

Newsletter #35



2024 SFE CEFEC CONFERENCE

The **38th SFE CEFEC Annual Conference** was organized in **Lisbon, Portugal**, in the period 18-20 September 2024, in collaboration with **ARIA** – Associação de Reabilitação e Integração Ajuda, under the title “*The Europe of Today: New Challenges, New Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities*”.

The 38th Annual Conference of SFE CEFEC aimed at increasing the cooperation and networking for New Challenges, New Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities in the Europe of today, with the sharing of experiences, presenting good practices of initiatives from Portugal and other European countries.

During the morning of **18 September**, the members from the Social Firms Europe CEFEC Executive Committee have met in order to discuss the programme for the next 2 days, but also to plan for 2025 when we will meet in Mainz/Germany. The day continued with the official opening of the Annual Conference. After greeting the more than 160 representatives from 18 countries present, the programme included 2 very interesting panel sessions: *Good practices in Social Firms in Portugal & Work experiences testimonies*.



Newsletter Highlights

2024 SFE CEFEC Conference

4th Academy event

2024 CEFEC Award Winners

Networking & Projects

New member organization

2025 Agenda

SFE CEFEC Podcast

CEFEC network of social firms has many social organizations trying to focus more on ecological matters.

To achieve this goal CEFEC has also implemented an ongoing „Green Working Group” for the last three years to give our social firms , dealing with „green production and services” a say. socialfirmseurope.eu

You are invited to Workshop 4 and Panel 5 at this conference to learn more about green business.



“In Nature, nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed”

Lavoisier's law (1743-1794)

The **2nd day** of the 38th SFE CEFEC Conference, had great presentations and speakers!

Our hosts from **Aria Reabilitação** did an amazing job in bringing together a lot of experts to discuss about these very important topics:

- Good Practice in Social Firms in Europe
- Solidarity based Economy

In the afternoon, the participants had the opportunity to participate in 4 very interesting workshops, on the following topics:

- New Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities
- The way to employment
- Academy Experience
- Green approach

This year's conference has a special focus on „getting greener“ even by being more attentive within its conference structures.

See what we implemented towards the 5 R's of sustainability:

- Reduce** - QR-Codes to disseminate conference information
- Reuse** - We offer a bottle so you can refill your water
- Recycle** - recycled pen and a paper notebook
- Refuse** - public transport (metro) to travel to study visits
- Rethink** - disseminate good practices



The final day of the 38th SFE CE FEC Annual Conference - "The Europe of Today: New Challenges, New Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities", **20 September 2024**, was nothing short of extraordinary. The main highlights of the day were the:

- **4 study visits** at: ARIA, Reshape, Café Joyeux & Crescer - É um Restaurante
- **AWARD CEREMONY** for the 4th Academy of SFE CE FEC
- **Inclusion by art II** - Plural Duet Dance Company
- **Hope to see you at Mainz in 2025** - a presentation of the next Annual CE FEC Conference
- **2nd Annual General Assembly** meeting of Social Firms Europe CE FEC members

As we wrap up this incredible conference, we carry with us the knowledge, inspiration, and connections needed to continue our journey. Thank you to all who joined us on this remarkable adventure!



4TH SFE CEFEC ACADEMY EDITION



On 16 September, we started in Lisbon with the **4th edition of the Social Firms Europe CEFEC Academy** event with participants from Poland, Finland, Slovenia, Romania, India, Republic of Moldova and Portugal.

The event took place between 16-20 September 2024 and included a lot of interesting workshops and trainings, including the 38th SFE CEFEC Conference:

- The European dimension of the Social Enterprises
- From idea to the first draft of the business plan
- Working on a business plan for developing a social enterprise
- Start-up mechanism of the Social Enterprises
- Support services for inclusion - a tool for a successful Social Enterprise
- Plastic upcycling workshop

Aria Reabilitação & **Impactrip**, many thanks for hosting us this year!



WINNERS OF THE 2024 CEFEC AWARD

On 19 September, during the Social Firms Europe CEFEC Gala Dinner, we presented the **2024 Award winners!**
The Awards for the best practices social enterprise were given to:

VIA Integration from Germany

Their vision is to create inclusive and sustainable work subject to social insurance contributions for people with and without disabilities on a social and ecological level. VIA has two certified organic areas, that are oriented towards climate-neutral guidelines : the vegetable nursery and the organic stores.

