



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Report of Regional Conference

by Sergio Campanella

Gela, March 24th, 2011

"Don Puglisi" Hall at the Volunteering House of Gela





EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Regional Conference of Gela



Time: 24th March 2011 (9:30-13:30)

Place: "Don Puglisi" Hall at the Volunteering House of Gela, Ossidiana Street, Gela, Italy



Opening

Project Lead expert Sergio Campanella welcomed all participants to the seminar and gave the floor to Deputy Mayor Mr. Fortunato Ferracane from the City of Gela.



Deputy Mayor Fortunato Ferracane (Social affairs)

Mr. Ferracane opened the seminar and spoke about the importance of a transnational project like Urban N.O.S.E. as a decisive element to strengthen EU-wide exchange of best experiences, practices and case studies, providing all



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



the partnership with a fundamental added value able to allow awareness and sustainable planning on the social economy.



The Deputy Mayor outlined two important elements as essential results of this transnational exchange: the work made at LSG level during three years of meetings, exchanges and sharing of the city social strategy; and the main output coming from all the work done so far, the city LAP, which perfectly resumes the city social strategy along with its objectives, actions, expected results, timing and financing: a precious tool allowing the city to see at its future with clarity and awareness.

And just to show to other cities' representatives in the region which have been the aim, scope and actions carried out by Gela in this project, he gives the floor to the project Lead expert, Mr. Sergio Campanella.





EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Towards an urban economic system of social incubators: the Urban N.O.S.E thematic network

Dr. Sergio Campanella, Lead Expert, URBAN N.O.S.E



Dr. Sergio Campanella told the audience about the URBACT II programme and the projects goals and aims. He stressed the importance of the Urban N.O.S.E. thematic network and presented its contents, along with its Local Action Plans and reminded the participants that the project provides a regional tool to support the social enterprises, especially in the start-up phase. He gave examples from the partner regions and stressed the importance of have involved all the possible interest groups into the Local Support Groups, which have all worked to develop and validate the Local Action Plans, identify and/or validate project inputs or outputs such as case studies, take part in exchange activities through meetings and on-line contacts, meet regularly, comment on final outputs and test pilot recommendations through the Local Action Plan, act as lobby for changes, organize local dissemination events and finally obtain the media coverage.





EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Dr. Campanella also spoke about the importance of networking both at vertical and horizontal levels, underlining how fundamental could be strengthening the already existing collaborations between Gela and its neighbouring cities: it could constitute a real added value, also useful for a better working of the social incubator in progress, as it would optimise its ray of action by spreading its activities for a users' basin affecting a wider territory than the only Gela's one. It is only question of improving co-operations already running, not only in social affairs, but also in economic, cultural and environmental matters, so valorising both virtual and physical services offered by the incubator for a wider population sharing similar problems and counting similar kinds of disadvantaged categories, among which those ones of unemployed youngsters and women. He closed his intervention with the hope to stimulate a wide debate upon the question.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



The Urban N.O.S.E. experience for the city of Gela

Gela LSG Spokesman, Prof. Luciano Vullo



Prof. Vullo made an introduction about the 'collapse of safety and challenges for social enterprises'. He explained that the road on which letting walk the social economy should take note of two indisputable facts:

1. The collapse of the security resulting from the downsizing of the welfare state (Welfare),
2. The increase in overall wealth.

Prof. Vullo was keen to stress the original features that distinguish the critical situation we are facing and that is commonly described in terms of:

1. General economic malaise
2. Existential individual precariousness

He paused to explain the entropic character of a crisis he described with reference to the phenomenon of globalisation, of hyper-technologisation and the new international division of the labour market. The security is no longer a metaphysical problem which has been generated by the State through various forms of social contract. Today the State, who was born to ensure safety (*sine cura*), records such a drift that is not possible to hope for any recovery. The global financial market imposes its *lex mercatoria*, which tends to escape the control of any institution.

So, all the rules, whatever the category they belong (political, civil, ethical, religious, ...) seem to have liquefied. So no promises as the need to explore and restore the lost time but, instead, to create a new meaning for existence.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Prof. Vullo, to this regard, praised the role to be played by what he called the prophetic minorities who, for various reasons, should operate in local situations to experience new forms of aggregation. These, responding to the liquefaction of the constraints, must be able to create new relationships of solidarity and civic development.



Since it will be physically impossible to hold on to the state-redistributor of wealth and resources and since only those categories most guaranteed with no sacrifice can save themselves in the private insurance system, Prof. Vullo has reiterated the need to unleash the imagination. Not in abstract and romantic terms. Specifically, considering that the richness is there, but it is also very unevenly distributed.

