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Solidarity Economy Europe  
[www.ripeess.eu](http://www.ripeess.eu)

# **ACTIVITY REPORT 2022**

## **1. Context analysis**

For RIPESS Europe, one of the challenges of the year 2021 was to collect testimonies from its members on the effects of Covid 19 on their activity and the responses they were able to organise. This collection has complemented that of RIPESS Intercontinental. We have seen that stopping economic activity has had disastrous effects when SSE businesses are forced to close if there is no social fabric or safety net to support people.

Thanks to several European projects, the exchange between members has continued to be structured and to produce a number of results. Paradoxically, the systematic use of video-conferencing has increased the opportunities for outreach through easier participation in partner events and the use of webinars to reach more people than face-to-face. As a result, the solidarity economy has fostered the resilience of local people and communities, who have found and rediscovered their capacity to overcome emergencies and rebuild a future through short circuits, local solidarity, and a global and holistic perspective. RIPESS Europe has pursued the objectives it set for itself in both its strategic plan and the commitments it made to the FPH.

## **2. The animation of the network**

RIPESS Europe's 10th anniversary : the year 2021 corresponded to the tenth anniversary of the founding of RIPESS Europe and after a preparatory meeting of members online in the Spring, a dedicated General Assembly was organised in September, the anniversary of the founding congress in 2011 in Barcelona. The event took place from the 7th to the 10th at the Bergerie de Villarceaux thanks to its availability by the FPH. It was attended by 44 people in person and 14 by video, representing 18 countries. A video gathering the testimonies of about ten members expressing their vision of the solidarity economy was projected at the opening and a publication in English and French was produced and distributed. The whole meeting was filmed and a professional video was produced for wider distribution.



The new members accepted in 2021 are the Irish network SOLIDNET, the Austrian network VSOK and ESS'PLICITE (French youth organisation). A collaboration between REMESS (the Moroccan SSE network) resulted in a partnership agreement formalised during the GA, which should lead to a youth exchange project to be financed by European funds dedicated to trans-mediterranean exchange (including Tunisia).

As the Scientific Council has initiated an exchange with Turkish universities, RIPESS Europe has responded positively to the membership application of Sosyal Ekonomi, a Turkish organisation that has initiated a networking process of social enterprises and organisations that recognise SSE values.

The development of a youth platform for SSE - YOU'CONOMY - led by Andrea Rodriguez supports the expansion of collaborations between members and other youth networks.

### **3. Webinars**

Several online meetings and webinars, on different themes (youth, cooperative platforms, territorial cooperation, solidarity tourism, etc.) were held, including those of the Scientific Council on ecofeminism from February to April. In collaboration with Urgenci (founding member), a webinar was created to support the contribution of associations for the maintenance of peasant agriculture (AMAP) to encourage community seed banks.

### **4. Mapping**



The [mapping of RIPESS Europe](#) members is visible on Socioeco.org. It includes RIPESS Europe members with their records in the 3 languages, and members of members.

RIPESS Europe has officially joined the Pilot coordination group of Transiscope for the interoperability between the existing maps with the intention to make it more international. Work has also resumed with the collaborative platform Commuconnecter.org.

### **5. Alliances**

In 2021, in addition to the continuation of the convergences promoted by the FSMET (World Social Forum of Transformative Economies), partnerships have been developed with platforms such as Transiscope (for mapping and interoperability); with Transformative Cities (Transnational Institute, Friends of the Earth, Habitat International Coalition, UCLG); with the Communities for Future initiative (Ecolise); with FTAO, Concord and other advocacy networks (on international trade, public procurement policies and the 'Build back fairer' campaign); with Social Economy Europe for the European Parliamentary Intergroup; with REVES and other municipality-led networks (such as RTES in France and XMESS in Spain); with Commons Network and Remix the Commons for the Municipalist and Commons movements' forums.

