



TASKFORCOME: TRANSNATIONAL ACTION TO ADVANCE SKILLS AND  
COMPETENCES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL MIGRANTS  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (SE) AND COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL  
ENTERPRISES (CBSE) IN ITALY AND EMILIA-ROMAGNA REGION

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to describe and present a national and regional overview of Social Entrepreneurship (SE) in Italy, with a specific focus on Community-based Social Enterprises (CbSE) as a relatively recent innovation in Italian Third sector scenery. Social and legislative assets represent basic conditions to develop and define third sector forms, so an Italian regulations overview will introduce to nowadays SEs development configuring the Third Sector Reform Law (Law No. 106/2016) that modifies the legal and regulatory environment for actors operating in the Italian social sector, providing general principles to reorganise and harmonise the third sector in Italy. Moreover, passing through definition of multistakeholder approach and main characteristics of Community based Social enterprise in Italy, some case studies and experiences of SEs and CbSEs in Emilia Romagna will be presented as concrete examples of inclusion and of migrant population, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Following pages provide a brief on both academics and ongoing examples about Social enterprises field, underlining specific characteristics of social business forms suitable and inclusive for individuals and communities needs. Due to the heterogeneity and complexity of the subject, due to continuous changes of legal framework, this report could represent a fragmented perspective.



## 2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND DEFINITIONS

In order to describe Social enterprises, it must be useful consider the definition of Social Economy in the Italian context which includes socio-economic initiatives that are not included in the sphere of public sector, neither they do in the traditional sector of private economy, known as "for profit" business. By "Social economy" we have to recognise all kinds of economic activity that focus on the values of collective effort, solidarity, participation of stakeholder, enforcement of social cohesion, collaboration. (ISEDE-NET "Innovative Social Enterprise Development Network")

Third sector covers *'the whole of that variegated archipelago of organisations which, although private in character along the lines of business companies, are different from them because of their declared non-profit making purpose'* (Tubaro, 2001, p. 313). The activity of these organisations, given that their aim is not to make a profit, is directed towards social and economic ends. Borzaga and colleagues' workpaper (2017) underlines we have to take into account *"all the nonprofit organizations characterized by a non-profit distribution constraint and by a clear social purpose but which behave as enterprises, despite not being legally classified as such"* (pp.3) extending the SEs label referring, not only to the organizations considered as social enterprises by Italian law (Legislative Decree No. 155 of 2006) such as social cooperatives and social enterprises, but also *"to de facto social enterprises, established as associations, foundations and religious institutions"* (ibidem)

In addition, to fully describe the whole phenomenon of Italian SEs, must be considered all different kind of active subjects that widely varied



landscape of social enterprise in Italy. Even though social cooperatives are considered the main player in the third sector, nowadays many activities are managed by new subjects. These new characters extended third sector field activities from social, educational, healthcare and work integration services, to cultural, environmental, sport and recreational activities, the promotion of economic development and many more.

Social Enterprises, due to their limited assignability to traditional categories of non-profit, private or public organizations, are often described as hybrid organizations (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Doherty et al., 2014). They can thus offer innovative concepts by combining existing elements into new hybrid solutions (*Murray, et al., 2010*) and overcome sector, organizational or disciplinary boundaries. In that way, social enterprises could be able to create new relations and networks, taking separate individuals into new groups and net of relations (*Nambisan, et al 2009*). Stakeholder participation thus becomes central for social enterprises, as it is inherent in their organizational objectives, namely the addressing of social challenges by processes that involve new individuals, stakeholders and groups, which in turn can be an instrument to empower the community and all the society itself (*Bureau of European Policy Advisers [BEPA], 2011, p. 9*).

For this reason, social enterprises are considered as inclusive and able to “*create new social relationships or collaborations*” (Hansson, Björk & Lundborg 2014). In fact, participatory principles are named as a central attribute for social enterprises by the European Commission’s Social Business Initiative (European Commission, 2011). Yet, they are also dependent on the enduring participation of stakeholders, as they usually



face a limited access to resources (*Seanor & Meaton, 2008*) and thus rely on strong relationships and a supportive network.

