

“Empowering the next generation of social enterprise scholars”

CA16206, managed by EMES – International Research Network

December 01, 2017 — December 31, 2021



**EMPOWER-SE**



# WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISES?

- Different types of “organizations which combine an entrepreneurial dynamic to provide services or goods with a primacy of social aims” (European Commission, 2015, 2016)
- “social enterprises contribute to smart growth by responding with social innovation to needs that have not yet been met; they create sustainable growth by taking into account their environmental impact and by their long-term vision; they are at the heart of inclusive growth due to their emphasis on people and social cohesion” (European Commission, 2011: 3)
- Enterprises for work integration of PWDs, NGOs that provide social services, cooperatives, etc.

# HOW WAS THIS COST ACTION DEVELOPED?

- Based on years long cooperation and networking of researchers of social economy and social enterprises from all around the world
- EMES initiated initiative in 2015, first application was highly evaluated, but did not win a grant in 2016.
- Renewed application accepted in 2017 and the project started in December 2017 and will last until 2021.
- The project builds synergy with other EMES projects, but also with different research projects of all project participants

# HOW DID SERBIA GET INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

- First mapping of social enterprises in Serbia done in cooperation with EMES experts within UNDP funded project in 2006.
- Researchers of the Institute for Sociological Research, University of Belgrade, prof dr Slobodan Cvejić and prof dr Marija Babović, led large survey of social enterprises in Serbia in 2007, prof Cvejic participated in expert team of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia which in 2013 conducted assessment of economic impact of social enterprises (one of 5 researches of the kind supported by EC DG Enterprises across the Europe)
- In both researches reduced EMES operational definition of SE was applied
- The Institute for Sociological Research participated in 2 more large international researches in the field of social economy, supported through FP7 Marie Currie scheme – exchange of researchers, PhD thesis, closing conference organized at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade in 2012.

# EMPOWER SE – MAIN PROJECT GOALS

- To answer the questions:
  - Which modes and practices of SE are embedded in different national contexts?
  - Which are their innovative practices in solving emerging social and ecological needs (unemployment, migrations, climate change, energy/food/water supply)?
  - What institutional support is needed to support SE activities?
- To reach an encompassing answer we have to overcome existing geographical, disciplinary, political, etc. fragmentation of knowledge about SE
- Action through 3 types of networking:
  - Geographic extension of the network of researchers
  - Extension of disciplinary perspective
  - Connecting different actors

# RESEARCH COORDINATION OBJECTIVES

1. Identifying and bridging the variety of SE conceptions and models in each national contexts thus reflecting the diversity of welfare regimes, and socio-economics contexts
2. Bridging different epistemological traditions (business, economics, sociology, political science, psychology, education, geography and other social sciences);
3. Gathering evidence and analysing the innovative contribution of SE in at least five key industries for the development of sustainable societies (migration, renewable energy and transport, health and social care, food supply chains, social finance, circular economy etc).
4. Equipping major non-research SE stakeholders with robust knowledge to understand the different models of SE and the institutional factors and organizational choices that shape these models

# CAPACITY BUILDING OBJECTIVES

1. Gather scholars from different disciplines and geographical backgrounds (66 proposers + scholars participating in the conferences and workshops).
2. Integrate researchers from COST inclusiveness target countries and young scholars into the international SE research community with the support of established scholars (35 Early Career researchers + young scholars participating in conferences and workshops).
3. Train and strengthen a pluridisciplinary community of PhD students in the field of SE particularly, from COST inclusiveness target countries (two training schools gathering at least 70 PhD students + special sessions dedicated to PhD in the conferences and workshops).
4. Foster new comparative research proposals, joint publications (two books, three special journal issues) and mobility actions (at least 15 Short-Term Scientific Missions) for enhancing comparative International research projects on SE.

# EXPECTED IMPACT

- **Scientific** – through working groups, academic conferences, scientific publications, training schools and short term scientific missions
  - Forming the network of excellence, applications for Horizon 2020
- **Social-economic impact** – through ‘EMPOWER SE talks’ with policy makers and practitioners in SE area, through sessions in 2 conferences to which EU level policy makers will be invited, as well as through ‘light form’ products which will bring the topic closer to newcomers to the field of SE



# PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

- Working group 1: ***Foundations***, M1-M24; to detect and connect different conceptions and model of SE – 2 scientific seminars per year
- Working group 2: ***Industries and impact***, M12-M48; to collect and analyse evidence on innovative contributions to SE in 5 industries – 2 scientific seminars per year
- Working group 3: ***Eco systems***, M24-M28; To equip major SE stakeholders with robust knowledge to understand how the different elements of the eco-system interact and impact
- Working group 4: Education and dissemination, M1-M48; To produce concrete outputs for transfer of knowledge and raising of awareness

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

- Management Committee Meeting (MCM 1) – November 2017, Brussels
- Management Committee Meeting (MCM 2) – February 2018, Lisbon
- WG1 conference - February 2018, Lisbon
- Prepared and presented framework papers for preparation of national reports on SEs
- Extended list of participating countries, now over 40: 28 EU members, 5 EU accession countries (SRB, MK, MNG, BIH, TUR), 6 near neighbor countries (Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Russia, Morocco, Lebanon), 3 international partner countries (Australia, Brazil i USA)
- One meeting with national actors held (meeting of the Coalition for Development of Social Entrepreneurship)
- Continued activities on development of eco-system
- One young researcher involved