### **6. Projects and working groups outcomes**



#### Documenting good practice

The Erasmus+ SSE VET 2 project on the training of trainers has collected all the materials resulting from 3 years of work. They are available on the socioeco.org website. The next project - COOP4FUTURE - was approved, which was to commit the partnership for another three years, consolidating the work done so far. Unfortunately the project has to be re-presented, as there have been financial issues with the Erasmus+ Portuguese national agency.

The project for the dissemination of SSE in Central and Eastern Europe (BUSSE - Building Up Social Solidarity Economy) ended with the production of 4 modules on the basics of building up solidarity and self-managed communities and enterprises, on agro-ecology and socio-ecological transition. Follow-up is already underway through a new Erasmus+ project called HATI-SOS (Hard Times - Soft Skills), which continues the peer training activity.



The youth and solidarity tourism group met in Cremona (Italy) in November for a practice exchange session between the different participants who develop solidarity and eco-responsible travel modalities.

The social utility evaluation group, after a first failed attempt to access European funding, reiterated the proposal to the EU, which validated it in early 2022. It is about cross visits of exchanges on the modalities of measurement of social utility adopted by each partner, to serve as a basis for a common denominator in terms of measuring the impact of the SSE.

The agreement signed between RIPESS and REMESS (Morocco) has made it possible to start working again with organizations and networks in the Maghreb, on different aspects (training, territorial cooperation, advocacy and dissemination).

During the September GA a workshop on the use of online platforms developed a [Charter on digital tools](#) to be proposed to members and partners.

## 7. Communication



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The communication team has consolidated its activity on a more regular basis, advancing on several aspects. In particular, the design have been changed to renew the visual identity and many new tools have been adopted.

- 1) A new logo has been developed
- 2) **Framavox** platform has been implemented based on Loomio : organised discussions for the working groups, decisions orientation, etc.
- 3) Agreement with Dunia.earth for the use of most of the platforms implemented
- 4) Open source meeting space ( **BigBlueButton** )
- 5) **Odoo** members and financial management platform - with training for the team
- 6) Renovation and designing of the website
- 7) **Monthly newsletter** : monthly video (access to our **Youtube channel**) and every 2 months a dossier with a specific theme or a dossier per country (we started with Poland in September 2022).
- 8) Creation of **Solecopedia**

## 8. Perspectives

1. Development of economic cooperation platforms (digital currencies and translocal exchanges), (e.g. Smartketplace) and further collaboration in common platforms such as Transiscope.org (for mapping and event calendars) and Communecter.org - as well as with Communitiesforfuture.org.
2. Support the emergence of new networks and the valorisation of local SSE practices, their networking at European level and their economic inter-cooperation.
3. Recognition of SSE: advocacy (including participation in the European meeting organised in Strasbourg in May 2022 "Social economy, the future of Europe").
4. Movement building: through convergence, peer education, youth engagement, developing those we have created, seeking new alliances and strengthening existing ones, both at institutional level and with other transformative economy movements.

## 9) Financial situation

The financial report could not be approved yet as it was not fully ready : we started working with the Odoo open source software for our accounts in 2022 and need more time to fully implement it. We asked the assembly to reconvene for the approval of the financial report **before 31st December 2022** . Odoo is a very useful and flexible platform (Bruno, Jason, Juliette, Andrea have been trained). The network invested in this tool and it will make our job way easier for all administrative work as well as the creation of an intranet for the members. We are planning to offer it to all members for internal use in their organisations - specific trainings will be organised by Ripess Europe once we are confident with the platform (see : <https://odoo.ripess.eu>).

## 10) New membership applications

This year we received 3 membership requests, which were all approved unanimously :

### **CSX Network eV (Germany)**

The CSX Network eV is an association of people who work, research, advise or have founded community-based companies on the subject of community-based enterprise. We started as a loose network and decided in November 2020 to found an association in order to be able to promote the notion of CSX more professionally in the future.



