



RaiSE

Enhancing social enterprises competitiveness through improved business support policies

Sixth interregional meeting in Westport

Project Meeting Report

29-30 January 2019

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT MEETING IN WESTPORT

CONTEXT

The sixth interregional meeting of the RaiSE project took place in Westport, co. Mayo, Ireland, and the focus of the meeting was the preparation of the six Action Plans of the RaiSE project, as well as the closure of Phase 1. Two partners (IFKA and ERVET) apologised for not being able to attend the meeting due to internal organisational reasons.

Tuesday 29th January 2019: Steering Committee Meeting

Welcome and Overview of the Interregional meeting:

Seamus McCormack and Joan Fahey from WestBIC welcomed the RaiSE partners and their stakeholder companions in the conference room of the social enterprise Leeson Enterprise Centre, and noted the importance of the Social Enterprise sector in Ireland delivering vital services in care of the elderly, childcare, cultural and community activities and environmental services, to name just a few. They explained the two days programme and afterwards, all project partners and stakeholders briefly introduced themselves.

Workshop on Policy landscape & Gap Analysis:

The advisory partner facilitated this workshop, in which each project partner presented a summary of the national & regional framework and the gaps identified in each region. All the presentations answered the questions “what’s in place in the region” and “where are the gaps”, in order to well elaborate the regional Action Plans afterwards:

- Policy landscape & gap analysis in Örebro (Region Örebro Lan)
- Policy landscape & gap analysis in Emilia-Romagna (ERVET) - video
- Policy landscape & gap analysis in Scotland (Scottish Enterprise)
- Policy landscape & gap analysis in Catalonia (ACCIÓ)
- Policy landscape & gap analysis in Ireland (WestBIC)
- Overview of Policy Developments in Ireland (Department of Rural & Community Development, Government of Ireland)
- Incorporation to Policy to Operational Programme (North West Regional Assembly)
- Seminar “Financing social enterprises in Ireland”
- Debate

All the presentations can be found in the RaiSE website library:

<https://www.interregueurope.eu/raise/library/#folder=1872>

Internal management meeting

Financial management and reporting

- Progress Report 3: it is already closed. The ERDF amount corresponding to Semester 3 was transferred to project partners on 23/01/2019.
- Improvements & Lessons learnt from Progress Report 3:
 - Excel file on IOLF: it is very important to send it to the LP just before submitting to the FLC, to solve possible errors.
 - Summary report: it is important to match activities with expenses. It is not necessary to report on activities or publicity actions that don't represent a cost.
 - Costs description: every item or expense has to be explained in detail, even staff costs. The information provided in IOLF is the only one that the JS has for matching activities with expenses.
 - FLC checklists: ask your FLC to include in the checklists as many comments/observations as possible.
- The internal deadline for submitting to the LP the fourth report already validated by the FLC is 01/03/2019. ACCIÓ, as LP, has to send to the JS the Joint Progress Report on 01/04/2019 at the latest.
- The internal deadline for submitting to the LP the fifth report already validated by the FLC is 01/09/2019. ACCIÓ, as LP, has to send to the JS the Joint Progress Report on 01/10/2019 at the latest.
- For the Mid-term review with Interreg Europe Secretariat (April 2019), inputs from partners will be requested: a questionnaire on project implementation and estimation of budget execution for PR5.

Project management

- Good practices guide (main activity of Semester 4): the second good practice has to be submitted through the PLP before the 15th February 2019, and additional GPs have to be delivered to ZSI & ACCIÓ before the same date too. The final good practices guide will be edited and published in pdf by the end of Phase 1.
- Phase 1 Analysis Report (P1AR) will be delivered by the advisory partner by the end of Phase 1.

- Action Plans (main activity of Semester 5): draft Action Plan before the 15th April 2019, final Action Plan before the 15th June 2019. The advisory partner & the lead partner will jointly revise the Action Plans and give feedback.
- Increased professional capacity surveys, for both project partners and stakeholders: they have to be included in the fifth progress report.
- Each project partner has to organise the fourth regional stakeholder meeting before 31st December 2018).
- The following round of Bilateral Skype meetings, which are useful to check on project's progress and facilitate the task of writing the reports, will take place in December 2018.

