



FUTURE OF WORK

SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY ACADEMY: “THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE FUTURE OF WORK”

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MADRID, SPAIN

Information Note



THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE FUTURE OF WORK

The recent global crises that continue to affect countries and people around the world compel us to pay attention to the need for more inclusive and sustainable development patterns. A growing recognition of problems such as unemployment, precarious employment, climate change and inequality forces us to rethink conventional approaches to growth and distribution.

The 2030 Agenda approved by the United Nations in 2015 comprises all these issues. “Transforming Our World” is the motto of this ambitious international agenda, which sets out the objectives of the international community to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable and inclusive development in the period 2016-2030.

The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 ambitious targets that aim to solve the most significant problems the world population is facing. The Agenda places a strong emphasis on environmental protection and seeks to improve well-being, quality of life and freedom.

The 2030 Agenda and the Future of Work are topics that occupy a central place in the agendas of governments and organizations generating wealth and prosperity in different countries. This is why the ILO, the Spanish Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security and the Spanish Business Confederation of Social Economy (CEPES) are organizing this session of the Social and Solidarity Economy Academy in Madrid. It is an opportunity for representatives of countries from around the world to exchange experience and methodologies relating to the Social and Solidarity Economy, with emphasis on the future of work.

The 2015 Report of the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) “The Future of Work We Want: A Global Dialogue” indicates that, given current demographic trends, 40 million people will be entering the labour market each year, and that 600 million new jobs will have to be created by 2030. The service sector is likely to create most of these jobs. Moreover, workers will have to sustain an increasing number of elderly people, due to the ageing of the world population.

The progressive deterioration of the quality of jobs is a related concern. While the informal economy has long been a serious problem in developing countries, the ILO report points out that this phenomenon is also present and growing in industrialized countries. The insufficient quantity and poor quality of work are not only the effect of recurring economic crises but also of long-term structural factors, linked to both the demand and supply of goods and services.

The effects of technological innovation, which is progressing at a steady pace, can already be observed in the increased level of automation at many companies, with the consequent replacement of human labour. Besides, as the document “Social and Solidarity Economy and The Future of Work” (ILO 2017) points out, due to changes in

consumption patterns and demographic trends, services that were formerly provided by the public sector are today subject to budgetary restrictions.

The multiple dimensions of these employment challenges, together with problems related to exclusion, inequality, poverty and environmental sustainability, explain the widespread and growing interest of policy-makers in the Social Economy. This phenomenon has emerged in both industrialized and developing countries as civil society has organized itself to address the needs of large sectors of the population whose needs are not being met by traditional markets or by the State. It is against this backdrop that, on the occasion of its centenary in 2019, the ILO approved a Resolution on the Future of Work, in which it explicitly recognizes the role of the Social Economy as one of the protagonists in addressing some of these challenges.

The Social Economy encompasses cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, voluntary associations, foundations and other business models that are people-centric, call for higher levels of solidarity and commitment, and promote entrepreneurship. Present in all economic sectors and comprising organizations of different sizes, the Social and Solidarity Economy pursues both economic and social goals, fostering solidarity, social cohesion and local development. According to the United Nations, the Social Economy accounts for 7 per cent of global GDP.

Recognized by governments, communities and international institutions, the Social Economy plays a valuable role in creating jobs and maintaining local economies, avoiding relocation and favouring the redistribution of wealth. Social Economy enterprises contribute to economic recovery in periods of crisis. They reinvest surpluses to modernize and make organizations more competitive, equitably share the wealth that is generated, and therefore contribute to creating a fairer society that provides better opportunities for all people. Since the 1980s, similar concepts have been developed locally and regionally in different parts of the world, but recently the international community has gradually reconnected with the Social Economy as a pathway to inclusive and sustainable development.

As an expression of this trend, in 2013 the UN *Inter-Agency Task Force on the Social and Solidarity Economy* was created as to synchronize the efforts of 19 United Nations agencies, the OECD, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations. Within the United Nations system, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been a pioneer in promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy. The very constitution of the ILO states that “universal and lasting peace can only be established if it is based on social justice”. This position was reinforced by a Recommendation on Cooperatives adopted in 2002.

