

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL ECONOMY...

THE REVES ORGANISATION

REVES*, which translated into English stands for the European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy, is the only European network that brings together local authorities and other social economy bodies. The purpose of the network is to create stable partnerships and common policies for sustainable local development. In addition, REVES is working towards increased involvement from citizens.

REVES was established in Reggio Calabria and Östersund in 1996. Through the manifesto taken in Genoa, Italy in September 1997, REVES was declared to be an international non-profit society. The network began its activities through various different districts, organisations and authorities.

A few examples of group members include Östersund (Sweden), Reggio Calabria (Italy), Bruxelles-Capitale (Belgium) and Roubaix (France), as well as CECOP**.

Over the years, the number of members in the network has increased dramatically and it has developed several key concepts: membership, participation, social context and quality work – in order to create a new, multi-sided local welfare. The network is based on the idea that the local community is an important basis for active citizenship and to be able to meet citizens' needs in the best possible way. The network's activities are combined with the EU's visions and strongly bound to the local development dynamic and through these, REVES is attempting to influence decisions at a European level and share experiences at a local level.

Through constantly establishing and developing national networks, and thanks to major commitment from REVES members, the network is expanding eastwards and into the area around the Mediterranean.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

At a local level, communicating opinions and solutions aimed at EU institutions within key areas such as local leadership, employment contracts, societal involvement, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and long-term development.

Developing projects with the goal of identifying and sharing experiences at a European level. Through the distribution, transfer and mutual participation among the network's members and special projects, REVES is creating a laboratory for the development of social innovation and the sharing of knowledge and experience.

REVES PROVIDES INCREASED VALUE

At a European level, local authorities and organisations are contributing to fulfilling EU's ambitious goals to have 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, powerful to a significant increase of the economy with more and better work and more social involvement' by 2010. REVES is working to develop democracy and strengthen cross-border cooperation, which contributes to local and social development. Through active citizenship, solidarity, participation, responsibility and leadership; societal involvement, relationships and confidence in society are improved. REVES generally encourages a higher degree of societal involvement and an economic development. Cooperation within REVES is based upon the prioritising of socio-economic goals to develop and create new kinds of work, societal involvement and development at a local level.

As a result of the work that REVES does, the term Socially Responsible Territories (TSR) was coined with the ambition of establishing a concrete model for social responsibility, better leadership and significant development. Through building further upon innovative experience at a local level, REVES has developed an instrument for social production, consumption and financing for all economic and social organizations. With the help of TSR, REVES has entered into cooperation with organisations striving for better conditions for the coming generations.

* Réseau Européen des Villies & Régions de l'Économie Sociale

** The European Confederation of Workers Co-operatives, Social Co-operatives and Social and Participative Enterprises

FACTS

Social economy

Social Economy became an official term within the EU in 1989. The term refers to a 'third' sector alongside the private and public sectors. The term includes cooperative and non-profit associations, but also private companies that participate in operations where profit is not the leading motive.

Characteristic of social economy are new kinds of cooperation between e.g. companies, authorities and charities.

... FOR THE COMING GENERATIONS