



## **PUBLIC POLICIES OF SOLIDARY ECONOMY: TRAJECTORY AND PERSPECTIVES IN BRAZIL.**

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### **SUMMARY:**

The solidarity economy is a form of self-management organization, legalized or not, whose purpose is to generate work and income for its members or cooperative members. The general objective of this article is to analyze public policies of solidarity economy, the challenges and perspectives in Brazil. The specific objectives are: to conceptualize solidarity economy, discuss the development of the solidarity economy in Brazil and its perspectives, and analyze Brazilian public policies of solidarity economy. To this end, we used the modalities of bibliographic and documentary research, through a theoretical review of the analysis of programs and actions that promote and support the solidarity economy. The article aims to contribute to public and academic managers.

**Key words:** Public policies, solidarity economy, cooperativism.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

THE economy solidarity is a form of self-management organization, legalized or not, but that generates work and income for its members or cooperative members. The solidarity economy is not necessarily a production model created to end the capitalist model of production, but rather as an alternative to minimize the social and economic ills generated by it.

The concept of solidarity economy by Singer (2002), one of the main theorists of the theme, is the association between equals to produce, trade or save. This solidarity model of economy is the alternative proposed by the author to alleviate the ills caused by capitalism. That supports competition and consumerism, generating social inequality and unemployment.

In this sense, Mance (2005) cites the need for public policies for socioeconomic development and social integration that promote work and sustainable consumption and policies for the solidarity-based diffusion of social technologies that can establish conditions for cooperation, collective participation, self-management and social integration.

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The solidarity economy (ES) is fostered through cooperation between stakeholders to achieve a common goal. This movement can be a social integration strategy for individuals living on the margins of society.

Higher education, in fact, is gradually strengthening as a new alternative for income generation, inclusion and social empowerment as an important response not only for workers but also for poor communities in relation to the transformations that have taken place in the world of work. This new production practice favors collective work, self-management, social justice, care for the environment and responsibility for future generations. (Chaves; Pinto, 2007, p. 61, emphasis added).

Thus, the general objective of this article is to analyze public policies of solidarity economy, their development and perspectives in Brazil. For this, the specific objectives are: to conceptualize solidarity economy, discuss the development of the solidarity economy in Brazil and its perspectives, and analyze Brazilian public policies in solidarity economy.

Interest in issues related to the solidarity economy has shown considerable growth both in the academic environment and in public administration. It is possible to perceive the increase in publications, congresses and consultancies related to the theme and mainly the need to create laws and legal bases and support created by the public administration itself.

One can see, for example, the creation of the National Council for Solidarity Economy - CNES, which took place in 2006, through Decree n° 5.811, of June 21, 2006, establishing it as a “collegiate body that is part of the structure of the Ministry of Labor. and Employment, of a consultative and purposeful nature, whose purpose is to carry out the dialogue and seek consensus around policies and actions to strengthen the solidarity economy”(BRASIL, 2006)

To meet the proposed objectives, bibliographic and documentary research modalities were used, since books and articles related to the topic were reviewed, as well as historical and legal events that concern public policies of solidarity economy and their perspectives in Brazil were researched. . Thus, this paper aims to contribute to public and academic managers through a theoretical review of the main authors related to the theme, using simple language, to analyze the main public policies of solidarity economy.

## **2. THEORETICAL REFERENCE**

### **2.1. Concept of Solidary Economy (ES)**

Singer (2002) differs the capitalist economy from the solidarity economy by the way organizations are managed. The capitalist economy applies hetero-management, using

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hierarchy in the circulation of information and levels of authorities defined from top to bottom. Hetero-management applies cooperation between employees, usually organized into sectors to achieve the organization's objectives. The solidarity economy, on the other hand, is organized equally by its members.

Both self-management and hetero-management present difficulties and advantages, but it would be difficult to compare them to find out which one is the best. There are two types of economic management that serve different purposes. Heteromangement seems to be efficient in making capitalist companies competitive and profitable, which is what their owners aim for. Self-management promises to be efficient in making companies solidary, as well as economically productive, democratic and egalitarian interaction centers (in terms), which is what their partners need. (SINGER; 2002. p. 23)

Mance (2007) defines solidarity economy as a global revolution formed by collaborative networks where its components are supported and, therefore, are more likely to achieve their goals. For the same author, the great challenge is to transform the local network into a global one, through communication between networks. “However, more than simply spreading your proposals, acting on the debate of ideas, on the transformation of culture, it is necessary to act simultaneously on the economic and political levels” (MANCE, 2007. p. 4).