CSX ('community supported everything') is inspired by the practice of community supported agriculture. Its core is the incorporation of prosumers as active participants in running a business, combined with the collective financing of the yearly operating costs. Based on the budget for each new business year, members of the cooperative community formally commit in advance to contribute a share of the costs. CSX thus fosters direct relationships and transparency among all participants, who use community contributions instead of prices to pre-finance their costs, thereby sharing all risks and responsibilities. Many CSX operations are also run on the basis of solidarity-based financing, participatory decision making, co-production, and community-owned property.

Our association sees itself as a lively organization that enables its members and interested parties to learn together and to become and be effective. In accordance with our statutes, we are particularly committed to education, science and research. Specifically, this means we:

- inspire and actively support people in founding community-based enterprises,
- research practical examples and practices of community-based economics and publish these results,
- promote the exchange between existing practical projects.

In our association we rely on co-creation, cooperation and collaboration instead of competition, on direct connections and personal relationships, on transparency and interactions at eye level, on needs orientation and participation, on self-reflection, solidarity and self-efficacy. And we have decided to turn our network into a learning space for diversity and to constantly question old habits of communication and hierarchy.

Website: <https://gemeinschaftstragen.de/en/>

Reference person: Bernd Bonfert

### **Profilantrop Association - Hungary**

The main goal of Profilantrop is to raise the environmental awareness, strengthen the independence and self-esteem of local communities to find a way to a responsible, sustainable and peaceful lifestyle. Empowerment is a cornerstone in our work, incorporating the creativity and skills of the people in finding solutions to their problems – instead of waiting for help from outside. We have been active in youth work since 2006, in the last 6 years we hosted volunteers in our Charity Shop, in the heart of Budapest. We are taking part in youth exchanges, recently leading two Erasmus+ strategic partnership projects. In 2015 we established a Charity Shop in Budapest, where we receive ESC volunteers.



**PROFILANTROP**  
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ASSOCIATION

We believe in Transformative Economy, and the goals of solidarity economy, we would love to improve this field in our association and in Hungary.

Website: <https://www.profilantrop.org/en/home>

Reference person: Zsofia Szepesi

### **DUNIA – international sectoral**



Dunia is a platform of free digital tools and networked communication, created in 2012 around the Earth Summit (Peoples Summit Rio+20) in Brazil. At that moment, it became more evident that the world was heading to a more intense confrontation in terms of political, economic, and technological rivalries. Alongside the effect of digitalization, the global economy showed also at that time that it was more and more embedded into a large process of hyper-industrialization, bringing a new kind of inequities, social polarization and concentration.

Since the 90's, the same wave of growing digitalization has also changed the way civil society is acting. Information has become an unseen leverage to struggle and pressure political actors, at the same time it has become a strategic issue for many organizations. The economy of innovation and monopolistic competition is now reinforcing the strategic dimension of information.

The new networked economy is currently driving territories and social communities to a new configuration: more global competitive, capitalistic, conflicting, individual-centric, and relational. This gives a new role to social and solidarity economy.

In this context, Dunia started to provide online tools and services to foster networked communication to organizations involved in the large field sustainability and altermundialism (digital infrastructure, servers, clouds, websites, streaming, etc.). It established partnerships with around 60 worldwide networks and institutions.

On the way, the platform has been structured by three specific operational lines: 1. Develop an offer based on open and interoperable digital tools for networking, rooted in the community of free software and activism. 2. Deepen the methodological experimentations undertaken by organizations in terms of collective intelligence, coordination and global outreach. 3. Contribute to generate new conceptual frameworks to address the new networked economy and power relations through information.

The core team of Dunia is currently composed of 5 persons based in Argentina, with a double juridical status of association (France, law 1901) and entrepreneur (Argentina). The digital infrastructure is mainly hosted in OVH (France), with dependencies in Germany (Hetzner) and Finland (Hetzner). The FPH is mainly supporting the project, while other organizations are contributing according to their financial possibilities.

Dunia was involved in the World Social Forum of Transformative Economies (2020), and the World Social Forum. It's now working with the Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF) and the Institute for Iconomy (France).