Lastly, in literature the most comprehensive and influential definition of social enterprise, is the one presented by the EMES International Research Network (Defourny and Nyssens, 2008), which is used by various European countries, as well as by the European Commission itself (European Commission, 2016). Social enterprise, in the EMES approach is a *"private legal entity, independent from the government, which carries out production activities, regardless of the legal form adopted (...) have an explicitly social aim and engage in activities that generate direct benefits for a community or for disadvantaged persons; they are constrained—at least partially—in their profit distribution, and they are characterized by an inclusive and participative governance"* (Borzaga et al 2017, pp10)

Social Entrepreneurship, as a concept and as a reality, has a long history in Italy since 1970's. Development and definition of SEs is mainly related to evolution of economic, social and cultural changes that have taken place in the country until 2000s.

There are four stages that feature the whole evolution of SEs in Italy (Borzaga et al 2017, pp.4; 2006):

- the emergence of new social problems, to which the Italian welfare system was unable to respond (in the 1970s);
- the birth of the first SE experiences, initiated by citizens (in the 1980s);
- the legislative recognition of SEs as players in the Italian welfare system (in the 1990s);



- the evolution of traditional forms of non-profit organizations into SEs (from the 2000s to the present day)

Even if, since the beginning, SEs have been identifying as innovative private initiatives established by volunteer groups, aimed at delivering social/care services or at facilitating the labour integration of disadvantaged people and vulnerable groups, the legislative framework did not always provided a specific legal status for SEs. According to the European commission (Directorate General for Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion,2016) “the main turning point in the development of social enterprise in Italy was the adoption of key legal reforms at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, which created conditions for the engagement of private entities in the delivery of welfare services”(pp 13)

During the early stages, two were the main facts:

-social enterprises resulted from a bottom-up dynamic; it means that it was not a public policy settled up by government but it was driven by social movements. Secondly, the areas of competency in the field of

-not clear definition of contractual form and social services that could be adopted by social solidarity cooperatives.

The 2000s year could be qualified as "pluralism acknowledgment"

In fact, numerous additional legal provisions were adopted. Main enactment of laws were:

- Law No. 328 of 2000, “Framework law for the realization of the integrated system of welfare policies” that for the first time, recognises non-profit organizations and social enterprises as actors of welfare



policies, in partnership with public authorities, regulating their involvement in planning and delivery of services.

- Law No. 118/2005 on social enterprises and Legislative Decree No. 155 of 2006. These steps recognizes and regulates forms of social enterprise other than social cooperatives and expands the range of organizations that can qualify as social enterprises.

Beside social cooperatives, now foundation, association or limited company are considered SEs and by the extension of types of goods and services that can be provided by these characters, new sectors of social business were defined.

- Thanks to a more flexible interpretation of the provisions of the Civil Code, associations and foundations are authorised to bond in the production of goods and services, when consistent with their institutional activities, but without assuming the full entrepreneurial status as required by L.D. 155/2006.

Furthermore, In June 2016, the Third Sector Reform Law (Law No. 106) was issued and since then provides general principles to reorganise and harmonise the third sector in Italy. In particular, it delegates the power to the government to design and implement decrees under the Third Sector Reform Law, in order to issue secondary laws which define and shape the Italian social sector. Law No. 106 of 2016 also define that social enterprises belong to the third sector, no matter the legal form they assume. New business area are defined and expanded, and the category of disadvantaged individuals entitled to work in social enterprises were enlarged.



As of today, significant changes have modified the legal and regulatory environment for actors operating in the Italian social sector, such as:

**1. Code of the Third Sector** (Legislative Decree No. 117 of 3 July 2017 and legislative decree no.95, July 2018) . On August 3, 2017, the new Code of the Third Sector entered into effect in Italy. The new Code is part of a broader reform of the “third sector”—organizations such as associations, volunteer organizations, and philanthropic foundations formed to pursue the common good—that is being undertaken to reach the goals of full human development and employment opportunities for all Italians. The new Code consolidates and simplifies the law governing the third sector. The Code aims at reducing the normative fragmentation affecting the various third sector players by introducing a common definition for associations, foundations, social enterprises, philanthropic entities, and voluntary organisations, which are now all considered as “Entities of the Third Sector”. This Decree changed the landscape of the previous regulation, where third sector entities were almost exclusively regulated in fiscal terms. Now, thanks to the reform, third sector entities will operate under unified rules - a change that is expected to boost certainty in the social sector and decrease frictions among stakeholders. Last updates declared in Legislative Decree No.95 on august 2018, defines increasing fields of general interest and activities, including microcredit, social housing, fair trade, social agriculture. The activities of general interest of the social association do not coincide with those of the third sector entities reported in article 5 of the third sector code. the possibility in limited form of allocating profits and operating surpluses is permitted

