



RIPESS Europe in action

ACTIVITY REPORT 2014



Meeting in Athens with the movements and solidarity-based initiatives, September 2014

1. Renewed and horizontal governance for an open, agile and innovative organisation

RIPESS Europe stepped up the RIPESS coordination committee (CoCo-RIPESS) meetings, which were systematically organised as mobile events with the alternating participation of different RIPESS members. At each meeting, a session open to the public and members of the host organisations was held, thus creating a broader discussion platform and taking the message of the importance of a European vision of the solidarity economy driven by actors in the field to a larger audience. This process was stimulating and enriching for the network.

This development means that we now wish to implement new procedures. RIPESS Europe is a network of networks, which is problematic when a potential member is still in an emerging and unformed phase. Often, in this case, the identified organisations are the ones to drive the collective networking process. They need to be able to become members in their existing state, since RIPESS Europe supports and strengthens their projects. Currently, the statutes limit membership to territorial, sectoral and cross-sectoral networks. Does RIPESS need to open up to organisations involved in the solidarity economy in order to foster greater territorial participation? The decision has been taken to revise the charter and statutes when necessary.



In 2014, the foundations were laid for a more agile and cooperative organisation. CoCo members set to work enthusiastically and collectively, guided by a spirit of equity, benevolence and openness. The challenge is to work out how to adapt to different realities (territories, countries, sectors and social realities) and to drive collective action whose validity and utility is constantly questioned in order to adjust proposed activities so they better reflect these realities.

An account at the Italian cooperative ethical bank Banca Etica (Italy) was opened, in line with the RIPESS Europe principles. A new treasurer was officially appointed, and a monitoring process set up.

The work carried out by CoCo RIPESS has resulted in three members deciding on a joint project (XES Catalonia, ADEPES Midi-Pyrenees, REAS Balearics): putting together an Interreg dossier centred on economic development and innovation with support from Eurorégion. Three meetings took place (3 March in Toulouse, 10 March and 22 July in Barcelona).

The Coordination committee held online meetings in between the different sessions to keep up a regular rhythm for the work to be undertaken.

In early 2014, the decision was taken to recruit a trainee to work on communications. Alessandra Manganelli, Architecture-Urban and Regional Planning Department/University of Leuven (Belgium) was based in the headquarters of Solidarius Italy in Rome and helped to create a new website, designed to offer more interactivity between members, to improve organisation of information and the newsletter, and to prepare the Annual General Meetings (AGMs). The site now provides a useful basis for group work and networking, and exists in two languages (English and French, with the possible addition of Spanish).



In July 2014, during the AGM which took place at La Bergerie de Villarceaux (near Paris), RIPESS Europe set up an Advisory Board made up of researchers from Catalonia, France, Portugal, Italy and Hungary to help build the network's historical and theoretical culture and put proposals to the CoCo in the solidarity economy field. The council will be evaluated during the next AGM.

RIPESS Europe has incorporated Ecosol into its activities as a complementary stakeholder in its programme, and undertakes to raise the profile of the solidarity resource website www.socioeco.org and RIPESS Europe the benefits of the information collected on the site and its database.

2. CoCo-RIPESS EU (Coordination Committee) 2014 agenda and AGM (Annual General Meeting)

The 8 members of the Coordination Committee mobilized during the year to advance with networking and with expansion of contacts with potential new members. These activities facilitated also interaction amongst different members, allowing to share events and processes amongst them.

Date	Subject	Activity/Impact
17 et 18 February	CoCo-RIPESS Toulouse	Solidarity entrepreneurship evening in Europe in partnership with ADEPES and Etymôn (40 participants)
22 et 24 April	CoCo-RIPESS Lisbonne	Meeting at the University of Lisbon with SSE Master's students and local actors (30 participants)
6 et 7 June	Annual General Meeting la Bergerie de Villarceaux (95 France)	Presence of new participants and future members: Greece, Germany, Poland. Invitation from REAS to take part in the Saragossa meetings (30 participants)
20 à 22 June	Meeting of national SSE networks in Italy (Collecchio, Parma)	RIPESS Europe presentation (200 participants)
14 et 15 September	CoCo-RIPESS, Athens	Public meeting with Greek SSE actors Participation of representatives from Hungary and Romania (60 participants)
29 et 30 November	CoCo-RIPESS, 1st international REAS meeting in Saragossa	Conference contributions, active participation in workshops RIPESS received the SSE prize for its work with the UN, particularly on the post-2015 agenda (600 participants)

3. Strategy, expanding the network

Starting with the implementation of the process of the "Panorama of solidarity economy in Europe", a number of meetings have been organized to build new links and bring the European dimension of the solidarity economy in different regions (for example, Bulgaria, Greece) or contexts (eg. Degrowth, Social justice movements).

