

# NEWSLETTER, APRIL 2024



Project “SURE” aims to design resources to train and equip those responsible for supporting business creation and self-employed entrepreneurs on the themes of ecological and social transition, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability competences. The project wants to put CSR principles at the heart of the business model and the daily practices of self-employed people.

The project gathers 5 organisations from four European countries: CO-ACTIONS (France), Agence LUCIE (France), POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ (Belgium), CCI VRATSA (Bulgaria), ARIS FORMAZIONE E RICERCA (Italy).



# Final Conference of the project SURE: Self-employed entrepreneurship for just transition in Europe

## Summary

Organised in Brussels on 10 April 2024, the final conference brought together over 50 participants: trainers and coaches, entrepreneurs, representatives of the Brussels-Capital, Wallonia and Nouvelle-Aquitaine (N-A) regions, representatives of European association networks, students, representatives of cooperatives, representatives of the Bulgarian trade union confederation and representatives of Belgian, French and Italian associations.

The conference was organized by POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ-PLS. Denis Stokkink - its president observed that the aim of the conference is to contribute to making the economy of the European Union (EU) sustainable and inclusive.



## Summary of the conference - continuation

Cécile Marsan (Director of the Co-actions entrepreneurs' cooperative in Nouvelle-Aquitaine), pointed out that it was the Erasmus+ programme that had made this transnational cooperation between Belgian, Bulgarian, French and Italian partners possible.



She also pointed out that the three results are available on the project's website: <https://sure-project.eu>

- **An assessment tool** that enables the intermediate person to help the entrepreneur diagnose his or her sustainable practices, and to take steps to improve them by making appropriate recommendations, particularly in terms of well-being at work, the environment, regulations and human rights, purchasing policies, etc.
- **A training tool** that provides key elements for trainers so that they can incorporate the various dimensions of sustainable development into their entrepreneurial training.
- **A white paper** offering a series of recommendations to self-employed entrepreneurs and political decision-makers to enable the self-employed entrepreneurs to integrate a CSR policy on the theme of green and social skills.

Brigitte Fellahi-Brognaux - Head of Unit, Social and Inclusive Entrepreneurship, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission, presented the Social Economy Aciton Plan and its achievements. She reminded that "It's important for everyone to get involved, and at every level."



## Summary of the conference - continuation

### Policies and stakeholders at the service of social and inclusive entrepreneurship

Isabelle Grippa CEO, Brussels Agency for Entrepreneurship "hub.brussels". She is a leader driving entrepreneurship in the Brussels-Capital region through her role as CEO of hub.brussels. With a focus on combining public support policies for businesses and promoting social and environmental innovation, she is committed to accelerating the region's economic transition.

Jacques Le Priol - Neo Terra Project Manager, Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region. He is a driving force behind the Neo Terra initiative in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, aimed at instigating environmental and social transitions within public policies. With a focus on sustainable development and community resilience, he advocates for a holistic approach to addressing societal challenges.

"It is essential to place human beings at the heart of the balances sought by the transitions in our societies."



## Summary of the conference - continuation

### Promoting entrepreneurship towards transition: ways forward

Céline Viardot collaborates with Smart Germany to train businesses in Belgium and France, emphasizing aligning operations with core values for fair pricing. She stressed the significance of integrating mission, vision, and values with European engagement for direct collaboration and nurturing business growth.

Sophie Humbert, VP of CRESS N-A, highlighted the social economy's pervasive influence and advocates for supporting CSR approaches and adapting business models. She discussed the positive impact of 'transition' for social economy players, promoting tools like the Ecological Redirection Guide for ecological transformation.

Jean-François Herz, co-director of SAW-B, advises on socially and economically innovative projects, advocating for meeting social needs, relocalizing production, and promoting cooperative practices. He showcased Belgian projects like food belts and citizen energy cooperatives while acknowledging communication challenges faced by social enterprises.



## Summary of the conference - Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations from the event emphasized the importance of local action and collaboration in driving forward the social economy.

Participants highlighted the need for policies and stakeholders to focus on action at the local level, rather than solely at the global level.

Examples were given of approaches that integrate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria into support for entrepreneurs and communities.

There was recognition of the challenges in changing practices, including the need for resources and funding. Microfinance and other financing tools were mentioned as potential incentives for supporting innovative, social, and environmental projects.

Overall, the call was for cooperation and collaboration among all stakeholders to drive meaningful change in the social economy.



## WHITE PAPER - WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

- It is the third deliverable of SURE project;
- It offers a series of recommendations for self-employed entrepreneurs to enable them to integrate Corporate Social Responsibility approach on the theme of green and social skills;
- It contains examples of successful stories;
- It offers recommendations for policy makers (local authorities, etc.);
- It contains perspectives;
- It is accessible at: <https://sure-project.eu/publications/white-paper-on-csr/>.
- It is available in 4 languages: Bulgarian, English, French and Italian.



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**WEB:**

<https://sure-project.eu/>