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Solidarity Economy Europe

ACTIVITY REPORT 2018



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A. Presentation of RIPESS Europe

RIPESS Europe - Solidarity Economy Europe is the European branch of the Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Solidarity Social Economy, which was created thanks to the synergy produced by RIPESS International through meetings to promote solidarity on a global scale. The 4th International Forum for the "Globalisation of Solidarity" Lux'09, held in Schiffflange in April 2009, launched a dynamic and built trust and knowledge between the social and solidarity economy networks at continental and international level. In 2011, the founding congress of RIPESS Europe was held in Barcelona.



RIPESS Europe brings together European regional, interregional, national or sectoral organisations in the solidarity economy. Today, RIPESS Europe has 39 members (thematic and territorial networks) from 19 countries. Socioeco.org has integrated into its activities to provide a tool for sharing and visibility of documents and resources on SSE and transformative economies. An Advisory Council composed of researchers contributes to the constitution of the network's historical and theoretical heritage.

Our strategy:

RIPESS Europe has set itself two fundamental objectives for the years 2018-2020:

I. To stimulate a change in the social and economic imagination to build a post-capitalist economy

- Promote a new positive and concrete narrative, based on existing SSE solutions, cooperative and collective modes of production and consumption that preserve the quality of life and dignity of humans through equity and social justice. Each citizen exercises a citizen's view of what he produces and what he uses or shares. with an ecosystemic vision and democratic and intergenerational solidarity.
- Support projects for reinventing the city or regenerating the countryside through initiatives to organise human services, soft energy, public transport, short production and consumption circuits for agro-ecological products from peasant agriculture, collective gardens, fair trade, ethical and solidarity-based financing tools, etc., and strengthen territorial links between cities and the countryside.
- Participate (and co-organize) at several levels of advocacy, whether in political, institutional, academic and popular education meetings, or those that bring together various social movements, festivals and alternative practice fairs. The visibility of solidarity economy initiatives will be stronger and more widespread through strategic alliances and convergence with other alternative economic movements on the one hand, and investing on the other hand in artistic, media, cultural

and real social innovation activities that can strike the imagination of citizens and young people in particular, and invite them to actively participate in solutions that exist or can be created.

II. Strengthening the solidarity economy movement

RIPESS Europe is alive thanks to its financial support and the activity of its members and in return membership of the European network has a dynamic effect on networking in countries that are still in search of structure and on older ones. The network partly (and conversely) provides tools for development strategies. It invites its members and its coordination to participate as much as possible in events and working platforms on common ground such as Transition Towns and Re-economy, Agroecology and Food Sovereignty, Common Goods and Open Knowledge, Shared Economy, Peer2Peer and Open Cooperativism, Declining Growth, Consumer Cooperatives, Solidarity Finance and Credit Unions, Fair Trade, etc. as well as research centres, independent and alternative media that promote forms of self-managed, collective and citizen-centred economic initiatives.

Our objectives

The objectives are divided into 4 thematic areas of action :

1. The network

- Deepen members' knowledge and support various forms of inter-cooperation (through European projects and other forms of funding). RIPESS Europe responds to requests from its members either to participate directly in some of their events, or to propose an exchange with a representative of the other members of one of the countries that seems most appropriate according to the theme of the meeting (agroecology, energy, culture, public policies, education and training, etc.). Promote forms of economic cooperation and fair trade (e.g. the Greek "Fruits of Solidarity" approach developed in several countries).
- Facilitate and promote regional meetings between members from different neighbouring countries (e.g. the NESEM - North Europe Solidarity Economy Meeting, which took place in Helsinki at the end of April 2018, or the meeting of SSE initiatives in the Balkan / Former Yugoslavia countries in Zagreb in June 2018, during the RIPESS Europe General Assembly), or thematic seminars such as that on independent media and SSE or Inter-mapping (shared maps).
- Design a series of webinars and peer-to-peer training courses from 2018 to 2019, organised by the RIPESS Europe communication group, but carried out each time by representatives of members or allied organisations, who make an initial presentation, prepare documentation and answer questions from participants. Participate in the construction of an online training platform on SSE practices and themes.
- Present joint projects: 5 European projects presented this year, each with different members of the network, academic partners or other related organisations. If funded, they should lead to broader networking work that will have an impact on the entire European network (and abroad, since some projects involve working at the Mediterranean level or with other non-European countries).

