



Short text accompanied by annexes to be discussed during the 4th Learning Journey, Edinburgh, 13 September

Introduction: why this text?

The idea of this text emerged in January 2013 with the aim of deepening mutual understanding of the transition, as experienced at the Cloughjordan ecovillage in Ireland, and drawing conclusions from the experience for the future.

The decision to produce the text was taken at PLIP in Mestre in April 2013.


It was seen as a relevant tool when accompanied by:

- accessible supporting references;
- accounts of concrete practices by partners and learners involved in the process.

Who does it target?

The text's primary targets are members of European Pacts and learners involved in the Grundtvig 2012-2014 cycle of learning journeys.

To encourage additional debate, it is also available in French and English on the Framapad accessible on the European Pacts website.

 http://pad.site-coop.net/p/ess_et_transition

Organizations, values, strategies, the social and solidarity economy: towards which transition?

A shared analysis of the context

“Transition”? What it actually corresponds to is a radical and necessary transformation of the underpinnings of life in society within a brand new context!

From one end of the chain to the other, the globalization of the economy and of social relationships raises several new problems.

On the level of daily life, individuals have lost control over the choices that govern their existence and tend to take refuge in their “egos”. By choice and by necessity, they are having to rediscover direct mutual aid and cooperation, and have very few bearings to guide them in a world of limited resources.

On the global level, at the other end of the chain, damage caused by economic globalization is building up, threatening the future of generations to come and the planet itself. Neither States nor multinationals are capable of defining and imposing respect for balanced regulations. And no independent force has yet emerged from society to supervise and verify respect for democratically validated collective rules.

A conviction: the solution will not come from achieving the sort of power that simply replaces the one it drove out, but by developing the capacity to resist in order to create and to come together in order to transform the world.

What we learned from the experience

Local and global are interdependent, but actions arise at the local level: both highly complex and highly concrete!

Taking the initiative to act liberates actual individuals. By taking back control over their lives, they create the collective spaces they need to become organized. Examples from right across the world show that it is possible, within a diverse range of cultures, resources and constraints imposed by different living situations. They look ahead to modes of organization suitable to a radical change of direction and seek to integrate essential interdependencies and possible forms of coexistence.

Taking the time to say things contributes to building up the new forms of knowledge that prepare the future: they validate the relevance of forms of organization that offer alternatives to the current model that seeks to impose itself as the unique reference; they use concrete examples to breathe new life into the collective perception of what constitutes the desirable, and they boost the legitimacy of practitioners who are promoting them and developing a role as new collective stakeholders.

Citizen life is about speaking and acting, powered by the desire to control both ends of the chain in the quest for democratic governance of the social and economic spheres.

Aim and challenges

Aim: to wish to live well together in the same places in a world that everyone can inhabit is the raison d'être of their commitment to social action.

Current challenge: making a pact involves creating the conditions for a robust and unifying consensus in order to take action together without waiting for institutions to act.

The schools of thought and action that identify with each other within the social and solidarity economy work towards this goal along with other trends, such as local development and sustainable communities, transition movements and, more generally, movements that see cooperation as the concrete expression of the values of solidarity and citizenship that will drive systemic change.

Making a pact is also about realizing that there is strength in numbers, that sharing means growing, that organization creates effectiveness.

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Appended:

The local pact analytical framework: the fruit of a pooling process that has been constantly developing since 1998. It is the generic formulation for territorial solidarity-based organization that can serve to describe and bring together a variety of forms of local partnerships and cooperation with enough characteristics in common to make them capable of developing productive proposals together.

The same definition of "territory", developed as part of an international online forum in 2009 aimed at continuing the work began at the LUX'09 meeting.

Goals and strategies for territorial, local and regional pacts, announced at the launch of the European Pacts initiative in Brussels, November 2010, EU Committee of the regions.

Summary of phase 1 of the online forum preparing for the 5th Manila meeting, Manila'13 (workshop: SSE and Territories).

ANNEXES TEXTE COURT (eng)

AN ANALYTICAL TOOL drawn up collectively by practitioners (2001)

the fruit of a pooling process that has been constantly developing since 1998. It is the generic formulation for territorial solidarity-based organization that can serve to describe and bring together a variety of forms of local partnerships and cooperation with enough characteristics in common to make them capable of developing productive proposals together.

