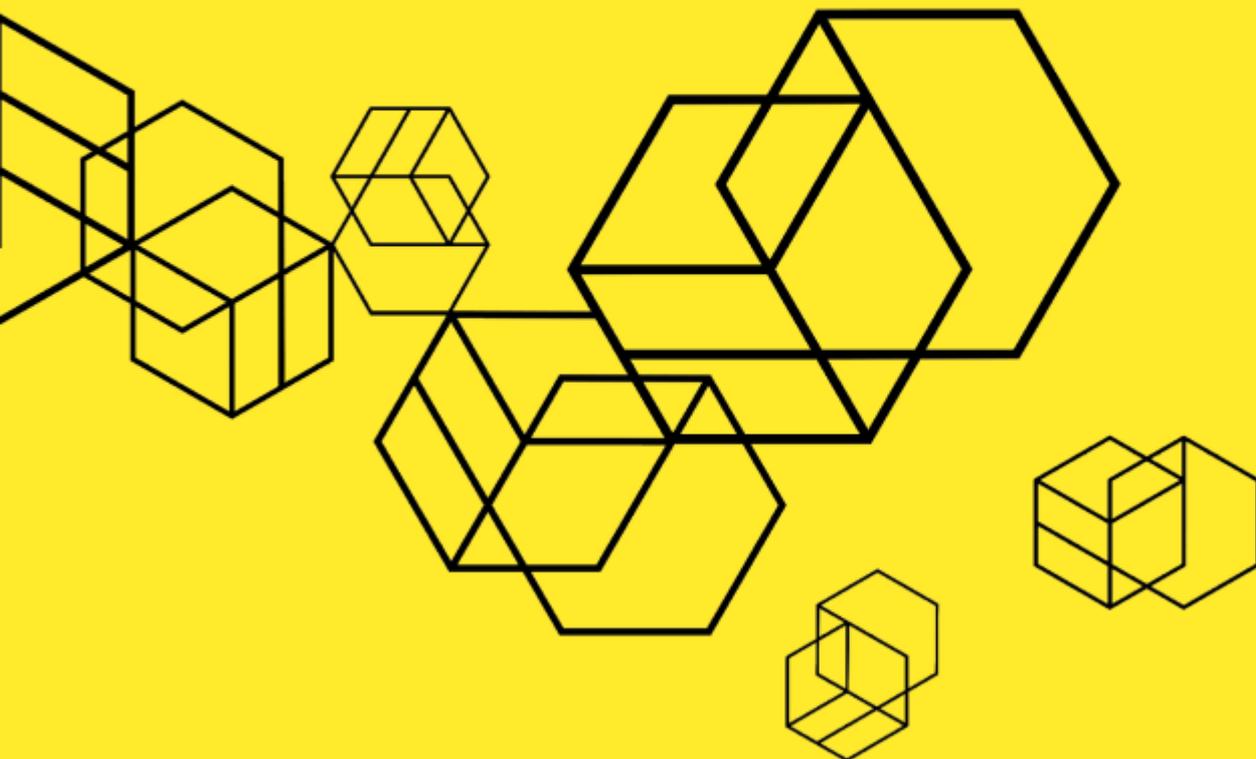




**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
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Report on SIC Learning Principles and Processes