Website: <https://dunia.earth>

Reference person: François Soulard

## 11) Election of CoCo members

As every year, the RIPESS Europe Coordination Committee (CoCo) is up for renewal of a third of its members. After reviewing all the expired roles and candidacies,

two new CoCo members are approved : Fairtrade Polska represented by Monika Onyszkiewicz (Food Community, SSE in Poland) and Apres-Vaud (Switzerland) represented by Constance André-Aigret - bringing the total number of components to 14. Moreover, RedPES proposed Ana Margarida Esteves to substitute Sofia Pereira.



The proposal to split the coordinator role in two was approved and the new co-coordinators of the network will be elected during the next CoCo meeting, possibly a woman and a man to respect the parity principle.

It has also been decided that the network could join the ECOLISE network, possibly with a mutual membership. The question of mutual membership with Social Economy Europe has also been proposed and discussed - but there was no consensus on it. Instead we should persue a MoU or similar agreement to work on common campaigns and advocacy issues.

Finally, the proposals to start a process towards the renewal of a RIPESS EU Charter of principles and mapping of the narrations of SSE were approved, in close relation with the work done in ongoing projects (such as the manifesto on Territorial cooperation and SSE, the Trainings, the Social utility and impact, Soleclopedia and the work that member networks such as REAS have done on reviewing their principles and the campaign RIPESS Intercontinental is doing to illustrate SSE to a wider public.

## 12) New RIPESS EU representative in the RIPESS Intercontinental board

Introduction to the activities of **Ripess Int.** by Stephanie Barrial (new general secretary) and Andrea Echeverria (communication officer) - [see slides](#)

Ripess Intercontinental is working on **4 work areas** :

1. Transcontinental advocacy in international arenas (UN mainly)
2. National and local networks' advocacy for SSE public policies
3. Convergence with other movement for joint advocacy and the reinforcement of the networks
4. Information, and education material for SSE promotion

Sofia Peireira is no longer available to be co-representative with Drazen Simlesa in the RIPESS Int. board. Ruby van der Wekken proposes to replace her and is unanimously nominated.

## 13. Working groups

### Youth and Education



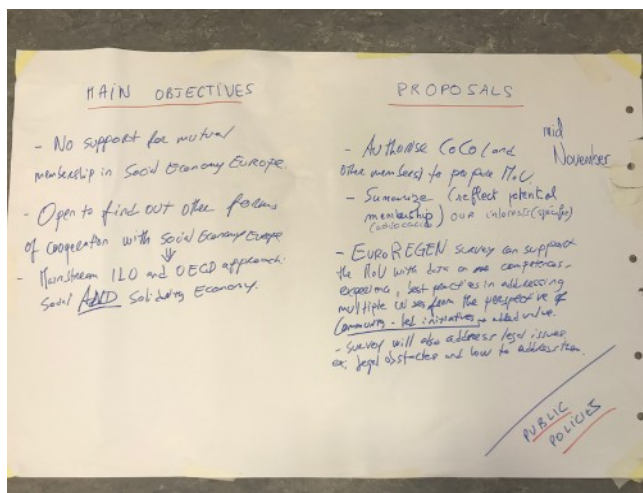
First of all, the need to define youth was addressed as we always talk about it as a homogeneous group determined by age, but it is important to mention that apart from being characterised by a vital moment, it can be said that youth is divided between those who are already convinced in the world of Social and Solidarity Economy and those who are not. In this sense, we have to differentiate with whom we work at each moment and think about how we can influence school curricula to put the SSE at the centre.

On the other hand, the idea of working from an intergenerational point of view was addressed and it was proposed to survey the members to see if they currently have projects on youth, have youth groups and members, work with educational organisations or institutions, etc.

Another working proposal is to focus on linking up with youth groups related to SSE and connected to our members and try to strengthen them instead of putting efforts into creating a new one.

