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ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΣΥΝΕΤΑΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΕΥΝΩΝ

& ΜΕΛΕΤΩΝ (ΙΣΕΜ)

Title of abstract: Social economy aspects in 3 European regions. Findings and recommendations from a transregional cooperation project

Spyros Papaspyrou, Directorate of Development Planning, Region of Western Greece

Abstract : (max. 300 words)

The Region of Western Greece together with Province of Burgos (Spain) and Oulu Region (Finland) met from February 2021 to January 2022 under the umbrella of COSME program to implement a project called AGRO SE VI. The project led to the development of a Blueprint for the creation of a Virtual Incubator supporting Social Entrepreneurship in the agri-food sector with the aim to develop a resource available for authorities seeking additional tools, for providing support to new and existing social enterprises which are active in the agri-food sector.

Although the three regions are characterized as rural ones with the same demographic profile the situation regarding social economy is different. Different starting points, different motivation, different laws, different mentalities for social firms and society result to various perceptions and practices in the field and vice versa. What seems most important is that despite the broad acceptance and visibility of the notion of social economy over the last years still there is a long way for social firms to take the part of economy they should. On the parallel, administrations, in national or local level, have to support further the development of social economy and help shaping the attitude of society towards social firms. Good practices detected in the project suggest that social entrepreneurship is closely associated with meeting needs at local/regional levels therefore local/regional agents should develop activities for further integrating social entrepreneurship into the existing framework for local development. Social innovation and innovation driven by circular economy can be also a crucial factor to the further development of social economy in regional scale. The balance between social and entrepreneurial dimension of a social firm is something also to be further explored.

Keywords: administration, social entrepreneurship, agro- food, innovation