



# CONVENTUS

Gap analysis

Final seminar, Helsinki 27th September 2013



# Co-operatives – Controversial issue

Co-operatives are...

- **FACING IDENTITY CRISES**
- **LACKING MEMBERS INVOLVEMENT**
- **STRUGGLING FOR PROMOTING THE CO-OP VALUES**

**ALSO**

- **NEEDED IN CRISES ECONOMIES**
- **ENHANCING DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES**
- **SUPPORTING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

This is why specific learning model is needed for co-operatives

# Conventus - Gap Analysis

## Aim:

- **MAP THE SITUATION OF CO-OPERATIVES IN EACH COUNTRY AND CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT**
- **REQUIREMENT ANALYSIS FOR AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING MODEL FOR CO-OPERATIVES**

## Method:

- **EVERY PARTNER PERFORMED A COMPARABLE GAP ANALYSE**
- **EACH PARTNER CREATED TWO TO FOUR COMPARABLE CASE STORIES**

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<b>Comparison of co-op situation in partner countries</b>					
	<b>FINLAND</b>	<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>TRENTO/ITALY</b>	<b>POLAND</b>	<b>SWEDEN</b>
<b>Number of inhabitants</b>	5.375.276	320.000	530.000	38.000.000	9.415.570
<b>Number of co-op employees</b>	37.480	800	18.000	300.000	63.000
<b>Number of co-op companies</b>	4.227	35	536	9.000	12.500
<b>Number of co-op federations</b>	9	1	1	62	22
<b>Largest co-op business sectors – number of employees</b>	Retail Banking Wood processing	Retail Housing Food processing	Agriculture Banking Social	Housing Agriculture Retail Banking	Retail Housing Agriculture
<b>Co-op employees % of inhabitants</b>	0,7%	0,3%	3,4%	1%	0,7%
<b>Average no of employees pr co-op company</b>	9	23	26	33	5



## GROWTH CONDITIONS FOR CO-OPERATIVES

Factors favourable for start-up and development of co-operatives:

1. **SUPPORT MEASURES**
2. **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY**
3. **INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCES**
4. **PUBLIC ATTITUDE**

Output from co-operatives:

1. **SOCIAL EFFECTIVENESS**
2. **ECONOMIC EFFECTIVENESS**

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

<b>Comparison of co-op conditions in partner countries</b>					
	<b>FINLAND</b>	<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>ITALY</b>	<b>POLAND</b>	<b>SWEDEN</b>
<b>Minimum number of co-op founders</b>	3 (7 for keeping employer status)	15 (exemption possible)	3: social 10: consumer 300: credit	5 for social- and farmers co-ops, 10 for all other	3
<b>Support environment</b>	Mix of support from regional business advisors and co-op organisations	No	Local government offers support	Only social co-ops and farmers groups are supported on national level	22 consulting and support organisations
<b>General attitude</b>	Favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not favourable	Favourable

## MEANS OF FINANCE FOR COOPERATIVE TRAINING MODELS

<b>COOPERATIVE TRAINING MODELS</b>					
	<b>FINLAND</b>	<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>ITALY</b>	<b>POLAND</b>	<b>SWEDEN</b>
<b>Organised by</b>	Local cooperative associations and enterprises		FL (owned by FTC)	National Cooperative Council and sectorial co-op organisations	Coompanion
<b>Charged/free of charge</b>	Free and/or co-funded for co-ops and potential co-ops		Some funded 60% by regional authorities. Some by co-op enterprises	Free or chargeable. Reasonable prices or funded by EU projects	Free. Funded by Coompanion and regional funds
<b>National/regional involvement</b>	Yes, by regional national university business programme		60% by special regional law	None	2/3 by public sector

## CASE STORIES - SUMMARY

	Co-op name	Activity	Members	First training	Preferable supplementary education	Preferable future education
FI	<b>Pienkoti</b>	Rehabilitation for elderly	7	Three month training in an incubator centre	Practical issues	Marketing, motivation
SV	<b>LIVEK</b>	Reinforce job opportunities for immigrants	11	General advises and training by Coompanion	Basic elements. E.g. Members motivation	Co-operative ideology
SV	<b>Lärkan</b>	Social co-op. Second hand shop, home service, bike repair, café, etc.	36	General advises and training by Coompanion	Financial management	Business strategy
SV	<b>Trill</b>	Social co-op: Second hand shop, home service, handicraft, café, rehab, etc.	4	General advises and training by Coompanion	Exchange experiences with others	Financial qualifications
IT	<b>Dinamos</b>	Hous renting brokerage - mainly for first accommodation	42	None	Law/ regulations and management training	Area planning, management training
IS	<b>NPA</b>	Social co-op: Provide personal assistance to handicap people and advice them on their rights	33	Leagal assistance and information from similar organisations in Skandinavia	Co-op ideology and	Constant motivation to members
IS	<b>BSA</b>	Service housing construction for elderly	3400	Leagal advice and exchange of experiences with others	Content of co-op strategy	Methodes to bring in new members



# SVOT ANALYSIS

<p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Training activities</b> (FI, IT, PO, SE)</li><li>• <b>Co-operative culture/ideology</b> (IS, IT)</li></ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Limited knowledge of the co-op model</b> (FI, IS, IT, PO)</li><li>• <b>Negative attitude to co-ops</b> (IS, PO)</li><li>• <b>Unfavourable legislation</b> (PO)</li></ul>
<p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Increased demand/interest for training</b> (IS, IT, SE, PO)</li><li>• <b>Using new and more sufficient methods for training</b> (PO,SE)</li></ul>	<p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Lack of new business investments</b> (IS, IT)</li><li>• <b>Commercial companies taking over the “market”</b> (PO)</li><li>• <b>Adopting legislative solutions that will eliminate co-ops from the market</b> (PO)</li></ul>