



ECO OPE

ENTREPRENEURIAL COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCE

FOLLOW UP MEETING
SANTANDER | 27 - 28 SEPT, 2017

FOLLOW UP MEETING

The follow up meeting of the Entrepreneurial Cooperative Experience Project (224-G-GRO-PPA-16-9235) took place on September 27-28th, 2017 at the Centro Internacional Santander Emprendimiento facilities in Santander (Cantabria, Spain). The meeting was attended by the project coordinator and the beneficiaries.

During this meeting we analysed the evolution of the implementation of ECOOPE, possible minor deviations and how to solve them and the procedures and work plan for the rest of the project activities, to assure the achievement of quality results. We also prepared all the technical and financial requirements for the interim report that covers from the beginning of the activities until September 30th.

LOCATION: Centro Internacional Santander Emprendimiento (CISE) | Centro de Desarrollo Tecnológico de la Universidad de Cantabria (CDTUC) | E.T.S. Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos Avd. Los Castros, s/h, 39005 | Santander, Spain.

CONTACT:

ECO OPE | Project management
CDTUC – ETS Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos.
Av. Los Castros, s/h, 39005, Santander
contact@ecoope.eu | (+34) 942 206 744



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PARTICIPANTS:

BENEFICIARY	NAME
Fundación UCEIF	Kerstin Maier
Fundación UCEIF	José Carlos Ceballos
Fundación UCEIF	Rafael Ruiz Bada
Fundación UCEIF	Paula Capparelli
Fundación UCEIF	Gema Martínez
Universidad de Cantabria	Federico Gutiérrez-Solana
Universidad de Cantabria	María Herrero Gómez
Co-operative College Trust	Sarah Alldred
Euricse Istituto Europeo di Ricerca sull' Impresa Cooperativa e Sociale	Ilana Gotz
Lappeenrannan Teknillien Yliopisto	Minna Hämäläinen
PEEP Policy Experimentation and Evaluation Platform	Christian Wolf
Universidade do Porto	João José Pinto Ferreira
Valnalón Ciudad industrial Valle del Nalón	Javier Vallina
Valnalón Ciudad industrial Valle del Nalón	Iván Diego



CONTACT:

ECOPE | Project management
CDTUC – ETS Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos.
Av. Los Castros, s/n, 39005, Santander
contact@ecope.eu | (+34) 942 206 744



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FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Sarah Alldred (Co-operative College), Minna Hämäläinen (LUT), Federico Gutiérrez-Solana (Universidad de Cantabria), Consuelo Arranz de Andrés (Universiddad de Cantabria), Javier Vallina (Valnalón), Iván Diego (Valnalón), Ilana Gotz (Euricse), María Herrero (Universidad de Cantabria), José Carlos Ceballos (Fundación UCEIF), João José Pinto Ferreira (UPorto) and Kerstin Maier (Fundación UCEIF).

ECOPE OVERVIEW (September, 27th -2017 || 15:00 - 15:45h)

After a warm welcome from the University of Cantabria represented by Consuelo Arranz (Vice-Rector of Students and Entrepreneurship) and Federico Gutiérrez-Solana (Director of CISE and ECOPE's project manager), the work started with the overview of the project implementation until that moment. José Carlos Ceballos (Fundación UCEIF) made a summary of the activities developed as well as the updated workplan for each of the work packages.

At this point we began the debate of how to continue overcoming one of the biggest challenges that our project has faced from the beginning, which is how to readapt the implementation calendar from the one planned in the proposal to the real one, that started in April 2017 instead that in January 2017, and achieve all ECOPE's expected results.

All the partners agreed that this must be the course to follow: to continue implementing the activities focusing on getting quality deliverables and the planned results, mantaining an agile decision making system between WP leaders and the coordinator that aloud us to adapt the resources and the efforts, as well as adapt the timetable in order to assure the expected quality and impact.



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ECOPE | Project management
CDTUC – ETS Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos.
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PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF WORK PACKAGES (September, 27th - 2017 || 15:45 - 19:00h)

The leaders of each work package held a presentation of the progress and methodology used during the first part of ECOOPE's implementation, as well as the evolution of the strategy to achieve the results planned. After each presentation all the project partners contributed with their opinions and experiences, following our feedback and collaborative way of managing the activities.

The afternoon session was divided in:

●●● WP5 | INNOVATIVE TRAINING MODEL SECONDARY

VALNALON, leaders of this WP reported on progress towards the conception of the entrepreneurial cooperative experience (A.15) and the preparatory actions for the set-up of the pilot programme (A.16).