Date	Subject	Activity/Impact
14. et 15 June	EMPATHEAST Bulgarie, organized by IDEAS FACTORY (Sofia)	Presentation of RIPESS and the solidarity economy to an interactive and cross-sectoral audience, mostly young (200 participants)
19 au 23 August	Université Européenne d'ATTAC	Co-organisation of a seminar on convergences with the ATTAC Alternatives Commission and Collectif de la Transition citoyenne (800 participants)

2 - 5 September	Congress on Degrowth in Leipzig (Germany)	Presentation of the network and existing convergences with other movements, 1st contacts for the next SSE Conference in Berlin in September 2015 (3000 participants)
10, 11 and 12 October	Festival of cooperative and solidarity economy Athens (Greece)	Participating in the construction of a Greek network for solidarity economy Building ties with Greece which will be invited to the Catalan Fair (200 participants)
10 -12 October	Manifesta 2014, organised by Animar, Santarem (Portugal)	Participation in the round table on the solidarity economy and promotion of territories (100 participants)
24 - 26 octobre	III Fira de Economia Solidaria, Barcelona (Spain)	Conference about SSE in Greece (80 participants)
14 et 15 novembre	14 ^{ième} Forum régional de l'Economie solidaire en Midi-Pyrénées (France)	Round table led by European Pacts "Innovation, Citizenship and Territories", conference on social innovation incubators, round table on "public policies and innovation" (200 participants)

4. Linkage with the RIPESS Intercontinental network

RIPESS Europe is represented in the Board of Directors of RIPESS Intercontinental by two members elected by the General Assembly. During the year 2014, there was a meeting in Casablanca in Morocco, which had the participation of 3 European members and the definition of the Plan of Action 2014-15. RIPESS Europe engaged in particular in the development of networking, mapping and communication activities, as well as institutional relations with the UN.

Date	Subject	Impact
26, 27 et 28 april	RAESS (Africa) Meeting and RIPESS Board (Casablanca, Maroc)	Improved integration of European work into the international process



ESS GLOBAL: the working group has made significant progress in its study of a world SSE mapping. In 2014, RIPESS Europe continued to work on a project designed to establish optimal conditions for interoperability between the different existing systems and create a shared tool with the use of linked data and the Semantic Web. The idea is to establish a collaborative movement with other initiatives, such as Shareable and Transformaps.

NATIONS UNIES: Urgenci, which works closely with the Committee on World Food Security as part of its Civil Society Mechanism in Rome, emphasises the need to build bridges between food sovereignty and the solidarity economy at every level. This concept is now beginning to be included in certain official documents on worldwide food policy. The next step is to translate them into national and local policies applied on the ground. During the CFS41 in October, UNFSSSE, particularly ILO and FAO, co-organised a parallel event with RIPESS and Urgenci on the subject of the solidarity economy and food sovereignty with the participation of La Via Campesina.

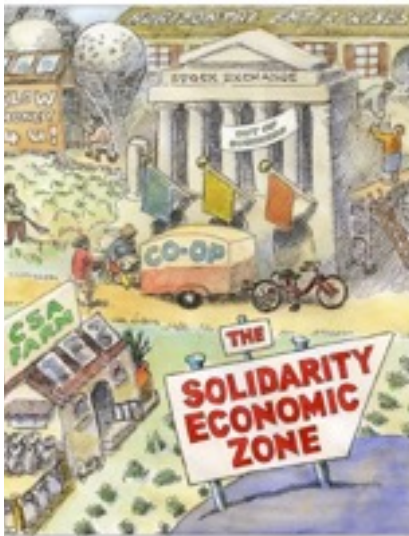


J. Hitchman and J. Nardi receiving the Prize awarded in Zaragoza in name of RIPESS

5. RIPESS Europe 2014 Working Groups

A common methodology was drawn up collectively, designed to enable work in progress to broaden the RIPESS Europe network, feed into a collective process, build a shared identity and undertake collective advocacy. Efforts were concentrated on the:

PANORAMA - OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL SOLIDARITY ECONOMY IN EUROPE



The desire to draw up an overview of the SSE began to emerge in 2013, with the goal of providing a true and well-anchored vision of the initiatives existing in Europe, and of gathering together the content to be used to build a shared solidarity economy advocacy process. The decision was taken to draw up a questionnaire and carry out the same survey in several countries. The SSE overview also incorporates work on the social audit (XES, ADEPES, REAS). The idea is to gather together the different existing approaches and identify common foundations ("Balance sociale", "EVALUMIP"). This work also served to bring together actors within an emerging participative process that needs to be consolidated in 2015 and to open up to other members, including members of the organisations that make up RIPESS EUROPE. Various SSE actors and researchers worked on drawing up the questionnaire. This approach, encompassing both research and field work, is certainly the most efficient and dynamic solution.

The questionnaire learning process is an opportunity to meet other partners (Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece and Germany). It is used as a tool in the process of broadening the network and opens the path to the creation of a shared identity. The work is scheduled to take three years, with an initial intermediary result in September 2015. The goal is to produce a sample of 1,000 answers.

The questionnaire exists in six languages (English, French, Spanish, Greek, German and Italian). Ties will be established with other countries (the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries). This could be an opportunity to publicise innovations in the field and develop a better understanding of the public policies adopted.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

RIPESS Europe participates in the international advocacy undertaken by Urgenci. This work serves to link together different organisations (including the REAS food sovereignty group) and create an SSE and food sovereignty network (work in progress). Several member networks (France, Catalonia, Hungary and the Czech Republic) will join this work group.

OTHER WORKING GROUPS

The other work groups have not yet got up to speed, and have therefore been postponed. They are the Solidarity Finance group and Popular Education group. We need to identify links with the new crowdfunding approaches, degrowth movements and MOOC projects: this will be formalised with a collective solidarity economy strategy.



6. Strategic alliances

New strategic alliances have been, or are currently being, established (ATTAC, Via Campesina, P2P Foundation, WFTO, etc.), including academic partnerships, such as the Réseau Inter Universitaire de l'ESS's agreement to make its document resources available to Socioeco.org.

MAIN PROPOSALS FOR 2015

A. Expand the network, boost the potential present in the field and continue with the work groups

On the basis of bottom-up processes: the CoCo-RIPESS will implement an action programme defined by members of the association during the AGM, in line with the overview of actions undertaken during the previous year. As part of this type of process, the decision was taken at the 2014 AGM to merge the two work groups “Perimeter” and “Taking Stock” of the SSE in Europe. In the same spirit, each CoCo-RIPESS meeting will continue to be combined with meetings with host field actors in order to better link European-wide perspectives with territorial/national networks’ deliberations in terms of structuring and development.

This agenda will be combined with the achievements of the work groups (point 2 above), which will be continued and expanded in line with the interest expressed by members. It will be adopted using methodology based on active participation (in the style of a world-café, open space) proposed and led by RIPESS EU.

B. Represent the European dimension of the solidarity economy

The link between CoCo meetings and meetings that are more local/national also serves to raise awareness among local institutions of the realities and issues at stake in the solidarity economy, including its European dimensions, and thus promotes the work undertaken by local networks.

This working principle underpins the preliminary and major work to be undertaken to identify the different actors in Europe and establish dialogue with them. RIPESS EU members will also present the European (and international) issues at stake in the solidarity economy to student audiences when they give speeches at universities.

Regular contributions to colloquiums and conferences will continue. In 2015, an effective institutional advocacy strategy for 2015-2018 will be drawn up on based on the overall reality represented by RIPESS Europe, as the body federating the sectoral themes pursued by its members and partners.

