

Research Project: Another Production is Possible: Exploring the Solidarity Economy

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Capitalism fails many people. It does not provide enough jobs and many of the jobs are leaving people poor. Welfare funds are insufficient to cover the gap. Other than an unlikely socialist revolution, what can be done? The project wants to explore the possibility for a mixed economy, i.e. the establishment of a solidarity economy next to the capitalist market economy. The project expects to offer a new way to States and Governments to overcome the problem of unemployment and poverty by allocating the same amount of financial resources as currently spent on unemployment and welfare measures over five years to buy the means of production and raw materials. This initial funding should jump-start the solidarity economy among those who do not find a space in the capitalist market economy or do not want to be part of capitalism. They would produce basic needs for themselves (not for the market!) and exchange their products in return for labour-time vouchers among themselves. The project wants to assess whether such a solidarity economy can produce everything what its members need by using machineries, which were bought by governments from secondary markets.

The project departs from contemporary commune initiatives in various aspects:

- it gives a central coordination role to the governments;
- it suggests a production without being associated with the market and money within a market-oriented society;
- it also presents a new way for governments to balance their social expenditures in the mid and long run. Unlike monthly cash benefits, there will be no need for governments to keep spending on welfare measures since the means of production will be in use for long. Similarly, needed raw materials could be provided through an exchange network between rural and urban poor which again will be coordinated by governments. Thus although governments' expenditures might rise in the very beginning, a continuous decline is expected for the following years.
- it may give hope to standard and precarious workers to be organized in TUs and improve their living and working conditions.

Within the framework of the project, face to face interviews will be held with 20 jobless workers, 5 trade unionists and 5 politicians in each country that in total 140 jobless workers, 35 trade unionists and 35 politicians would be interviewed in total 7 countries given below under item "Participants" in order to find answers following questions:

- Is the Project itself feasible and applicable?
- What could unintended consequences be?
- Could it find a strong support in the society?
- What are the weakest and strongest aspects of the Project?

Methodology:

As this research will be conducted in seven countries, basic method adopted is case study method which will be used by GLU alumni participants. Necessary data will be collected through a number of ways such as reviewing literature, gathering Government statistics and interviewing with key informants like political party representatives, Trade Union officers and long term jobless.

Participants:

Researches will be conducted by the following nine GLU alumni in seven countries:

1. Gaye Yilmaz / Turkey
2. Bilge Çoban / Turkey
3. Tolga Toren / Germany
4. Zami Chikani / Zambia
5. Lincoln Aveza / Kenya
6. Nuhu Dadi / Nigeria
7. Moradeke Badru / Nigeria
8. Cyntia Machado / Brasil
9. Gift Maoneka / Zimbabwe

Duration of the Project:

- Field interviews will be completed till to November 2019
- Country contexts (short info/or intro. about country's labour markets, data on poverty, unemployment rates and social aid provisions) will be written till to the end of January 2020
- Final text for each case study will be ready latest in May 2020