

## *Be part of the **Universse 2017***

### *Democratizing Economy, Emancipating Society, Empowering Change*

The 4th European Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) Congress will take place in Agricultural University of Athens ( [map](#)) on the 9/10/11th of June.

Cooperatives, grassroot initiatives, SSE organizations, groups and people that work to promote and advance SSE from all over Europe will meet for the event.

During the 3day Congress, we are going to have the opportunity to discuss and exchange ideas, experiences, expertise and common strategies around SSE. We consider SSE to be a dynamic space that spreads all over Europe, in which people organize their social and economic activity in many different ways.

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This event is a great opportunity to enhance SSE's visibility in Greece and to build strong connections amongst people, groups and coops on a European level.

We are also happy to announce that the 6th General Assembly of Ripess EU <http://www.ripess.eu/> will be held in Athens as well, as part of the Congress.

### ***Call for ideas***

While the organization team works for the success of this congress, we are looking forward to receive your ideas regarding the following themes that we prioritize to discuss during the 3day Congress.

The procedure will be the following:

Every group, network or individual that is interested in participating on the process of formulating the program, could send ideas according to the following axes, until the new deadline (27/03/2017) through our email: **[call@universse2017.org](mailto:call@universse2017.org)**

Proposed axes:

#### **1. Concepts, forms and fields of social solidarity economy and cooperativism**

The universe of S.S.E is characterized by a vast range of operations such as informal solidarity groups and volunteers, exchange networks, alternative currencies, cooperatives, networks of social cooperatives, recovered factories and enterprises and social enterprises that work in various sectors of the economy such as food , education, trade, new technologies, alternative financing, communication, tourism and more.

Horizontal management, role distribution, labor relations, conflict management, social and economic sustainability, networking, marketing strategies, social impact and decision making process are some of the challenges that we want to discuss! And of course some questions: Social Economy? Solidarity Economy? Cooperative Economy? Social Entrepreneurship? What about Sharing Economy?

## **2. Responsible consumption, production and climate change**

The globalized neo-liberal system seeks to maximize shareholder profits to the detriment of human and planetary resources, leading to climate change and severe social damage. The broad vision of solidarity economy is based on sustainability and this implies the relocalisation of production and consumption (food, renewable energies, goods, services, culture...) as specified in Sustainable Development Goal 12. Solidarity economy, by implementing this approach (re)builds solidarity at all levels, empowers citizens to create and implement alternatives in direction of food sovereignty, reconnects rural and urban society, and significantly contributes to fighting climate change (SDG 13).

## **3. Practices of SSE on social integration with a special focus on refugees issues**

Crisis management or empowerment policies for social groups experiencing exclusion? Can SSE transform the design and implementation of social policy in the direction of solidarity? How is "social work" affected in the context of crisis and what does the mutual help model imply? Bright examples of social solidarity initiatives towards refugees...

## **4. Social innovation: Research, technology, education and tools for SSE**

A fundamental part of the social innovation occurring in the solidarity economy is its pedagogic character. Pedagogic in the ways that education-related movements practice teaching and learning and, more importantly, in the way that part take in a movement with transformational impact on the personal, societal and political levels.

This session would like to explore how social innovation and knowledge production and sharing is practiced in the SSE: How assemblies act as an educational method and how novel pedagogic methods incorporate democracy as educational principle? What is the role of technology for the capturing and reproduction of the manifested social innovation and how the knowledge produced on the ground can be systematised and distributed? What new forms of research and educational institutions are bred by a practice based in solidarity and collective well-being in relation to the public, private and third sectors?

## **5. Commons: Approaches and practices on digital, natural, urban, cultural common goods**

The movements for the defense, recuperation and development of Commons, consist a growing wave of practices of mutuality and a proposal of a social and

economic model of organization beyond the state and/or market bipolarity. This thematic aims to facilitate the exchange of experiences and self-management of Commons by the communities of their users in various fields – from the natural resources (water, land, food, energy etc.) to digital commons and from the urban space to knowledge production. Moreover, it hopes to enrich the discussion that already has started around the conception of institutional and legal frameworks for the establishment of Commons, in the prospect of radical social transformations.

## **6. Public policies ( local, national, European level) promoting SSE: From whom, for who, what for.**

Recently, a series of framework laws have been introduced in various countries of Europe (and not only Europe) with the intention to recognize Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), to regulate a number of issues related to the respective entities belonging to the universe of SSE, to define the way through which the state at its various levels (central, regional, local) interacts with SSE.

To what extent the new public policies enable or restrain the transformative potential of SSE? Are the necessary conditions for the creation of a public space between SSE and the state assured? Are there any examples of local governance with a radical direction? How are local communities involved with the design and implementation of policies affecting their everyday life?

## **7. Open space**

We invite ideas indicating the thematic area you refer to and the format of the meeting you propose (workshop, panel discussion, etc.). After the new deadline (27/03/2017), the organizational team will assess all proposals and arrange them in clusters. Within these clusters we will make an effort to include as many ideas sent as possible.

The main intention is to organize the Congress along with the main axes (plus the free zone area) in order to enable a common vision while allowing for the exchange of different perspectives and experiences.

Check for updates and contact us.

Organizational Team contact info:

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