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2015 Analysis

AND IF EVERYONE STOPPED SETTING UP HIS/HER (SMALL) ENTERPRISE?

In the dominant debates, the development of the unemployment curve has become the obsession of our society right to the point when a corporate project is often justified by the number of jobs created (or preserved). As players in the social economy, we note that our actions are interesting for politicians provided that they can answer the question: « What is the impact on employment? ». Ultimately, the quality and the meaning of these jobs have little significance. Confronted by the social urgency of providing employment (or at least an income) for everyone, a more prospective reflection on the future of work is difficult to introduce in the public debate.

But we feel that this is more than necessary. This is why we invite readers to challenge the future of work in several instances¹. This initial analysis proposes the (re-)discovery of business and employment cooperatives and their evolutions². Confronted by a shortage of available jobs, numerous measures have been introduced to stimulate the self-creation of business. « Be your own boss » - this is the slogan making people dream, but it hides a reality which is often precarious and remote from the emancipation often advocated. Business cooperatives have emerged to accompany this phenomenon while ensuring individual developments. In the near future, the evolution of these cooperatives to « work mutuals » could well be the precursor of a new way of working without being condemned to « setting up companies ».

When establishing the framework, we have to first remind ourselves of some fundamental challenges of the working world. Then we will return to the origin of business and employment cooperatives and their potential evolution to future « work mutuals ». At the end, we will discuss the potential of such structures in redefining work by analysing the possible role of the social economy while highlighting some as yet undecided questions. Our reflections have been fuelled in particular by a meeting organised by the Riposte.CTE³ collective with Sandrino Graceffa (director of SMart), Noémie de Grenier (co-director of Coopaname), Patrick Lemoine (co-president of Coopaname) and Steve Bottacin (artist).

¹ Other analyses on the future of work will follow in 2016.

² As regards the functioning of a business cooperative, we refer to a previous analysis: « Les coopératives d'activités » [Business cooperatives], SAW-B, 2012, available at: www.saw-b.be.

³ Riposte.CTE is a space of cooperation and actions of unemployed individuals and committed workers. The debate took place in Liège on 9 December 2015 with Thierry Muller acting as facilitator. For additional information see: www.riposte-cte.tumblr.com.

« I FEEL (VERY) BAD AT WORK»

The title of this documentary by Jean-Michel Carré (2007) summarises in itself the less than enjoyable vision of today's world of work. Many researchers have described and analysed this reality. It is simply worth recalling some guidelines, which we feel are particularly pertinent for our reflection.

At present, employment is the only activity which seems to be worthy of interest. But employment is only one form of work (the most visible) among others (Let's think of charity but also household work, for example). Even without a job many persons work in one way or the other. But did you notice that the question « What you do in life? » in fact says « How do you earn your living? ». More than being a social status, employment provides the basis for our system of social security which is intended to shelter us all from poverty: it gives us access to rights. The job is the object of all envy, but it is not accessible to everyone: many unemployed therefore have to try to « insert themselves» into an overly crowded labour market. Only by proving their efforts will they eventually get an allowance enabling their survival. Those who are so « lucky» to have a job cannot rest in peace either: the spread of precarious, intermittent, « project-related» forms of employment puts pressure on the workers who are afraid of becoming unemployed again, and this lead to considerable collateral damages (especially burn-out, absenteeism and occupational diseases).

« Find the ball»

« It is obvious that there are far from enough jobs for an entire segment of the population lacking the necessary qualifications. And who would really like to work, but they are not qualified, they're not up-to-date for the available jobs. This turns into a fool's game, absolutely crazy. There is a social worker accompanying a person to look for a job even though it is clear that there are no jobs and that someone else will check. It is as if it was a game: you are enclosed in a room, you are told « find the ball», but you know very well, you have seen in two seconds that there are no balls and, if there was a ball in a month's time, you would certainly take it, but then there is no ball. Then someone else will come and help you look for that ball which does not exist in that room, and finally someone else comes to check whether we really look for that ball, which is not to be found in that room. This is annoying at that moment, I can no longer stand the checking. »

Stéphane Bertrand, coordinator for Intregra Plus.

Excerpt recorded in a radio show produced in Marche in 2015 with interns of socio-professional insertion structures⁴.

