholders believe there is a need to set up a financial programme that will encourage them to engage with new communication technologies and the digital economy and to disseminate the ensuing innovations and best practices.
- 16 The social economy stakeholders hold that they have a fundamental right to apply to all European and domestic programmes and projects, funds and lines of credit. These should be attuned to their specific models of organisation and governance, to allow them to participate in the future generation of community funds.
- 17 The social economy stakeholders, aware of the measure and social importance of their volunteer work, believe that they should strive for the recognition of this work, so that it is given its due value, but not as a substitute for paid work, and that ways and means should be found to foster and accommodate such work.
- 18 The social economy stakeholders understand that discussions on cross-border cooperation should be maintained and broadened, so as to generate ways of effectively meeting their members’ needs, even where this may require changes to legal and fiscal frameworks.
- 19 The social economy stakeholders support the government’s position of pursuing an Action Plan that would underpin the social economy on a European scale, as also set out in the recent Madrid Declaration signed by 11 European governments.
- 20 The social economy stakeholders, whilst holding to the primacy of the individual, believe that economic and social development requires a concerted joint effort at the European and international level. They would focus specifically on the Lusophone and Ibero-American communities and strive jointly to ensure these take their proper place, evidencing their true economic and social worth and their potential as drivers of societies that are more democratic, solidary, inclusive and sustainable.



Annex III

Ljubljana Declaration “Scaling up Social Economy enterprises in South-East Europe: towards a stronger and structured cooperation between the EU and South East Europe”

Ljubljana , 25th april 2017

In the continuity of previous Conferences and in the framework of the Conference SSE2: Scaling up social economy enterprises in South – East Europe, held in Ljubljana on 24th and 25th of April 2017, the representatives of Governments of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania and Luxembourg adopt the following declaration:

WE observe that social economy is realizing the increasing recognition in EU and internationally but that social economy enterprises are still missing the appropriate recognition in certain EU member states and countries from the region of South East Europe. Therefore we strongly recommend the European Union to commit itself to strongly support social economy on European level and level of South East region of Europe. We recognize the actions presented by the European Commission to promote the development of social economy enterprises in Europe referring the recommendations of GECES Report 2016.

WE acknowledge that social economy enterprises are commonly accepted term for variety of organizations in the field of social economy. But we realize that there are differences in the field of definition of social sector. Therefore we believe that the definition of social economy sector shall be based on mutual recognition of various types and forms of organization acting as social economy organization in different EU and South East Europe countries.

WE admit that social economy can act as a driver for economic growth if supported by appropriate programmes, projects and financing. But there are still differences between EU member states and countries from South East Europe arising from different conditions in case of access to finance, provided by EU institutions. Countries of South East Europe would therefore support the creation of network of social economy organizations on the level of the region of South East Europe as a whole.



Meeting in Ljubljana on 24th and 25th April 2017 we decided to adopt the following declaration:

- ◆ The European Union and the countries of South East Europe shall put substantial effort to increase visibility and the acknowledgement of social economy and social economy enterprises on the European level, South East Europe regional level and internationally.
- ◆ Following the Luxembourg declaration, European union and the countries from South East Europe shall acknowledge a common understanding of the scope of social economy and with respecting the diversity of organizations regarding their types and legal forms take steps to mutual recognition of social economy organizations on European level and on the level of South East Europe countries.
- ◆ The European Union and the countries of South East Europe shall take appropriate actions to create an ecosystem for social economy enterprises in the process of tackling the emerging challenges concerning migrants and refugees.
- ◆ The European support for social economy enterprises shall be strengthened and balanced for EU Member states and for South East Europe countries. Harmonization of access to to programmes and instruments shall be strengthened as a convergency is needed for al European Member states and South East Europe countries.
- ◆ Social economy organizations are encouraged to create a strong regional network on the level of the region of South East Europe.
- ◆ South East Europe countries are encouraged to join Monitoring Committee of EU Member states on social economy and participation on regular High – level meetings of high political representatives in charge for social economy.