2. The alliances

- Seek alliances within social movements to better articulate forces and skills and give more visibility to the actions undertaken, compare approaches, common issues; participate in unifying campaigns.
- Co-organize the World Social Forum exclusively dedicated to the Transformative Economies in Barcelona in April 2019 and 2020 in partnership with the Municipality of Barcelona and the Xarxa d'Economia Solidaria, an opportunity for convergence based on the Solidarity Social Economy, the Municipalities, the Feminist Economy and the ecological movements (transition, decline, agroecology), fair trade, ethical finance and other alternative economic movements.
- Strengthen the alliance with cooperative, alternative and independent media to better circulate information on SSE to all audiences.

3. Public policies

- Engage policy and institutional leaders to reorient their policies towards a more sustainable and balanced economy and continue the work of advocacy and co-development of public policies by supporting members in their local advocacy and by intervening in public debate either directly or through its media productions (publications, webinars conferences, etc.)
- Intervene, in conjunction with RIPESS Intercotinental, in the events proposed by organisations such as the GSEF (Global Social Economy Forum), CITIES (Centre international de transfert d'innovations et de connaissances en économie sociale et solidaire), the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (especially for initiatives in Geneva), the SSE European Forum , etc. In particular, with the comparative mapping of public policies and on the real impact of the SDGs. The start of the work was presented with Socioeco during the GSEF in Bilbao in October 2018.
- Get involved in the networks of cities and local authorities that promote SSE. E.g. the Network of Territories for the Solidarity Economy (RTES) or the Catalan Network of Municipalities for SSE (XMES). A project (Cities of change - Urban Alternatives) to map urban regeneration initiatives is underway in partnership with the Transnational Institute, European Alternatives, Habitat International Coalition and others.
- Network the expertise present within the network members. For example, by coordinating a report by the Greek Ministry of Labour, Cooperation and the Social and Solidarity Economy on a "Strategic Plan for the Development of an SSE Culture in Greece". Or work with campaigns such as Droit à la Ville or institutional consultation tables such as IPES food.
- Partner with other networks to promote solidarity economy and economic alternatives within the European institutions, such as the "The Europe we want" Manifesto with many organisations such as Friends of the Earth, Fair Trade Advocacy or Greenpeace, in view of the next European elections in May 2019.
- Cooperation with Social Economy Europe and the Inter-Group for the Social Economy can also be sought depending on the work themes.

4. **Cultural change and education**

- Influence public opinion, in particular through training (particularly among young people), public campaigns and communication to advance knowledge among the general public of the value of economic cooperation as a substitute for fierce competition and the use of democratic and ecological resource management methods.
- Massively invest in the field of education and training by presenting European projects on the theme (e. g. IVET / Erasmus) by initiating or continuing collaborations with universities and by multiplying summer universities and the dissemination of webinars, online courses and other accessible tools.
- Seek alliances and joint projects with networks of creative people from the cultural area (e. g. UFISC - the Federal Union of Intervention of Cultural Structures, member of RIPESS Europe) or festivals (Creative Commons Film Festival, Alternatiba, Fêtes des Solidarités, etc.)

5. **Relations with the RIPESS Intercontinental network**

- Share and animate the transversal dimensions with RIPESS at the international level: work, climate change, food sovereignty, gender equality, the fight against discrimination and for social justice, paying particular attention to the active participation of young people. Participate in advocacy on SDGs, UN etc.
- Strive to be a facilitator of useful collaborations between the different continents represented within the Intercontinental RIPESS by actively participating in the various working groups, feeding communication through the International Newsletter, and a diversified and abundant documentation on the SSE of Socioeco.org and other initiatives of European members.

B. Our areas of work

RIPESS Europe's action plan has three dimensions: the internal level (strengthening and widening the network, projects with members and partners, the international level (education and the European dimension), the external level (convergence and communication).

I. The internal level

1. Expand the network, boost the potential of the field work and continue the working groups

In April 2018, in collaboration with Commons.fi (Finnish member), we organised the first NESEM - North European Solidarity Economy Meeting - in Helsinki (during the Finnish Social Forum), with representatives from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia and Russia.

The 2018 RIPESS Europe GA was held in Zagreb (Croatia) at the invitation of Good Economy Platform - Dobra Economija, which organised its annual congress. The GA was held following this very rich event.

During the 2018 GA, three new members, all from Eastern Europe, applied and were adopted: Our Good Earth (Наша Добра Земја in Macedonian), Macedonia, Fair & Bio Coop, Czech Republic, Fairtrade Poland Foundation (Koalicja Sprawiedliwego Handlu in Polish).

2. Ongoing projects

Several European projects are underway. In 2018, the Erasmus+ SSE.IVET project, which brought together 7 countries, was completed but an extension was approved. It was launched during a transnational meeting in Timisoara, organised by CRIES, the Romanian organisation that has been a member of RIPESS EU since its inception. It should make it possible to carry out pilot training courses for initial and vocational training trainers so that they can include SSE in their curriculum. This strategy aims to reach young people as a priority through these training courses.