Stigmatisation for those excluded from employment, suffering for the employees, this picture does not make one dream. How did Steve Bottacon put it: « *The job market turns into the place of all rivalries and violence: an overpopulated arena where everyone's present and future are played out...*»⁵. To mitigate that violence, a number of social tools have been introduced (socio-professional insertion, Article 60, etc.)... Whether they are absolutely necessary to support the most deprived or not, these measures most often provide only palliative responses without really proposing alternatives⁶.

⁴ To listen to the show, visit: www.saw-b.be/spip/RADIO-SHERWOOD

⁵ Steve Bottacin, « Le prédateur et le coopérateur » [The predator and the cooperator], Analysis Smart, 2015.

⁶ See also our analysis « Entre intégration professionnelle et émancipation sociale, quels nouveaux défis pour les CISP ? » [Between professional integration and social emancipation, which are the new challenges for the CISP], 2015, available at : www.saw-b.be.

There is another way which is often presented as desirable and means - to refer to the title of the brochure of 1819.brussels⁷ - « don't look for a job any longer, create one! ».

THE SELF-CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT: YES BUT ... NO

At first glance, it might seem that leaving employment to escape the ties of sometimes suffocating subordination is tempting and that many self-employed persons make a conscious choice (and come out rather well). Not having a boss and living one's passions - a dream of a combination! But that image hides another reality, the reality of self-employed workers having their « last chance». For them, this status is not an option chosen freely, but a situation they endure (out of necessity, as they did not find anything better...). And it is noticeable everywhere in Europe that the crisis of 2008 has provoked a marked increase in the number of self-employed individuals⁸. This status exposes them to numerous risks and difficulties making these workers highly vulnerable: insufficient social protection⁹, especially in case of unemployment, disastrous consequences in case of illness or accident, the need to always self-develop on one's own ... Furthermore, even if certain self-employed individuals come out well financially, it is remarkable that 60% of them earned less than € 833 a month in 2013 (while the poverty level was €973 at the time)¹⁰. And the tendency is not brilliant: the number of self-employed workers grows while their income goes down steadily.

It is this tension between the wish for emancipation and the risk of precariousness, which is highlighted by the authors of a publication on the Manufacture coopérative [Cooperative Manufacture]¹¹: « *new ambitions emerge: working less, working better, giving meaning to one's work ... they are reflected in the incentive to become one's own employer; but, paradoxically, this wish for independence gives rise to new forms of heteronomy: the one-person employer clearly subject to the laws of the market, to the same centrifugal forces which have pushed him or her out of employment- by choice or necessity. He/she faces new situations of domination (strong dependence on the order-giving entity, fierce competition between self-employed workers...), while his/her precariousness mounts and his/her social protection weakens* »¹².

Whether a person is a salaried employee, self-employed or unemployed, the world of work does not stop assigning us relationships which Steve Bottacin did not hesitate to qualify as « feudal » in the sense that, in all these cases, « *one of the parties is in a concrete feudal relationship to another: the person with precarious employment vis-a-vis its employers, the unemployed individual vis-a-vis its controlling organism and the self-employed worker vis-a-vis ... himself or herself in a logic of fierce and desperate (self-) exploitation* »¹³...

⁷ « 1819 is a telephone service set up upon the initiative of the Brussels-Capital region to inform and orientate the founders of start-ups or managers of existing companies in Brussels. The mission of the service is to act as a first point of entry to a range of public or private services intended for Brussels entrepreneurs. » www.1819.be

⁸ Eric Moranval, « La protection sociale des travailleurs indépendants » [The social protection of self-employed workers] (directed by Denis Stokkink and Sandrino Graceffa), analysis by Pour la Solidarité and Smart, 2015.

⁹ The social security system was established at the end of the Second World War, when there were very few self-employed workers.

¹⁰ Arnaud Lefèbvre, « Constat alarmant : 16% des indépendants de Belgique vivent sous le seuil de pauvreté » [Alarming conclusion: 16% of all self-employed in Belgium live below the poverty level], www.express.be, 30 July 2013.

¹¹ Manufacture coopérative is a research action initiated by the Oxalis et Coopaname SCOP with the associated LADYSS repertory. It is committed to the transformation of work collectives and cooperative organisations irrespective of the motive for this transformation: recovery, transfer or revival.

¹² The Manufacture coopérative, *Faire société : le choix des coopératives* [Shaping society: the choice of cooperatives], éditions du Croquant, 2014, p.29.

¹³ Steve Bottacin, *op.cit.*

BUSINESS COOPERATIVES...

