

## **“Solidarity in Transition? Researching Social Enterprise in Post-Communist Societies”: An International Scientific Colloquium**

Hotel Tirana International, Scanderbeg Square, Tirana, 1001, Albania

Thursday 21- Friday 22 April 2016

**Invitation to attend, and call for papers**

Social enterprises exist to serve social interests, rather than for maximisation of profits for private gain. Interest in social enterprise has expanded exponentially in recent decades, presented as having the potential to address some of society’s most pressing ills. The European Commission has an explicitly stated aim to contribute to the creation of a favourable environment for the development of social enterprise activity in Europe, and of the social economy at large. Through providing employment opportunities and activities aimed at society’s most vulnerable people, social enterprises are considered to have significant potential to contribute to social cohesion, solidarity, and the reduction of inequalities. However there is no fixed understanding of social enterprise: this varies considerably across time, space, place, culture, and political, legal and institutional context.

**You are personally invited to attend a free scientific colloquium that will critically engage with the topic of social enterprise within transition economies, to be held in Tirana, Albania, on the above date. Places are strictly limited so please indicate whether you can attend by, at the latest, 17 December 2015. The travel and accommodation costs will also be met for a limited number, with priority given to those who submit a scientific abstract for consideration for presentation at the event.**

Given the specific social challenges – and opportunities – facing post-communist societies, particularly in the context of pressure from global economic, and transnational political forces, not least from the EU, this scientific colloquium aims to: better understand the patterns of development of social enterprise activity in the various countries comprising the ‘post-communist region’ of East Central and South Eastern Europe; develop a future research agenda; and encourage and facilitate development, networking and partnership opportunities, particularly for early to mid-career researchers.

*We are also calling for scientific papers for presentation* at the colloquium, aimed at extending our understanding of social enterprise in the region and provoking discussion and debate. How is social enterprise understood in your country? How does this differ between countries, and why? In what ways does the legacy of socialism influence the patterns of social enterprise seen? Does the ongoing political context help or hinder an enabling environment for social enterprise? What might an ‘enabling ecosystem’ for social enterprise look like?

Abstracts of no more than 500 words (one page) should be submitted to [michael.roy@gcu.ac.uk](mailto:michael.roy@gcu.ac.uk) no later than Thursday 17 December 2015. Submitted abstracts will be peer reviewed by members of the Scientific Committee and a decision made by the end of January 2016. Those accepted will be invited to prepare a full paper, with the intention that the best will be put forward for consideration for inclusion in a special issue of *East European Politics*. Papers should therefore not be under consideration anywhere else. Only a very limited number of papers can be accepted.