Within the European Union, there has been significant progress in recent years in putting the Social Economy on the political agenda, reflecting a greater commitment on the part of the Community institutions and EU governments. The EU Advisory Report on “The promotion of the Social Economy as a key driver of economic and social development in Europe” was approved in December 2015 by the 28 Ministers of Employment and the Presidency.

The European Council stated that “the Social Economy contributes (...) to the achievement of several key objectives of the EU, namely: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, social cohesion, social innovation, local and regional development and environmental protection. It also constitutes an important tool that contributes to guarantee the well-being of people. Furthermore, the Social Economy is a sector that has weathered the economic crisis a lot better than other sectors and its role is increasingly recognized at European level”. This report marked a significant turning point for the European Commission, and the Member States of the European Union are now committed to the development and promotion of the Social Economy in their countries. In the European Union as a whole, the Social Economy is represented by 2.8 million companies (10 per cent of all companies in Europe), which employ 13.6 million people and represent 8 per cent of the EU's GDP.

Moreover, in recent years the ILO has been promoting regional and interregional knowledge-sharing on the SSE and the construction of global networks through its capacity-building and South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiatives. Among these efforts, the ILO Academy on Social and Solidarity Economy has emerged as a catalyst for innovative initiatives supporting the SSE.

Following the programme proposed by the ILO Tripartite Conference on Social Economy held in Johannesburg in October 2009, a high-level capacity-building programme was launched in conjunction with the International Training Centre of the ILO. The first edition of the SSE Academy took place in Turin (Italy) in 2010, followed by sessions in Montreal (Canada) in 2011, Agadir (Morocco) in 2013, Campinas (Brazil) in 2014, Johannesburg (South Africa) and Puebla (Mexico) in 2015, San José (Costa Rica) in 2016, Seoul (Korea) and Luxembourg City (Luxembourg) in 2017, and Turin (Italy) in June 2019.

Since 2012, the ILO has also encouraged the creation of a virtual knowledge-sharing community with the launch of a virtual interactive open space called “Collective Brain”. This multilingual space allows participants and former participants of the Academies to keep in touch, and exchange and deepen their knowledge of the Social Economy.

The aforementioned trends have attracted the attention of policy-makers, with beneficial effects for the organizations and companies that shape the Social Economy. These SSE enterprises contribute intangible values to society and deserve to be supported by all political forces active in European governments and international institutions.

Since the 1990s, these organizations and companies, which are present in all economic sectors, have been offering innovative solutions to social problems, and have demonstrated a capacity to face the challenges posed by current circumstances. For example, they have contributed to the creation of new forms of employment that give workers greater power to organize and lower the costs of production, often involving volunteers and the beneficiaries of the services they provide. At the same time, Social Economy businesses have created a more deeply rooted economy and have promoted the redistribution of the benefits of productive activity. The contribution

of Social Economy companies in promoting decent work (ILO, 2011) is demonstrated by their history, as in the case of Spain, where, even without the existence of favourable ecosystems, they have been established as innovative institutional structures.

With contributions from governments, social actors and Social Economy entities, as well as civil society, this conference will provide plenty of material to feed the debate on the Future of Work and the contribution that the Social Economy can make in this area.

THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN SPAIN

At the European level, Spain has played an important role in promoting the Social Economy in recent decades. In 2011, it passed a Social Economy Law guaranteeing the implementation of public policies to enhance Social Economy companies, such as the recent and pioneering Spanish Social Economy Strategy 2017-2020. A key player in the Spanish SSE process continues to be the Spanish Business Confederation of Social Economy (CEPES), which, through its 25 partners, represents the interests of more than 42,000 companies, accounting for more than 2,100,000 jobs and 10 per cent of Spanish GDP.

In May 2017, the CEPES, in partnership with the Spanish Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security and Social Economy Europe, organized the conference “The Social Economy, a business model for the future of the European Union”. The conclusions of this conference, signed by the governments of Spain, Luxembourg, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Malta, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Sweden, affirm, among other things, that the universal values of the Social Economy actively contribute to social cohesion and, therefore, to innovative, intelligent, sustainable growth and integration, in addition to the creation of quality employment.