The difficulties and risks in transferring to a self-employed status are not new and the solutions developed by the social economy are business cooperatives. Emerging in France and imported to Belgium in 1999 (with the establishment of the first company of this type: Azimut¹⁴) business cooperatives want to accompany currently unemployed persons in establishing their own business in a secure setting (testing the business activity within the cooperative, retaining unemployment benefits during a transition period).

What is a business cooperative?

«The business cooperative has the goal to enable persons having a certain know-how and feeling like creating their own employment or their own economic structure to do so in a secure setting while facilitating their start and enabling them to familiarize themselves with the operation and the management of a company. These "candidate entrepreneurs" - in principle, they are hard-to-place unemployed individuals and other vulnerable groups - conclude an agreement with the business cooperative (for an overall period of no more than 18 months) defining the accompanying activities, the framework and the coaching associated with their business activity; they are then given an opportunity to test in a real-life situation the viability of the business project they intend to launch as self-employed individuals while retaining their social rights (unemployment benefits, insertion income or welfare payments) during the term of the agreement.

The business cooperative is based on a collective momentum, is supported by monthly reunions of the entrepreneurs, individual coaching and accompanying on-site support by professionals. It makes its legal structure and its business registration number available to the candidate entrepreneur; to a certain extent it therefore turns into its billing centre.

The principle of the absence of debts, which is fundamental for business cooperatives, effectively limits the range of possible activities: service activities or handicrafts - all sorts of business requiring little investment, demanding a low inventory. The cooperative cannot provide a framework for businesses requiring a lot of financial investment such as industry or trade or businesses requiring guarantees or long-term insurance like the building sector, for example. »

Source : Dictionnaire du Centre d'économie sociale de l'université de Liège [Dictionary of the Centre of Social Economy at the University of Liège], www.ces.ulg.ac.be

Terminological clarification

As often, the terminologies used in the French-speaking world lends themselves to confusion. Certain precisions are therefore called for.

In Belgium, business cooperatives are companies with a social purpose recognised in the decree called SAACE of 18 July 2008 (Structures d'Accompagnement à l'Auto-Création d'Emploi [Accompanying Structures for the Self-Creation of Employment]). Under this heading, they benefit from public financial support.

Employment cooperatives (also called DiES, see below) have neither a special legal structure nor a licence or label.

In France, one talks about CAE (business and employment cooperative) for all these structures.

¹⁴ Visit: www.azimut.cc. It is interesting to underline that Jean-François Coutelier (the original founder of this business cooperative) currently works on the development of another cooperative – Scopiton - aiming at the mutualisation of services between small businesses.

This «first-generation» of business cooperatives intends to pursue a softer and smoother transition between the status of jobseeker and the self-employed status by reducing the initial risk and breaking the isolation of the project initiator. In Belgium, they are united in the Coopac Federation¹⁵.

This experience resulted in the following reflections: why should one ultimately leave the business cooperative after the test? Why should one not continue to benefit from the advantages of certain shared elements (buying material, mutual financial management support, etc.) together with other entrepreneurs in a single company while pursuing one's own business activities in full independence? This is the principle of the employment cooperative or the « shared enterprise». Ultimately, «*we definitely share our apartments or vehicles, don't we?*», wonders Sandrino Graceffa. This is no longer a test for becoming self-employed but a way of developing one's business activities in a company, in which an individual is employed and a long-term partner at the same time. This is the option chosen by DiES, an employment cooperative in Belgium. It currently unites approximately 60 active salaried entrepreneurs in a wide range of fields: ONG, training, design, translation, business services, photography, etc. There are three conditions for joining this cooperative: «*Having a specific know-how / an occupation, showing the strategic and financial viability of a professional project (an average gross margin of no less than € 2.000 per month), complying with the internal regulations*»¹⁶. At the end of six months, there is an invitation to become a partner and to participate in the decision-making bodies according to the principle of « one person – one vote». It should also be noted that Azimut has recently launched « Join up », the employment cooperative project for individuals, who want to remain in the cooperative after the test period and who generate sufficient turnover.

