

15th Rencontres du RIUESS

RIUESS

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CHAIRE
ECONOMIE SOCIALE ET SOLIDAIRE

Can the creativity of the Social and Solidarity-based Economy be dissolved in entrepreneurship?

The Social and Solidarity-based Economy (SSE) promotes a social project of emancipation, of a tribunician function for self-identification and of a legitimization of social needs, and it is responsible for the development of projects aiming to meet the social demand through the creation of innovative new activities.

This responsibility to create new activities is not only called for by activists in the SSE. It is also, in a certain point of view, imposed to them by the political sphere, which praise to the SSE must be understood in the light of the former's anxious expectations: the hope for some support from the "civil society", given its own difficulty to address the "Great Depression" that originated in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Hence the incentives or even injunctions to work with and within the "traditional" economy, but also the requirement for the SSE to dare getting involved in every sector, including industry and technological innovation.

From this follows the need to articulate the forms and bases of its creativity: citizens' initiatives, joint projects responding to social expectations, sources of creativity within collective intelligence. Some prefer to set it within a context of "social entrepreneurship" that would go beyond the legal barriers of the SSE statutes. "Social entrepreneurship" can be defined by reference to the criteria selected by the *Mouvement des entrepreneurs sociaux français* (Movement of French Social Entrepreneurs) and by the EMES network (European

Social Enterprise Research Network). But do the selected properties make social entrepreneurship a specific model for social economy? Or rather, do they pave the way towards the normalisation of this “other,” or alternative, economy that we wish to build? Do they increase the influence or the attraction of the commercial and/or capitalist enterprise?

Moreover, is there only one possible design and type of social enterprise? It seems not: for example, European models are significantly different from North-American principles and practices. A variety of forms of social enterprise can be identified, especially in the difference between cooperatives and associations. Additionally, what are the current influence(s) and repercussion(s) of the strategic approaches rooted in philanthropy, venture philanthropy or social business on the evolution of the SSE, and more precisely on the political project, on the modes of governance and management tools and on the management mechanisms-devices of established organisations?

Finally, the different classifications of social enterprise, social entrepreneurship or social entrepreneur should not be likened. What do these terms cover in Management or Legal Sciences? Do they allow their own conceptual deconstruction or empirical investigation? Can Economic Sociology or Critical Management Studies clarify or specify their theoretical significance or their analytical scope?

Without being exclusive, we therefore hope to debate five issues and two areas, which include but are not limited to:

TOPIC 1: From creativity to creation: how can mixed resources be mobilised? What types of resources are concerned?

The literature often classifies the creation of new activities in the SSE as a “social” sector, or it places the responsibility for social innovation on communities left on their own, whereas in fact such innovation often requires a mixture of resources including the market, the redistribution and the reciprocity. What expertise in history, in geography, or in economics and management, can social entrepreneurs use to ask the following questions?

Is there room for the creation of activities within the SSE, and in particular for long-lasting activities, given that they bear the exploration risk in other key “sectors” of the economy, such as agriculture, industry, corporate services and new technologies – without being exhaustive? What resources are mobilised in case of a creation? Can they only be “community based”? What kind of connexion can we observe or propose between private profit-based activities, public, institutional resources and the SSE?

TOPIC 2: “Business differently”? Collective action and solidarity projects vs. social entrepreneurship?

Reducing collective action to the development of economically sustainable activities that create jobs sometimes leads to stress the “economic” efficiency and the leadership of a creator considered as the entrepreneur. Emphasis is given to innovation, that is, ultimately, on a concept that reduces the problem of creation to an economic issue (and thus to the Schumpeterian break introduced by this entrepreneur in given environments). Without ignoring the role of the individual commitment, which is at the root of the SSE, should we

develop charismatic figures of leaders for consolidating corporate governance or the emergence of projects in the SSE? What are the risks of institutional isomorphism with traditional entrepreneurship? What is the room for the collective, solidarity and for the social projects in entrepreneurship when it is collective? What is the room for local initiative, for local resources and actors within the question of innovation?

TOPIC 3: What management tools and what legal tools are required for the SSE?

The 2008 crisis raised both the issue of the management standards in traditional commercial organisations and of the payback effects of the legal frameworks produced by the great wave of economic liberalisation. Particularly in the SSE, can the guidance of the creation of new activities use the same management tools and legal framework as those governing the competition? This workshop wishes to host communications concentrating on tools and processes. It wishes to develop explicitly the two following aspects: (1) Are “on-board” management tools in the SSE organisations consistent with the SSE principles? What new tools for management control, financing and evaluation can and should we develop? (2) It is also important to pay particular attention to legal problems. The SSE investigates new ways of organising working relations and new ways to “form community,” in particular to successfully reduce firms’ ecological footprint by inward relocation. Thus it comes up against a whole series of issues with competition law. Hence the need to master, but also to leverage legal mechanisms and to bear on the elaboration of the law, in a whole series of areas: in new legal forms, such as Territorial Economic Cooperation Clusters (Pôles Territoriaux de Coopération Économique - PTCE) or activity cooperatives, for example, in the relationship with the public authorities and in the rules governing the competition and/or the inclusion of social clauses in their call for tender.