In this sense, in the final document of the 1st National Conference on Solidarity Economy (CONAES), in 2006, the solidary economy is reaffirmed as a revolutionary process that aims to reverse the exploratory process of capitalist labor and natural resources through participatory management, being considered an alternative to capitalism.

In this process of developing a solidary economy as a socio-political practice, support and promotion entities are of paramount importance for the establishment of the enterprise, worker training and technical, legal and administrative assistance. As well as public administration through their representatives, they are fundamental with regard to public policies of solidarity economy (Chaves; Pinto, 2007).

In Brazil, the reinvention of the solidarity economy is recent, but it has great vigor and remarkable institutional creativity. Brazilian inventions are the National Association of Workers of Self-Management and Shareholding Companies (Anteag), which has already guided the conversion of hundreds of companies into cooperative crises, and the Technological Incubators of Popular Cooperatives (ITCPS) inserted in universities, of which 13 form a network and many others carry out similar activities

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linked to the Fundação Unitrabalho, integrated by more than 80 universities across the country. Incubators organize peripheral communities into cooperatives through incubation, a complex process of formation through which traditional practices of solidarity are transformed into instruments of emancipation. (SINGER, 2002. p. 122)

## 2.2. The Historical Origin of the Solidarity Economy

According to Singer (2002), the solidarity economy originated in Great Britain, when more enlightened industrialists began to propose laws to protect workers, which were highly exploited in factories. The main name in this fight was Robert Owen, who owned an industrial complex and decided to limit his employees' working hours and offer them "generous" treatment.

In 1815, the cycle of wars in Europe brought about by the French Revolution ended. This created a depression in Britain's economy. Owen presented the government with a plan to stop the fund for the poor from being distributed and to be invested in land purchases for the construction of Cooperative Villages, where approximately 1200 people would live there who would produce something and the surplus production would be exchanged between villages with barter. However, the British government denied the implementation of this plan. (SINGER; 2002).

Owen's economic reasoning was impeccable, because the biggest waste in any economic crisis of the capitalist type (due to the fall in total demand) is the forced idleness of a substantial part of the workforce. There is an effective impoverishment of society, which is concentrated in those who have been excluded from economic activity. Therefore, getting work for them is to expand the creation of wealth, allowing the quick recovery of invested value. (SINGER; 2002. P. 26)

Owen's disciples began to create cooperative societies everywhere in line with the creation of several unions. Workers who were in conflict with their bosses created cooperatives to try to replace them in the market, often these cooperatives were financed by unions. (SINGER; 2002) According to Singer (2002) in 1833, Owen proposed to the Union of Construction Workers the creation of the Great National Builders Guild with the objective of dominating the construction market. "Behold, cooperativism, still in its cradle, was already flying as an alternative mode of production to capitalism." (SINGER; 2002, p.33)

## 2.3. Advances in the Solidarity Economy in Brazil

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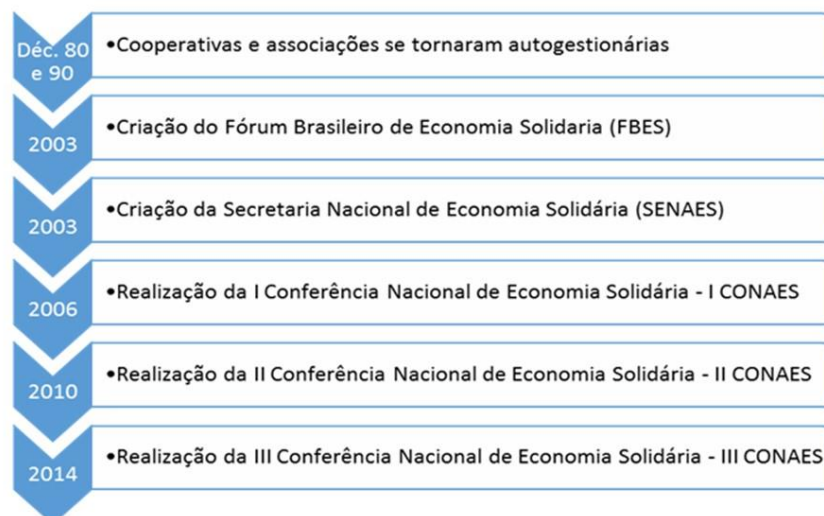
Cooperatives were brought by European emigrants to Brazil at the beginning of the sec. XX, but it was in the 80s and 90s, when Brazil experienced a strong social crisis and that was why mass unemployment and social exclusion occurred, that cooperatives and associations became self-managed (SINGER, 2002).