Two examples: Coopaname and Smart

« *Coopaname is a worker cooperative, which emerged from the movement of business and employment cooperatives. Coopaname features a range of activities and an open structure and proposes to any worker, male or female, graphic artist or repairer of chair seats, consultant or e-businessman/businesswoman, IT developer or magician to freely join the cooperative, to contribute his/her know-how and to independently develop a business activity, which enables him/her to gain a salary and to benefit from social protection. In other words: a collective framework to jointly look for the means to live decently of the activity a person likes and knows how to do in the rhythm of his/her own liking.* »¹⁷

Coopaname is a French structure from the Île-de-France and the Sarthe regions. Today it counts more than 750 persons. For joining Coopaname it is not necessary to justify a minimum turnover: « *From your first billings, you sign a CDI (permanent contract of employment) with Coopaname – and you then benefit from the social protection and the same rights as any employed individual – and start paying your own salary from your own turnover. The salary you transfer to yourself varies over time and is reviewed during the further evolution of your activity.* »¹⁸

SMart was founded in 1998 in Belgium. It is currently represented in eight European countries and has more than 60,000 members. «*Our organisation provides concrete answers, proposes advice, training and administrative, legal, fiscal and financial tools to simplify and legalise the professional activity in the creative sector*»¹⁹. Apart from contributing solutions for a large number of workers in the creative sector, Smart has made a major contribution to numerous struggles for the recognition and appreciation of these «atypical» workers. SMart Belgique has recently launched «SMart in Progress», a

¹⁵ www.coopac.be

¹⁶ www.dies.be. DiES is a social-purpose cooperative recognised by the Conseil National de la Coopération [National Cooperative Council].

¹⁷ www.coopaname.coop

¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹⁹ www.smartbe.be

participatory workshop of several months where all members are invited to participate. The objective? Transforming the association to a cooperative to better respond in full independence to the needs and the challenges of tomorrow.

... TO WORK MUTUALS ?

«*Business and employment cooperatives are a solution, they are not a model*» clarifies Sandrino Graceffa. But these cooperatives are perhaps the place where the work of tomorrow is invented and conceived. « *The company will become more and more functional in future: people will use it, because they need it to do what they want*» he continues. One therefore passes from the shared enterprise to the «work mutual». What will this mutual resemble? It is difficult to say precisely, as the project is still in the conceptual stage. Nonetheless it represents an evolution of the model of business and employment cooperatives: the partners work in independently while providing security for each other. In contrast to the culture of entrepreneurial risk, the response given is a collective risk²⁰ (which is lower and can therefore be more audacious). Furthermore, inside the mutual, it is possible to see the soft and opportunistic establishment of small businesses or circumstantial collectives which might work together on a particular occasion or over a longer period of time. The fact that it is not necessary to create a fully developed structure and its flexibility and ease may also enable individuals to avoid facing dilemmas: whether the project works or not or whether it becomes unsuitable over time, it is possible to «close shop» with less damage and more perspectives for redeployment than today (given the fact that everybody nonetheless stays in the same mutual). This more flexible way of creating and working may favour challenging the rationales and ways in which these groups will actually function to a greater extent. Today, the blackmail in favour of employment is still immense: even if one knows that certain business activities are disasters for the environment, for example, it is often very difficult to envisage closing them because of the loss of employment such an action will provoke.

In this mutual, «*one does not join with an entrepreneurial project but with know-how (a «profession») intended as a means to make an independent living*»²¹. This is really an upscale shift which will transform the theoretical experiment. As Sandrino Graceffa put it, «*it is by the force of numbers that we can create a right*».

Tomorrow, the new *Bigre !* mutual

« *Bigre !* was formed as a result of a meeting between *Coopaname*, *Oxalis*, *Grands Ensemble* and *Vecteur Activités*, which have emerged from the business and employment cooperation movements, and *SMartFr*, the French representative of the *SMart* group of mutuals, which originated in Belgium and counts 35,000 professionals from the creative sector everywhere in Europe.

It is an open and welcoming cooperative, in which the following support functions are mutualised: management, research, social protection, legal assistance, etc.

Together, Oxalis, Vecteur Activités, SMartFr, Coopaname and Grands Ensemble as well as all cooperative, associative or mutualist organisations joining them want their cooperation to overcome the traditional alternative between subordinated salaried employment and precarious self-employed work. Their group - which is essentially mutualist - comes with a

²⁰ La manufacture coopérative, *Faire société: le choix des coopératives [Shaping society: the choice of cooperatives]*, éditions le Croquant, 2014.

²¹ Joseph Sangiorgio and Stéphane Veyer, « Les coopératives d'activités et d'emploi : un exemple de construction d'une innovation sociale » [Business and employment cooperatives: an example for developing a social innovation], *Projectics / Proyéctica / Projectique* 2009/1, p. 51-61.

strong demand for invention while refusing the commercialisation of social issues and without waiting for public powers, the necessary practices to arrive at a resocialisation of the economy.