Now the third sector is enlarged and includes different entities that promote Italian community solidarity and pluralism, in a context of



autonomy and cooperation with governmental authorities. (L.D. No. 117, arts. 2(1) & 4(1).) Other Third Sector entities (*enti del Terzo settore*, or ETSs) are: organizations promoting the culture of legality; peace among peoples; nonviolence and unarmed defense; human, civil, social, and political rights; and the rights of consumers. (*Id.art.* 5(1)(v) & (w).) Governmental agencies; political associations; unions; and professional, entrepreneurial, commercial, or industrial associations are not considered part of the third sector. (*Id.art.* 4(1). Under certain circumstances, religious entities are also subject to third sector regulations. (*Id.art.* 4(3).)

Private entities, including companies that permanently and principally exercise one or more of the activities of general interest in the form of business, profit-making, for civic, solidarity and social utility purposes, acquire the status of Social Enterprise. Even Social co-operatives and consortia acquire the status of social enterprises by law

**2. The Third Sector Reform**, targets social enterprises as a subset of third sector entities. Social enterprises are now defined as private entities whose main activities aim at creating civic, solidarity and social benefits, and are managed in an accountable and transparent way. Moreover, the Legislative Decree no. 112/2017 grants further flexibility to social enterprises: the decree expands the areas of engagement and the categories of intervention in which social enterprises can operate (now cultural heritage, microcredit interventions and sustainable tourism are part of these new categories) allowing more organizations to operate as social enterprises and benefit from the Third Sector Reform. Farther, because of incorporation of social enterprises in for-profit companies, they are entitled to share profits and distribute dividends within certain limits, enabling them to tap into new forms of funding, and move from grants to



more complex social investment instruments, such as debt and equity instruments.

**3. Public- private foundation:** The Third Sector Reform Law also launched the Fondazione Italia Sociale, a foundation in a public-private partnership with the aim of establishing a market champion for social innovation in Italy, funded through both public and private funds. It has a double mission:

a) to attract more resources to the third sector acting as a market champion and building confidence in the sector;

b) to trigger a shift in the procurement processes of government units by developing and funding outcomes based payment-by-results schemes.

### 3. SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN ITALY AND EMILIA-ROMAGNA

As previously said, in order to promote pluralism in the production of social utility goods and services and in order to facilitate the implementation of the social business model in different sectors, the legal category of ‘**Social Enterprise**’ (SE) was introduced in 2005, through the adoption of the **Law on Social Enterprises (Legislative Decree no. 155/2006)**. The law does not create a new legal form or a new type of organisation, but created a recognised label, which can be obtained by an organisation complying with identified criteria and regardless of its ownership or structure.

Thus, an organisation can be legally recognised as SE if:

1. It is a private legal entity; 2. It engages in regular production and exchange of goods and services having "social utility" and seeking to achieve public benefit purpose, rather than generate a profit (an



organization is considered a SE if it generates at least 70% of its income from entrepreneurial activities having social utility); 3. It can make profit but cannot distribute it to its members or owners (non-distribution constraint); 4. Profits must be reinvested to further its main statutory (public benefit) goal, or to increase its assets.

As a result, Italy is one of the few countries with a law on SC (legal form) and a law on SE (legal status). Despite there being a legal framework for SE, research centres, public bodies and academics often refer to different ‘constructs’ when talking about SE: in some cases, reference is made only or mainly to SC, while in other cases the concept of SE covers a wider range of organisations operating in the non-profit sector.

First cooperatives appeared in the second half of the 1970, in northern Italy (Lombardia and Emilia Romagna regions) as groundbreaking in the SE system and spreading all over the country. Their blooming was originally promoted, on the one hand, by a tendency (some say: need) of public authorities to outsource services in an ever-expanding range of areas (social, health, education, etc.), on the other hand, by growing orientation of civil society towards self-organization in associative forms.

They obtained their own distinct legal identity of “**Social Cooperatives**” (SC) in 1991, as a simple acknowledgment of their status, characteristics and features, through the **Act on Social Cooperatives (Law no. 381/1991)**. The Act defined two essential forms of SC, still valid:

- “**Type A**” SC: it provides social and health as well as educational services (focus on social care and assistance);



- **“Type B” SC**: it provides activities such as agriculture, industry, commerce, services, and its focus is in labour integration. 30% of employees must be disadvantaged persons (former drug and alcohol addicts, prisoners and prisoners in probation, or individuals with physical, mental and sensory disabilities), and their employment must be the ultimate purpose of the social cooperatives

Besides, there is a Type C, which refers to Consortia of social enterprises formed by single social cooperatives linked together; And a **“Mixed A-B type”**-named “mixed social cooperatives”, that performs activities described above in types A and B.