He alluded to the fact that we are now in a position to rely not so much materials but ways and technologies that produce resources. Starting with the energy resources that can do without the oil, like natural gas and biomass, using wind, solar radiation, the strength of the movement of the sea waves... That is, knowledge and human intelligence. Goods which, although individually acquired endowments, are referred to the history, civilization, the common heritage of mankind.

So, the act of liberation of the imagination must be translated locally into using a kind of heritage, the knowledge, that belongs to all of us. In this regard, Prof. Vullo has indicated its view that some roads may be covered by the social enterprise in Gela.

The road to the second level of health. It is a matter of fact that the Italian State and the Sicilian Region can no longer ensure the general health care. According to the current difficulties of public accounts, the institutions responsible for health service can provide the essential measures and urgency. Services remain outside the second level. Besides, graduates from



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Italian universities are young doctors who have no longer public spaces where to exercise their profession. After that the families of origin have made huge investments in studies to support their children until their thirties (and more), the young medical graduates will (when things go well!) settle for a job in a private doctor's ambulatory (or elsewhere) for less than one thousand euro per month. All this in spite of the costs of private and public health that already marginalises the poor who risk being excluded from services in the near future because they lack the resources with which to buy them. Prof. Vullo, therefore, suggested the creation of social enterprises as <<associated medical cabinets>> that, by using community resources and making arrangements with local authorities (or their associations), also manage to provide the service to candidates to exclusion and to leave themselves from the condition of exploitation.



Prof. Vullo asked those present, especially young students, to take account of all health services that are requested by the modern society that moves so many machines and so little people. So, for example, obesity (which is also growing in the Mediterranean societies), and that of sedentary-related disease. Preventable with the practice of the gym, that is no longer a luxury for bodybuilding fanatics. Obviously it is impossible that the public health service offers gym to all children and people who need them. Like many psychological diseases could be followed by psycho-therapists at less prohibitive costs if you should develop social enterprises in an area with a public, especially youth, who needs so much since neither the family nor the school are able themselves to assist in the growth of new generations.



Another area in which to engage social enterprises is, as suggested by Prof. Vullo, that of access to food. Speaking of which, he noted that the logics of <<food banks>> are collapsing. Italian municipalities, moreover, have lately been deprived of those regional and government transfers with which they have contributed to the delivery of food to the needy through food banks. At a time when the number of needy people has increased and continues to grow, municipalities are unable to cope with the situation. Prof. Vullo has proposed changing the logic to the banks and to turn them into social companies as cooking centres. These, offering services for families who have little time and who refuse to resort to fast food, they could, using volunteers and saving on purchases of raw materials, practice the delivery of meals to the needy people.

Another sector which takes a fresh look and can offer high quality integrated services, according to Prof. Vullo, is that of those of persons with disabilities, as well as that of children and the elderly.

Prof. Vullo asked those present to reflect on the changes taking place in cities. The way in which they propose to young people and not just for their enjoyment of leisure. A strong appeal Prof. Vullo made in highlighting the "city" life nowadays takes place mainly in the evening and night hours. When it seems that the city is of none. Since it is not desirable that cities be militarised in the night with public or private patrols, the public should, in cooperation with municipalities, giving rise to aggregation initiatives in the cultural, animation, sports, leisure and entertainment areas with social enterprises prepared to this end and also developing local and sustainable tourism actions.

According to Prof. Vullo, the change must start from the activation of new forms of <<care>> when the present society, at the mercy of cynical forms



of mercantilism, seems to have no interest in the relationship with others and with nature. In this regard, Prof. Vullo, starting towards the end, he hoped that social enterprises should take charge of forming a new ruling class. The processes of change are too rapid and complex. The replacement of the ruling classes was assigned in the past to processes thought as <<natural>>, almost hereditary. Even within the logic of conflict parents/children, or adults/youngsters.



What today is being established (in fact is already in place) is a complex society but without parents and then children, without state and without citizens, without teachers and without students. A society that is horizontal, mystifying ancient ways of life that always somehow have enhanced the vertical direction or in religious or in secular sense. Meritocracy in which mention is made today is only a surrogate that only the vacuum and the cult of the charismatic leaders can justify. Thinking of a Superior School for the vocational training of the new ruling class may well be another kind of social enterprise to be taken into account.



Cooperation as employers' organization for social economy

Dr. Marcella Falzone Chairman Sicily Committee on Women Confederation of cooperatives

The Confederation of Italian Cooperatives (Confcooperative)

The Confederation of Italian Cooperatives, of which the short name is Confcooperative, is the main organization, legally recognized, representation, assistance and protection of the cooperative movement and of the social enterprises. It is inspired by the cooperative principles, set and regularly updated by the 'ICA (International Cooperative Alliance)' and, because of the social function constitutionally recognized (Article 45) for cooperation, promotes the development, growth and spread through the more appropriate actions, from time to time.

