



**Cooperative Business and Innovative Rural Development:
Synergies between Commercial and Academic Partners
C-BIRD**

FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IAPP Marie Curie
Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP)



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Study visits report

October, 2016





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Euricse
European Research Institute on
Cooperative and Social Enterprise



UCC
University of Central Florida



АГРОПРОМСИТ
ВИКТОРИЯ



Zip
CENTER



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1) Introduction

1.1. Context

The main objective of C-BIRD is to improve the knowledge and competencies at local and regional level in cooperative business and about the existing viable structures that represent the principles and ideas of cooperativism. This is realized through creation of a European network of local institutions, organizations, business and decision-making authorities, comprised of two key elements: physical tools for meeting and exchanging viewpoints and a collaborative exchange and transfer of good practice.

The C-BIRD partnership counts 7 partners from 4 EU Member States: Bulgaria, Italy, Spain, Ireland and 1 non-EU Member: Serbia. The panel contains universities, research institute, business incubator, producer organization and a business company.

1.2. Objectives of study visits

The overall aim of study visits organized during researchers' secondments is to collect and to share good practice and lessons learned in C-BIRD research work and implementation in order to transfer knowledge and experience. The objective is to initiate exchange on ideas and practices between the members of the network, represented by academia and business.



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2) Participating project partners and study visits organized

For the period of the present study visit report (January – October, 2016) were implemented the following secondments:

January, 2016	host organization COEXPHAL, Spain, seconded researchers from UAL, Spain
February, 2016	host organization EURICSE, Italy; seconded researchers from Zip Center, Serbia
May, 2016	host organization Trakia University, Bulgaria; seconded researchers from Zip Center, Serbia and Agroconsult Engineering, Bulgaria
June, 2016	host organization COEXPHAL, Spain, seconded researchers from EURICSE, Italy host organization COEXPHAL, Spain, seconded researchers from UAL, Spain host organization EURICSE, Italy; seconded researchers from Agroconsult Engineering, Bulgaria host organization Zip Center, Serbia; seconded researchers from Trakia University, Bulgaria
July, 2016	host organization COEXPHAL, Spain, seconded researchers from UCC, Ireland host organization EURICSE, Italy; seconded researchers from Zip Center, Serbia
August, 2016	host organization Zip Center, Serbia; seconded researchers from EURICSE, Italy
October, 2016	host organization Zip Center, Serbia; seconded researchers from EURICSE, Italy





3) Evaluation of visits – individual reports of participating researchers and hosting organization

Study visits organized by EURICSE, Trento for the seconded researchers were with the aim to complement the multifunctional role of cooperatives that goes beyond the traditional concept, embracing the dynamics and pro-active approach of business companies. Meetings with Industrial accelerator in Rovereto; HIT – Hub Innovazione Trentino, Federazione Trentina delle Cooperative and Impact Hub Trento, were expected to bring the focus on the innovative aspects of cooperatives in agricultural and touristic sector.



Seconded researchers managed to gain information and knowledge about the practices and mechanisms that stimulate start-ups and innovative companies, established to contribute and impact local development and community involvement.

The main advantages pointed out from the seconded researchers and the host organization, are identified in the following:

- Developing knowledge on local innovation eco system;
- Support for start-ups;
- Developing academia-business network.



The seminar *“Bridging the gap between practice and knowledge”*, organized within the International agricultural fair BATA AGRO, 8-12 March, 2016 by Agroconsult Engineering.



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This seminar was purposefully organized during the international fair, where agricultural producers, traders, associations, decision-makers representatives, academia and community stakeholders meet to share best practices in agricultural process, machinery and inventory. Participating companies were 143, while the exhibition area was over 26,000 square meters. The seminar was attended by this diverse group of participating companies, not only from Bulgaria, but also abroad (Lithuania).



*“Bridging the gap
between practice and knowledge”
Agroconsult Engineering*

Following the recommendation of the Mid-term evaluation, for this year secondments, Trakia University, Bulgaria focused on training as part of the work under the C-BIRD project.



Four training seminars were organized on topics related to the thematic area of the project, including cooperative networking, policy provisions and mechanisms to stimulate rural development through cooperativism, as well as the role of the education to stimulate local development.