Bigre ! has a novel form for an economic and social organisation: a work mutual in partnership. In a single and identical community, it regroups several thousand members working on the same footing and mutually offering guarantees based on their economic and social capacity to perform their professions well and make a living from them.

In concrete terms, *Bigre !* pursues a mission of integrating in its societal structure craftspeople as well as intermittent performers, freelancers, authors and e-businesspeople, journalists or service providers. Thanks to its common structure called «la Manufacture coopérative» and accompanying the cooperative, *Bigre !* is also open to all new cooperative, mutualist or associative enterprises wishing to develop emancipated forms of work relationships in their midst.

Bigre ! will be a novel form of economic and social organisation: a work mutual in partnership. »²²

Let us briefly recapitulate the history of business (and employment) cooperatives. At the start, they wanted to accompany jobseekers (and some still do) in creating their own business activity by enabling them to enjoy benefits (continuing allowances, opportunities for testing, advice ...) and security in a transition phase. Then, certain structures wanted to « continue indefinitely » this transition phase through salaries for the entrepreneurs who then benefited from the advantages of being employed - especially with respect to social security - and the freedom of self-employment. Today, certain structures already conceive and test a model, which goes further and which might become a mass phenomenon and develop into a place, in which individuals coexist and work occasionally or as more permanent groups and collectives. This is the idea of the « work mutual » (a cooperative of professions, one might say).

It is interesting to underline that the model developed as assistance (the business cooperative) may give birth to a solution (the employment cooperative) which then inspires the development of a model (the work mutual).

ENTHUSIASM... AND QUESTIONS!

Have a happy mourning!

As early as 1958, the philosopher Hannah Arendt wrote: «*Modern society, after having transformed the entire society into a society of workers, will progressively free them from the chains of work. But the debates on the purpose of work are perceived as menace and not as liberation*»²³. Almost 60 years later, this sentence seems to be just as topical. It seems to us that we find ourselves confronted by highly ambivalent perceptions on employment. On the one hand, we inherit our past and significant struggles to reduce the significance of employment, to «tame it» in view of moving towards the promise of «the leisure society» (which does not materialise). Today, the increase in the demand for intentional part-time employment, time credits and other forms of sabbaticals illustrates this desire to abandon

²² *Bigre!* Does not yet have a Website. For more information, visit: <http://www.coopaname.coop/actualite/bigre-cooperation-7000-personnes>

²³ Alban Goguel d'Allondans, « Les métamorphoses du travail. Requiem pour l'emploi salarié ? [The metamorphoses of work, A requiem for salaried employment?] », *Innovations* 2005/2 (no. 22), p. 9-32.

the totally central role of employment in our lives. On the other hand, employment continues to be regarded as a Holy Grail, a foundation of social life, and access to the rights and the means to make one's living. In these contradictory perceptions and in view of the current situation in the world of employment, one thing is certain: we need to reinvent work as such, «*and not only working conditions or forms of employment contracts or even the sharing of productivity gains in a digital economy!*»²⁴. And we should dare saying it loud and clear: this is perhaps good news, this is a fascinating challenge! Certain people like Bernard Stiegler do not hesitate to openly rejoice at the end of alienating and subordinating employment, which, paradoxically, would «kill» work, production²⁵. Without going so far, we can feel that this is not the end of the society of salaried employment, it is definitely the end of a society, in which salaries or permanent full-time employment were the monopoly form of work and would be the preferred vector towards having a place in society and access to social security and therefore to rights. «*Salaried employment, a seemingly insurmountable model, is only a very minor part of our history*» Sandrino Graceffa wisely reminds us. In this respect, the project of work mutuals is the vehicle for giving our reflections and hopes direction.

Which role for the social economy?

Do social enterprises have anything to contribute to this challenge of redefining work? Certainly, given their history full of experiments, trial and error, struggles and insights. But these reflections must be updated, revisited. «*Today, the social economy is sometimes excessively caught in the logic of conservation, while it knows how to take risks not as a means of enrichment but to prove that other models are possible*» underlines the director of SMart. At this point, it also seems essential that the social economy demands a different relationship to work and not just the possibility to create «*likeable enterprises*»²⁶. But the social economy will not redefine work all by itself: this is a project which must be pursued with other players like unions but also associations of temporary workers or even collectives of the unemployed (or workers «out of employment»). Nonetheless, the precious stone in the building of the social economy is doubtlessly the same as always: it is groundbreaking experiences, trial and error or, in other words, social innovation.

