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INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL ECONOMY
“SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY: MOVING TOWARDS A NEW
ECONOMIC SYSTEM”, BUCHAREST, ROMANIA, JUNE 6-9, 2019)**

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Claudia PETRESCU¹

Abstract

The 7th CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy called “Social and Solidarity Economy: Moving Towards a New Economic System” was organized in Bucharest, Romania, on June 6-9, 2019. The conference gathered more than 140 paper’s presentations about social and solidarity economy in 35 parallel sessions. The paper aims to present the structure of the conference, the main topics of the parallel and of the plenary sessions.

The 7th CIRIEC International Research Conference on Social Economy called “Social and Solidarity Economy: Moving Towards a New Economic System” took place in Bucharest, Romania between June 6-9, 2019. The Conference was organized by CIRIEC International (the International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy) in partnership with Solidarity Laboratory, University of Bucharest (Faculty of Sociology and Social Work), National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, and

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Civil Society Development Foundation. More information could be found at <http://www.solidaritate.eu/index.php/ciriec-2019/>.

As a recognition of the efforts for the development of the social economy sector undertaken in the last 15 years by Romanian researchers and practitioners, this prestigious international conference on social economy topics was held for the first time in Central and Eastern Europe.

The conference brought together social and solidarity economy researchers, representatives of international organizations (International Labour Organisation – ILO, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs – UNDESA, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development – UNRISD, UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy – UNTFSSSE, International Cooperative Alliance, European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, European Economic Social Committee) and national public institutions' representatives. The conference's structure includes four plenary sessions for debating various topics related to social and solidarity economy with researchers and representatives of international organisations, one round table and 35 parallel sessions for papers' presentation.

The four plenary sessions were dedicated to presenting the various models of social enterprises existing at national level, to discuss the initiatives in the field of social economy at European and international level, and to analyze the perspectives of future development of social economy. Patrick Klein, Head of the Social Economy Team at the European Commission, DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW), Unit „Advanced Technologies, Clusters and Social Economy”, Alain Coheur from European Economic Social Committee and Victor Meseguer, Director – Social Economy Europe discussed about the social and solidarity economy future in Europe. The President of International Cooperative Alliance – Ariel Guarco, President of EURICSE – Carlo Borzaga, and President of CIRIEC – Marie J. Bouchard debated about the future of social and solidarity economy in the world.

The CIRIEC Conference gathered 250 participants from 42 countries from all over the world (European Union, South America, Africa, Asia) who discussed about various topics related to social economy. The Conference had 35 parallel sessions, with more than 140 paper's presentations.

The Conference had challenging parallel thematic workshops dedicated to topics such as: social enterprises and sustainable development goals, social innovation and social economy, cooperatives, worker owned enterprises, social economy evaluation, new technologies and social and solidarity economy, finance for social and solidarity economy, social economy ecosystems, dimensions and typologies of social enterprises, social and solidarity economy and food sustainability, commons, social and solidarity economy and local sustainable development.

During the conference was organized also one round table with representatives of international organizations that discussed about new trends and challenges in

global economic system and the role of social economy in it. The topic of the round table was “Moving Towards a New Economic System” and it was moderated by Marie J. Bouchard, president of CIRIEC International Scientific Commission on Social and Cooperative Economy and professor at Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada.

The conference was an opportunity to discuss the latest research challenges and topics in the field of social economy, but also to learn about the various initiatives in the field adopted at international or European level. It also aimed at promoting the field among national level decision makers.