Another European project led by the Ekumenik Academy of Prague aims to promote SSE in Central and Eastern European countries through training and networking modules - with meetings scheduled for 2019 and 2020.

Several other European projects are either under study or have been presented (7 in total, plus an associated partnership with EPOG - Erasmus Mundus / UTC Sorbonne University). They support intense collaborations and exchanges of knowledge and experience that mutually reinforce the participants.

3. Work on the co-construction of public policy advocacy

Several strategies have been devised by members to engage political and institutional leaders in reorienting their policies towards a more sustainable and balanced economy and to continue the work of advocacy and co-construction of public policies.

As a first step, a series of webinars and a public policy working group were set up, which produced a report on the development of SSE culture in Greece for the Greek government (commissioned by the British Council). RIPESS Europe has also worked more closely with networks of local authorities - starting with its member RTES (Réseau des Territoires pour l'Economie Solidaire), as well as REVES (Réseau Européen de Villes pour l'Economie Sociale), and participated in meetings dedicated to strengthening the links between SSE and public authorities.

The Socioeco.org website's mapping of public policies in favour of SSE must continue to be fed. An analysis and comparison between the different resources on this map could lead to the development of a document that is easier to interpret (currently the resources are in the original languages of each country). See online: http://www.socioeco.org/cartos_en.html

The meetings within the GSEF (Global Social Economy Forum, Bilbao Oct. 2018) have also led to closer links with RTES and the 2019 GA planned in Lyon at the invitation of the Greater Lyon Urban Community.

II. At the international level:

Cultural change to build a solidarity economy based on existing SSE solutions requires investment in education and training.

RIPESS Europe is very active in the RIPESS International Education Working Group and the International Campaign for a Global SSE Curriculum. A video presentation of RIPESS Europe was produced and broadcast during the Kibera Meeting (Kenya, 8-11 December). Several virtual meetings have taken place and the group should participate in the Barcelona FSMET. He is looking for funding to organize a seminar to build a global curriculum.

In Luxembourg representatives of RIPESS Europe actively participated in the ILO SSE Academy and in September were invited to participate in a conference and visit to Saint Petersburg, Russia ("How Is European Labour Changing: organization of work, working spaces and times, new professions and adaptation of education, solidarity economy").

A series of webinars and online courses are being developed (with a new online knowledge exchange platform), involving many member organizations through their expertise and practices, on different themes. Peer learning is conceived as an exchange of knowledge as well as a means to strengthen opportunities for intercooperation.

One of these issues concerns the financing of SSE initiatives for systemic change and the use of complementary local currencies (traditional and/or blockchain-based) to support and feed social markets.

The above-mentioned European projects also fall within this theme.

1. **Representation of the European dimension of the solidarity economy**

In addition to European cooperation projects, which are in themselves a way of bringing the European dimension to life, we also respond to invitations to promote RIPESS in various assemblies and campaigns.

At the invitation of the TNI (TransNational Institute) in Amsterdam, we participated in the Cities of Change mapping campaign and later in the year in the preparation of the Transformative Cities Award, which will take place in 2019.

From April onwards, we participated in the co-construction of the campaign to change the forms of narrative "the Europe we want" ("Europe we want"), promoted by Friends of the Earth and other networks, which produced a guiding report published in February 2019.

In October, RIPESS EU was invited to participate in the World Congress of the Socially Responsible Tourism Network in Lyon (OITS).

For example, we had a meeting led by the Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO) in November. The outcome: a campaign for the European Parliament elections in May 2019 on targeted objectives. We participated and contacted several other organizations: CONCORD - European platform of development NGOs, SDG Watch, EEB (German organization, Good food for all), CIDSE (campaign on sustainable consumption and production - Catholic organization, in collaboration with Artisans du Monde).

2. Presence on the RIPESS International Council

Ripess Europe has been appointed coordinator of RIPESS International and Jason Nardi is in charge of its functions. As such, Jason Nardi represents the SSE movement on the Organizing Committee of the World Social Forum of Transformative Economies. On this side, it has a role to play in mobilizing its networks and its links with social movements. Ripess Eu is also a member of the working group on education. It feeds the international Newsletter.

III. The external level

1. Organize convergences

This is one of the dimensions we have focused on this year.