The cooperative experience is being shaped with three broad principles in mind. In the first place it will raise student awareness about co-ops and the social by providing opportunities to interact with key actors in the sector. Secondly, the experience will be action-oriented. Students will be asked to solve a cooperative entrepreneurship challenge working in teams. And last but not least, the experience will be an opportunity to dive deep into the culture of the place. These three elements were visible in the first draft of the 3-day work programme presented to the partners for discussion.



Javier Vallina | VALNALÓN



CONTACT:

ECOOPE | Project management
CDTUC – ETS Ingenieros de Caminos, Canales y Puertos.
Av. Los Castros, s/n, 39005, Santander
contact@ecoope.eu | (+34) 942 206 744



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The precise nature of the challenge remains to be defined but some ideas were shared. Challenge may be posed by a real co-op willing to solve a specific problem or a local issue (social, cultural, environmental) In any case, the students will be involved in a collaborative problem-solving process. Phases and expected behaviours were shortly introduced and will form the basis of our assessment approach. The final result of student teams work will be pitched to the institution launching the challenge.

Active engagement and critical reflection will be key elements. Thus, it was agreed ECOOPE blog will be the place to report on all action taking place and showcase students opinions. It was agreed CISE Communication Team will provide technical support to do this.

A quick summary of the arrangements made so far included decisions on location (Asturias), venue (VALNALON), contact with regional federation of worker co-ops (ASATA) and the accommodation options available for students. The main topics of discussion focused on timing, schools selection and budget issues.

- Timing: Initially we intend to carry out the pilot on the week starting Jan, 22nd. Final dates may be subjected to change depending on schools availability.
- Schools selection: Four schools will be selected before the end of October. 2 Schools in Spain (Cantabria, Asturias) and 2 schools in Portugal. Each school will select a sample of 5 students (aged 16-17 yrs old)
- Budget: Programme includes a team-building activity, local transport arrangements and social dinner.

A brief description of each action and estimated budget was advanced and Maria Herrero (UC) will work together with VALNALÓN in order to manage the funds allocated for these activities.

Partners were given the floor to ask questions and share some insights. Bearing in mind this is a work in progress, Valnalon encouraged partners to drop them a line with further suggestions to finetune the programme.

WP5 CONCLUSIONS:

- The Pilot training will take place in Asturias
- 2 Schools from Portugal (10 students), 1 school from Asturias (5 students) and 1 school from Cantabria (5 students) will participate in the one week training.
- During october we will identify the cooperatives and schools, and start thinking about the challenges.
- The week for the pilot will initially be chosen between January 22nd to February 8th, 2018.

●●● WP6 | INNOVATIVE TRAINING MODEL - HEIs

University of Porto representative, João José Pinto Ferreira, as WP leader, made a presentation of the advances made in the innovative programme for university students, which we are now beginning with its conception.



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According to the presentation made by UPORTO, the programme will include a one week training and four weeks of work inside the cooperatives that will participate in the pilot.

According to this initial conception, the participants will receive a 5-day intensive preparatory course to familiarize themselves with the cooperative bussiness model. The students will be organized in five multicultural and multidisciplinary teams of 3 to 4 students, from different European countries.

Each of these teams will work together on a different real innovation challenge to be selected out of the ones proposed by cooperatives from various European countries, the same cooperatives where they will developed the practical part of the pilot program.



João José Pinto Ferreira | Univ. of Porto

During this process the participants will have access to understand the cooperative model and how it works, gaining practical professional experience, teamworking, puting their entrepreneurial skills to the test and entering into a worldwide business network: the cooperative movement. The program will contain issues such as ECOOPE presentation and objectives, background and context of the cooperative model, what is different about cooperatives, their forms and sectors... as well as useful tools for the participants to face the innovation challenges proposed in order to achieve a practical and realistic solution that could actually be implemented in the future by the cooperatives.

All the partners also agreed with the project leader that communication issues are very important for this WP. Not only about explaining the motivation for the students and cooperatives to participate and make it more appealing, but also to show the own participants experience, using tools such as a blog and other IT solutions.

Also, one of the key points in WP6 success will be the identification of the co-operatives that could collaborate with the pilot, as they will define with us the challenge and will participate in all phases.



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WP6 CONCLUSIONS:

- The one week training course will take place in Santander.
- The four weeks internship / cooperative challenges will take place ideally in three countries.
- In October we will start identifying cooperatives and higher education students from the European Union, target groups to participate in the pilot.
- The tentative dates for the training: are last week of January - first week of February 2018.
- The four weeks of internship in the cooperatives will take place initially in February and March 2018.
- EURICSE and Cooperative College will also facilitate access to experts for trainings.

PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF WORK PACKAGES (September, 28th - 2017 || 09:00 - 18:00h)

●●● WP3 | EVALUATION METHODOLOGY & WP4 | BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

Minna Hämäläinen, representing Lappeenranta University of Technology (LUT, WP3 leaders) explained the partners the advances made in the implementation of the activities and how the work it's been combined with WP4, being both the workpackages more advanced in ECOOPE.

First of all LUT explained how the consortium members dealt with the need of updating the schedule and with the fact that a lot of the work was supposed to be done in summer time, months with less activity, specially regarding university and educational institutions that mainly are on holidays and closed.

Together with all the partners we overviewed the work with the preliminary questionnaire, based on success indicators, designed for start working with the identification of good practices, initiatives, trainings and methodologies from different educational levels and european countries that will be part of the final selection after applying the methodology designed.

LUT presented the final digital questionnaire to be used in WP4 and sent to all the preidentified initiatives. Using Webropol online survey tool two questionnaires were developed, one for secondary school and another one for university education initiatives. The data coming from the answers to these questionnaires will be analysed and used to validate the methodology, as well as to propose a score of initial good practices final candidates.

These questionnaires are part of the Evaluation Methodology, already designed as a draft version that will be sent to the partners to get their feedbacks as part of ECOOPE's quality assessment process. Once a final draft is consolidated, it will be delivered to the external experts, so they can evaluate it and contribute to ensure an adequate approach and quality of the methodology.



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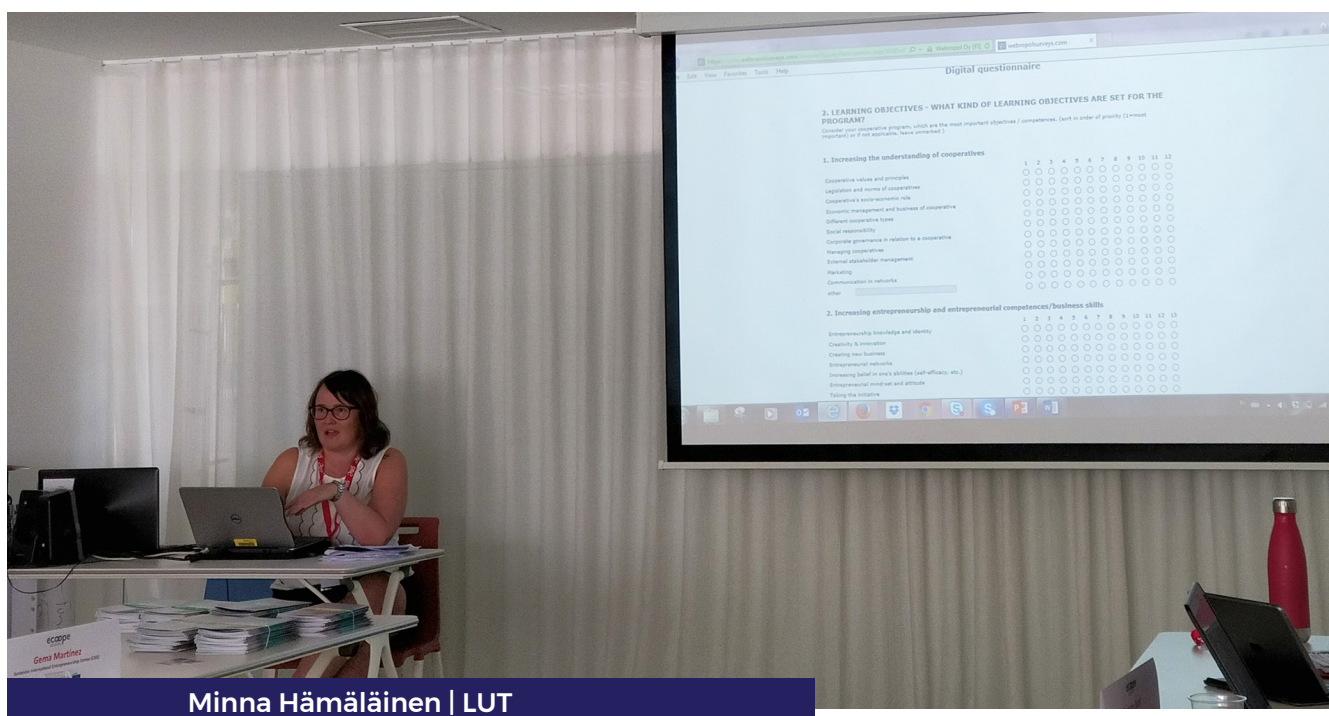


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Focusing now in WP4 implementation, Christian Wolf from PEEP - Policy Experimentation & Evaluation Platform, workpackage's leaders, explained to the partners the implementation of the good practice search and the future steps for the selection and the guide.