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Table of Contents

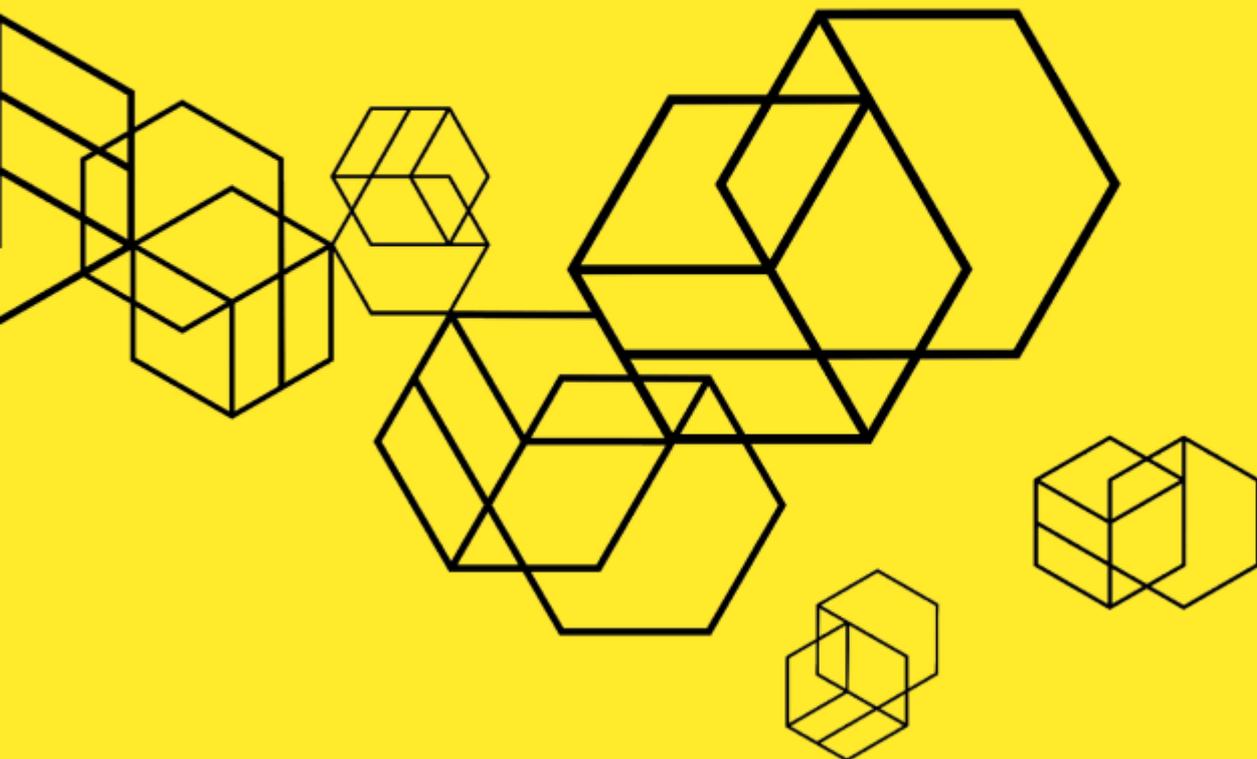
<u>RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>1. OVERVIEW OF LEARNING THEORIES</u>	<u>4</u>
LEARNING IN ECOSYSTEMS	5
LEARNING IN ORGANISATIONS	6
LEARNING IN COMMUNITIES AND NETWORKS	8
INDIVIDUAL LEARNING	9
<u>2. OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SI EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES</u>	<u>11</u>
FINDINGS AND MAPPING	12
DEGREE OF INNOVATION IN APPROACH AND ORGANISATION	12
DEGREE OF INTER AND TRANSDISCIPLINARITY	14
DEGREE OF THEORETICAL VERSUS EXPERIENCE BASED LEARNING	14
TYOLOGIES OF LEARNERS	16
THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS & INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS	16
SKILLS DEVELOPED	18
PROGRAMMES TYOLOGIES	20
FORMAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES	20
MA in Sociology: Social Transformations and Innovation, University of Barcelona	20
<i>MA IN SOCIAL INNOVATION, ZSI AND DANUBE UNIVERSITY KREMS</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>MA IN SOCIAL INNOVATION/SVB, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>MA SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP, GOLDSMITHS UNIVERSITY OF LONDON</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>MA IN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MANAGEMENT, ROSKILDE UNIVERSITY (DK)</i>	<i>23</i>
UNIVERSITY COURSES AND SUMMER SCHOOLS	25
<i>CHALLENGE LAB COURSE: LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS, CHALMERS U, GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN</i>	<i>25</i>
POST-GRADUATE / EXECUTIVE COURSES; NON-FORMAL ED	26
<i>ENTERPRISING LEADERSHIP, KAOSPILOT AARHUS</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>MASTERCLASS ON SOCIETAL TRANSITIONS, DRIFT'S TRANSITION ACADEMY & IHA</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>YEAR HERE, LONDON, UK</i>	<i>28</i>
NETWORKS DELIVERING OR STIMULATING SOCIAL INNOVATION EDUCATION	29
ONLINE COURSES	31
<i>IVERSITY - SOCIAL INNOVATION MOOC (EN)</i>	<i>31</i>
DISCUSSION: DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD	31



3. HOW WE INVESTIGATED SI LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES IN CONTEXT	33
FIRST STEP. DESK RESEARCH ON LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES.....	33
SECOND STEP. DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDING QUESTIONS	34
THIRD STEP. DEVELOPMENT OF CASE STUDIES AS INSTRUMENTS TO EXTRAPOLATE SI LEARNING PROCESSES.....	34
FOURTH STEP. DESIGN OF THE SIC LEARNING FRAMEWORK.....	35
4. SIC LEARNING CASE STUDIES IN A NUSHTELL	35
5. SI LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES AT WORK.....	48
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	49
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING/ LEARNING BY DOING	51
SITUATED LEARNING.....	53
REPLICATING/ADAPTING.....	55
REFLECTIVE LEARNING.....	57
6. OTHER INSIGHTS ON SI POTENTIAL LEARNING SUBJECTS	59
7. SIC LEARNING FRAMEWORK	61
8. SI EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES: GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES	63
9. REFERENCES	65
APPENDIX 1 LIST OF THE ANALYSED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES	68
APPENDIX 2 SIC LEARNING CASES STUDIES.....	70



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RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The aim of this report is directed towards establishing strong synergies and closing gaps between theory and empirical evidence on the issue of social innovation (SI) education.

Hence, the report will provide an initial grounded theory of learning in the context of social innovation, based on the analysis of 14 real-life case studies and their discussion with the support of diverse learning theories. The report thus bridges findings coming from the analysis and discussion of case studies with literature review, trying to capture the multifaceted aspects of learning in the context of SI.

Moreover, the report analyses gaps in the current education of social innovators and operators in the field of SI, providing advice and guidance on gaps and possible ways of filling them.

