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Social Entrepreneurship in the European Union

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“An operator in the social economy whose **main objective is social impact rather than profit-making** for owners or shareholders. It operates by providing goods and services for the market in an **entrepreneurial and innovative fashion** and uses its profits primarily to achieve social objectives. It is managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involves employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by its commercial activities.”

-European Commission

Examples of Social Entrepreneurship & Social Enterprise in the European Union

EKON Association
Poland

EKON is an Association of the Disabled for the Environment. It provides a social service in Warsaw, Poland while employing the mentally disabled, a population which has been traditionally excluded from the job market. The public is responsible for learning how to properly sort the waste from the recyclable material and then placing the properly sorted recycling bags outside of their residence. EKON workers collect, transport and re-sort the bagged items before condensing them into “bales” for the city recycling center. Emotional support and employment guidance is also offered to the workers.

53% of EKON’s employees are mentally disabled (469 employees)

31% of the packaging waste recycling collected in Warsaw is collected by EKON

EKON is an illustrative example of a European social enterprise for several reasons. Its basic operation is to provide a service for the public, recycling collection and re-sorting. Rather than pursue this service providing in a profit-driven way, EKON has chosen to increase social value by employing the socially excluded. In conclusion, EKON operates within some traditional business parameters while simultaneously accomplishing EU goals of social inclusion, employment, and environmental sustainability.

For more information please visit their website at ekon.org.pl

Community Campus 87
United Kingdom (est. 1980s)

Community Campus 87 (CC87) is a multi-faceted and largely self-sustaining social enterprise focusing on social issues related to homelessness and unemployment. It has various programs, each dealing with a particular issue. The Community Campus Trading, for example, is a subsidiary company of CC87 which provides many manual labor services (construction, plumbing, etc.) for private, public, voluntary and community sectors of the community. What makes this unique is that CC87 simultaneously trains and employs local youth and under-employed individuals. Another facet is their recent partnership for remodeling vacant and dilapidated housing, called Empty Homes. Through this program they will refurbish underutilized spaces to create better quality, sustainable and affordable housing. An additional facet of their model is their support for new homeowners. Home ownership is a responsibility wracked with obstacles and possibilities for failure. CC87 works along with these new owners to stop the cycle of homelessness.

Community Campus 87 (CC87) uses a variety of business principles to ensure its long-term financial stability. It pursues expansions and partnerships, it provides community services for hire and it

networks with parties interested in replication or cooperation. CC87 differs from an average enterprise in many ways but is remarkable in its social innovation. CC87 prioritizes improving the quality of living for its homeless clients and its under-employed trainees. It pursues environmental stewardship through its Empty Homes project. Compassion and smart business principles seem to co-exist in CC87's efforts to increase social value.

For more information please visit their website at communitycampus87.org

Barka Foundation for Mutual Aid
Poland (Original), the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland and Canada

Barka is a foundation to include and empower some of society's most excluded members. It accomplishes this goal through an evolving array of means but its perhaps best known method is its farming communities. These communities are built around the concepts of agriculture and group support. The members farm the land together while also participating in therapy and training. Members have a place to live, neighbors to depend on, and services to empower them to succeed upon leaving (vocational training, emotional support, financial and legal advice). The farming communities seek to be self-sustaining and to involve the neighboring villages. In recent years, Barka has expanded to include 70 Centres of Social Integration (which provide vocation training and advice), 100 public-private partnerships (facilitating and guiding the creation of more social enterprises), and franchises/models in four new countries (three of which are EU Member States).

Barka pursues social inclusion, employment, environmental sustainability and poverty reduction in a manner which calls upon several business principles. Most notably, Barka provides work and training for the unemployed while simultaneously improving social value.

For more information please visit their website at barka.org.pl/node/115

SINEO
France

SINEO is a water-free carwash with facilities all across France. It replaces water and soap with 100% natural & biodegradable products. In addition, SINEO employs member of society who are not yet well integrated into the job market (examples could be individuals with disabilities, addictions, criminal records, etc.).

SINEO operates in many ways as a business but has made uncompetitive, profit-crippling decisions in order to increase social value (SINEO's higher risk employment method and expensive cleaning product strategy). SINEO was created by an exceptionally dedicated and visionary entrepreneur who had to pursue several formulas with green chemical labs and work with a variety of investors. The result is a social business which values environmental stewardship, social inclusion, and employment.

For more information please visit their website at sineo.fr