All partners contribute to the identification process, searching for initiatives using the preliminary questionnaire guide and indicators in 17 European Union countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) and contacting all the cooperatives umbrella organizations from these countries, trying to identify trainings and methodologies from secondary and higher education linked with cooperative entrepreneurship.



Minna Hämäläinen | LUT

Once the preidentification is finished and the answers to the digital questionnaires designed in WP3 are received and analysed by LUT (using the answers also to validate the questionnaire themselves), PEEP will proceed with the selection of the good practices with a higher score according to the Evaluation Methodology developed.

One of the main agreements that was discussed in this meeting was the logic that we can't assume we are going to select the best practices at European level, as we are not going to have the resource to reach each and every existing experience, and part of the preidentified ones may not answer the questionnaire. So all the partners agreed that what we are talking about is Good Practices, educational initiatives that has a good score according to our evaluation methodology.

The proposed structure of the Good Practice guide will include a Foreword; an Introduction explaining what is a cooperative and entrepreneurship, what is ECOOPE and why are we searching for this kind of programs and trainings; ECOOPE's evaluation methodology; the good practices and conclusions.



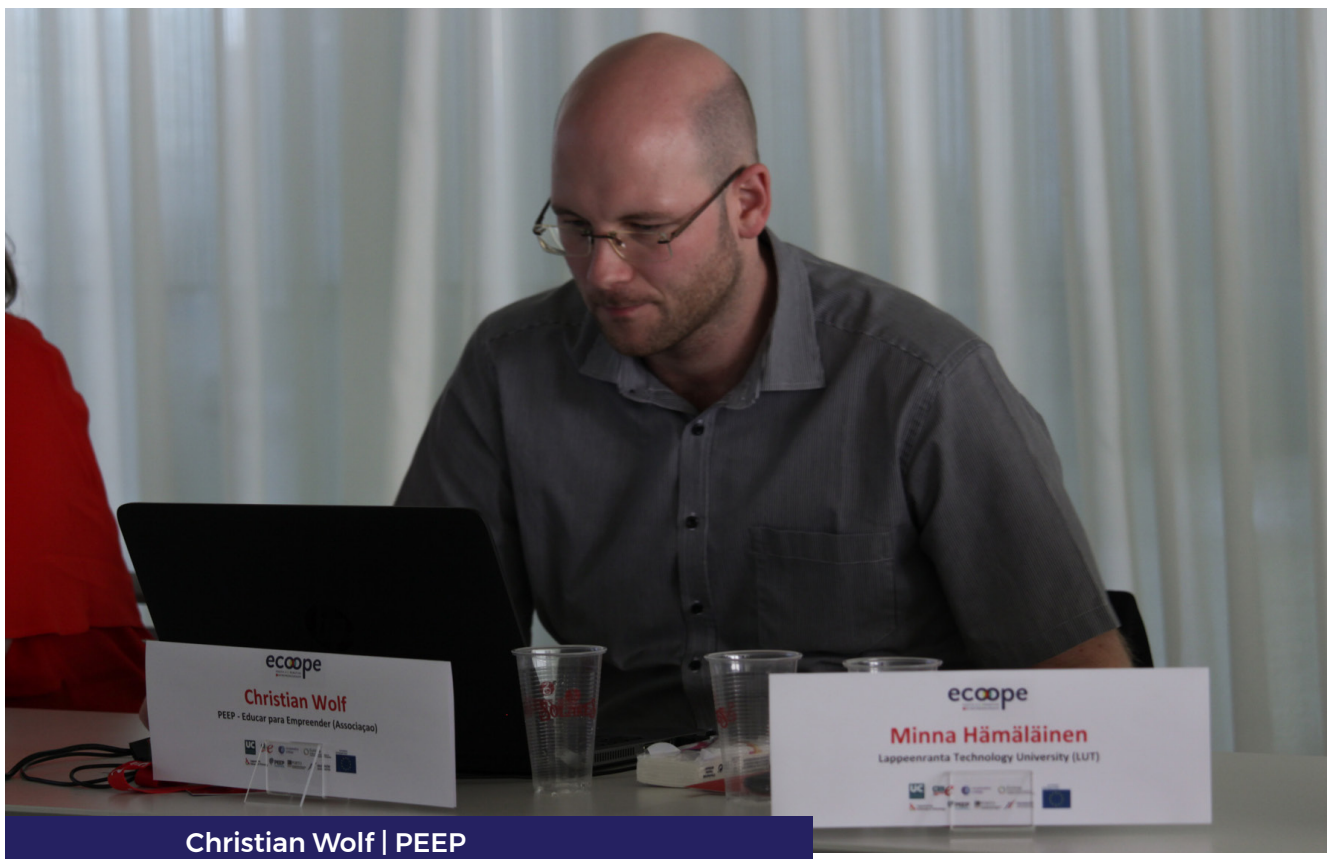
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Christian Wolf | PEEP