In 2015 , 7.3% of non profit insitutions were born amongst 2015 and 2016; 1 over 4 between 2010 and year 2014 and more than 30% between 2000 and 2009; just a 6.9% was created before the 80s. Between 2015/2016 non profit institution increased in all possible legal form, and in this biennium we find a very population various form: mostly are associations (85.1%), social cooperatives (8.2%), foundations (2.2%) and others forms (8.2%).(Source: censimento istituzioni no profit, Istat 2019)

In Italy in 2016, there are 1,367 law-compliant SE, employing 16,474 employees and 2,700 volunteers with a production value of EUR 314 million; SE are 12,570, with 513,052 employees, 42,368 volunteers and a production value of about EUR 10 billion.

Overall, Social Cooperative (SC) and SE meet the needs of over 5 million beneficiaries (December 2016, source: Ministry of Labour and Social Policies). The results are quite significant in terms of employees, beneficiaries and production value, especially considering the critical situation at macro-economic level and in the welfare segment where most



SE are active (social welfare services, job integration of disadvantaged people).

In 2015-2016 biennium, SEs expanded mostly in the north-west of Italy recording a +3.3% and a +5.0% for employee growth rate in Emilia Romagna region. According to Unioncamere data (October 2016), in Emilia-Romagna in 2016, there were 27 law-compliant SE, employing 585 employees. SCs are 848, with 50,789 employees. Concerning the cooperative enterprise data, in June 2017 Emilia-Romagna had 5,137 enterprises ranking sixth among the Italian regions for the dissemination of cooperation (13 cooperatives per 1,000 companies) being second only to Lombardy in terms of employment with a total of 237,979 employees, that makes more than 14 employees per 100. 47 % of SEs and SCs operating in Emilia-Romagna are engaged in the sector of social assistance and health care (October 2016, source: Unioncamere). Social economy in Emilia Romagna region represents a high value field that has been, and still being, central and determinant on social cohesion and leverage for territorial development. Social economy organizations are considered excellence for the region: the presence and activities of social enterprises, social cooperatives, associations and voluntary organizations contribute to creating and consolidating the social and economic network of the region. Indeed, social economy consents to improve competitiveness because of their positive impact on communities, other for profit organization, public administration. As underlined therein Ervet regional report *“Emilia Romagna model takes on a dimension of national importance due to the density of organization of the social economy, the structure and the types of relationships established by the public administration with these*



*entities and with the for-profit companies with a view to territorial development and co-production of welfare services” ( pp.6).*

#### 4.FOCUS ON CSBE IN ITALY

The most important characteristics of CbSEs is that they are locally rooted. They are rooted in a particular geographical place and respond to its needs. For example, that could be high levels of urban deprivation or rural isolation. Trading for the benefit of the local community: They are not-for-private-profit businesses. Their income comes from diverse activities such as renting out space in

In the European and Italian debate, the Community-based Social Enterprises (CbSE) are becoming, under different institutional status, a key actor in the regeneration process of urban and rural contexts.

Community-based enterprises (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006) are a relatively recent phenomenon in Italian Third sector landscape. This new form of SE known in Italy as community-based cooperatives, have had a volunteer-based genesis, with main goal of regenerating territories too void of relationships or business activities, activating members of that community -citizens- to concretely find as a community answers to their needs.

Community-based enterprises, its a phenomenon able to transform engaged citizens and communities needs and exigency -paid jobs, work, good environment, health sevices- in adapted business models. "Social enterprise development relies on the active participation of community members who take charge of planning and problem solving. There is no „one-size-fits-all“ format that is imposed from outside so organizational



structures are worked out as the enterprise is formed and grows" (Communities economies collective and Gybson, 2008 pp.2). Main distinguishing feature is their role in specific territorial areas to develop and regenerate Community assets. CbSEs consider the community not only a stakeholder (as relevant concept in SEs), but the scope and the mission in terms of possible solution to social crises and challenges of public services in marginalised districts (such as urban peripheries and rural territories), suffering of depopulation and social disaggregation. The funding and inspiring principle is that of "concern of community", then operating in several and different sectors through the implementation of activities and initiatives, where the community need is detected. Therefore, CbSE represent a peculiar ecosystem of SE; it emphasises the rooting characters through the regeneration of local assets such as: buildings, environmental resources, cultural traditions, and so on. The new availability of those local/territorial assets allows the development of small local economies, even opened to bigger markets (e.g. tourism), able to generate growth, employment and cohesion also for the vulnerable groups of the community.