In 2003 the solidarity economy advanced in Brazil in terms of public policy, as the Brazilian Forum for Solidarity Economy (FBES) and the National Secretariat for Solidarity Economy (SENAES) were created in the Ministry of Labor and Employment. In 2006, the First National Conference on Solidarity Economy (I CONAES) was held in Brazil, where guidelines and priorities were defined in public policies for solidary economy (II CONES, 2010). THEThe first conference was of great value in the process of affirming the solidarity economy as an alternative to the capitalist model, ratifying the ES model of development, sustainable and inclusive. It is worth mentioning that before the national stage, state and territorial conferences took place (III CONAES, 2014).

The II National Conference was held in 2010 and had the role of strengthening the practices of cooperativism and associativism and mainly of advancing public policies of solidary economy. The III National Conference had the objective of creating a National Solidarity Economy Plan containing a vision of the future, diagnosis, strategic axes of action; strategic programs and projects and management model for strengthening the solidary economy in the country, in addition to taking stock of the progress made in Brazil since the first conference (III CONAES, 2014).

### Marcos da Economia Solidária no Brasil

Figura 1- Fonte: Elaborada pela autora



### **3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES**

Using the method proposed by Vergara (2004), the research was classified as to the ends and the means: As for the ends, the research is descriptive and explanatory. Descriptive because it analyzed the main public policies of solidarity economy in Brazil, identifying and registering their characteristics; and the research is explanatory because, based on descriptive research, it made the application of the theme intelligible.

As for the means, the research is bibliographic and documentary. Bibliographic because the theoretical basis used books, articles and websites that talk about public policies, solidarity economy, cooperativism; and documentary because government programs and actions that promote and support the solidary economy were analyzed, based on laws, decrees and reports. The field of field research was public policy promoted by the Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE). Therefore, the sample was defined by accessibility and typicality. (VERGARA, 2004) The sample population was defined in a non-probabilistic way. In other words, the sample was defined by accessibility, where according to Vergara (2004) the elements of the research are chosen due to the ease of access to them and by typicality because elements were selected that the researcher admits to be representative for the research.

### **4. DEVELOPMENT**

#### **4.1. Brazilian Public Policies in Solidarity Economy**

As explained in this article, the solidarity economy took an institutional shape with the creation of SENAES, from then on it started to have its own budget and was included in the Federal Government's Pluriannual Planning (PPA), so it became, in fact, on the agenda governmental policy. The objective of this topic is to analyze the public policies of solidarity economy developed in Brazil by the Ministry of Labor and Employment, as follows:

##### **4.1.1. PRONACOOP Social**

PRONACOOP Social - National Support Program for Social Associations and Cooperatives is a program that started in 2004, with a mapping of municipal and state initiatives to generate work and income for people with mental disorders or disorders caused by the use of alcohol and drugs , this mapping was carried out by the National Mental Health Coordination of the Ministry of Health. (MS and MTE, 2006).

In this sense, in 2004 a “Workshop on Experiences in Income Generation and Work for Users of Mental Health Services” was held, whose objective was to analyze the results of the mapping

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and propose policies in this area. From the deliberations of this workshop, an inter-ministerial working group was created to build and implement this public policy. (MS and MTE, 2006). The following year, the Interministerial Ordinance No. 353, of March 7, 2005, created the Working Group on Mental Health and Solidarity Economy, with the following attributions:

Art. 2 The Mental Health and Solidarity Economy Working Group will have the following attributions:

I - propose and establish mechanisms for articulation between the actions of mental health policies and solidary economy;

II - elaborate and propose an agenda of partnership activities between the two policies;

III - mapping the experiences of generating income and work, cooperatives, work grants and social inclusion through work, carried out within the scope of the psychiatric reform process;

IV - propose financial support mechanisms for the experiences of generating income and work;

V - propose training, capacity building and knowledge production activities at the interface between mental health and solidarity economy, as well as the appropriate legal framework;

VI - establish conditions for the creation of a Brazilian Mental Health and Solidarity Economy Network; and

VII - propose interinstitutional partnership mechanisms, at the national and international levels. (BRASIL, 2005)

But it was only in 2013, Decree nº 8,163, of December 20, 2013, that PRONACOOOP Social was instituted with the purpose of planning, coordinating, executing and monitoring actions aimed at the development of social cooperatives and social solidarity economic enterprises through the Union in partnership with States, Federal District and Municipalities and private initiative. (BRASIL, 2013).