Next events & Project meetings

- Interregional exchange final conference (Brussels, June 2019). Open seminar: presentation of interregional analysis, best good practices & the Action Plans and Internal management meeting, at the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to the European Union.

Communication

- RaiSE website: we had 1.074 sessions in Semester 4, so we reached our goal of 1.000 sessions per reporting period and are among the “Top 10” most visited Interreg Europe websites. The most read sections are: reviews of meetings and events and the good practices section. 11 news were published in Semester 4.
- RaiSE Twitter: 472 tweets (+92) and 327 followers (+35) until January 2019. It is working very well.
- RaiSE YouTube: 1.197 views (+136) in total. Our promotional video and project meetings videos have lots of followers.
- EU Week of Regions & Cities 2018 – Workshop “Cohesion Policy meets Social Enterprises” (Brussels, 11th October 2018). Led by Emilia-Romagna region and co-organised by Social Seeds and RaiSE. ERVET, IFKA and ACCIÓ will attend.
- EU Week of Regions & Cities 2018 - INTERACT contest “6 projects, 1 slam” (Brussels, 10th October 2018). Paula Santarén, representing RaiSE, won the first place in the contest.

Brainstorming workshop “Designing our Action Plans”

The advisory partner and the lead partner jointly designed a special workshop on designing the Action Plans for the Westport meeting, which had the following objectives:

- Introduction on Action Plans in the context of RaiSE project and the roadmap for the drafting of these Action Plans.
- Problem solving exercise on issues of social enterprise ecosystems and policy implementation while considering the framework conditions.
- Exchange of experiences and discussion on selected issues that social enterprise ecosystems face and how different regions think about them.

RaiSE project partners and stakeholders were split into four groups to discuss the following four topics/challenges:

- A lack of volunteerism can be observed (especially regarding young people) which enforces the lack of time and capacity for running the social enterprise.
- All regions report needs in human resources, more concretely in hiring people with management skills, and business experience.
- Common to all regions is a lack of publicly available funding (and a dependency on that), which often leads to an insecure financial situation.
- Some social enterprises do so well, that they think about expanding their activities to other countries – but how do you start an internationalisation?

The advisory partner designed a special template for the workshop, which was printed in A3 format and completed by every group.

Thanks to the workshop, RaiSE project partners & stakeholders could put into practice a methodology on how to identify key challenges and needs and propose tailored solutions for them.

Workshop template:

RaiSE - Action plan design workshop

Challenge addressed

Key aspects

Potential solutions

Key allies

Outcome and indicators

Monitoring concept

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Westport, 21.01.2018

Group 1: Lack of entrepreneurship in social enterprises

RaiSE - Action plan design workshop

Challenge addressed

LACK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP/VOLUNTEERISM



Key aspects

EDUCATION SYSTEM
GOOD PRACTICES FROM SE TO
BE KNOWN

Potential solutions

VALUES IN SCHOOL: SOCIAL COMPROMISE, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE
CHANGE THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP / SE
PROMOTE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (GRANTS...)

Key allies

ESTABLISHED SE
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Outcome and indicators

NUMBER OF SE STARTED
BY YOUNG PEOPLE
NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE
WORKING ON A SE

Monitoring concept

INTEGRATE IT ON
GOVERNMENT PLANS

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Westport, 29.01.2018

Group 2: Human resources in social enterprises

RaiSE - Action plan design workshop

Challenge addressed

HUMAN RESOURCES - ENSURING SES HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS + EXPERIENCE



- ① Key aspects CAN BE DIFFICULT TO FIND PEOPLE WITH SOCIAL DRIVERS AND NECESSARY BUSINESS EXPERTISE
- ② * PEOPLE WITH HIGHER SKILLSET MAY EXPECT REMUNERATION TO REFLECT THAT
- ③ * SECTOR EXPERTISE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN BUSINESS EXPERTISE
- ④ * LOWER PROFIT MARGINS MAY LEAD TO LESS OPPORTUNITY FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT / TRAINING
- ⑤ * STAFF RETENTION MAY BE AFFECTED IF RELYING ON SHORT-TERM FUNDING / FINANCIAL PLANNING
- ⑥ * FINANCIAL PRESSURES FOR EMPLOYEES AT VARIOUS LIFE STAGES CAN AFFECT CAPACITY + ATTRACTION OF SECTOR
- ⑦ * IDEALISM OF BOARD + BUSINESS ACUMEN OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM (OR VICE VERSA) CAN CAUSE CONFLICT