In Italy a basic step on community cooperation development in order to revisiting participation and direct control by the citizen, was in 1999, when a partnership between Legacoop and the association "Borghi autentici d'Italia" started, to provide operational support and widespread diffusion for the project of community-based cooperatives at a national level. This collaboration spread the diversity of activities of community-based cooperatives, enlarging them to more complex forms, involving the entire community. A first example of Community-based cooperativen in Italy, was in the 2000's with two trial experiences on the Reggio Apennines, that



boosted up eleven ongoing cooperatives. In Italy, CbSE are quite often Community Cooperatives, whose mission is the production/management of community assets. There are about 50 organisations active in Italy (2014, Rapporto Iris Network). The community-based cooperative usually takes its shape in public services contest that may be considered too marginal or too innovative. Community-based cooperatives now ongoing are active in four main sectors: agriculture, floriculture/forestry, tourism (farm tourism and private hospitality) and green economy public utilities (solar power). (Bandini et al, 2014 pp 14)

In this kind of new form of enterprises, the multistakeholder approach is considered an asset because it represents the cooperative's assumption of economic actor's role that is not about a single person, but considers the whole system of social partners, such as workers, users, consumers, providers of venture capital. Acknowledging the multi-stakeholder structure as a premise for creating and maintaining the commitment of individuals, groups or organizations, Evers & Schulze- Böing (2001) note, that *“the tasks of keeping an active link to the local environment and safeguarding the mobilization and constant use of solidarity resources make social enterprises both better suited and more fragile than the usual type of business organisation”* (p. 124).

Because of this approach, actors are considered active partners that take on themselves (and share as a community) leadership and economical risk, and not only the role of representatives of peculiar and personal interests in public services' organization. CbCs adopt model to develop and control local public services through the direct involvement of citizens in the service's management, supporting participation and direct control of



citizens reactivating forms of collective entrepreneurship in public service.

CbSE, in the scope of TASKFORCOME, define *any group of people, either formal or informal, who cooperate in order to improve the living conditions of a relevant part of its society* (which often will be a local community such as a village or a city). Its activity has typically economic aspects, marked by participation in market economy, especially the local or regional one. CbSEs may make profit from this activity. However, profit is neither the single nor the first and dominating purpose, since improving the well-being and cohesion of the local community is seen as at least equally important. Moreover, any profit should typically be re-invested into the core activities of the enterprise or community. In that respect, a CSE is an entity of so called social economy, however with strong local and grass roots flavour to it.

Three elements seemed to be crucial:

1) **Centrality of citizens:** as single citizens or organized groups such as volunteers, social workers, non-conventional actors, non-profit, associations, foundations, etc.

2) **Involvement and co-production:** active involvement of final beneficiaries, with a co-creation/co-production purpose making individuals both producers and users of the services.

3) **Benefit for community welfare:** conceiving the community as a group of people living on the same territory, the benefit in terms of wellbeing must be at community level.



A CSBE can be created anywhere, not necessarily in a disadvantaged territory, but could be raised in any territory with a proactive group or community. As will be showed in the case studies, they are result of a bond between member and community and not necessarily from belonging to a territory, so it shows up a relational connection. Community cooperatives are multi-stakeholder and produced interests and well-being never effects on members only, but they generate value for the entire system and different stakeholders.

Also, research and academy (Bailey et al 2018) started getting interested in the CbSE and other groups of characteristics and requirements are appearing:

- **Locally rooted:** CbSEs are rooted in a particular geographical place and respond to its needs (e.g. that could be high levels of urban deprivation or rural isolation);
- **Trading for the benefit of the local community:** CbSEs are not-for-private-profit business and their income is generated by diverse activities in various sector (e.g. renting out space in buildings, providing services, selling products they grow, generating energy, etc.);
- **Accountable to the local community:** CbSEs are accountable to local people, also through innovative ‘social finance tools’ (e.g. community shares to members who have a voice in the direction of the business);
- **Broad community impact:** CbSEs benefit and impact on their local community as a whole. They can morph into the hub of a neighbourhood, where all types of local groups gather, e.g. to access broadband or get trained.