In this current initiative, the ILO is working with the Spanish Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Security and the Spanish Business Confederation of Social Economy (CEPES), a key player in the Spanish SSE institutionalization process.

WHO IS IT AIMED AT?

The Academy is addressed to:

- Those responsible for formulating government policies
- Social partners (workers ‘and employers’ organizations)
- Social Economy professionals (leaders and directors of social economy organizations)
- Promoters of the Social Economy (development partners, foundations, Social Economy networks)
- Researchers and academics wanting to gain a practical perspective on the application of the Social and Solidarity Economy in different regions
- Professionals interested in the Social Economy
- Graduate students specialized in Social Economy

ACADEMY OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the Academy will be to illustrate and clarify the role played by the Social Economy in the economies of the various countries and its contribution to the future of work, particularly in the context of intense economic and social transformation due to the penetration and generalization of new technologies.

At the end of the academy, the participants will:

- Have a better understanding of innovative SSE policies and practices, particularly in relation to the future of work;
- Be familiar with a large number of Social Economy experiences, strategies and tools, including examples of South-South and Triangular Cooperation, enabling them to better face the challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities, that characterize the dynamics of the world of work;
- Become part of an international network of policy-makers and professionals working in and for the Social Economy.

CONTENTS

The conference will cover the following issues and themes:

- The current context and the world of work: data and trends. How should we react to the impact of the fourth industrial revolution (block chain, big data, etc.) on the labour market, and how can the Social Economy create stable, high-quality work?
- Ecosystems and public policies favourable to the Social Economy. What elements and actors are needed to create an ecosystem favourable to the Social Economy? What examples are there of good practices and innovative experiences at the international and national levels? What public policies are needed to help create jobs in Social Economy companies, and what role can the social partners play?
- Innovative models of production and consumption. Analysis of the Circular Economy boom, new consumption habits and their social and environmental impact. Legal and fiscal reforms to enhance these new market niches, aligned with the SDGs.
- The Social Economy and social cohesion. In addition to creating jobs in line with local needs and realities, the Social Economy can be an instrument for increasing social inclusion, particularly in the integration of vulnerable groups (women, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, etc.).
- The Social Economy and youth: new opportunities for the future of work. What sectors of the economy offer opportunities for young people interested in a more social and solidary economy?
- The Social Economy and education. It is a priority for countries to analyse what changes are required in their education systems to guarantee the necessary skills and to generate a synergy between the education system and new market sectors and trends.

- The Social Economy and the SDGs. Analysis and exchange of international good practices, showing how Social Economy companies can promote the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Measuring impacts.

METHODOLOGY

The ILO Academy of Social and Solidarity Economy lasts a week. Its flexible and interactive dynamics ensure an enriching experience for both experts and those approaching the subject for the first time.

Participants in previous editions of the Academy have greatly valued the Academy's approach, which facilitates the assimilation and deepening of knowledge, and creates a spontaneous environment in which it is easy to establish links and build relationships.

The Academy will include interactive plenary sessions and a number of optional sessions. You can choose between different topics, depending on your professional interest. The elective courses will provide the opportunity to exchange knowledge, discuss concrete applications of the Solidarity Economy in inclusive and sustainable development at the national, regional and local levels, and learn how to conduct investigations and projects, and make decisions for the future.

A key aspect of the Academy will be *study visits*, during which participants will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with some interesting experiments and with best practices in the Social and Solidarity Economy in Spain.

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS:

PLACE AND DATES

Madrid, Spain, October 14-18, 2019

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

This event has a limited number of places for both Spanish and international candidates.

ENROLMENT AND REGISTRATION

To enrol in the Academy, please register online at <https://oarf2.itcilo.org/STN/A9512650/en>

CONTACTS

For more information, please write directly to socialeconomy@itcilo.org



Madrid, Headquarter of the Social and Solidarity Economy Academy

INFO

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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