



## Project short description

This project aims to affirm the Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Europe through curricula innovation in Initial Vocational and Educational Training (IVET). Its main inspiring vision is a comprehensive training and professional development of younger generations, which integrates alternative socio-economic models and paradigms in their framework of ideas and attitudes.

The project **rationale** is based in two main assumptions:

(1) SSE as an alternative socio-economic model

The Social Solidarity Economy increasingly asserts itself as a vibrant and promising socio-economic model in the EU and in various parts of the world. The SSE is rooted in inclusive values and practices, and comprises organizations of the Third (citizen's) Sector, as social enterprises, social movements and citizens who develop alternatives to the multilayered crisis that we face today (greater inequality, lower levels of democracy, increased structural unemployment, loss of social cohesion, environmental challenges, forced migrations, dismantling of welfare states, etc.). The current dominant economic paradigm is no longer providing answers to the deep aspirations of the people and the planet, and so there is a call to a sustainable model that highlights local communities' social bounds and emancipatory relationships, on a reciprocity and solidarity basis.

(2) IVET as a tool for social change

A change in paradigm requires a change in consciousness. This is why education and training are a fundamental part of this process - and particularly IVET with its great potential to transform younger generations into citizens and professionals who are more knowledgeable and aware, as well as more able to deal with current societal challenges. These challenges call for an approach that evokes IVET, namely in upper secondary and non-tertiary levels, as a high quality choice on skills/vocational development and on transversal and general knowledge acquisition, to train highly skilled and educated young adults. In order to achieve this, IVET curricula need to be innovative in order to respond to contemporary labour market and social challenges.

In this context the partnership – with diversified expertise and similar concerns – wants to bring together the potentials of SSE and its reflections in IVET, creating a synergetic field to address the challenges and needs stated below.

## **Challenges/needs** addressed by the project:

- Contents regarding the SSE are mostly inexistent in IVET curricula in most European countries
- Modules regarding SSE are not included systematically as a transversal content in IVET of existing professional profiles
- Training courses on the social economy are increasing in the last years, but they are generally very specialized, with no reference to the solidarity economy, and lack a systematic vision for a critical transformation of the current economic system
- These training courses are often focused on individuals or organisations already working in or engaged with this field, specifically active professionals
- SSE is a promising but still largely unexplored subject of action, research and policy, and its concept is largely unknown, vague or strange to most people, professionals and decision makers

Past research and experience of partner organisations has revealed a number of weaknesses in available training and learning packages for the social economy: they relate to national/regional or even organisational frameworks and lack a European/international perspective; they tend to focus on special aspects of setting up/running/funding certain types of enterprises, lacking a holistic approach which reflects the overall social and economic framework in which these organisations operate; they operate in an assertive way given their geographical, cultural or administrative limitations and are accepted without critical debate, lacking a strategic policy to intervene in the political, cultural and economic environment. To overcome these weaknesses we need an integrated historical/cultural perspective and an effective collaborative approach to change economic paradigms. Moreover, people's geographical mobility in education, training and at labour market is now a reality that also requires an integrated European perspective on younger generations' knowledge and skills development. This is why affirming SSE through IVET curricula innovation can best be resolved by a European approach.

Given this context, the **objectives** of the project are the following:

1. Map the opportunities and constraints for affirming SSE in IVET curricula at European and national levels
2. Develop a common package of IVET training modules on SSE
3. Advocate for the inclusion of IVET training modules in IVET curricula at European and national levels

To comply with these objectives different **target groups** will be involved in the project:

- Local, national and European IVET providers delivering training in economics, management, finances and social subjects in the upper secondary and non-tertiary levels
- Local, national and European SSE organisations
- Policy and decision makers at national and European levels
- Local and national IVET trainees

## **Partnership and Funding**



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