OilRight from Romania

Their vision is an environmentally conscious and socially just world. OilRight reduces the used cooking oil-related pollution in Romania, by providing a friendly collection option while creating jobs for vulnerable persons. OilRight inspires and enables individuals and companies to protect the environment by extending the useful life of UCO, transforming it into scented candles and raw materials for biodiesel production.

Because we received such interesting applications this year, the CEFEC Award Committee decided to also give **2 certificates of recognition**, to:

- Allium z.o.o., - so. p., Etri skupina Group (Slovenia) &
- Visas Iespējas (Latvia)

Congratulations for all the hard work they do and for the the valuable contribution to the social inclusion of vulnerable people within social enterprises!



Networking & Projects

EDF ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Between 11-12 May 2024, the Social Firms Europe CEFEC Executive Committee member & leader of WG6, Mr. Klaus Meyer zu Brickwedde from BAG Inklusionsfirmen, represented our network at the Annual General Assembly of the European Disability Forum (EDF) taking place in Ljubljana, Slovenia.



EDF represents more than 100 million persons with disabilities in Europe and is a powerful voice in EU policy-making.

With the European elections just a month away, it was more important than ever to emphasize the importance of inclusion in Europe, to campaign for the implementation of the UN CRPD, and to highlight the particular vulnerability of persons with disabilities in the current crises and conflicts.



SFE CEFEC ARCHIVE

Now an annual tradition, the visit of the 1st General Secretary of Social Firms Europe CEFEC in **Suceava - Meto Salijevic** - took place on 14-17 May, with the support of Organizatia Institutul Bucovina, which is part of the SFE CEFEC Executive Committee.

We are working hard to put in order all the documents, reports and studies in the CEFEC archive, developed over the 37 years of activity of our network!



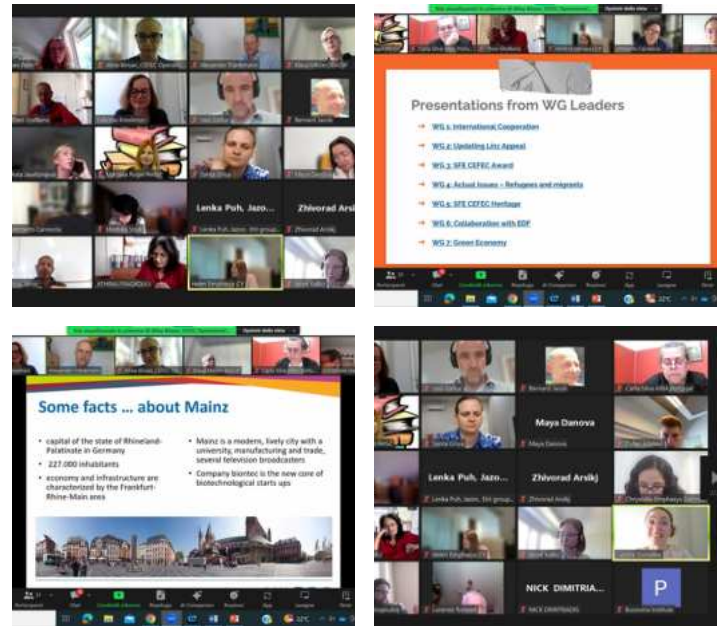
Networking & Projects

SFE CE FEC - AGA MEETING

The Social Firms Europe CE FEC Annual General Assembly took place on 23 May, online, with the participation of over 30 members from 16 countries.

The main topics on the Agenda:

- the annual management report
- cooperation between the CE FEC members, through projects
- financial and membership aspects
- activities of the working groups
- 38th SFE CE FEC Annual Conference - "The Europe of Today: New Challenges, New Social Entrepreneurship Opportunities" & 2024 CE FEC Academy
- first details on the 2025 SFE CE FEC Annual Conference, which will take place in Germany, organized by gpe GmbH Mainz



LET HER IN - NETWORKING EVENT

Organizatia Institutul Bucovina, European Development Foundation & DomSpain, 3 of our Social Firms Europe CE FEC members, have met in Tbilisi/Georgia, during the period 11-12 June 2024, in order to attend the Let her in International Networking Event!

It was a great opportunity for our Development Manager, Mr. Petru Vasile Gafiuc, to present the SFE CE FEC network and details about the upcoming Annual Conference from Lisbon/Portugal.