RIPESS Europe holds its AGM every two years at a conference. The next assembly is scheduled for September 2015 in Berlin. In 2017, the venue will be chosen in line with hosting opportunities and benefits for active or emerging network members.

C. Organise convergences

From the start, RIPESS Europe established various partnerships with actors close to the solidarity economy in order to foster convergences likely to make the actions taken by each party more effective in the quest for a shared goal: up-scaling. They are actors working in transition, fair trade, ethical finance, degrowth, common goods, social movements, and so on. These efforts will be continued and stepped up.

Discussions will be held with the FPH Foundation (and other potential funders) at a later stage to see how a formal work period could be organised for collaborative work on collectively defining a roadmap in order to step up convergence and increase the impact of the actions taken by different networks and organisations working to bring about a systemic change to the economy.

D. Développer une stratégie de communication en lien avec Ecosol

The RIPESS Europe website has been improved with the aiming of making it more visible, attractive and user-friendly, and thus a more up-to-date and effective site. The newsletter (in two languages, sent to 3,500 people) is published every three months. The ties established with socioeco.org will be strengthened, leading to very close collaboration. The intended effect is for RIPESS EU to benefit from the huge amount of work Françoise Wautiez has put into collecting data, monitoring technological developments and disseminating information, and promote it more effectively at the European level. A strategic plan will be drawn up for the 2015-2018 period. Closer ties with other alternative media will also be established.

More specifically, Ecosol will set up a more targeted European monitoring process to meet RIPESS Europe's needs for information, context provision and content enhancement. Ecosol will collaborate more closely with RIPESS Europe members. It will set up a specific video database to increase the audio-visual content. It will continue to work towards ensuring that socioeco.org is better incorporated upstream and downstream. Upstream is the example of the RIUESS: highlighting on the RIUESS site of data entered in the socioeco.org database. Downstream is the retrieval via Scrutari of information from other sites so as not to have to re-enter external data.

E. For a paradigm shift in modes of organisation

Discussions are underway on how to improve the link between internal skills and their development as part of a shared economic governance within RIPESS EU. This would enable a new operating mode to be tested, which could then be shared with other current and future members. The idea is to move on from the classic governance model of volunteer/paid executive coordination in order to mobilise the skills present in the network so they can be used for clearly identified and paid delegated tasks within a contract-based framework. Depending on needs, this mechanism could be combined with the creation of a paid position. Political strategies and assessment of the implementation of the resulting actions will remain the

responsibility of the statutory bodies. This quest for innovation in the ways we function should enable RIPESS EU, and European solidarity economy actors in general, to up-scale by learning how to implement a political programme more efficiently.



This report was compiled by the RIPESS EU - Solidarity Economy Europe Coordination Committee in February 2015. If no other source is specified, the contents of this report are under a Creative Commons Attribution – Non-Commercial - Share Alike 3.0 Unported License. You can find the full text of the license in [this website](#).

ABOUT RIPESS, Intercontinental network

RIPESS is a network of continental networks that connects social solidarity economy networks throughout the world. The continental networks (RIPESS-LAC, RIPESS-EU, RIPESS-NA, RAESS and ASEC) in turn bring together national and sectoral networks. RIPESS believes in the importance of global solidarity in order to build and strengthen an economy that puts people and planet front and center. From Lima (1997) to Quebec (2001), from Dakar (2005) to Luxembourg (2009) and Manila (2013), RIPESS organizes global forums every four years and is a nexus for learning, information sharing and international collaboration. [www.ripestt.org]



ABOUT RIPESS EU, Solidarity Economy Europe

After the 4th Ripess global meeting in Luxembourg in 2009, a group participants from different networks decided to form a European chapter of RIPESS, the intercontinental network for the promotion of Social Solidarity Economy. Within two years, in 2011 the Ripess Europe founding congress was convened in Barcelona. The second Ripess Europe congress was held in July 2013 in Lille, France. Today, Ripess Europe has 26 official network members (thematic, sectorial, inter -sectorial and territorial networks) from 12 countries. [www.ripestt.eu]



RIPESS Europe is an independent non profit association, registered in Luxembourg. It receives funds mainly from it's members and from the the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humankind (fph.ch).