Components of the local pact

- ✚ **The pact is rooted in shared values:** solidarity, coexistence, social ties.
- ✚ **It places great importance on concrete action.** The term “conclusive experiments” is used.
- ✚ **It is based on consultation.** Anyone can decide to initiate a local pact, but it only exists after consultation and once contract-based commitment is in place. The contract can cover several forms and contain several elements: objectives, implementation and assessment methods. For example, one method used is described as “shared and constantly reassessed diagnostics”.
- ✚ **The type of issues tackled:** it seeks to increase social cohesion, solidarity, democratic participation and exchanges between the economic, social, cultural, political and environmental spheres.
- ✚ **It is rooted in a territory:** open interlinked and recognized. The territory can be defined by the capacity to undertake actions together using available resources. The local pact draws on its values to meet the territory’s needs and ambitions with the aim of creating coherence between stakeholders, actions and territorial levels.
- ✚ **Throughout its existence, the local pact draws on the presence of the capacity to:** seize opportunities; communicate; create synergies between different skills; switch from individual awareness to collective awareness; meet the challenge of launching a new process; link together, and take the initiative.
- ✚ **A participative approach:** that focuses on solutions drawing as far as possible on cooperative actions; that accepts conflict and highlights the positive dimension of diverging positions so that they serve the common good; that creates a link with local policies; that creates a link between the internal and external; that ensures that all participants have an equal chance to express themselves and that they listen to each other in equal measure, and that produces mutual respect.

The method is the functional aspect that links the components together.

- ✚ **The local pact looks at the situation from every angle:** paying special attention to the quality of interpersonal relationships; adopting an approach based on action research; undertaking a diagnosis of existing elements and available energies, and using clearly identified levels of involvement.
- ✚ **The local pact builds an open-ended strategy that guarantees a long-lasting process.** The approach seeks to bring together, as a minimum, the people involved, along with other categories of territorial stakeholders: elected representatives, the economic sector (particularly SMEs and SMIs), not-for-profit organizations and resource people with complementary skills. Ideally, the greatest possible number of people are involved.
- ✚ **The local pact makes permanent self-assessment a priority.**

- ✚ **Implementation produces:** the capacity to help participants develop; the questioning, via meaningful actions, of systems governing relationships, how institutions function, shared meanings (local culture, etc.) and consensus; development of each person's resources, and the desire to capitalize on and transmit experiences, learning and culture.

The effects exceed the sought-after results.

The same definition of "territory"

developed as part of an international online forum in 2009 aimed at continuing the work began at the LUX'09 meeting.

What do we mean by «territory»?

This term has different meanings dependent on languages and cultures.

For us, a territory is an action system geographically based, where are organized social, cultural and economic relations:

- between inhabitants that share a common heritage, a past and a future in a same area, that they inherited and has a destiny (whether native born, of adoption, migrants or visitors);
- between organizations with multiple features (enterprises, local authorities, state, networks, mutual aid, sectors of production, etc.)
- between these individuals and the organizations with a specific bio-geographical environment;
- between all these components and larger ones (macro) of smaller ones (micro).

These systems of territorial relations are necessarily open and connected to the outside. For in today's world, interdependence has increased. Solving concrete problems as housing, food, development, infrastructure, services, employment, use of natural resources, the allocation of resources, etc., must take into account:

- Constraints and opportunities of production and distribution of globalized goods and services;
- Shortcomings of current international governance in the organization of a fair, just and appropriate territorial management of natural and cultural resources «the global common goods and shared values» and the flow of all kinds that are appropriate to the diversity of different situations (ecosystems, overcrowded metropolitan areas, vulnerable territories, etc.);
- Territorial governance must also create new types and forms of organization (institutional, economic, social but also cross-cutting, financial, fiscal, technical, etc...)

From local to global: building Europe

Goals and strategies for territorial, local and regional pacts, announced at the launch of the European Pacts initiative in Brussels, November 2010, EU Committee of the regions.

European P'acts to :

- ✚ Organise and become a permanent collective of resources aimed at pooling experience, learning from one another (popular education), hand on lessons learnt, multiply them by using them, support each other and jointly make our voice heard.
- ✚ 2. Raise our collective independent voice in advocacy to the European, national, regional and local institutions in order to provide people with a means of consulting civil society as collectively gathered in the P'ACTS.