TOPIC 4: Concentration and financialization in the SSE

We can now observe a process of economic concentration, for example in the (rather unfortunate) setting-up of large SSE brands in the services to individuals. Is this not a clear sign of a structural transformation of the SSE? At the same time we are seeing the emergence and development of groups of firms, of co-operative alliances and of local clusters and networks. How can we interpret this phenomenon, which blurs the statutory boundaries between not-for-profit and for-profit logics? Should we focus on the establishment of cooperative relationships, or contrast them with the rational search for size effects, for economies of scale and of scope, for productivity gains and for pooling resources? It would be interesting to attempt to describe the consistency of this trend towards concentration, but also to highlight its explanatory variables and the consequences in economic, social and political terms.

Similarly, over the last decade the SSE has attempted to strengthen the financial tools at its disposal (*e.g.* through France Active). Little work has been carried out so far on the involvement of cooperative banks and financial cooperatives in the development of the SSE. The funding of new activities, either directly or through schemes like local initiative platforms (members of France Initiative) or microcredit (ADIE, Planete Adam etc.), has also probably received too little attention from researchers. Finally, it might be appropriate to study the relationships between banking or financial cooperatives of the SSE and social enterprises, and in particular associations; are these relationships specific or general?

TOPIC 5: Merchandising social welfare or meeting needs through collective action?

One of the issues involves the emergence of new needs that the political sphere had interpreted as an opportunity for their (precarious and fragmented) employment policies against the public finance crisis. Some economic actors also see such needs as a source of new growth through the development of a *silver economy* promoting the myth that we may observe a rush to precious metals through the exploitation of demographic changes... Mutual unions and associations are therefore under pressure, in a context of service deregulation at the European level, of commodification logics against which they find it difficult to develop suitable answers. Through its own efforts to secure its activities, will the SSE contribute to the reinforcement of the market dynamics and to the casualization of employment? Or will it manage to make its project part of a renewed social welfare and an art of a better living together?

Will it act as a pioneer in the satisfaction of needs like it was for post-war healthcare and social organisations? As the individualist figure of care makes way for the increasing coordination in the form of healthcare or care networks, are these networks doomed to be guided by some public interventionism and by budgetary rationalisation, or by economic agents using new technical tools such as telemedicine?

Two areas, from local to global

Area 1 – The local area / The SSE territories: The creation of new activities and the demand (from public authorities) are embodied within territories. This led to the emergence of a specific reflection on the collective produced by the territory. From this perspective, the conference proposes to bring a specific view on the first experimental work of the Territorial Economic Cooperation Clusters, and on the involvement of many researchers in these experiments. This may also shed light on the attempts to respond to the employment crisis:

- the problem of *ecological reindustrialisation*, within which the SSE is attempting to find its place;
- the construction of networks and inter-organisational cooperations between public, private and associative actors in order to promote productive activities;
- the experimentation of new forms of mobilisation of or on the territory: for example what opinion should we have on the formation of groups of employers or on some actors' proposition to create "Territorial CVs" over and above individual CVs.

Area 2 – The SSE and the world: as usual, we would like to welcome colleagues working on what we shall call "the social economy in middle high income countries," which includes French-speaking countries such as Belgium, Switzerland, and also North American countries. But can the SSE also be considered as a third sector that is only possible in Northern industrialised countries where the state, Christian churches and consequently secular movements have played a central role? Following on from contacts established during the last RIUESS conference, particularly with North African researchers working on the development of the SSE, we would also like to explore the forms that the social economy can take in other social contexts and list the initiatives and problems in the Mediterranean, African and South-American regions in this field.

An interdisciplinary call for papers

The RIUESS 2015 call for papers proposes to cover these five topics and two areas – but without excluding original submissions that deserve to be discussed at our network’s annual meeting. We will particularly welcome joint communications by researchers and professionals; these have regularly been very much appreciated at RIUESS conferences and they contributed to its success. We would also like to call **our colleagues in all the disciplines of humanities and social sciences** to send proposals for communications:

- Sociologists first of all, with whom we have had established relations for many years and who have significant contributions on the SSE, and which variety of recent theoretical and empirical contributions can bring a particular point of view to shed light on our different fields;
- Historians, who can help us to contrast contemporary experience with collective entrepreneurial initiatives in the SSE in other periods and other contexts;
- Territorial development, to present the problems of creation in a territorial context;
- We look forward to receiving communications from the different fields of economics and management – and hope for the involvement of researchers in these disciplines, but also in Sociology and Communication Science, from a *Critical Management Studies* perspective.
- We also look for communications from Social Psychology and from Communication Science – without wishing to be exhaustive – particularly in the field of entrepreneurship.
- Finally, we would like the conference to report the opinions of legal experts on the various legal forms for business (e.g.: CAE) or associations, and of the limits that different legal levels (European or national) can put on the inventiveness of actors.