WP3 & WP4 CONCLUSIONS:

- The initial draft version of the Evaluation Methodology is already designed.
- The partners will collect answers from the preidentified initiatives using the digital questionnaires developed in WP3.
- LUT will analyze the data from the questionnaires and will give them a score.
- During november 2017 PEEP will make a selection of good practices based on WP3 evaluation methodology and analitative feedback.
- PEEP will coordinate the interviews of the selected trainings, assisted by the partners, and will elaborate the Good Practice guide, that will be edited and published as planned in WP7.

●●● WP1 | PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The main objective of WP1 is to implement the project activities efficiently and accordingly to the work plan, promoting the achievement of high quality results. This section of the follow-up meeting was held by José Carlos Ceballos (UCEIF), ECOOPE's Technical Project Manager, and Maria Herrero (UC), Financial Project Manager.



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ECOPE | Project management
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José Carlos Ceballos | UCEIF

First José Carlos Ceballos, from UCEIF, presented an overview of the project, comparing the initial timetable with the current one, updated together with each of the WP leaders to adjust it to the reality of the intervention.

These updates are designed for getting better results and achieve even more complete goals. The updated workplan for each workpackage was presented to the partners. He also suggested to the partners that the key stakeholder's database should be developed during all the implementation period of ECOOPE, in order to include all the identified and contacted institutions.



María Herrero | UC

During the rest of the presentation we focused in general management and financial issues, especially in the first interim report that the consortium must send to the European Commission regarding the implementation period until September 30rd.

María Herrero, from University of Cantabria, highlighted the deadlines for sending the information, the documents the partners must provide and a few recommendations to complete the financial statement correctly, as well as the second payment the partners will receive after this first interim report, as stated in the Consortium Agreement.

Before October 31st, 2017, the partners must send to the coordinator the financial statement and scanned copies of the supporting documents to review, validate and consolidate all the information before sending a scanned and a hard copy to the European Commission.



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WP1 CONCLUSIONS:

- The key stakeholder's database will be updated during all the implementation period in order to contain all the contacts done and all the institutions identified.
- The initial delay it's been a challenge during all the implementation period but the updates in the work plan managed to adapt the timeline as much as possible in order to assure the achievement of the results and impact.
- Before 31st October the partners must send to the coordinator the financial statement and scanned copies of the supporting documents.
- Before 30th November the the coordinator will send the interim report to the EU.

●●● WP2 | COMMUNICATIONS & WP7 | DISSEMINATION

The ECOOPE project communications team presented the evolution of their work since Porto's kick-off meeting. To explain the different actions, they spoke about the project main assets: website and social media, plus others related to offline dissemination.

ECOOPE's web was online in May 2017. Since then, the communication team has been involved on a constant evolution and improvement of the different sections, not only at a design level but also functionality and contents. As a result of this work the webpage is more dynamic and reflects the evolution of ECOOPE's implementation. Our communication experts explained to the partners that the webpage will continue evolving to emphasize each of the project phases, specially downloading of the deliverables. Facebook and Twitter accounts were created by the end of May 2017. Managed using weekly planners in order to keep the channels updated and schedule important events, they have also been useful for establishing relations with important institutions key stakeholders in this sector's social media, such as Coops Europe, Cecopa, Coceta or the Centre of Expertise for Cooperative Entrepreneurship. We've created several hastags, being #MeetThePartners one of the most successful.

It was also emphasized to the partners that ECOOPE it's a cooperative project and that link building and social media interactions will be key for the project dissemination purposes. To achieve these dissemination goals the ECOOPE communications team has prepared a specific communications and marketing campaign to strengthen the propagation of the project milestones, such as the evaluation method, the development of the pilot programmes and the design and dissemination of the international event. This will involve the design and launching of specific page inside ECOOPE's website, and all the links will be send to the rest of the partners, so they can enable them in their own sites or blogs.

There will be online and offline dissemination. The first one will include marketing campaigns, blog post and news inputs, and social media interactions. For the offline one there will be dissemination on local media through press releases or special features.

Also during this meeting the communications team presented the leaflet designed to all the partners, includes an overview of the project and it's going to be useful to the promotion of the project because, you know, you can take them to a meeting or to an event.



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