



**Webinar : “Co-designing the European Action Plan for the Social Economy Workshop Solidarische Ökonomie”**

**Promoting collective entrepreneurship  
to build an economy that works  
for people and the planet**

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# Who speaks to you?

## Short profile

**Dr. Burghard Flieger**: economist and sociologist, Freiburg in Germany, advises, teaches, publishes on the topic of new social innovative cooperatives for 35 years:

- **Board of directors of innova eG, Solar-Bürger-Genossenschaft eG, an energy cooperative and SAGES eG, a neighborhood cooperative**
- **Lecturer at the University of Siegen in the study course Plural Economy**
- **Research project: Share - cooperative design of public welfare oriented care, by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.**

**innova eG**: nationwide operating consulting and qualification cooperative with headquarters in Leipzig:

- **advises and qualifies collective enterprises committed to building an economy for people and the planet**
- **Researches into sustainable concepts of cooperatives.**

# What are the special characteristics of collective entrepreneurship?

## Definition features

- **Principle of promotion:** not the exploitation of capital, but user orientation, the satisfaction of members' needs is the main focus.
- **Principle of identity:** Two groups that otherwise face each other on the market, such as tenants and landlords or service providers and users, become identical and give up their "one-sided" role.
- **Democratic principle:** Independent of the capital contribution, each member has one vote in the general meeting.
- **Principle of solidarity:** During the construction period and in times of crisis, the exclusive protection of one's own individual interests is avoided.

# Cooperative history has a future

More than 1,000 energy cooperatives



Around 250 senior citizens' cooperatives

# Cooperative history has a future



**284 Community-supported  
agriculture (Solawi-farms)**

**Between 2,000 and 3,000  
community housing projects**



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# What are the problems of new social enterprises?

## Current situation

- **New social enterprises are small, without financial resources. They cover a wide range of sectors with very different independent concepts and constraints.**
- **They do not have a strong lobby, hardly at all at the European level, and weakly at the German national level.**
- **At the national and European level, the traditional cooperative associations such as the German Co-operative and Raiffeisen-association act as representatives of the new social enterprises. In fact, they do not understand them and do not support their objectives.**
- **In many promotion and support programs at national and European new social enterprises are not included. They are sitting "between the chairs". But they are the enterprises who stand for a new social and ecological Europe.**

# How can the situation be made better?

## Procedure I

- 1. Consultations on the possibilities of developing new support structures should be based on “the principle of targeted searches instead of pushing lobbying by professionals” at European and national level. In this way, not only big associations and lobby organizations should be heard.**
- 2. Support and financial assistance must be made available. These should enable the development of sectorrelated cooperation and association structures of small solidarity enterprises.**
- 3. These associations and cooperations should serve as awarding and management organizations of a European label that is absolutely necessary to develop. Collective enterprises and their products of the social and solidarity-based economy will be identified in this way.**

# How can the situation be made better?

## Procedure II

- 4. It is important to launch a statute for social and solidarity enterprises at European level. On this basis, national governments should also do this.**
- 5. Fiscal treatment, promotion and support structures should be oriented to it - compatible with the European label named above.**
- 6. It is also important to set up sectoral, self-administered solidarity funds for social enterprises. This can be used to finance start-ups, social enterprises in crisis and economic and social joint ventures!**
- 7. European support programs must commit national governments to include information and national definition of social enterprises in their national implementations so that they can fully participate.**

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