And which model of society?

The enthusiasm, which may trigger the emergence of a potential model for a work mutual, is great. But in the end we would like to propose three open questions, which we feel are important not to neglect in these reflections.

If enabling workers to enjoy greater independence is rather desirable, it is also necessary to point out the risk that, without a radical change in the concept of work, this independence will be reserved for a certain elite, which knows how to sell itself, to «give themselves a stage», as writer and researcher Christian Salmon²⁷ put it. Becoming «your own entrepreneur» is ultimately just the application of the new liberal logic ... to one's own person! And even when transposed into a framework of solidarity, is it desirable that we all become small entrepreneurs? What will happen to persons who do not necessarily have the qualifications or entrepreneurial ambitions? It seems necessary to us that education processes and room for debate are proposed and encouraged by the structures right from

²⁴ Stéphane Veyer, « Pour une mutualité de travail » [For a mutuality of work], La Tribune Fonda, n°222, June 2014.

²⁵ See his book-length interview with the explicit title: Bernard Stiegler, *L'emploi est mort, vive le travail ! [Employment is dead, long live work]*, interview with Ariel Kyrou, Fayard/Mille et une nuits, 2015. Or for a short presentation of his statements: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2m5g7z>

²⁶ Emmanuel Antoine and Stéphane Veyer, « Pour une économie sociale et solidaire de combat » [For a fighting social economy in solidarity], *Le Monde*, 21 November 2013.

²⁷ Christian Salmon, « Un individu entrepreneur de lui-même » [A one-person entrepreneur by him-/herself], Rue Saint Guillaume, n°158, April 2010.

the start. Not only to « train» individuals to become (their own) entrepreneur, but to debate the meaningfulness this would have (or not have). As we can read in *Manufacture coopérative*, «*not to lose their soul (anima), [business cooperatives] must cultivate their cooperative spirit (animus)*»²⁸. Another risk to be pointed out is the size of the undertaking and the number of members: if large numbers enable mutualisation, solidarity and a change of scale, they also come with their share of difficulties. Indeed, how does one live in a participatory fashion among 7.000 members? How does one avoid cumbersome administrative procedures? How to create cooperation and confidence, when the members don't all know each other? Could dynamic, independent and resilient entities have their place in such a « superstructure »?

Secondly and as Steve Bottacin reminded us: «*a model of a commercial society is not a model of society, whatever you might say!*». In order to avoid staying in an « alternative bubble» or to simply defend one's private preserve, it seems essential for the benefit of all to reflect on the links, which may exist between the struggle of salaried entrepreneurs and those of other workers with or without employment.

Finally, if this proposal is intended to be included in a real redefinition of work, it will also be necessary to reflect on the type of activities which do not sell on the market. Not all activities, however useful they may be, have the potential of being transformed into a commercial product which is sold or ordered. And how is it then possible to recognise these forms of voluntary and highly useful contributions (Would it be just the contributor to an article in Wikipedia who will be read by millions of people?). Is it necessary - in parallel to these proposals - to reflect on a way of guaranteeing to everyone the means of subsistence in an unconditional manner? Is it necessary to share (and therefore reduce) the period of employment? When seriously exploring these questions, Stéphane Veyer, partner (and former director) of Coopaname, already proposed: «*Where does the frontline run between work and leisure? And between production and self-production? What does dividing work mean? Which elements form the basis for gaining an income from one's work? What is a profession? For whom, for what, on what does one work? On what basis will income be socialised?* »²⁹.

Whatever the case may be, the social economy really intends to strive for another relationship to work, and it seems urgent that we dare to demand the creation of activities full of meaning which are also vectors towards individual and collective emancipation and not « simply » the establishment of enterprises. Supporting the experiment of work mutuals would be a first step!

²⁸ La manufacture coopérative, *op.cit.*, p.71.

²⁹ Stéphane Veyer, *op.cit.*



SAW-B ASBL, Solidarité des Alternatives Wallonnes et Bruxelloises, is a pluralist federation of social companies and the social economy.

Its goals?

- Defending and representing the social economy on the Belgian and European level.
- Creating awareness and make social undertakings and the social economy known as an economic alternative.
- Developing the social economy, promoting networking and mutualisation.