## 5. PUBLIC POLICIES SUPPORTING SE AND CBSE IN ITALY AND EMILIA-ROMAGNA

There are two main policy areas at Italian national level that support the development of the non-profit sector, including SEs:

- active labour market policies
- social inclusion policies.

Interventions in these areas include the introduction of a favourable legal framework and fiscal treatment for organisations pursuing a social aim.

Italy has a relatively rich, well developed and diverse ecosystem for SEs as compared to other EU countries. Several public support measures and initiatives have been developed by authorities at local level (provinces and regions) and national level. Also networks and mutual support mechanisms are well established namely for SCs: they often group together in local consortia to be effective in the market place. There are, even more, systems for social reporting which are specifically targeted at SEs and SCs.

The Emilia-Romagna Region has long been engaged in a process of revising the concept of development to highlight the important role of the social dimension, through the development of integrated instruments aimed at promoting Social Economy in its geographical area. The survey titled "Un altro welfare: esperienze generative" (Another welfare: generative experiences) - carried out in 2011 by the Regional Social Policy Department, ERVET and AICCON - has brought out the value generated by the Social Economy. The Social Economy represents one of the "products" with the highest added value in the Region, one which has played and



continues to play a decisive role both in terms of social cohesion and leverage for local development. Social Economy organizations also represent a point of excellence in the territory: the presence and activity of SEs, SCs, associations and voluntary organizations contribute to create and consolidate the regional social and economic fabric. Indeed, the Social Economy and the added value it produces in a certain area (at economic, social, institutional, cultural or environmental level), contribute to improving its competitiveness with a positive impact on the community, the local businesses and the functioning of the Public Administration.

Highly relevant for the promotion of social enterprises in the Emilia-Romagna Region are three regional laws that concern social cooperation, economic solidarity and social entrepreneurship, in particular those enterprises which are active in some attractive sectors of the area (welfare). The regulatory interventions mark an important step forward in the official recognition of the role of social entrepreneurship in the development, growth and attractiveness of the regional territory.

**The Regional Law No. 12 "Norms for the promotion and development of social cooperation. Implementation of Law No. 381 of November 8, 1991"** (July 2014) recognizes social cooperation as a public function entity involved in the design and management of services. An important social role is also recognized to work integration (Type B SCs) by providing new forms of relationship with the Public Administration through the use of social clauses and below-threshold contracts (Regional Council Resolution No. 969 of June 27, 2016 "Adoption of regional guidelines on awarding services to social cooperatives"). The law also introduced the **Advisory Committee on Social Cooperation** with the task of encouraging the connection between regional policies and social cooperation in the various



areas in which it operates. Finally, the Executive Decision No. 16930 of October 28, 2016 implemented the provisions of Regional Law 12 of 2014, requiring social cooperatives registered in the Regional Register to submit their social and financial reports.

Another important regulatory act of 2014 is the **Regional Law No. 14 of 18 July "Promotion of investments in Emilia-Romagna"**, where article 10 provides for the promotion of **corporate and community welfare** projects in the territory to increase and qualify personal services, integrated with the existing network of social, healthcare and housing services; Article 17, on the other hand, promotes a **culture of corporate social responsibility and social enterprise responsibility** as a key to implementing the measures set forth in the 3-year programme for production activities, research and technology transfer, human resources training programmes and programmes to support managerial training and the managerial skills of businesses. To this end, the **local laboratories for corporate social responsibility** have been set up, with the goal of strengthening the skills of companies and raising awareness of the impacts generated by their activities, supporting innovation processes that contribute to implementing the objectives and targets contained in Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. The activities of the laboratories are co-financed by the Region (Regional Council Resolution No. 399 of 2017).

Finally, **Regional Law No. 19 of July 23, 2014 "Norms for the promotion and support of economic solidarity"**, recognises economic solidarity "as a tool for tackling the economic, environmental and employment crisis" and promotes its development starting from the implementation of the so-called "Local participatory guarantee schemes" and the creation of "Centres for economic solidarity". Given the importance of this sector, the



Regional Authorities also wanted to develop specific policy and technical operating tools. In particular, a memorandum of understanding is in force between the Emilia-Romagna Region, the regional Unioncamere and the Emilia-Romagna Forum of the Third Sector for the creation of the first **Observatory of the Emilia-Romagna Region on Social Economy**. The Observatory aims to improve knowledge of the non-profit system through the preparation of joint reports on the situation of the third sector in Emilia-Romagna and its development prospects, monitoring it, not only in economic terms, but also through enhancing and measuring the generation of relationships and human capital.