Scientific Committee:

Jérôme Blanc (University Lumières Lyon 2),
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Marie Bouchard (UQAM - University Quebec to Montréal),
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Eric Dacheux (University of Clermont-Ferrand),
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Christopher Lecat (University of Reims, Champagne-Ardenne),
Laetitia Lethielleux (University of Reims),
Vincent Lhuillier (University of Lorraine),
Valery Michaux (Neoma BS),
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Philippe Odou (University of Reims, Champagne-Ardenne),
Carmen Parra (University of Barcelone),
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Nadine Richez-Battesti (University of Aix-Marseille),
Josiane Stoessel-Ritz (University of Haute-Alsace),
Delphine Vallade (University of Montpellier 3),
Stéphane Vernac (University of Picardie- Jules Vernes).

Local Organisation Committee:

Mélissa Boudes (doctoral student, assistant, NEOMA BS-URCA Social Economy Chair), Elodie Brulé-Gapihan (Management Sciences, URCA), Monique Combes-Joret (Management Sciences, URCA), Jean-Paul Domin (Economics, URCA), Florence Gallois (Economics, URCA), Christopher Lecat (doctoral study- REGARDS Laboratory), Laetitia Lethielleux (Management Sciences, director of the NEOMA BS-URCA Social Economy Chair), Jean-Paul Méreaux (Management Sciences, URCA) Martino Nieddu (Director of the REGARDS laboratory), Michèle Severs (President of CRES-CA).

Schedule:

The deadline for reception of communications proposals is set on 4th January 2015.

Proposals of not more than 1200 words, to include the topic, methodology and theoretical framework, should be sent to: riuess2015@univ-reims.fr

Each proposal will be submitted to a double-blinded review by the scientific committee. Proposals should consist in two separate parts:

- 1) An information section, with the name of the author(s), position, title of the communication and a five-letter acronym.
- 2) The proposal itself, of no more than 1200 words, identified only by its acronym.

The scientific committee will send its decision, acceptance or refusal, to the authors by 15 February 2015.

The final texts must be sent by 4 May 2015.

RIUESS 2015 - REIMS organisers' contacts:

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Rencontres RIUESS 2015

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Doctoral Workshops

Doctoral students can of course make submissions in using the procedure detailed above. However, RIUESS also has a network of doctoral students. Each year, on the Wednesday morning, the conference opens with discussions, conferences on particular topics, and workshops, organized specifically for doctoral students with researchers in the network.

Doctoral students or prospective doctoral students who wish to take part in these events are invited to complete the information sheet below (no more than 4 pages in times new roman 12) and send it to doctorantsriuess@gmail.com by 4th January.

LES DOCTORIALES DU

RIUESS

To be returned by 4th January 2015 at the latest to doctorantsriuess@gmail.com

SURNAME:
First name:
Laboratory:
Discipline:
Thesis supervisor:
Year of completion of Thesis:

TITLE OF THESIS:

Key words:

Main idea:

Methodology used:

Field of study:

Issues dealt during the preparation of the thesis:

The Inter-university Social Economy Network (Réseau Interuniversitaire de l'ESS: RIUESS) was founded in 2000. Its members include the research groups and/or Master programmes of 24 member universities:

Aix-Marseille II, Angers, Avignon, CEU Barcelone, Bordeaux III, Brest, Clermont-Ferrand, CNAM Paris, ESSCA Angers, IEP Grenoble, Haute-Alsace Mulhouse - Le Mans, Lille I, Lyon II, Luxembourg, Marne-la-Vallée, Montpellier III, Nancy, Nantes, Poitiers, Reims, Rennes 1, Rennes II, Saint-Etienne, Toulouse II, Valenciennes, together with the Western network for Research into the Social Economy (Réseau grand ouest de Recherche en Économie Sociale et Solidaire).

Other non-members universities regularly take part in our conferences.

Each year RIUESS organises a multidisciplinary conference (economics, sociology, law, history, psychology, communication, management, geography, political science ...) devoted to the Social Economy, which brings together 150 to 200 teachers, researchers and doctoral students, together with professionals in the field of the social and solidarity-based economy.

Our previous conferences took place in:

2001 in Valenciennes: The Social and Solidarity-based economy

2002 in Lyon: The sense and scope of the social economy

2003 in Toulouse: Innovation in the social economy

2004 in Paris: The social economy and democracy

2005 in Marseille: The social economy and territories

2006 in Grenoble: The future of the social economy in Europe

2007 in Rennes: The social economy and its responsibilities

2008 in Barcelona: The social economy, development, mobility and relocation

2009 in Roanne: Entrepreneurship in the Social economy, a political issue?

2010 in Luxembourg: Developing a body of theory for the social and solidarity-based economy for a new social model

2011 in Poitiers: The social economy and work

2012 in Nancy: The social economy and the challenges of social innovation and changing society

2013 in Angers: Developing the social economy today. Values, Statutes, Projects?

2014 in Lille: The social economy and cooperation

Site: www.riuess.org