

Instructor's manual

Chapter 9 – Democratic enterprise: the invisible giant?

This chapter begins with an overview of global and national statistics relating to co-operatives and employee-owned businesses. It then considers the social, political, and economic environment in which these enterprises currently operate, and analyses the factors that promote or inhibit the growth of this sector. The chapter concludes by outlining a 'roadmap' for the future development of the democratic enterprise movement. By the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- understand the prevalence of co-operatives and employee-ownership at local, national, and international levels;
- appraise the environment in which democratic enterprises currently operate;
- analyse the factors that promote or inhibit growth of the democratic enterprise sector;

The key arguments that will be developed in this chapter are:

Co-operative and employee-owned businesses make a significant contribution to the world economy.

Globalisation presents both threats and opportunities for democratic enterprise.

There is increasing public appetite for democratic enterprise development which favours a ground-up rather than top-down approach.

Action and education are needed to ensure society benefits from a vibrant democratic enterprise sector in the future.

Chapter cases and seminar exercises

Seminar Exercise 9.1 Action planning



Summary of Learning

This chapter has argued that:

- Co-operatives and employee-owned businesses play a significant role in societies and economies around the world.
- The democratic enterprise sector in the UK is under-developed compared with the situation in some other countries and will remain so until more favourable regulatory frameworks and policies are in place.
- There are social, economic, and political issues that must be addressed for the movement to develop and grow.
- Renewable energy and financial services are among the most promising growth areas for democratic enterprise.

Possible Essay/Discussion Questions

- Assess the current status of democratic enterprises in your community. How many are there? Were you aware of their existence before conducting this research? If not, what does that say about education policy?
- How might a case be made to government for support (financial and legislative) for democratic enterprises?

Useful resources

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| Big Society Network | http://thebigsociety.co.uk/ . |
| Beyond Grey Pinstripes | http://www.beyondgreypinstripes.org/ . |
| People and Planet | http://peopleandplanet.org/ . |
| Co-operative Global News Hub | http://www.thenews.coop/ . |
| Co-operatives UK 2012 | http://www.uk.coop/2012/ |