Many thanks to the CE FEC Spanish member, DomSpain for the invitation to be part of this great event!



Networking & Projects

EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS HIGH-LEVEL EVENT 2024

The Social Firms Europe CEFEC Development Manager, Mr. Petru Vasile Gafiuc, together with our members from North Macedonia, Mr. Sreten Koceski from CDI Macedonia - ИРЗ Македонија, & Mr. Sergi Alegre from our Spanish member Fundación Esplai, have participated in the event "European Alliance for Apprenticeships High-Level Event 2024", organized by DG Employment in Brussels, Belgium on 17 & 18 June.

Mr. Gafiuc, who is also the President of the CEFEC Romanian member Organizatia Institutul Bucovina, contributed to a panel discussion entitled "Apprenticeships for Adults: Unlocking Opportunities".

The event explored how apprenticeships can help address the challenges of labour shortages. With companies struggling to find skilled employees, apprenticeships are emerging as a strategic solution to bridge the skills gap and ensure a sustainable workforce for the future.



AWARD FOR 60 PROFESSIONAL VOCATIONAL WORKING YEARS

We are very proud of our Social Firms Europe CEFEC Senior Consultant and founder member, **Mrs. Christiane Haerlin**, who was awarded by the LVR (Landschaftsverband Rheinland) on 28 May 2024 the "Rheinlandtaler" Award for 60 professional vocational working years.

Mrs. Haerlin worked for the Rheinland Authority LVR, between 1985 - 1992, before starting and running the Rehab Centre (Berufliches Trainingszentrum BTZ).

During this period (1992-2005) she saw that the big psychiatric hospitals in the Rheinland should be modernized and that it is necessary to spread the activities into the community with day hospitals, day centres, workshops, rehabilitation centres and social enterprises.



Networking & Projects

EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICE IN GREECE

In the framework of the exchange of best practices between the members of Social Firms Europe CEFEC, our members from Greece had the pleasure to welcome in July 2024, the partners from Silta-Valmennusyhdistys ry from Finland!

They had the opportunity to present the Cooperative, to discuss issues of Supported Employment for vulnerable groups and challenges we face in Greece. The focus of the discussion was the new Specialized Supported Employment Office (SSAO) for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the methodology we have developed for the implementation of the program.

Many thanks to the CEO of the organization Mr. Kimmo Kumlander and his partner Ms. Athanasia Agriogianni for the visit and the useful exchange of knowledge and experiences!



NETWORKING BETWEEN MEMBERS IN SUCEAVA

Very exciting and busy days spent between **20-23 August 2024** with our Social Firms Europe CEFEC members from Italy, Finland and Spain.

Organizatia Institutul Bucovina and Mr. Petru Vasile Gafiuc, our board member and development manager from Suceava/Romania, prepared a full and interesting agenda for Mr. Kimmo Kumlander representing Valo-Valmennusyhdistys (Finland), Mrs. Felicitas Kresimon, the CEFEC General Secretary (Italy) & Sergio Alegre Calero representing Fundaci3n Esplai (Spain) and the executive director of ARC (Airport Regions Council):

- a workshop at Botosani Chamber of Commerce
- a study visit at the Botosani Labor Office Center “Cite des metiers” discussing the possibility for international cooperation
- a common workshop of the CEFEC members in order to discuss future project collaborations and possibilities to work together on boosting our network
- different social and cultural visits in the Suceava region



Networking & Projects

DIGI-LANCE4SE ERASMUS+ PROJECT



Between **May and September 2024** all Digi-Lance4SE partners organized their **piloting activities** by delivering the *Social Enterprise Training* to at least 20 participants each in their own country. Six champions have been selected by each partner and could then participate in 3 transnational trainings (LTTAs) which took place in May in Trieste Italy, in July in Dublin/Ireland and in September in Athens, Greece. Finally in June, it took place the transnational project meeting in Athens, Greece.

As the project is getting to an end, the partners will have their final meeting from 12-13 November in Germany, Ostfalia University, with a final conference on Social Enterprise on 14th of November. Interested persons are invited to participate and for more information you can access the website: <https://digilance4se.eu/>

Dublin 2024

- Care Worker Support
- Colour Art Therapy
- Cyber Safety
- Mental Health Support

Social Entrepreneurship Elevator Pitches

Co-funded by the European Union

Digi-Lance4SE

EUROPEAN SOCIAL INNOVATION CAMPUS



SFE CEFEC is one of the key supporting organizations of the **ESIC** project and we had the great pleasure to have with us in Portugal, two ESIC Alliance & Diakonia University representatives, **Mrs. Niina Karvinen** and **Mr. Harri Kostilainen** from Finland. They had an intervention on 18 September, during the 38th CEFEC Annual Conference, on the Panel II - Work Experience testimonials.