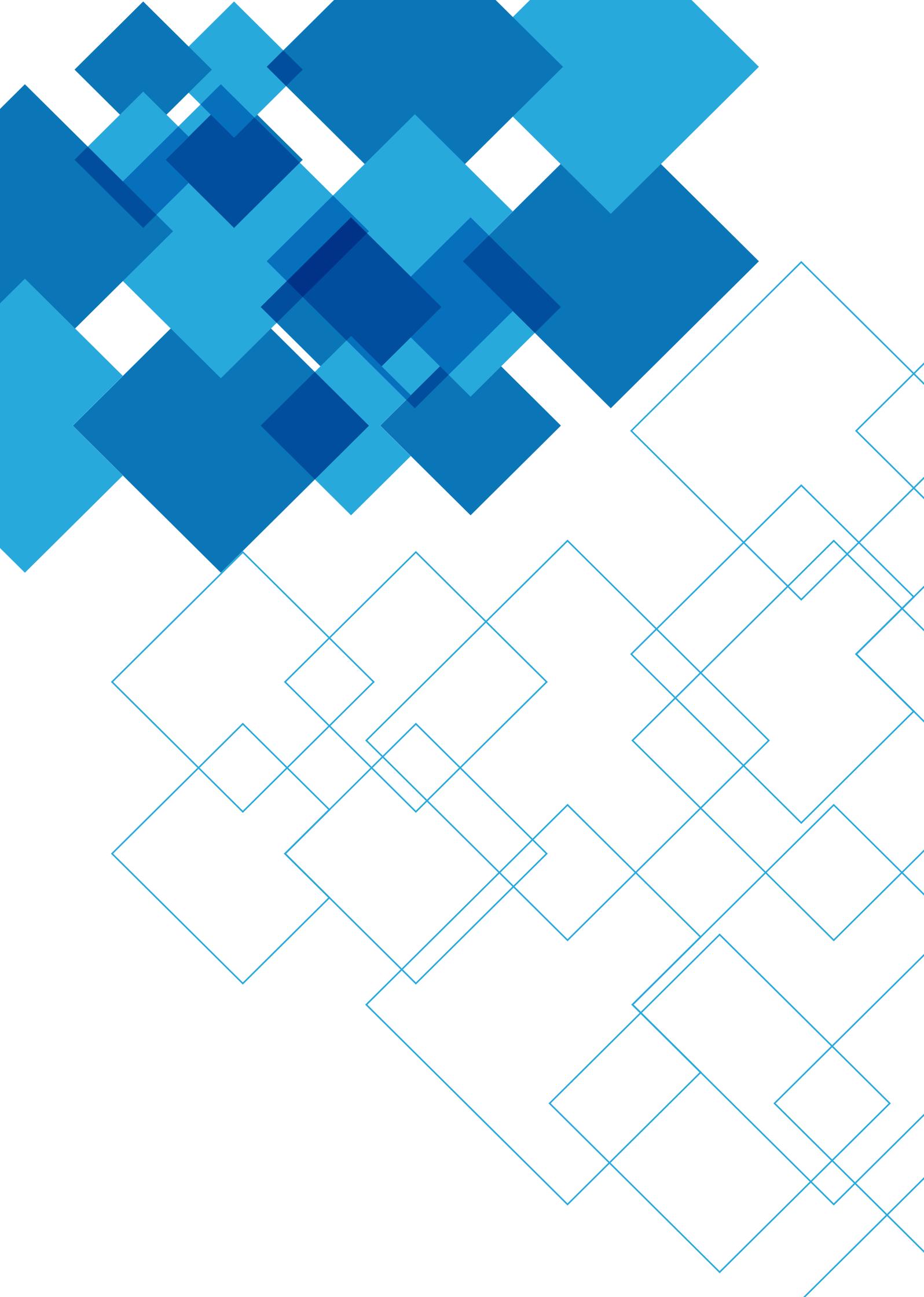


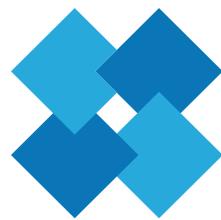
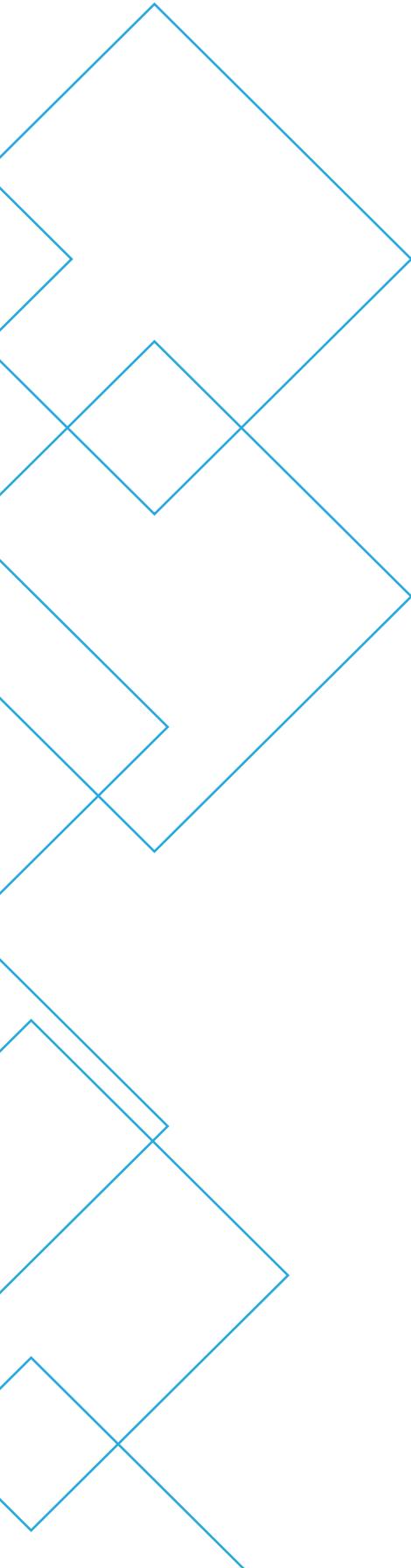
ANNUAL REPORT 2017



X GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SOFIA, 16TH APRIL 2018





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Economy
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