

# Building Up Social Solidarity Economy (BUSSE)

is an Erasmus+ project that focuses on disseminating SSE know-how and practices in Central and Eastern Europe.

Main goal of the project is to enhance peoples' skills and knowledge of SSE and its transformative potential.

To achieve that, project partners have developed an informal educational programme and publications with focus on four themes from SSE:

**Starting up, Community Building, Cooperatives, and Food Sovereignty.**



## STARTING UP

Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) is about "real utopia". Explore existing alternatives, copy them, develop them, invent a new approach.

### • Learn from case studies:

Look out for good practices and ones that failed: on the internet, by contacting projects and enterprises.

### • Take part in field visits:

Visiting "practices" is always inspiring. Talk to real people involved in a SSE initiative! Be clear which aspects you would like to learn about.

### • Organize democratic meetings:

They are at the center of SSE. Once you have a community, discuss what makes meetings democratic and effective.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING

To ensure healthy development, sustainability and resilience of an SSE enterprise it has to be supported by building a community around it. Building a community creates lasting bonds between members and ensures the commitment needed to develop an economic model that is based on people's needs and a common good. In Social Solidarity Economy it is the people, their skills and knowledge that are at the centre.

• **Learn to work together.** A community is processual and continually in flux. Foster the ability of everyone to articulate their views, attitudes, and needs and create procedures to address conflict and disagreement.

• **Know your Community.** Find out who are the people in and around your community and choose the best ways to approach them.

• **Reach out.** Besides working on communication and relations within the community remember to reach out for new members and look for alliances among other social actors and relevant movements.

## COOPERATIVES

A co-operative (co-op) is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise. The co-operative movement is an important part of SSE.

• **Democratic decision-making and ownership.** All decisions in co-ops are taken democratically by their members. Primary members have equal voting rights – one member has one vote. Members also democratically control the capital of the co-op.

• **Cooperation as a means of relating to the world.** Co-ops are cooperating with other co-ops or other SSE initiatives and organisations and participate in building the co-operative movement, support their local community and respect non-human nature.

## FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Food Sovereignty aims to transform the entire food system: from socially and environmentally destructive to a regenerative one – employing resilient agricultural practices and respect to nature and all people. Easy ways to join the movement:

- **Become local** – Choose from plentiful varieties on a local market rather than uniform industrial production in supermarkets.
- **Become a gardener** – on your own, in an allotment garden, or a community garden. Or get inspired by guerilla gardeners and look for a forgotten spot in the city!
- **Become part of a local Community Supported Agriculture group** (or start one)!
- **Join (or start) a food co-operative** – distribute healthy and sustainable food.
- **Be part of a policy change** – promote Food Sovereignty values!