Proposals in the european project: The P'ACTS consider that sustainable local development provides a positive road to overcoming the current crisis, if certain conditions are respected

- ✚ A strategy designed and applied to provide concrete answers to essential everyday issues: managing shared resources, activities and employment, living conditions and services all aimed at providing the perspective of a joined-up opening and solidarity between territories.
- ✚ A strategy aimed at providing a medium- and long-term legal framework to local and regional issues (territorial interactions and co-operation).
- ✚ The key principle is based on shared responsibility. Multi-level governance is the instrument. It includes organised civil society as a stakeholder in building and implementing actions, as a collective actor in the real economy and in territorial governance.
- ✚ A strategy based on different sources of funding in a programme framework that facilitates; the rules for implementation should be simple and transparent.
- ✚ The objectives for results should be defined with both quantitative indicators (how much/many) as well as qualitative indicators (how/what impacts) such as: satisfying essential needs in the real economy: the collective quality of our lives, resilience, the vitality of our democratic and cultural existence, a lesser dependence on fossil fuel as well as on imported food or foreign finance.

Summary of phase 1 of the online forum preparing for the 5th Manila meeting, Manila'13
(workshop: SSE and Territories).

Learning stories: an overview of forum contributions

✚ **Question 1: linking (ethical) producers and (ethical) consumers**

- 23/06 Community-supported farming: a global practice - *Judith Hitchman, URGENCI*
- 27/07. Agence BEST, Graefewirtschaft, a social and multi-cultural company in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin - *Heike Birhkoelzer, directrice*
- 28/07 Cloughjordan ecovillage for building a sustainable community, Ireland: *Oliver Moore, Newsletter Voyage Apprenant P'actes Européens, janvier 2013*
- 31/07 Wulkow ecovillage: economic self-help in a serious crisis situation, Germany: an approach - *Technologie-Netzwerk Berlin*
- 01/08 The AltraEconomia (alternative economy) project and solidarity purchasing groups (GAS in Italian) in Venice: *Jackie Scutt, Rapport du Voyage Apprenant des P'actes Européens, avril 2013*
- 02/08. NEKASAREA: a network of producers and consumers in Biscay that creates short food chains: *Jocelyn Parot, URGENCI, in Bulletin International de développement local durable (BIDLD)*
- 09/08. Seikatsu Club Consumers' Co-Operative Union, Japan - *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*

✚ **Question 2: linking (ethical) production and solidarity/social finance**

- 25/07: concerted planning and local economic development, Kayès region (Mali) - *Idrissa Sanogo, GRDR-Kayès Atelier 3, 2^{ème} Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille, juillet 2013*
- 29/07: the *Fabrique Citoyenne* project, part of a cooperative framework (on the edge of the Aude and Ariège departments) - *Peter Wollny Atelier 3 au 2^{ème} Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille, juillet 2013*
- 02/08. Social and complementary currencies: an effective tool for linking producers and (ethical) consumers - *Miguel Yasuyuki Hirota*
- 04/08. Creating activities: the *Pôle d'économie solidaire* in the Dijon greater urban area

(Burgundy) rebuilds local economic circuits
in Faire P'acte: Cahier de propositions des P'actes Européens, 2011

- 04/08. Building cooperative actions between different scales, a movement driven by elected representatives (Brittany). *Alain Yvergniaux ; in Faire P'acte: 2011*
- 04/08. Territories that invent their currency: *Gazette des Communes, in socioeco.org*
- 08/08. Cooperatives and Inuit Communities in Canada: *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*
- 08/08. ASSEFA: 40 years of local holistic development organised by and for villagers in different regions of India - *Yvon Poirier, BIDLD*

How can we make further advances? Pooling lessons

✚ Local pacts: a diversity of forms and shared characteristics

- **A bottom-up view: spaces for organisation where actual individuals can rebuild themselves with other people** – *in: « Faire Pacte », 2011*
- **The essential importance of spaces that are open** for the purposes of creating collective actions, mutual help, bold thinking and being firmly in a position to make dramatic change. *Atelier 3 Congrès du RIPESS Europe, Lille juillet 2013*
- **New alliances between communities, solidarity economy networks and local authorities.** Participation in the creation of the common good goes beyond the abstract notion of democracy. In territories, it takes the form of concrete actions that involve all stakeholders equally in a cooperative process. *Atelier au Forum Social Européen de Florence (novembre 2012)*
- **An innovative way of creating jobs and promoting the social and solidarity economy in Germany** *Technologie-Netzwerk Berlin*
- **A tool for territorial development:** Local Development Centres in Quebec have been in place for 15 years – *Yvon Poirier, in ouvrage LDNET sur le développement local, et témoignage de Jacques Fiset, directeur d'un CLD*