Potential solutions

- + PROVIDE RANGE OF TRAINING OPTIONS, FUNDED OR SUBSIDISED BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR (① + ③ + ④)
- * INFORMATION CAMPAIGN FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT A MORE VALUE-DRIVEN JOB / MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES (① + ③ + ④)
- * TAX / BENEFITS NEGOTIATED WITH PUBLIC SECTOR TO INCREASE AFFORDABILITY OF WORKING IN SECTOR, INCREASE MORALE AND RECOGNISE CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL SECTOR WORKFORCE (② + ⑤ + ⑥)
- * FACILITATION PROGRAMME - GROUP + 1-2-1 SUPPORT TO ADDRESS CONFLICT + STRATEGY REQUIREMENTS (⑦)

Key allies

CIVIL SERVANTS
POLITICIANS
EDUCATION
SECTOR INTERMEDIARIES
BUSINESS LEADERS

Outcome and indicators

HIGHER RETENTION OF STAFF
INCREASED PROFITABILITY
INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY
MORE JOBS IN THE SECTOR
HIGHER % OF GDP

Monitoring concept

DIRECT SURVEY - PRODUCT-RELATED
NATIONAL CENSUS

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Westport, 29.01.2019

Group 3: Financing social enterprises

RaiSE - Action plan design workshop

Challenge addressed

3. LACK OF GRANT FUNDING + DEPENDENCY

FINANCE

Key aspects

1. CASH FLOW!
2. SEED FUNDING
3. LONG TERM FINANCING
'SUSTAINABLY'
- ↳ TOO SHORT-TERM
4. FINANCIAL SKILLS + TRAINING
5. POLITICAL WILL TO INVEST IN SE

Potential solutions

- LONGER TERM FUNDING (MIN 3Y)
- LONGER " CONTRACTS "
- UPSKILLING & FINANCIAL SKILLS + MARKETING.
- BLENDED FINANCES
- GOVTS SROI - GRANT + % REPAYABLE
- PROVIDE GUARANTEES - RISK SHARE

Key allies

UNIS
EU
GOVTS / national / regional
BANKS (SOCIAL INVESTORS)
PUBLIC AGENCIES / FOUNDATIONS

Outcome and indicators

- INCREASED ACCESS TO FINANCE
- MORE SUSTAINABLE SES
- " CONFIDENCE "
- increase supports to SE
- skills
- investment-readiness

Monitoring concept

- Total amount of investments
- No of SE's supported/receiving
- longevity of organisations
- social invest impact

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Westport, 29.01.2019

Group 4: Internationalisation of social enterprises

RaiSE - Action plan design workshop

Challenge addressed

INTERNATIONALISATION OF SOC. ENT.



Key aspects

- Ready → where to start?
- Scottish Development International + AICÍÓ Sweden not there yet.
- Most demands: EU funding / EU projects.
- Not a priority for S.E.
- Network already established with RaiSE.

Potential solutions

- Existing Platforms → insert the expert there.
- "Successful stories" → real cases of an internationalised S.E. Learn about real barriers.
- Advice each other informally.
- Mentoring programmes mainstream enterprises - social enterprises.
- "Speed dating".

Key allies

- RaiSE partners.
- Int. S.E.
- Public adm.
- Experts on int. advice.

Outcome and indicators

- n° of S.E. that have raised an interest in internationalisation.
- n° of S.E. that have succeed.

Monitoring concept

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Wednesday 30th January 2019: Study Visits

RaiSE partners and stakeholders visited key social enterprises in County Mayo, to learn about the public policies and resources that they use to increase their competitiveness, such as the two Irish good practices for RaiSE [Clann Credo](#) and [Community Services Programme](#):

- [Custom House Studies](#): Social Enterprise Arts Centre.
- [Cúram Family Centre](#): Counselling and Family Support Service.
- [Claremorris Town Hall Theatre](#): Self financing, non-profit making community facility.
- [Claremorris Community Radio](#): Volunteer-led, not-for-profit radio station broadcasting a mix of community news. During the study visit, RaiSE Interreg Europe representatives were interviewed in the radio programme "The way it is" with Anthony McNicholas. Seamus McCormack (WestBIC, Ireland), Anders Bro (Örebro, Sweden), Pauline Graham (Social Firms Scotland) and Paula Santarén (ACCIÓ, Catalonia) talked about RaiSE Interreg Europe project and how Ireland's good practices are inspiring project partners in finding new solutions for financing social enterprises. You can listen to the interview [here](#).
- [Brickens Care Home](#): Community run Housing Association and Care Home.
- [Clár ICH Mayfield Housing Project & Growing Locally Project](#): Voluntary Housing Association and Growing Locally community owned horticultural project.