### **4.1.2. PRONINC**

Another public policy is the National Program for Technological Incubators of Cooperatives and Solidarity Enterprises (PRONINC), which aims to support and encourage organizations that operate with the incubation of solidarity economic enterprises. PRONINC emerged in 1998 to corroborate the process of incubating solidary economy companies by incubators. However, the program was interrupted and returned in 2003, in a scenario where the Solidarity Economy

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was institutionalized in the Ministry of Labor and Employment - MTE with the creation of the National Secretariat for Solidarity Economy - SENAES. (IADH, 2011).

The Solidarity Economy (ES) incubators have their roots in the Citizenship Action movement, when in the midst of the extreme poverty of significant layers, especially in the large Brazilian urban centers, sociologist Herbert de Souza, Betinho, called on everyone to act “against hunger and misery and for life”. The insertion of public entities in this proposal originated in 1993, in Rio de Janeiro, the Committee of Public Entities in the Fight against Hunger and for Life - COEP, with the objective of encouraging actions to fight hunger and generate work and income for these segments of the population. (IADH, 2011, p. 7)

According to the PRONINC Final Evaluation Report issued by the IADH (2011), the technological incubators of popular cooperatives (ITCPs), are established mostly in public or private universities or in higher education institutions. The objective of ITCPs is to support solidarity-based economic ventures, whether for the creation or strengthening of existing ones. In this sense, PRONINC encourages ITCPs so that they can achieve their goals.

Since the creation of the National Secretariat for Solidarity Economy in 2003, PRONINC has taken strength and managed to establish itself and develop more and more in Universities and Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology, providing support to incubators and encouraging the creation of new incubators . (IADH, 2011)

Initially, a Steering Committee was formed, composed of bodies and entities such as the MTE, SENAES, Ministry of Social Development (MDS), Funder of Studies and Projects (FINEP), Ministry of Health (MS), Ministry of Education (MEC), among others , in order to debate proposals and continuously evaluate the program. In the process, other government agencies saw incubators as an opportunity to implement public policies to combat inequality and poverty. (IADH, 2011)

This is confirmed by the publication of Decree No. 7,357, of November 17, 2010, which provides for the National Program for Popular Cooperative Incubators - PRONINC, and provides for other measures, which in its second article exposes incisively, through its objectives, the role of incubation in promoting public policies of solidarity economy.

Art. 2 The purpose of PRONINC is to strengthen the incubation processes of solidary economic enterprises and will seek to achieve the following objectives:



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I - generation of work and income, based on work organization, with a focus on self-management and within the principles of autonomy of solidarity economic enterprises;

II - construction of a conceptual and methodological framework about incubation processes and the monitoring of solidarity economic enterprises after incubation;

III - articulation and integration of public policies and other initiatives to promote local and regional development;

IV - development of new methodologies for the incubation of solidary economic enterprises linked to local or territorial development processes;

V - training of university students in solidarity economy; and

VI - creation of disciplines, courses, internships and other actions, for the dissemination of the solidarity economy in higher education institutions. (BRAZIL, 2010)

According to the IADH (2011), PRONINC resulted in support for 77 (seventy-seven) incubators throughout the national territory, but with a focus mainly on the North, Northeast and Midwest regions.

### **4.1.3. Solidarity Economy in Development Program**

The Solidarity Economy in Development Program started in 2004, and it was from this same year that programs focused on the field of solidarity economy started to have their own budget and were included in the Federal Government's Pluriannual Program (PPA), which marked the introduction of public policies of solidarity economy at national level. (MTE, 2015)

The program, in its first quadrennium, fostered hundreds of solidarity ventures and in the second quadrennium the general objective was to facilitate access to capital, opening lines of credit and mainly to elaborate a legal framework for the solidarity economy, guaranteeing the right to associated work. (MTE, 2015)

The main specific objectives of the program were; disseminate and strengthen self-managed enterprises, through promotion and technical assistance actions; materially support entities and agencies that support and promote the solidarity economy; intervene in the reformulation of the legal framework that regulates cooperatives and propose the adoption of a Statute of Self-managed Enterprise, which allows to consolidate its identity, to implement a protection system for its workers and to guide inspection actions; articulate production chains, expanding the production, distribution and consumption of products of the solidarity economy; among others. (MTE, 2015)

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This program was based on the main demands within ES expressed in the Brazilian Forum of Solidarity Economy and in the First National Conference on Solidarity Economy and was also developed in line with the policies of generating work and income, combating poverty and inclusion of the Federal Government and other federal entities.

It was as a consequence of this program that Law 12,690 / 2012 was enacted in 2012, which is considered the regulatory framework for the solidarity economy. Bearing in mind that this law defines what cooperatives are, the principles and values they are governed by, which is self-management and mainly ratifies the labor rights of the members. (BRASIL, 2012).