## Public Policies and Advocacy

The main issue discussed was the relationship with Social Economy Europe. We used to cooperate with Social Economy Europe for the European Parliament intergroup, but we stepped back a few years ago - due to lack of people able to engage and follow. Now the cooperation should start again as the Social Economy action plan has been developed as well as the European Green Deal. Our contact so far has been with Victor Messenguer (director), but it has not been very fruitful. Since last year and in the leadup to the Strasbourg conference (May 2022), we have opened the discussion with Jérôme Saddier, president of ESS France - and with Patrizia Busso, director of ENSIE and vice-president of SEE.



The group proposes to have the CoCo (and other interested members) prepare an MoU agreement, summarizing our specific interests.

The EuroREGEN survey, led by Ana Margarida, can support the MoU with data on competences, experiences, best practices in addressing multiple crises from the perspective on community-led initiatives - as well as legal obstacles and how to address them.

Public policy work has also been done with the ECOLISE network and should be

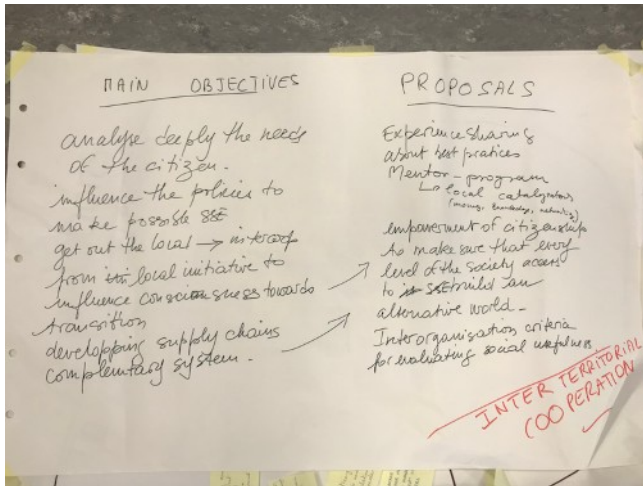
continued with a wider participation.

The group should also work more in connection with RTES and other local authorities networks at country and European levels (UCGL, REVES, etc.).

Concrete suggestions by Judith Hitchman (Urgenci) for a Public Policy action plan for the next year would be the following:

- \* Immediate follow-up with Social Economy Europe to ask how they plan to implement the enclosed document and how we could develop a joint action plan
- \* Immediate follow up with Social Economy Europe to ask how they plan to implement the Conclusions and Resolutions of the International Labour Conference at EU level, and see if we can work jointly on certain aspects.
- \* Work on sustainable Food Systems Law: how can we gain traction with Social Economy Europe to ensure SSE approaches we have input and will be working on in the Food Policy Coalition are taken up jointly with Social Economy Europe?
- \* Same for other food policy aspects where Urgenci will be engaging in Europe?
- \* How can we strengthen the bridge between the Farm to Fork and Sustainable Food Systems Law policy and the Green Deal?
- \* What other groups in RIPESS EU PP working group can engage on other aspects of the Green Deal?