Lecturer: Rangel Matanski





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Training areas included:

- 1. Design of cooperative networking in rural areas** (LEADER, PO, cooperatives and family farms) – in particular cooperative sectors’ role and support for the integrated rural development, viability of small- and medium-scale enterprises (case studies), mechanisms to enable complementarity of rural programmes.



- 2. Institutional arrangements and policy – rural development processes in Bulgaria** – in particular results and lessons learned from the implementation of the first Programme for rural development, as well as recent opportunities for innovative rural development through measures for cooperation and networking in rural areas



Lecturers:

Prof. D.Sc. Julia Doitchinova, Trakia University, Stara Zagora

Prof. D.Sc. Ivan Kanchev, UNWE, Sofia





3. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Rural development programme, including topics about historical development and changes within the scope, priorities and mechanisms of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and CAP 2020 and its specific implementation in Bulgaria.



Lecturer: Pavlina Gospodinova,

Regional economic development agency, Stara Zagora

4. Local development through education – the role of modern approaches towards sustainable results - education opportunities in rural areas, community service applications courses and volunteer practices in distance education.



Lecturers: Sevinç Gülsecen, Ayşe Çınar, Zerrin Ayvaz Reis, Istanbul University, Turkey

In June and July, 2016, EURICSE, Italy also organized for its incoming researchers intensive training seminars on the following topics:

- The history of the cooperative movement in Trentino with lecturer Alberto Ianes;
- Innovative cooperative and social enterprise models in Italy with lecturer Flaviano Zandonai;
- Italian school of the management of public goods with lecturer Riccardo Bodini;
- New cooperative models for local development. The experience of Italian Community of cooperatives – with lecturer Jacopo Sforzi;
- World Cooperative Monitor: the agricultural cooperatives in the world with lecturer Ilana Gotz-Bodini;
- The agricultural cooperatives by Eddi Fontanari;



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- The comparison of the cooperative model between Italy and South America by Michela Giovannini.

Through this intensive session of lectures was given a better understanding and insight on the why whereby:

- Cooperatives, associations and NGOs are able through viable strategies to achieve successfully business goals, to implement Rural Development Policy;
- Networks contribute to local development and rural areas;
- Different business models are available in a way to reflect specific local advantages and characteristics.

In Serbia local products and production are particular example of how rural communities merge sources to provide for geographical uniqueness and sustainability of preserved traditions. Such unique collaboration and support for the sector is operationalized through activities of local NGOs, educational organizations, local institutions and sectoral agencies – NGO Leka, NGO Refresh, NGO Temstanke, Touristic organization Pirot, Cooperative Lady’s heart, Mlekarska Schkola.



Mlekarska Schkola in Pirot

Pirotski kashkaval is more than a brand of the local production famous worldwide. It is better described as a unique tradition of cheese and yogurt production that sustains experience of centuries and is recognized as symbol for quality and clean production.





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Mlekarska Schkola in Pirot is both a factory and a school where learning by doing in milk and cheese production meets the need to educate youth and further translate the knowledge of cheese making. There are two processes that are run in parallel and until now show sustainability and success. All production is organized as a handmade model with careful attention paid to quality of the raw milk, production process, storage and maturing, and of the end products – cheese and yogurt. Production is supplied by 300 milk producers from the region, which raw material is periodically tested to ascertain the taste and the quality. This permanent control is also supported by training seminars organized for producers. The educational process involves students in a learning-by-doing mode, having the opportunity to improve their knowledge with the practice.

While HelpHilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V. - HELP organization has started its activities based on humanitarian assistance, now its scope of action includes various rehabilitation and development projects to provide for community wellbeing.



HelpHilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V. – HELP, Nis

In Serbia HELP arrived in 1999, since 2004 it has office in Nis and currently it is working with 363 beneficiaries from Pirot. Agriculture is one of the priority sectors where financial support is provided mainly for equipment. The co-financing from the beneficiaries ranges from 5-20%.

The organization is following closely the entire process from the delivery of the equipment to its regular and purposeful usage as stated in the project proposal. There are three levels of control to ensure adequate distribution of the financial resources:





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The Agricultural advisory and professional service Pirot, Ltd. is semi-autonomous public agency within the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water management, responsible for public agriculture advisory and extension services. The mission of the agency is to increase farmers' access to information, knowledge and technology for profitable agricultural production and the objectives are to: stimulate productivity and market orientated farming, access to information and to financial resources, capacity-building and development at regional level. Training modules and seminars are part of the measures taken to sustain agency activities, including focus on land quality preservation, welfare of farm animals, integrated protection systems in vegetable production, soft skills and financial education.