In March, we went to Salvador de Bahia, where the World Social Forum was held, with the objective of continuing what had begun in Montreal, namely to organize an event focused on the convergence of organizations whose objectives and practices contribute to the evolution of the economy towards greater democracy, social justice and ecological vigilance. It is a question of focusing on the transformative dimension of our activities to put a stop to the damage caused by hyper-liberalism and to invent a new global balance.

During the GA in June, the focus of the debate focused on the World Social Forum process of transformative economies, launched by RIPESS and XES in Salvador de Bahia in March 2018. Xavi Artigas (XES) and Laure Jongejans (RIPESS Int) described the convergence and co-organisation processes: this ambitious project will be carried out in two stages. A first meeting in April 2019 in Barcelona to establish the main lines of the World Social Forum of Transformative Economies of 2020, which should bring together some 10,000 participants.

In the meantime, each meeting is an opportunity to promote theWSFTE. Thus in Grenoble, in August, at the "Summer University of Social Movements" a workshop was devoted to convergence.

In October, this project was presented at the Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF) in Bilbao, where several member networks participated.

A Coordination Committee was held in Barcelona in October where XES members, REAS and those in charge of coordinating the process presented their strategy. This event is organized jointly

with RIPESS International, of which Jason Nardi has been coordinator since the 2017 Board meeting.

One of the areas where the network is stronger thanks to the activity of its Urgenci member is that of food sovereignty policies (and local agro-ecological production-consumption practices). Two representatives for RIPESS Europe participated in the work of IPES Food (International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems) which produced the latest report ("Towards a Common Food Policy for the European Union", February 2019). We also participated in the Urgenci Symposium in Thessaloniki in October, where one of the main axes was the solidarity economy. Urgenci continues to play an important and very active role in RIPESS Intercontinental's work with the United Nations within the UNTFSSSE and the High Level Political Forum in New York on the implementation of the SDGs.

2. Develop a communication strategy in connection with Ecosol and Alternative Media

The links between Socioeco and RIPESS EU are very close. F. Wautiez plays a very active role in the production of the Newsletter in collaboration with J. Combes and J. Nardi. F.W has a function of monitoring SSE news and welcomes information proposed to it by RIPESS members and includes it on the site.

There is always the challenge of improving communication at all levels, especially online presence, which is our main visibility tool. An effort to work on this point with RIPESS Intercontinental is underway, joining forces for the website, the cloud (document sharing) and the meeting / education platform.

A pro-active opening (started at the Berlin Congress in 2015 and the Athens Congress in 2017) towards alternative, cooperative and independent media encourages the exchange of information. A working seminar was organised in Villarceaux in February with the objective of implementing a kind of alternative media network. The drafting of a common manifesto is not yet complete, but some links remain strong.

3. Socioeco: an increasingly fruitful collaboration

The work with socioeco.org is increasingly elaborate. There are several developments in the field of specific mapping (public policies, independent media, SSE solutions, etc.) and with other resource centres (Collective Brain of the ILO/ILO SSE Academy, CITIES, and others).

The site now includes documents and videos in 9 languages: French, Spanish, English, Italian, Portuguese, Catalan, Greek, German and Dutch.

The site had nearly 246670 visits for 2018. The socioeco.org site is mainly a library to consult: there are 27206 downloads over the year that are not systematically counted as visits to the site. The download can be done directly from google for example.

Socioeco.org lists 6,046 documents, 1,661 publications and 1,212 videos related to 5,035 authors and 1,015 organizations. It also lists 265 training courses and 704 sites, or 15459 references.

The site works in collaboration with 14 other databases, providing access to a total of 29453 documents.

Improvement of the website

a) Educational tools

They are now available in the form of guides/manuals, training modules and games. We believe that group games that promote the principles of SSE should be more widely disseminated and FW hopes to collect as many training modules as possible to facilitate the work of new teachers and practitioners.

(b) The mapping tool

The mapping tool allows you to visualize some of the information. And its classification thanks to different filters. From the solutions map, other maps were extracted.

- The Geosse map, a map that queries other ESS-related and alternative maps (17), either from socio-eco.org or outside. The Transiscope portal was launched last October. The idea is exactly the same as on the geosse map, but for France. Vincent Calame is following the project to include the maps from socioeco.org and see how geosse can complement this initiative with its European and global perspective.

4. For a paradigm shift in organizational modes

The strategic planning of the network for the next three years is underway and, although our structure remains very limited, the work carried out through our member organisations has increased and the recognition of RIPESS and SSE at European level has increased.

Diversification of funding, which we have addressed both with European projects in partnership with many others, and with other private donors to finance specific activities, has proved to be a challenge. This is a continuous effort, but some results are already visible, first of all with the WSF of transformative economies, which requires a special effort.

