

Ariadne Project

Country Specificities Chart – Belgian Comments

Euricse – WP 4

1. Why this chart?

One of the objectives of WP 4 is to create training modules to be used in various countries - either as standalone trainings or inserted into existing trainings. The purpose of this chart is to highlight the similarities across countries, yet also recognize the specificities of the social economy in each European country.

The chart below was developed by Euricse, with scientific supervision from Carlo Borzaga and the Euricse research area. The aim is to define the social economy - the sectors, the actors, and the context - and evaluate its development. The starting point for the development and use of the chart is the EMES definition of social enterprises, meaning enterprises that produce goods and services, as defined at the last Ariadne partners meeting in Liege.

2. Purpose of the chart:

These topics are intended to be part of the introductory training we are developing and modules for further study. When combined with the competency model developed in WP3, it will cover topics pertaining to management in the social economy from a theoretical/disciplinary perspective as well as a practitioner/managerial perspective. We have designed it to be flexible in terms of length of the training course, in the sense that it can be used as an overview or instructors can go into more depth on each topic. It also brings together the commonalities across Europe, but leaves room for specific country contexts.

3. Feedback from partners:

The review and confirmation of this chart from all the Ariadne partners is a necessary step for completing WP4. We ask that you read the chart and think about how it could be discussed and responded to in trainings in your country. Please tell us the following:

- a) Are all the necessary topics covered or is there something missing?
- b) Are the topics clear and understandable?
- c) Is there something you would not be able to respond to in your country?
- d) Is there something that is more important to highlight or something that is not relevant in your context?

4. Next steps between now and September Ariadne Partners meeting:

- a) Collect feedback from this chart from all partners by the end of August 2011
- b) Euricse will summarize the comments and revise the chart (early September 2011)
- c) We will then integrate it with the competency model (the revised version from Liege, post focus groups)
- d) During the September partner meeting Euricse will present a draft training model for discussion
- e) From September-December 2011 the training model will be refined and completed, taking into consideration the other variables discussed at Liege (target, methodology, format, etc.).

<p>1. Specific characteristics</p>	<p>Definition of social economy in your country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization types (cooperatives, mutuels, associations, etc.) • Attention to the needs of the community and members (prioritizing of this versus economic results/profit; multistakeholder dimension) • Democratic decision-making process (level of involvement; multistakeholders) • Sectors of operation today (quantitative and qualitative data) <p>Historical evolution/pioneers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who/how many were they • In what sectors • Cultural/political context that favoured or obstructed the birth and evolution • Was it a bottom up or top down process <p><i>In Belgium, the history is much more diversified than how it appears. Indeed, the history is very specific to the sector in which the social enterprise operates → It would be better to analyze it by sector of activities, by industries as the institutionalization process are different.</i></p> <p>Do national laws or other regulations exist that regulate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/sector • Legal structure • Taxes/fiscal elements and supportive policies • Relationship with public authority for delivery of services (outsourcing, vouchers, etc) → <i>I don't really get the difference between this point and 2.a (relationship with public authority)</i> • Other <p><i>Same comments than for the historical evolution</i></p>
<p>2. Positioning/role in socio-economic system</p>	<p>Relationship with public authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substitution • collaboration • Advocacy/lobby • No relationship/antagonism <p><i>If you speak about the market failure, it seems important to speak about the failure of the public authorities.</i></p> <p>Relationship with markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour market (selection of workers and volunteers) • Financial market (ability to attract resources, fee-for service, donations, contracts, etc) • Goods and services market (competition or collaboration with for-profit enterprises/filling gap where there's market failure) • Distributive function (relationship with clients, price discrimination) <p><i>Something around the access of social enterprises to loans and the ability to fetch financing in capital should be said. And again, in Belgium, the answer is different according to the sector of activities.</i></p> <p>Relationship with networks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With similar organizations to exchange/develop knowledge, information, best-practices, solutions, etc. • Representative organizations (political/lobby and/or union) • 2nd level organizations (consortia and other forms of business coordination) <p><i>In some sectors, coordination is very well organized but, in Belgium, it is not the case for all the sectors (such as the cultural aspects). So, again, it depends on the sectors.</i></p>
<p>3. Future prospects</p>	<p>Managerial dimension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of professional development/training of managers, not just degree held • Internal policies related to staff development (not just for managers, but capacity growth for all staff) • Long-term planning and sustainable growth capacity for organization and staff development <p><i>Very interesting and important but we do not have all those information in Belgium. A specific investigation is necessary.</i></p>

	<p>Prospects for innovation and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of innovation (product, market, process, organizational, service) • Who's pushing for the innovation (the organization itself, market demand, public authority, community, etc) • Awareness and potential of innovation capacity of the organizational form (since social enterprise is innovative in and of itself) <p><i>Same comments than for the managerial dimension</i></p> <hr/> <p>European prospects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of EU regulations, policies, funding opportunities regarding social economy • Best-practices across Europe – know and compare to inform enterprise in your country
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