

CO - OP!

Social cooperatives as a tool for youth employment

the project:

"CO - OP! Social Cooperatives as a tool for youth employment" is a project of the training course in the frame of the KA1 of the "Erasmus +" Programme. The aim of the project is to promote business in the form of a social cooperative as a solution for different social problems, mainly related to unemployment of youth. The name "co - op" is the common name for cooperatives and in the language of the youth it means also: "cooperative or cooperation mode", which stands for playing together in computer games by two or more players against the artificial intelligence (source: wikipedia). Therefore, the name of the project itself refers both to explore opportunities of work in the form of social cooperatives, as well as the need for cooperation of young people from different countries, particularly in the present, difficult economic situation.

The training course is organized by the Foundation of European Initiatives in Silesia in partnership with other EU organizations that support entrepreneurship among young people. The project will take place in the Polish Tatras, on 1 – 7 of December 2016. During the project, young Europeans will learn how to run a business in social cooperative form and how to respond by that to a variety of social problems. They will learn how to fundraise, work in a team and know benefits of multiculturalism at work. All activities will be conducted by non-formal education method and with support of variety of IT tools (blended education method).

The result of the project will be to increase youth chances in the labor market by disseminating knowledge about social cooperatives and team work competences. Key to achieve that will be Virtual Learning Environment (e-learning platform), created by participants and containing different IT tools for social economy learning (such as: Glossary, definitions, problem based modules, Q&A and presentations). Digital approach will also increase IT skills of all participants and open for them new possibilities of work and education in future.

Participants involved in the Project:

2 or 3 participants per organizations. There is no age limit, but we prefer youth workers or young people in 18 – 30 aged interested in entrepreneurship.

Please be aware that we are looking for participants that are motivated to use gained knowledge in **practise** (to start or intensify business activity in their local society). That is also one of our target as a organizers – we plan to settle a social business after that project and any other experience will multiply this outcome.

Duration:

1 – 7 of December 2016 (it could change a little in meantime).

About FEIS:

Foundation of European Initiatives in Silesia (FEIS) was founded in 2010. Its main objectives are: development of civil society, promoting European awareness, inclusion of people excluded or at risk of exclusion to participate in social activeness, mobilization of young people to participate in public affairs and promotion of cultural and geographical values of polish province – Silesia in Europe.

Since its beginning the Foundation has been proactive in organizing youth exchanges. **Until now FEIS had completed five projects from “Erasmus+” Programme (sixth is in progress) and eight projects under the Programme "Youth in Action"**, during which developed such topics as: future of the European Union, youth entrepreneurship, youth participation in democracy and volunteering in general.

The Foundation also participated as a partner of the third sector in the project Comenius – Regio, implemented by the district of Będzin. FEIS pursued also a number of activities at the local level. One of them was a long-term action "Friendly FEIS of volunteering", during which the volunteers of the Foundation organized meetings with youth in schools in aim to promote the concept of volunteering and teach about practical side of this activity.

FEIS has also supported a number of other activities. Their volunteers took part in a series of training courses, projects, exchanges and actions at international level. Currently, the Foundation's headquarters is located in Bytom, and the level of its activity aspires to be a regional.



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Schedule of the project:

E-activity before TC (October – November 2016)

- How to use different IT tools in process of blended education e.g.: Padlet, Moodle, Prezi, Youtube, social media (e-learning course for participants, 3 – 5 hours).
- Working in groups on different topics connected with social cooperative in Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) with active support of organizers.
 - "Back to past" – case study of first co-op's in XIX/XX cent (2-3 hours),
 - "Social cooperatives in our countries" – economic research (2-3 hours),
 - "What a social cooperative is ?" – working on legal/economic definitions (1-2 hours),
 - Making the general agreement, Fears, expectations & contributions (1 hour),
 - Find me on the Galaxy of social economy – presentation of participants & organizations (1hour),
 - Q&A forum.

Training Course (December 2016)

day 1

- Arrivals
- Break the ice! – part 1
- Glossary –wiki for social economy, prepared everyday
- myLOG –Individual journal of learning (by different IT tools)

day 2

- Break the ice! – part 2
- Lets start CO-OP! – part 1 – team building
- Youthpass party

day 3

- Lets start CO-OP! – part 2
- Differences and similarities: Co-ops vs Companies – topic introduction
- How to build a social co-op? – practical activity
- International evening – part 1

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day 4

- Where to build a social co-op? (problem based learning)
- Road map as a tool for social inclusion – practical exercise
- Q&A – case study preparation
- International evening – part 2

day 5

- Case study in the Social Cooperative in Krakow
- Q&A implementation
- How to promote social cooperative – practical exercise

day 6

- Building an e-learning platform (Virtual Learning Environment) by different IT tools for future results dimension
- Project's evaluation

day 7

- Networking for future Project
- Departures

After TC (January–February 2017)

- Establish VLE (Virtual Learning Environment – e-platform for learners interested in social economy) with included TC results :
 - Glossary
 - Short modules ("Back to past", "Social cooperatives in our countries", "What a social cooperative is ?"),
 - Q&A
 - "How to build a social co-op?" – learning activity
 - "Road map to social problem solution" – short modules
- Active dissemination of VLE by participating organizations

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