Joining the Pact for Skills on Proximity and Social Economy, the European Social Innovation Campus (ESIC) contributes to the challenge of the upskilling and reskilling of 5% of the workforce and entrepreneurs of the sector each year to tackle the green and digital transitions in the social economy by boosting social innovation capacities.

"SOCIAL ROOTS" PROJECT

On **11th of October 2024**, Bucovina Institute from Suceava, in partnership with Foundation Star of Hope Romania, successfully held the 4th **outreach event** of the project "Social Roots: Developing Businesses that Matter" and Social Firms Europe CEFEC network was presented by our Development Manager, Mr. Petru Vasile Gafiuc.

The event took place at AJOFM Botoșani, Adult Vocational Training Center and brought together people interested in the development of social economy in rural areas. The project aims to set up 34 social enterprises (SEs) and create at least 136 jobs, in order to stimulate the social innovation and support business start-ups in the social economy.



NEW MEMBER ORGANIZATION

AKTYWA PLUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION NON PROFIT LIMITED

The organization has been operating since 2007 and since 2023 it was registered as a social economy entity. Since 2010 they have been running the activities of the Social Economy Support Center (OWES) and since 2012, has been the leading partner in the implementation of OWES activities in the Szczecin region.

OWES activities are free of charge for clients (including associations, social cooperatives, people at risk of social exclusion such as people disabilities, local communities).

Website: <https://owesszczecin.pl/>



2025 AGENDA

Join the **CEFEC Conference: "CREATING ACCESS; Job Carving and Job Crafting"**

We are pleased to invite you to the upcoming CEFEC conference, taking place from July 1st to 2nd, 2025 in Mainz, Germany. The city, centrally located in Europe, is easy to reach via Frankfurt airport, making it accessible for participants from across the continent. This event will focus on the crucial topic of creating truly inclusive employment through innovative approaches like job carving and job crafting.

What Are Job Carving and Job Crafting?

Job carving involves tailoring existing roles by adjusting or removing certain tasks to better fit the strengths of individual employees, especially those facing barriers to employment. Job crafting allows workers to reshape their job responsibilities in ways that increase both their productivity and personal satisfaction. These strategies are vital for creating flexible and inclusive work environments where all employees can thrive.

Why It Matters

At the heart of the conference is the goal of designing jobs that meet the needs of a diverse workforce. This approach ensures that employment opportunities are accessible to everyone, regardless of their background or challenges. It's not just about filling positions—it's about creating spaces where all individuals can reach their full potential. For employers, this offers a chance to embrace corporate social responsibility while accessing untapped talent.



For More Information about the upcoming event visit the CEFEC annual conference Website or visit socialfirmseurope.eu

NEW CEFEC PRESIDENT



MR. ALEXANDER TRÄNKMANN, 2024-2025 SFE CEFEC PRESIDENT

Alexander is 54 years old and originally from Hanover Northern Part of Germany. He trained as a hotel manager in Hamburg and is the Hotel Manager of INNdependence Mainz since 2000 (inclusion hotel).

Alexander was repeatedly elected as Deputy Chairman of the Embrace Hotels Association since 2015 and since 2023 he is the Chairman of the Embrace Hotels Association. Since 2015, he is additionally the head of the gastronomy division of inclusion enterprises at gpe.

Since 2017, Alexander Tränkmann is one of three spokespersons for the State Working Group for Inclusion Enterprises in Rhineland-Palatinate.



In 2023 we managed to develop a series of podcasts with several Social Firms Europe CEFEC members, and we are very happy to continue with this tradition in 2024. So, we are very excited to share with you another 2 recordings, with:

- » **Kimmo Kumlander**, president of **Valo-Valmennusyhdistys**, from Finland.
- » **Sergi Alegre Calero**, SFE CEFEC Board member and international specialist representing Fundació Catalana de l'Esplai, from Spain.

Click on the **yellow button** to view & listen!

Social Firms Europe CEFEC

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activities, please follow us!**



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