NEXT STEPS

In the short term, the following activities have to be undertaken:

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES		
Submit the 2 nd Good Practice and additional Good Practices (optional) through the Policy Learning Platform following the methodology for the Good Practices Guide developed by ZSI & ACCIÓ	IFKA, WESTBIC, SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE ERVET, ÖREBRO, ACCIÓ	15/02/2019
Review the first additional Good Practices of each project partner	ZSI & ACCIÓ	04/15/02/04/2019

Prepare draft Action Plan & send it to the advisory partner and the lead partner	IFKA, WESTBIC, SCOTTISH ENTERPRISE ERVET, ÖREBRO, ACCIÓ	15/04/2019
Revise Action Plans & send feedback	ZSI, ACCIÓ	15/05/2019
Prepare Phase 1 Analysis Reports (P1AR)	ZSI	28/06/2019
Prepare the next project meeting in Örebro Brussels (June 2019)April	ÖREBROACCIÓ	04/0417/06/2019
COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION		
Organise Joint Workshop RaiSE-SOCIAL SEEDS – SOCENTSPAs	IFKA & ACCIÓ	28/06913/12/2017
Prepare fifth e-news flash	ACCIÓ	28/061/2019
PROJECT MANAGEMENT & FINANCIAL REPORTING		
Organise third round of bilateral meetings January-June9)	ACCIÓ	28/062/2019
Submission of the second fourthreport to the LP (already validated by the FLC).	ALL PARTNERS	01/033/2019
Submission of the Joint Progress Report to the Joint Secretariat	ACCIÓ	28/0403/2019

PARTICIPANTS LIST

LP – Catalan Agency for Business Competitiveness (ACCIÓ)

1. Clàudia Danesi (ACCIÓ)
2. Juan Luis Aparicio (ACCIÓ)
3. Paula Santarén (ACCIÓ)
4. Maria Roser Hernández (Stakeholder, Directorate-General for the Social Economy, Government of Catalonia)
5. Lourdes Ridameya (Stakeholder, Catalan Institute of Finance)
6. Jordi Vergés (Stakeholder, Ministry of Presidency, Government of Catalonia)

P3 – Innovation & Management Centre Limited (WestBIC)

1. Seamus McCormack (WestBIC)
2. Joan Fahey (WestBIC)
3. John Brennan (WestBIC)
4. Kathleen Calvey (WestBIC)
5. Tracey Hannon (Stakeholder, Clann Credo)
6. Alan Curtis (Stakeholder, Pobal)
7. Brendan Whelan (Stakeholder, Social Finance Foundation)
8. Caitlin Connolly (Stakeholder, North West Regional Assembly)
9. Lorraine Corcoran (Stakeholder, Social Enterprise Strategy Group)
10. William Parnell (Stakeholder, Department of Rural and Community Affairs, Government of Ireland)
11. Anthony McNicholas (Stakeholder, Claremorris Community Radio)

P4 – Scottish Enterprise

1. Darah Zahran (Scottish Enterprise)
2. Suzanne Orchard (Scottish Enterprise)
3. Pauline Graham (Stakeholder, Social Firms Scotland)

P6 – Region Örebro County

1. Anders Bro (Region Örebro County)
2. Micael Björk (Stakeholder, Re:form)
3. Anna Andersson (Stakeholder, St. Mary)
4. Maria Holm (Stakeholder, EVA Kooperativet)
5. Andreas Molin (Stakeholder, Möckelnföreningarna)
6. Annika Dellevåg (Stakeholder, Miljövårdscentrum)

P7 – Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)

1. Stefan Philipp (ZSI)
2. Wolfgang Haider (ZSI)