



MANIFESTO OF THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY EUROPE NETWORK BARCELONA 2011

THE GLOBALISATION OF SOLIDARITY

LIMA 1997, QUEBEC 2001, DAKAR 2005, LUXEMBURG 2009 are the dates of the key meetings that mark the creation of the international solidarity economy network. The process is currently visiting and meeting in Barcelona, the city named the "Rose of Fire" by the worker's movement in the early 20th century. The aim of this meeting is the birth of the Solidarity Economy Europe network, (RIPESS EUROPE – Réseau Intercontinental de Promotion de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire, Europe)

We, the representatives of Belgian, Catalan, French, Hungarian, Luxemburg, Portuguese, Spanish, Swiss and Romanian networks, sectorial and inter-sectorial networks as well as people from Germany and Italy, declare that after three fruitful days' work and exchange on the 8th, 9th and 10th of September 2011, we have created the RIPESS EUROPE Network. The network has Articles of Association, and we have elected representatives to the Coordination Committee for the next two years.

The creation of the RIPESS EUROPE Network is a reminder to us all, that we have travelled a long road of struggles and experiences that have marked the social and political history of Europe. Whenever men and women in the smallest village of the Old Continent have come together and developed a collective, emancipatory response to their needs, they have contributed to the progress of the social and solidarity economy. Cooperatives, self-help organisations, organisations of resistance movements, associations, Credit Unions and trade unions as well as popular education circles and universities, encyclopaedia centres, workers' libraries, choirs, theatre companies...they have all progressively become part of our social and cultural heritage; we are both the children born of this heritage and those who intend to continue bearing these ideals forward to the future.

The creation of the RIPESS EUROPE Network provides us with the opportunity to highlight the fact that the current political, economic and social model of organisation is characterised by a desire to achieve profit,

competition, individualism and violence against people. Contrary to this, the position of SEE aims to overcome the impacts of the current crisis and to promote organisational approaches from local to global that support freedom, reciprocity, solidarity and egalitarian exchange. We reject both the causes and the consequences of the current crisis. This crisis is the result of speculation on uncontrolled financial flows and an equally uncontrolled economic model that makes people poorer and excludes an increasing number of people and territories. It does so by destroying both the natural and cultural heritage of the whole world.

Meanwhile, thousands of concrete experiences that identify with solidarity economy exist both in Europe and elsewhere in the world. Self-managed producers' cooperatives, solidarity markets, responsible consumption and food sovereignty, alternative finance, time banks and proximity services, environmental and ecological initiatives, projects that include gender balance and that are pedagogical, fair trade, local development associations and sustainable social enterprises... In all spheres of economic life, production, commercialisation and consumption as well as finance, new organisations are constantly emerging. They are opening up new paths and want to overcome the logic of individual profiteering of capital and trade-based economy, the bureaucratisation and hierarchy of the public sector. The determination and ways of articulating and coordinating this increasing number of initiatives is increasing; we can witness the creation of representative platforms, consortia, federations and networks. This is the perspective in which the present creation of the RIPESS EUROPE Network is situated.

These are the values and the experience upon which we can build, and that we intend to use to build an economy and society that are both fairer, less predatory and more inclusive.

We realise that this will be no easy task. We shall have to face complex and important challenges in the future. Democracy needs to become part of economic life; we need to strengthen and extend our experience, to become less marginal and more visible, and integrate the multitude of economic, social and environmental initiatives at territorial and vertical levels. We also need to develop our critical approach to the traditional economy as well as the theory of solidarity economy, to fight poverty, exclusion and inequality, improve the quality of life, respect nature, defend peoples' culture and their right to self-determination, to do away with corporative logic, and promote the general interest of citizens. We also need to call upon and mobilise the public sector, to build alliances and networks with the actors in other social movements. We must assert our legitimacy and gain recognition and become accepted in dialogue with local, regional, national and European authorities. Finally, we do not wish to be limited by European borders, we want to play an active role, and participate in the globalisation of solidarity.

Furthermore, the creation of the RIPESS EUROPE Network provides us with the opportunity to assert that it is possible to build a future that is different from the current uncontrolled economic model, and that it is possible to build another world.

We are of the firm conviction that not only is another world possible, but that it is increasingly necessary.

May the fire of the rose shine on the solidarity economy. From Barcelona we proclaim: "Long live the solidarity economy of the whole world!"