As regards technical and operating tools, **third sector databases** were created which be freely accessed online (Register of social cooperatives, time banks, register of social promotion associations, register of voluntary organizations).

## 6. CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED SES AND CBSES

In this section, some case studies and experiences of SEs and CbSEs in Emilia Romagna region as well as in Italy have been collected, namely as concern the target group of migrant population, including refugees and asylum seekers. Four case studies are presented with a short summary and a focus on objectives and beneficiaries.



## HOTEL PALLONE

<http://pallone.lapiccolacarovana.net>

Albergo Pallone is a hotel in the city centre of Bologna, accommodating both tourists and people in situations of social fragility. Part of its rooms are reserved for people needing support for inclusion such as asylum seekers and families in fragile social situation. Albergo Pallone also promotes working inclusion of disadvantaged people by offering them jobs in the hotel, for example cleaning, reception, restaurant and maintenance services. Currently, people are employed at Albergo Pallone. Moreover, Albergo Pallone is part of a cooperative network providing services for everyday needs such as laundry, supply of fruit, vegetables and beverages, and bike rental. The hotel is also part of other local networks such as AITR for responsible tourism, and *Reti bolognesi per l'accoglienza* (Bolognese Network for Reception by the name of *Naufragi*). The hotel has been under management of the social cooperative *La Piccola Carovana* since 2009.

### Objectives:

- To define strategies for the accommodation of people in need
- To run an economic entity able to keep its place in the trade and tourism market
- To value the coexistence of ordinary users (such as tourists) and users benefiting of social projects
- To test ad-hoc solutions for social inclusion of persons affected by disease (Law 381/91).



- To create opportunities for meeting and exchange for associations, the third sector (voluntary and community organisations) and the whole city.

Primary beneficiaries are:

- asylum seekers (single adults, including such with specific health problems)
- families and adults in in fragile situations of housing and income
- disadvantaged people (Law 381/91)

### LAMA DI RENO- LEATHER CRAFTS CENTRE

[www.lai-momo.it](http://www.lai-momo.it)

The Leather Crafts Centre in the village of Lama di Reno (municipality Marzabotto) is a pilot model for reception of refugees. It combines the activities of an official refugees reception centre (CAS - *Centro di Accoglienza Straordinaria* / “Centre for Extraordinary Reception”) with vocational workshops in leather crafts. So far (2016-2017) vocational training classes have been held to train 15 asylum seekers in leather crafts. Recently (July 2017) it also established a social enterprise to produce and sell leather crafts. Trainees of the Leather Crafts Centre who cannot get employed in the social enterprise subsequently will be assisted to find employment in other local enterprises in the leather goods sector. Or, depending on their personal desire and perspectives for the future, they may be hired by new cooperatives created by the *Ethical Fashion Initiative* (EFI) of the *UN International Trade Centre* in their countries of origin. The



project pays particular attention to local communities and to involving resident citizens, nonprofit organizations, companies,

Objective of the Leather Crafts Centre is to activate training and learning processes allowing asylum- seekers to develop capacities and competences in the leather sector. Furthermore, the project supports asylum-seekers' individual projects. On the one hand, trainees can get support for entering the Italian and European labour market (in case of positive result of the request for international protection) or, on the other and, they may decide to return into their countries of origin by relying on the networks which EFI already developed in Africa. Furthermore, the project intends to develop a local social enterprise to create employment opportunities for asylum-seekers and resident citizens.

Beneficiaries are asylum seekers (applicants for international protection) hosted in the metropolitan area of Bologna, and to local residents.

### **AREA EX-LIMONETTI: A VIRTUOUS CASE OF RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY SOME PUBLIC PROPERTY CONFISCATED FROM MAFIA**

Ex-Limonetti is a complex of buildings and six hectares of fertile land in the city of Forli, Northern Italy, confiscated from a Mafia family. The story goes back to the 1990s when the investigations by the judiciary began. Now the fields are in use again thanks to their allocation to social cooperatives who cleaned up the land and started cultivating it. Thus Ex-Limonetti is an area reclaimed from lawlessness, where now young people, disabled persons, and ordinary citizens take care of crops and production of vegetables and cereals. The renovated buildings serve for educational, cultural and recreational activities. One building is used as “Casa della



Legalita” - House of Legality. Because of the lack of coordination within the National Agency for the Assets Confiscated from Mafia, the allocation of goods for social purposes in Italy has not been a frequent phenomenon. That is why the case of Forli is especially interesting. Moreover, it is principally replicable. Only in the Emilia Romagna region there are more than a hundred seized assets. Ex-Limonetti is a project made possible by multistakeholder partnership of local associations with the Region, the Municipality of Forli, social cooperatives, the University of Bologna, Caritas and others.