### **4.1.4. Solid Waste Program**

The Solid Waste program has the main objective of corroborating with the associations and cooperatives of waste pickers created in all states of the federation, most of which are articulated by the National Movement of Waste Pickers (MNCR), promoting the organization and formalization of new cooperatives, contributing with technical advice and structuring of collection units, sorting, processing and sale of solid waste. (MTE, 2015)

Faced with this “new” reality, where solid waste is seen as an opportunity for economic and social insertion for waste pickers and as a consequence of this work, the reduction of waste in dumps and landfills, the Ministry of Labor and Employment developed this policy that brings following targets for 2012-2015:

- Train and strengthen participation in the selective collection of 60 thousand waste pickers;

- Fostering and strengthening 500 cooperatives / associations and cooperation networks of recyclable material collectors to act in selective collection and recycling chains;

- Increase 100 sales networks for recyclable materials collected by waste pickers' associations;

- Enable infrastructure for 280 thousand waste pickers;

- Support and promotion of associations, cooperatives and cooperation networks of recyclable material collectors through training, technical advice, infrastructure and logistics in waste collection, sorting, processing and marketing units. (MTE, 2015)

### **4.1.5. Regional, Territorial Sustainable Development and Solidarity Economy**

According to the MTE, the Regional Development, Sustainable Territorial and Solidarity Economy Program aims to foster and strengthen solidarity economic enterprises and their cooperation networks in production, commercialization and consumption chains through access to solidarity knowledge, credit and finance and the organization of fair and solidary trade and

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to strengthen the institutionality of the national policy of solidary economy, the federative articulation and the integration of policies to promote solidary economic initiatives in the sustainable and solidary territorial development processes.

The program uses the regional / territorial development process as a strategy with its potential and vulnerabilities. In this sense, it is intended to expand the generation of employment and income in poorer regions through the solidarity economy, in the form of popular cooperatives, associations of small producers, cooperation networks, operating in several productive sectors. (MTE, 2015)

In this way, the solidarity economy starts to constitute a strategy of socioeconomic dynamism within the scope of sustainable local or territorial development processes, promoting social cohesion, the preservation of cultural diversity and the environment. (MTE, 2015)

According to the MTE (2015), this program ratifies the Federal Government's intention to eradicate poverty and minimize social differences. To achieve the objectives, the program established the following goals:

- Create and strengthen 200 production and marketing networks;
- Include 200 communities in solidarity finance;
- Certify the products and services of 5,000 solidarity-based economic enterprises in the Fair and Solidary Trade System;
- Promote the training and social and professional training of 10,000 workers for the solidarity economy;
- Promote incubation, technical advice and direct promotion to 1,500 solidarity economic enterprises;
- Approve the new legal framework for the solidarity economy and labor cooperatives;
- Maintain and update information from 30 thousand solidarity economy organizations;
- Create and implement the National Solidarity Economy System and strengthen instances of participation;
- Promote the integration of solidarity economy policies in 100 territorial development processes;
- Implement the insertion of 9 thousand solidary economic enterprises in the National System of Fair and Solidary Trade; and
- Conducting educational campaigns to publicize the solidary economy and promote responsible and solidary consumption. (MTE, 2015)

## 5. CONSIDERATIONS

In light of what has been studied, it can be seen that the solidarity economy is a strategy of civil society in order to minimize the negative consequences of the capitalist model of production. However, in Brazil, the State institutionalized and regulated the form of cooperative and self-managed production.

It should be noted that the creation of SENAES was the milestone for the development of the solidarity economy, as it institutionalized it as a public policy and having Law 12.690 / 2012 sanctioned was the regulatory framework for the solidarity economy, as it provides robustness and credibility to cooperatives.

It can be seen that despite the creation of several public policies aimed at the creation and development of the solidarity economy in Brazil, the Ministry of Labor and Employment lacks disclosure of the results of these policies, both with regard to the economy and social development, which hinders further research.

From the public policies analyzed, PRONINC differs from the others. Because this policy develops within the academy, instructing teachers and students to be disseminators and trainers in incubators, demonstrating the capacity for training professionals committed to social emancipation and with university extension, in addition to potentially developing technologies appropriate to the reality of the solidarity economy .

It should be noted that the present article did not extinguish all the questions related to the subject and did not even have this objective. On the contrary, new questions have arisen. Therefore, based on what has been studied, the following themes will be of great value for future research:

- ✓ Deepen this research with statistical and / or econometric data;
- ✓ Conduct research on ITCPs, conducting case studies; and
- ✓ Study the consequence of the solidarity economy for regional development.

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