✚ A bottom-up view: three relevant spaces for interaction

- **A local level for improvements** provided by stakeholders that organise solutions generated by close collaboration.
- **An embedded level that favours the territoriality of social life** in spaces for consultation that are big enough to act as cohesive spaces for public services and economic development based on endogenous resources, something the very small level does not allow.
- **An all-encompassing territorial level that maintains a relationship with the outside world** via interrelations that can take different forms: multi-level networks addressing similar problems; convergence on outcome targets committed to by contracting parties in a same region; partnerships between administrations, authorities and not-for-profit organisations for inter-cultural or inter-tactical action outcomes; the local application of European programmes or general measures, etc.

✚ Territories and Solidarity

- **The holistic approach to the challenge of understanding global interdependencies: opening up prospects for 2050** (*ASSEFA*)
- **The learning process concerning territories' social responsibility: a European challenge** – *CIDES, centre de ressources et d'action de la mutuelle CHORUM et Think Thank Pour la Solidarité (sur Socioeco.org)*

- **Governance of common goods:** a new look at the conditional commitments in uncertain and complex environments to improve collective action *Elinor Ostrom*

✚ **Conditions for a local economic development rooted in solidarity**

- **Redefining activities in territories outside the obligatory reference to a commercial exchange**
 - An activity is based on mobilising personal and professional values.
 - Rooting in a place as a component in a choice of lifestyle within a pre-existing social background.
 - The activities created imprint the effects of new social demands, defining profiles of activities in specific spaces capable of hosting them.
 - They express the values intrinsic to endogenous development (food, meeting essential needs) and external attributive values (leisure, environmental value, tourism) within various human-oriented systems.
- **In order to build the new glocal public sphere, the time has come for cooperatives to play an important role** in their own communities and as the most important not-for-profit organisation in the world (*Seikatsu Club*).
- **Once the social economy sector is a participant in developing strategies** with the entire range of stakeholders in a community, municipality, town or district of a city, it is guaranteed to serve all members of community.

How can we make further advances? Proposals

✚ **Giving the territorial pact a more widespread basis is about learning to cooperate.**

For the exercise of real local democracy

- **The terms of democratic debate** need to be reconstructed to succeed in building far more cooperative partnerships that take into account all parties' territorial and social commitments.
- **Cooperation is the expression of shared responsibility:** it works to ensure that a diverse range of stakeholders, public and private, individuals and organisations, act within an overall and coherent process with the aim of achieving a shared goal in the interest of the greatest number.
- **Democratic participation for inhabitants-citizens is based on acting together and/or independently:** by contributing to public action initiated by other people, by taking the initiative to launch actions that help to achieve these shared goals; at times, by resisting when sites are chosen for economic reasons and those choices are imposed, with the backing of the authorities, even though they go against local residents' right to lead a healthy, safe and peaceful life, or when they destroy common goods. Because this is about protecting fundamental rights: a question that is part of the overall democratic debate on the global society approach.
- **There is an urgent need to unite the forces of society within our communities and between our communities to create the critical mass needed** to build an alternative model rooted in the real economy.

✚ **Learning the lessons of citizen action in the life of territorial society is essential**

- **The local pacts approach is rooted in daily realities, but this type of local approach is not only geographic. It is interlinked and systemic.** It leads to the management of antagonistic practices, within and without institutions: the global with the local, the long term with the short term, collective interests with individual interests, the single-purpose approach (sector-based, cultural) with the multi-purpose and cross-cutting approach, the simplicity of actions with the complexity of situations.
- **The search for a better understanding and definition of local economic solidarity ties is an educational strategy** aimed at obtaining political recognition of the SSE as an economic sector in its own right. These approaches provide the foundation for all levels of a complex democracy: the management of everyday problems as well as the conditions for finding a dynamic and differentiated way to link to the globalised economy.