Agricultural advisory and professional service Pirot, Ltd.

Backed up with skills and information, farmers are to be prepared for major difficulties associated with scale and complexity of extension operations, broader policy requirements, financial instability and alternative financial resources.





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"Could networking be a way to empower social enterprises in Serbia?" is the title of training dedicated to social enterprises that will be held in Belgrade on October 7th. The event is organised in the Zip Centar za mlade biznis inkubator DOO Pirot as a part of Aleksandra Bobic's secondment within the C-BIRD project and is supported by all the main actors involved in the promotion of social enterprises in Serbia participating in the Coalition for the development of social enterprises.



During the event was presented the Guide for social enterprises in Serbia in the presence of Serbian minister Slavica Djukic Dejanovic who has social enterprises within her portfolio. Aleksandra Bobic (Euricse) contributed to the Guide, which is published by the European Movement in Serbia, in collaboration with Heinrich Böll Foundation's Office in Belgrade.



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**DRUŠTVEN
KORISNO
ODRŽIVO**

KAKO OSNOVATI SOCIJALNO PREDUZEĆE U SRBIJI



**PETAK 7. OKTOBRA OD 8.30 DO 18.00 H
UK PAROBROD - KAPETAN MIŠINA 6A**

**18.00-18.20
RADIJSKI SASTANAK SOCIJALNIH PREDUZEĆA
MINISTARKE SLAVICE ĐUKIĆ DRAGANOVIĆ**

PREDSJEDNIK:
Slavica Đukić Draganović, ministarka bez portfelja u Vladi Republike Srbije
Predsjednica **40 socijalnih preduzeća** u Srbiji
Oblasti: hrastlje, zdravstvo, socijalna preduzeća

Prisustvo i borba za preduzeće su jedan od načina da se postigne održivost. Kako to mogu da postignu i preduzeće koje su osnovane prije 10 godina? Kako to mogu da postignu i preduzeće koje su osnovane prije 10 godina? Kako to mogu da postignu i preduzeće koje su osnovane prije 10 godina?

* još pitanja...

**18.00-18.20
KAZUJA ZA KAFU I UMREŽAVANJE**

**18.20-18.40
PREDSTAVLJANJE VODIČA
DOKUMENTA, KONIZMO, OSREIVO
KAKO OSNOVATI SOCIJALNO PREDUZEĆE U SRBIJI**

HOSTS:

Maja Bekić, generalna sekretarka Evropskog parlamenta u Srbiji
Andrija Petrović, direktor kancelarije Ambasade Republike Srbije u Beogradu
Aurora Vukobratović, **Olga Bekić**, izvršna direktorica Evropskog parlamenta u Srbiji
Aleksandra Bekić, ministarka za odnose sa javnošću Evropskog parlamenta u Srbiji
i još nekoliko socijalnih preduzeća - **40SOCIAL**, **Infija**

Tea Perišević, direktorica **Aut guma** u Hrvatskoj
i još nekoliko preduzeća

Podstizanje različitih aspekata i inicijativa preduzetništva kroz praktična iskustva u radu sa predstavnicima, ministarke, direktorice, menadžerice i osnivačice socijalnih preduzeća iz Srbije, Hrvatske, Slovenije i Albanije

**18.40-19.00
KAFUJA**

**19.00-19.30
RADIJSKI SASTANAK UMREŽAVANJE SA HRVATIMA
KAKO OSNOVATI SOCIJALNO PREDUZEĆE U SRBIJI**

FACILITATOR:

Tea Perišević, Aut guma (Hrvatska),
Modirja Brndićević, Sarajevobranje

Prisustvo, razmjena, prihvatanje i podrška za sve one koji su zainteresovani za osnivanje i razvijanje socijalnih preduzeća, uključujući one koji su osnivači socijalnih preduzeća i preduzeća, a posebno sa tim koji imaju međunarodno iskustvo u osnivanju i razvijanju socijalnih preduzeća

U skladu sa Zakonom o radu Srbije, organizirano u skladu sa zakonima socijalnih preduzeća





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The research leading to these results has received funding
from the People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the
European Union's Seventh Framework Programme
FP7/2007-2013/
under REA Grant Agreement No. 611490
(PIAPP-GA-2013-611490)