## Territorial cooperation and Inter-cooperation

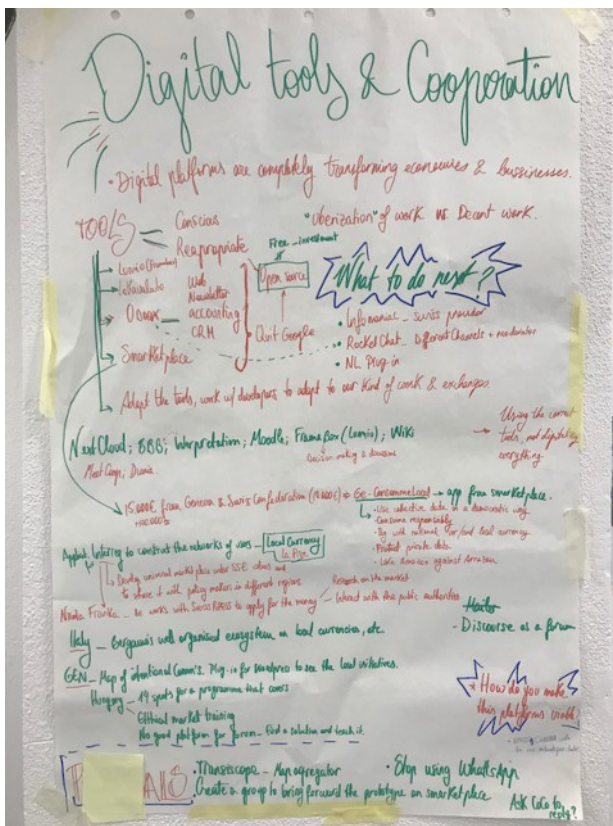


The group agreed that it was necessary to carefully analyse the citizen's needs to be able to influence the policies that would make possible SSE initiatives. Important is not to stay strictly local but as well opened to global issues.

Here are the main objectives raised during the discussion :

- Set up inter-cooperation in order to raise awareness towards the transition
- Develop supply chains based on complementarity between organisations
- Sharing best practices
- Develop empowerment of citizenship to make sure that every level of the society get access to SSE and not only the middle class
- Program training for local catalysts
- Set up inter-organisation evaluation criteria to measure the social consciousness raising and the social usefulness of actions.

## Digital platforms for SSE



For many people, the current economy is not serving anymore. This transformation is connected to the effect of computerisation of society. There is a new vision of social justice.

How can we improve free software open source tools ? How to use and promote online technologies that we are fighting against ? At the same time, online collaboration is more and more useful for our intercooperation between networks. Also for economic exchanges.

Smartmarketplace is a start. Apres-Ge has received a grant of 15000€ from the state of Geneva. They also received a more important subvention to develop the platform as JeGe (je consommation local). Smartmarketplace is a whitelabeled common app and every region/country can replicate it. The objective is to build a network of users. Each region can develop a specific strategy. They have hired someone to make applications and to follow up the project.

A collaboration with Open Food Network has started and could be a good integration with Smarketplace as well as with the other platforms.

Thanks to the agreement with Dunia, we now have a whole set of tools at the service of the network: nextcloud (documentation), meeting tool (big blue button), moodle (knowledge exchange platform) ; as well as a connection with meet.coop (cooperative developing bbb), , and other tools such as loomio - framavox, from Framasoft. The idea is not digitalize everything we do but more to use the right tools for the right task.

GEN EUROPE has set up a map with filters where you can see each region, country etc. In Hungary, they have started a system with a local food community (logistics, finance etc).

Conclusion : the network has to build a strategy to facilitate the exit from the GAFAM's (Google Apple Facebook Amazon Microsoft) dependency and find the means to elaborate this transition.

### International activities we participated in

- Social economy Europe Conference (Strasbourg, France) feedback : Berenice (MES FRANCE) and Juliette organised a workshop on Economic democracy and Citizenship; other members had workshops too (RTES, URGENCI, etc). The official plenaries were very interesting. It was important to be there even if we didn't have a big role next to other social economy actors.
- Ecovillages network gathering (Denmark) feedback : Good connection with Gen Europe (Gen youth group). We would like to maintain and reinforce the relations with them and let them know about how SSE can connect with ecovillages.



### Events organised by members

- REAS Red de Redes is co-organised an event on cooperative housing in November in Barcelona. Meetings were also organised with MES Occitania to explore our common interests on social balance: focus on getting closer to our neighbour networks (around the Mediterranean).
- [FRESS\\*](#) (Occitanie) 25th, 26th November.. The title was "Citizenship and solidarity Europe" : we worked to understand better what is going on in Europe. Also what is SSE in Europe (with climate change, Human rights, culture and education perspectives). We also celebrated the MES 20th birthday on 24th November and we edited a book « Solidarity in Mouvement » (Eres editions) that was published on November 3rd. The book has been written by 40 contributors (organised by Bruno Lasnier, Josette Combes and Jean-Louis Laville).