The initial purpose was to give new life to the land confiscated from the mafia and to return these areas to the community and to civic and social participation. The land and the buildings were later transferred by law to the Municipality of Forli (with an obligation to use this land for social purposes), and in 2009 the Municipality entrusted the assets (until 2019 for free) to social cooperatives now combined in the For.B cooperative. Early rehabilitation and remediation was marked by the participation of political science students of the University. Since then, various projects on farmland have been initiated: 50 community gardens that are entrusted with a fair rent to the citizens of the district; vegetable crops and cereals, which are sold or supplied to restaurants Don Abbondio and Gardens Orselli; organic cultivation of medicinal herbs with employment of disabled people (brand The Other Garden run by the cooperatives Tangram and Il Cammino).

Beneficiaries are people with disabilities, young people involved in legal education courses and general local population.



## BEYOND THE PERIMETERS - BARN BUILDING

[www.oltreiperimetri.it](http://www.oltreiperimetri.it)

Palazzo Granaio is an old barn building in the city centre of Settimo Milanese which had been out of use for many years. In 2015 it was reactivated by the municipality who - through the *#oltreiperimetri* initiative - involved local associations and organised a series of meetings with citizens. This was in order to let them participate in the planning and implementation of initiatives to take place in the barn building for the benefit of local citizens and community cohesion. In addition to non-profit organisations, there is also a number of for-profit organisations who use Palazzo Granaio for their activities. They pay a moderate rent and are requested to contribute with their specific expertise to the community. The *#oltreiperimetri* initiative is welfare Community Project (Funded by Cariplo Foundation) that aims to generate social energies by pooling individual and collective resources to build new responses on sociality, savings, housing, work and household needs.

The aim of the Palazzo Granaio project is to promote community life and cohesion through active involvement of citizens and local organisations. Organisations and citizens shall get an opportunity to co-produce services and goods. In addition to the positive effect on community cohesion in the city, this is also expected to contribute to the financial sustainability of the Palazzo Granaio project.

Beneficiaries are the citizens of Settimo Milanese. Over the two years of activity, more than 2800 people have attended *#oltreiperimetri* events at Palazzo Granaio. About 350 people per year participate in social workshops (*socialità*) (single events). 70 people participate over the year in actively



co-designing community workshops (usually socially oriented activities). 500 people per year participate in the services created by these workshops, such as *Pomerendiamo* (a weekly social chatting and creative handicrafts event for children and adults), Bank of Time, English language course, Italian language course for foreigners, etc.

### **BRIGANTS OF CERRETO - COMMUNITY TOURISM**

[www.ibrigantidicerreto.com](http://www.ibrigantidicerreto.com)

Briganti di Cerreto is a cooperative founded in 2003 by a group of young people in Cerreto Alpi in the Apennine mountains.

In the early 2000s a group of inhabitants, determined not to give up seeing the place where they were born, to die, took town's fate into their own hands, forming a cooperative association that today gathers 500 people. They recovered landscape and their territory, and traditional crafts (such as the collection and drying of chestnuts), re-launching a formula of sustainable and authentic tourism, but above all creating a model of economy that today is an example for other mountain realities that are in danger of disappearing.

Its mission is to develop local activities in an ecological way for the welfare of the local community so that residents can earn their living here where they are at home and are not forced to move away. Although forestry is the main source of income, from the very beginning the cooperative has been a protagonist of tourism, combining the economic development of the territory, the broad spectrum of activities of its members, the involvement of the entire local community, and the rediscovery of material and immaterial culture of the past. Community tourism and other activities developed by Briganti di Cerreto have become a famous good practice



example which has been studied at national and international level. Unlike other Italian cooperatives presented in this book, this is not a social cooperative (as foreseen in law 381/1991) but a regular cooperative, although non-profit.

In sixteen years of activity, the Cerreto Brigands created jobs, improved the local economy and landscape, strengthened the community, brought people back to the Apennines and relaunched tourism.

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