

People in Europe and around the world are living in an era of multiple crises, in which education and employment are challenged by great social inequalities, unsustainable technological developments and a dysfunctional economic and financial system, leading to exploitation, precarious employment and worsening living conditions, due to climate change, pollution and depletion of natural resources.

About the project

The **SSE.IVET** project is funded by Erasmus+ Programme and supported by the ideas that SSE is an alternative to the current socio-economic model and that Initial Vocational and Educational Training (IVET) is a tool to achieve social change, as new generations should be familiarised with SSE values and principles, democratic management and ethical and solidarity finance. For this reason, a group of civil society organisations, associations and social enterprises from seven European countries¹ - involved in the field of SSE and part of training agencies and the European SSE network (RIPESS) – have been working for the last two years to include SSE in IVET curricula and to disseminate collaboration and solidarity principles through training, aiming to inspire teenagers in becoming active promoters of a fairer and more liveable future. SSE.IVET aims to draw policy and decision-makers' attention to the package of tested training modules intended to innovate IVET curricula, pedagogical approach and training practices.

Why SEE and what is it?

Social and Solidarity Economy is increasingly offering a vibrant and promising socio-economic model worldwide. It is a transformative, critical, concrete and plural approach towards all socio-economic activities that promotes democracy at workplace and community levels, emancipatory relations, cultural diversity, social justice and environmentally safe and local/decentralised development, thus meeting the Agenda 2030 principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Why should SSE be included in IVET trainees' curricula?

A change in paradigm requires a change in consciousness, a new work mind-set and skills development. This is why education and training are a fundamental part of this process; especially programs as IVET, which are aimed at young people in the most delicate phase of their formation.

IVET is indeed designed to provide younger individuals with professional qualifications to assume an active role in the redefinition of the labour market, to create equal opportunities and to encourage cooperation.

Although SSE is nowadays hardly mentioned in training curricula, SSE and IVET have certain common aspects: development of key citizenship competences, attention to soft skills development (such as social and civic competences, initiative and entrepreneurship, awareness and cultural expression) and attention to peer to peer methodologies.

Conclusions

Social and Solidarity Economy can play a crucial role in the realisation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs through concrete social, institutional and technological innovations and practices.

Therefore, SSE.IVET supports the United Nations Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (TFSSE) in recognising the need to mobilise and bring together States, SSE organisations, networks and civil society into a worldwide movement meant to reassert social control - by prioritising social objectives over profit maximisation, through SSE as a vital form of economy that is focused on social protection and equality. Political representatives sharing these goals can help achieve them by adopting the following recommendations.

¹ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Romania.

At the European level

» Implement article 1 of the newly approved “European Pillar of Social Rights” promoted by the main EU institutions¹ through concrete policies that make SSE part of the application of the right to “quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning”; substantiate article 4B;

» Address SSE as an innovative and concrete element to be added to national educational programme; it ought to follow European standards and provide adequate resources to map existing experiences, test programmes and train teachers and trainers, in collaboration with SSE organisations and IVET providers - through the European Parliament Intergroup on “Social Economy, Social Economy Enterprises, Social Entrepreneurship and Third Sector”².

» Ensure the liaison between the European Parliament Intergroup, GECES and CEDEFOP, in close collaboration with SSE organisations and networks and other civil society actors.³

» Include SSE in the newly proposed Council “Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning”⁴ to encourage SSE in IVET schools through the partnership between SSE organisations and schools at local, national and European levels.

At the national level

» Build or strengthen a cooperative coordination mechanism among institutional and SSE actors to collaborate in the recognition of SSE skills, capacities and abilities as part of National Qualification Systems and promote their integration in the EQF.

» Take into account the European tendency to develop work-based learning with part-time schooling, add SSE in secondary schools and IVET curricula (including traineeships opportunities) in SSE organisations, in order to experience a more cooperative and socially oriented entrepreneurial environment.

» Recognise the importance of SSE in IVET curricula as a vector of skills to be developed by

youth, to find their vocational area, to experience collaborative forms of work, to relocate sustainable production-distribution chains and to improve local communities - thus preventing NEETs and the increase of unemployment and underemployment rates.

Within the national and local education systems

» Inform younger people of the existence of SSE and make them aware of the possibility of becoming actors and promoters, through self-managed entrepreneurial and professional experiences. The resulting work opportunities, created through the SSE approach, will favour both the community and the environment in which they live.

» Develop training for trainers on SSE principles, values and methodologies and coherent pedagogical approaches, moving away from frontal approach and involving trainees in educational relationship with the teachers and peer group dynamics.

» Promote SSE values and principles in mainstreaming IVET curricula through the recognition of credits for trainers who participate in training courses in SSE, educational events and conferences, organised in partnership with SSE actors.

Among national and local SSE actors

» Promote SSE career guidance courses for young people as an opportunity to get to know SSE values and experiences as an alternative social, economic and cultural model; they should include a series of activities, such as visits to social enterprises, volunteer programs, mentoring programs in SSE organisations, etc.



² Social Economy. Available online: <http://www.socialeconomy.eu.org/social-economy-intergroup>

³ European Commission. Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/social-economy/enterprises/expert-groups_it
https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/agencies/cedefop_en

⁴ European Commission (2018). Available online: <https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/recommendation-key-competences-lifelong-learning.pdf>