

# Good practices in social enterprises: social economy, participatory processes and inclusion

## Report

20th December 2021

Zaragoza, Spain

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, EPR and Fundación Rey Ardid co-organised the National Awareness Raising Event “Good practices in social enterprises: social economy, participatory processes and inclusion” in Zaragoza, Spain. The meeting, that was streamed, was joined by 30 people in-person and 46 online including EPR members Fundación INTRAS and Fundación ONCE.

### Welcome and Introduction

After a ‘welcome coffee’, Sabina Lobato, Vice-Chairperson at EPR kicked-off the event introducing the objectives of EPR national awareness raising events, such as reaching multiple actors at national level, influencing certain policies of the sector, or making known the work of EPR to national actors and service providers to people with disabilities; Noelia de Mur, Enterprise’s Manager at Fundación Rey Ardid welcomed participants to Zaragoza and introduced Fundación Rey Ardid.

### EPR Presentation

Alicia Gómez Campos, Senior Public Affairs and Community Officer at EPR, presented EPR’s mission, work, activities and expertise highlighting the work the organisation does in employment of people with disabilities and EU funded projects contributing to improving the situation of people with disabilities in the labour market Alicia also mentioned EPR’s work in policy and advocacy with other European partners and networks such as Social Services Europe, Inclusive Labour Market Alliance or European Alliance for Mental Health Employment and Work (EUMH Alliance). She informed the audience about initiatives at European level related to the social economy such as: the main points of the recently launched by the European Commission Action Plan on Social Economy; the European Pillar of Social Rights and how it related to work and people with disabilities and the New European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that is focused on the fulfilment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which includes in article 27, the right of people with disabilities to work under equal conditions.

### Conference ‘Instituto Tecnológico de Aragón’

Teresa Gaspar, Innovation project manager at ITAINNOVA, introduced the Technological Institute of Aragon which is a technology Center dependent on the Aragon government that guides and helps companies to be more competitive and excellent hand in hand with innovation and technological development. Their work focuses on developing new products or creating new business models and to carry out R&D projects, consulting or technical assistance services in laboratories.

She informed of some of their European projects related to social economy:

- +RESILIENT Project: aims to tackle the need for innovation conducive to increased socially-responsive competitiveness of SME’s & simulate new jobs, especially for companies operating in the social economy.
- Identify aparophobic (hate to poverty) content in Twitter: identify the cause and the affected group of people.
- Physiomate: a project aimed to help doctors to evaluate and detect the effectiveness of treatment in Parkinson’s patients.



- 'Mochila Medicalizada': a project oriented to the development of capture team that send physiological parameters to a reference center.

Teresa also introduced other non-European programs such as 'innoidea' which supports entrepreneurs creating and consolidating new enterprise through technologic acceleration, or AWE (Academy for Women Entrepreneurs) a project funded by the USA embassy in Spain for entrepreneur women in any sector to help them starting their business.

### Panel discussion 1: EPR, European good practices

The first panel discussion of the day was led by Alicia Gómez Campos. It was dedicated to exchange and debate about European good practices in social enterprises.

- Alicia presented and shared good practices from EPR members through two studies: "Employment Models within Social Economy and role in including PWD into Labour Market and Society (2018)" and "Social enterprise as tools to put into practice the European Pillar of Social Rights and active inclusion (2019)". Both studies focused on gathering good practices in promoting the employment of people with disabilities through social enterprises models.
- Sabina Lobato, Director of Inserta Empleo/Fundación ONCE, presented the initiative 'D-WISE Network'. The project aims to build a European partnership that brings together work inclusion social enterprises (WISEs) that employ people with disabilities (D-WISE). The outputs of the network were: a description of the EU regulatory framework, a summary of international policies, a comparative study, six study cases and policy recommendations.
- Ines González, Social Educator at Fundación INTRAS and Laura Sánchez, Psychologist at Fundación INTRAS, introduced their organization and their project 'Manzanal ecológico' a project based on organic farming/agriculture and aimed to a double process of recovery: the recovery of the life project of people with mental health issues and the recovery of an ecological apple orchard. The initial objectives of the project were to train 12 people with mental health problems, to hire 5 at least persons and to recover 350 apple orchards.

### Panel discussion 2: Good practices from Spain

The second panel discussion was moderated by Sergio Lacamara, Knowledge Management Manager at Fundación Rey Ardid. The aim of this section was to share good practices based in the Spanish territory (Aragon) by Marisa Esteve Amal, Manager of the Aragonese Association of Insertion Companies at AREI, Pepa Torres, Federación Empresarial Española de Asociaciones de Centros Especiales de Empleo (FEACEM) and Belén Cañadas Rodríguez, People Management (EMPRESY) at Fundación Rey Ardid.

- Marisa Esteve introduced AREI and their work with inclusion enterprises and their role in European projects since 2003. The main result of their work was the increase of inclusion enterprises to 17 as a result of the promotion and dissemination of the inclusion companies as an inclusive tool; and in national level, an institutional recognition of the insertions companies at a political level thanks to their advocacy.
- Pepa Torres presented FEACEM a non-profit Business Federation of Special Employment Centers, formed by 16 business organization linked to the associative movement of people with disabilities. Their aim is to represent and contribute to the development of competitive and efficient organizations that create social and economic value, and improve the level of employability of people with disabilities. Both speakers agreed on the relevance of being part of networks and work within networks and in different areas to have an impact and take advantage of new opportunities. Networks are essential.
- Belén Cañadas introduced Fundación Rey Ardid and their different processes of insertion at Fundación Rey Ardid including a personalized insertion plan within the insertion company, an individualized support program through a special employment center, and a labor insertion program for people with mental health problems.

## Closing

The final session was led by Francisco J Galán Calvo, President at 'Plataforma del Tercer Sector' in Aragon, who presented the 'Plataforma del Tercer Sector' in Aragon; a space of interaction of organisations that advocate for the rights of people in situations of poverty or risk of exclusion.

## Evaluation

Participants gave the meeting an average of 4.37 including the areas of knowledge, expectations met and organisation of the meeting. Participants highlighted their satisfaction with the Panel discussion sessions and the exchange of good practices at and national and European level.

- To focus on the article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which includes the right of people with disabilities to work under equal conditions. It's fundamental to position against the idea of 'sheltered workshops' or 'segregated employment' included in article 27.
- Countries need to position themselves about social economy and social enterprises.
- In Spain the employment model requires to be reviewed. At European level the percentage of inclusión at enterprises considered inclusive for labor groups is of 50%.
- Stop using certain terminology to refer to social enterprises. These are enterprises that compete in the labor market and develop activities with the same value as the rest of enterprises, they should be considered the same, as employers