Our strategy of "convergence" with other anti-globalization movements is bearing fruit, as evidenced by the positive reactions we receive and the invitations to participate in numerous collective campaigns, advocacy initiatives and demonstrations.

These cooperations play an important role in the development of the network's reputation, which is increasingly solicited as an expert by various SSE actors.

5. Advocacy

An important project has been initiated to identify the forms of public policies that support the development of the solidarity economy. In addition to this identification and compilation work (see also the Socioeco report), RIPESS EU has generated

+ meetings with elected officials (in Barcelona, Madrid, Athens, Rome, etc.). Within the Athens Congress, workshops on this theme took place and welcomed the testimony of Greek politicians on the new national law to promote SSE (late 2016) and the possibility of future collaboration for implementation. The first result was a collaboration on the action plan for the development of SSE culture in Greece, in the form of a collaboratively written report between a group of network members (completed in May 2018)

At the European level, RIPESS EU had participated in the co-construction of the second European SSE Forum, organised by the European Parliament in Brussels (EFSSE, 9 November 2017). This event was not followed by a new session.

6. Prospects for the future

Meeting in Elne, France in January 2018, the Coordination Committee established an action plan for the next three years, based on the priorities decided at the Athens GA and the previous objectives, with a stronger emphasis on education and the active participation of young people.

The two fundamental objectives have been maintained :

- Change of social and economic vision to build a post-capitalist economy
- Strengthening the solidarity economy movement, in dialogue with the feminist economy approach, the commons, municipalism & citizen transition

These two fundamental objectives are divided into 4 main areas:

- The network: deepening members' knowledge and supporting various forms of inter-cooperation (through European projects and other forms of funding)

- Alliances: compare approaches, common issues, participate in unifying campaigns. Support convergences of advocacy and public events with other alternative economic networks and in particular organize convergence for the realization of the World Social Forum of Transformative Economies

- Public policies: continue advocacy and co-construction of public policies by supporting members in their local advocacy

- Cultural change: influencing public opinion, including through training, public campaigns and communication. Advancing knowledge among the general public of the importance of forms of economic cooperation for the transformation of society. The transversal dimensions shared with RIPESS International are those of work, climate change, gender equality and the fight against discrimination for social justice. All these projects are open and the coming years will be devoted to them.

AGENDA RECAPITULATIF 2018

12-14/01	Elne / Fr	Coordination Committee (CoCo) - Strategic Directions
18-19/01	Amsterdam / NI	TNI – Meeting on Cities of Change
09-11/11/02	Villorceaux / Fr	Seminar Convergence of alternative medias
12 - 18 /03	Salvador de Bahia / Brésil	World Social Forum
18-20/04	Amsterdam / NI	« Europe we want »– changing narrative seminar
16-17 / 05	Rennes / Fr	RIUESS – meeting 2018
21-22 / 05	Florence / It	CoCo RIPESS EU (preparation GA)
6-8 / 06	Bruxelles / Be	WFTO – Fair Trade conference
12-13/06	Florence / It	REVES Days
14-15-16/06	Zagreb / Croatie	Conférence Good economy + AG RIPESS-EUROPE
22 -26 / 08	Grenoble / Fr	Rebel and citizen university of social movements /
26-30 / 09	S.Petersbourg / Ru	Fall meeting German-Russian Exchange
01-03/10	Bilbao / Es	GSEF 2018
04-05/10	Bilbao / Es	CA RIPESS INT
06-07/10	Bayonne / Fr	Alternatiba 2018
24-25/10	Barcelone/Es	CoCo RIPESS EU
26-27/10	Barcelone /Es	FESC XES
08/11	Athens / Gr	KALO (ESS) Expo
09-10/11	Thessaloniki / Gr	Urgenci International Symposium
10-11/11	Palermo / It	Fà la cosa giusta – European meeting
21-23/11	Lisbon / Pt	SSE and Commons- conference
23-24/11	Toulouse / Fr	SSE Regional Forum - Presentation RIPESS & WSFTE
27-19/11	Prague / Cz	Meeting transnational Erasmus+ BUSSE (Europe Centre-Est)
28-29/11	Timisoara / Ro	Meeting transnational Erasmus+ VET2
13-15/12	Verona / It	Agora des Habitants de la Terre

A total of 25 meetings and events, all of them with a European or international dimension, mobilised RIPESS Europe members in 2018.

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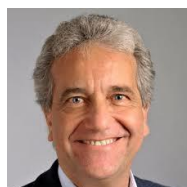
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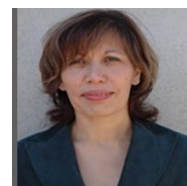
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