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their economic needs, social and cultural aspirations through the creation of a company jointly owned, democratically controlled. Cooperatives are based on the values of self-sufficiency, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. Faithful to the spirit of its founders, members of cooperatives adhere to the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and altruism. The co-operative principles: voluntary and open membership, democratic control by their members, members' economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, cooperation among cooperatives, commitment to the community are guidelines by which cooperatives put into practice their values. Article 1 of the Statute also recognizes that the action of



Confcooperative relates to the principles and traditions of the Church's social doctrine.

Confcooperative has a widespread presence throughout the country, with an organization that is divided horizontally into: 22 Regional Unions, 81 Provincial Unions, 7 Interprovincial Unions. Confcooperative sectoral structure is divided in 9 national associations and the Mutuals Secretariat.

Confcooperative, in addition to being present throughout the territory through the regional, provincial and interprovincial offices, has a large network of structures, with different tasks, have the role of providing support and services to member cooperatives and or to the same federal government in its various organizations. They consist of: national operational structures (development fund) center, industry associations and national structures and training agencies.



The National Federations

Confcooperative is divided into 9 industry-wide national federations representing the members for the reference point for all issues related to specific sectors, rather than cooperation in general. National Federations, which can in turn be divided into territorial level federations, are also the natural "place" in which are discussed the specific issues related to the various sectors of activities that, within each Federation, see cooperatives as protagonist: Fedagri, Federasse, Federabitazione, Federconsumatori, Federcoopescas, Federculture Sport Tourism, Federlavoro and Services, Federsolidarietà Federation Health. In particular, Federsolidarietà is the organization of political and union representation of social cooperatives, mutuals and social enterprises belonging to Confcooperative.



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



Federsolidarietà institutionally represents their associated and assists at the union, legal and legislative, technical and economic levels. Care is also the promotion and strengthening of institutions participating through a complex and widespread consortium system. Federsolidarietà has developed a democratic, participatory and multistakeholder identity of Social cooperation pursuing a social business plan for and with the territory, grounded in the principles of the Code of Ethics. The member cooperatives operate in all areas of social, health and education and in many business areas, enabling the way to working. Federsolidarietà organizes volunteer civilian service to offer young people an educational experience aimed at sharing the ideals of equality and active citizenship.

The system

The widespread presence - divided into 20 federations and 70 regional federations and provincial areas - make Federsolidarietà the most important organization representing the political union of social cooperation in Italy. Today there is a cooperative of Federsolidarietà every 11,200 inhabitants, and their work ranges in the social sectors, health and education and innovative way to working in many productive activities of goods and services. Among the social cooperatives participating 67% working in the social health and education and 33% entering employment for disadvantaged people. Federsolidarietà, in fact, represents about 55% of total employment of social cooperation in Italy and almost 13% of the entire nonprofit sector. Not only that. The social associations of the Federation have an ability to work integration of disabled persons as many as 25 times higher than the rest of the economy.

The context

In the last 20 years the social cooperation (social enterprise) is a real support for the territorial welfare. In the coming decades the challenge will be to grow in an environment where the needs increase and the resources (public financing) are reduced.



The lucrative company has employed as main goal to maximize profits. It is therefore essential to increase efficiency in production processes to be selected and rewarded by the market.

The nonprofit company has a core objective of subsidiarity, involvement and participation. The feeling that may result is that subjecting the economic aims to the social ones you can create inefficiencies within the company.



These have a double impact:

Firstly

- a) within the small enterprise, the inefficiencies are amplified and become unsustainable in the development phase to larger dimensions,
- b) because the profit is not the main objective, there is a risk that any shortcomings can be justified inside the enterprise itself, slowing and hampering the improvement of organization.

Secondly

- c) Any failures are perceived negatively outside (from clients or potential clients) with serious damage to image and competitiveness.

A possible solution is to pursue balanced economic and management methods that are appropriate means to realize the business object. So, to grow in quality, commitment and responsibility being aware that the resources of the public finances are in decline. Undertaking, in line with the reform of public services of economic importance (with the participation of the private partner), and activities of public utility that can self-sustain the economic point of view: the management of IIS, renewable energy (eg, photovoltaic and biomass data collection, transmission, storage and maintenance facilities), facility management in PA, cleaning, waste



collection, property maintenance, management, public transport, cemetery services, public parks, etc.

As published on the green paper by Federsolidarietà - Confcooperative (document containing an analysis on issues relating to the inclusion through the work of people with special employment difficulties), at national and local levels, the following actions are desirable:

legislative character: extend also to social integration enterprises working in non-cooperative nature the same benefits in the social cooperatives of type B (exemption from payment of social security contributions for the period during which the worker is certified as a disadvantaged and the ability to obtain orders through agreements with governments);

unification of the different definitions of disadvantage in the labor market, even articulating the rights and benefits according to the severity of the difficulties in access to employment;

comprehensive review of the incentives to the work insertion.



Overcome the logic of emergency situation that often led to job placement assistance to prisoners and former prisoners (we could set up a customized project, and so face a process of progressive integration, from the training inside the prison expendable aiming to achieve professionalism in the labor market) to facilitate the acquisition of contracts for social cooperatives and social enterprises, measures could be in demand as public and private demand then changes the code of contracts recognizing the social cooperatives and social enterprises the Italian translation of secured work experience as defined in Europe, to encourage private demand is proposed to provide limited but widespread incentives (tax breaks) for all businesses that establish business relationships with companies or cooperatives of social work placement. Again: measures to promote the integration of



disadvantaged workers in the labor market open at the end of their period of training in co-operative, it is proposed to be set up at the Chambers of Commerce a special fund designed to support collaborative efforts between social businesses and not, so as to facilitate the passage of the disadvantaged workers from the first to the second ones.

The last group of policies seeks to encourage the creation of new social cooperatives and strengthening social inclusion working on the production and technology levels to foster the existing ones. To this end at national level should be repeated the type of fertility program, explicitly designed to create new entering firms. At the regional level should be set up revolving funds with mixed public-private partnerships that involve a number of private actors that already are financing in various ways social entrepreneurship initiatives aimed mainly at supporting the investments of these firms (eg banking foundations).



Today Federsolidarietà - Confcooperative associated with more than 5,500 social cooperatives and consortia that mattered in 2009, 208,000 members, of which 22,000 volunteers, about 200,000 employees and a turnover of over five billion euro. For two thirds of these cooperatives operating within the health services and education, a third part of cooperatives that work for disadvantaged people. There are 258 associations that aggregate cooperatives at local level.

In Sicily, about 520 cooperative members are a majority of type A, about 45 and 140 in the province of Caltanissetta in the province of Palermo.

Today, the crisis that 'Italy is experiencing, and in particular the impact on the employment side, led Federsolidarietà to seek new ways to respond fully to its vocation of organization devoted to the subsidiarity and assume full commitment.



This raises us to new commitments and responsibility to maintain balance and commitment to innovate where necessary for employment. So we've drafted the Green Paper "Social cooperation for the employment." (source: Guarini, president of Federsolidarietà). A document containing an analysis on issues relating to the inclusion through the work of people with special employment difficulties. Along the lines of discussion papers published by the European Commission, which illustrate the state of a given sector to boost the potential and that are intended for all those involved in the process of consultation and debate, the federation with the Green Paper wants to feed the debate on the potential that social associations can put in place for the employment of disadvantaged people through a careful analysis of the industry and public policy. The document ends with a series of proposals at European, national and local levels on the means for attaining those goals. The proposals concern is the widening of the categories of disadvantaged persons, provided today by the law 381/91 and proposals to promote the integration of disadvantaged workers in the open labor market after completing their training period in the cooperative.

In recent years, there has been a growth of social cooperatives for work integration, both as regards the number of coops and the number of employees.



The social coops of working inclusion joining Federsolidarietà - Confcooperative are over 1,700. 55% of these companies has more than 10 years of life. Over the past six years the number of cooperative work placement in the South grew by 94%. In 2009, the aggregate turnover exceeds EUR 1.1 billion.

There are about 50,000 members (3.4% are legal persons). And in 55% of cooperatives, members are volunteers. More than 41,000 workers, and



EUROPEAN UNION
European Regional
Development Fund



inserted around 13,800 workers at a disadvantage conditions, of which about half are people with physical, mental and sensory disabilities. To these we must add an additional 25% share of total employees, people from situations of long-term unemployment, older workers, single mothers with children, immigrants, etc..

These results lead us to strongly defend the validity of the cooperative model of social work placement as a means of effectively achieving intrinsically active employment policies for social inclusion. But to be effective, this model needs oxygen provided by continuous alliances and consensus of the institutions and social partners not to deny the opportunity for the weaker workers to access labor market.



After an inspiring and animated debate, with interventions from different neighbouring cities very interested to fostering local permanent networking on social economy, at 13:30 Mr. Campanella thanked the audience and closed the session.