What emerges is an understanding of the gaps in SI education as well as its opportunities and a set of guidelines about how to exploit these opportunities within the SIC framework and beyond.

Learning in SI is a subject scarcely investigated until now despite the relevant role of different competences and knowledge in establishing and making SI robust and sustainable. Much research and many projects have already demonstrated that successful SIs are those supported by previous knowledge on a set of different domains from management to human resources, from legal frameworks to specialised knowledge on SI application sectors.

The SIMPACT project Deliverable 3.2 - *Comparative Report Across Social Innovation Across Europe* (Terstriep et alii, 2015) has already discussed the need to encompass the vision on SI as something that cannot be designed due to its bottom-up spontaneous nature suggesting, thanks to the evidences coming from 26 SI business case studies, that economically sustainable social innovation very much relies on the level of know-how and the absorptive capability of the underpinned organisation, individuals, and ecosystem.

Current literature on learning in SI is basically confined within the boundaries of the phenomena of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise/social economy (SE). As a consequence, the majority of the education programmes that today cover the area of SI are mainly developed around areas such as: management of social enterprises and cooperatives, social enterprises and cooperative legal forms, non-profit sector characteristics and market, and social economy principles and dynamics.

Contrary to this trend, there is a new tendency that has emerged during the last years which is emphasising many more areas of competences and tools that specifically address the problem of how to conceive and develop SI: how to individualise a promising idea, how to transform an idea into an innovative process, product or services, how to conceive an effective user experience for SI costumers and beneficiaries, and how to design a sustainable business models. As a confirmation for this tendency



we can observe the proliferation of SI design toolkits that exploit methodologies and tools coming from the area of design thinking and service design, innovation and new product development, and action-based research – to mention a few – to offer learning tools for social innovators, intermediaries and organisations who wish to establish a SI.

Then the question is: what are the learning mechanisms and processes that are in action in SI contexts and that better work to support these learning needs? What are the gaps between the practice of SI and how SI is faced in educational programmes around Europe? And finally, which guidelines are coming from the SI fields that should be adopted in SI education programmes?

The overall goal of this Deliverable is to empirically analyse the learning factors at work in different SI contexts, to classify and discuss them against the theoretical research on learning and to produce a set of recommendations to fulfil the gaps that already exist in the field of formal SI education.

To reach this goal T4.1¹ has been developed along three main lines of activities:

Sub-task 1. Understanding the learning principles that may (or may not) work in social innovation. For this sub-task, we have conducted a review of the literature on the main learning frameworks. This review, reported in section 1, has supported us to have a larger set of principles and processes of learning, with respect to the framework of the social entrepreneurs, against which to discuss real case studies.

Sub-task 2. Extrapolating learning processes from real SI case studies. For this sub-task, we have applied the qualitative methodology of the case study. We developed 14 SI case studies to cover different contexts and meaningful processes. For each of the cases, those learning mechanisms at work have been detected and discussed.

Sub-task 3. Analysing the current SI education offering within the EU boundary. For this sub-task, we have selected different program typologies: formal education programs (master degrees); not formal education programs (intensive courses, post-degree courses, courses that are not officially recognised

¹ This task aims to understand what learning means for researchers, social innovators, citizens and policymakers in SI and how it is fostered in institutional/top down environments (universities, schools, public agencies and organizations) and in non-institutional/bottom-up contexts (intermediaries, facilitators, makers). By analyzing how different types and levels of learning relate to how social innovation actors solve social problems or challenges and scale-up local solutions the task will offer insights on how learning works in several SI contexts: in a) SI incubators and accelerators across Europe; (b) in SI cases; and (c) in the SI ecosystem. These efforts will be connected with on-going EU FP7-funded research projects (SI DRIVE, TRANSIT, BENISI, TRANSITION, SIMPACT and CRESSI). Together with WP Strategy Development and Impact Measurement, and WP Research, this task will assess what works and what does not in terms of learning principles, processes and contents. Results will be directly used for setting up T4.3 (Summer School), and T4.4 (Social Learning Workshops)."



in the EU university education system); on line courses, and educational paths offered by networks operating for the diffusion of SI.

The learning processes and principles at work in real SI contexts have been individualised, classified and compared with the general principles of learning in 4 domains (individuals, organisations, communities and networks and ecosystem) and compared to those applied in SI education programs.

The final results we provide with are:

- The SIC learning framework: a general model of learning to be exploited in designing SI education programmes;
- An overview of the main education offerings available in Europe and beyond on SI; and
- Gaps and opportunities for the next generation of SI education programmes in terms of both new content and areas of learning and new trajectories of development.

1. OVERVIEW OF LEARNING THEORIES

Literature on learning in SI is still very scarce and it is even more difficult to find scientific work on learning in SI contexts. However, a larger body of literature on social entrepreneurship education and scientific work on social economy and on social entrepreneurship has taken centre stage for decades. “Theoretical Approaches to Social Innovation – A Critical Literature Review”, the first constitutive publication of the research project SI-DRIVE analyses different concepts related to SI and shows how according to these multiple foci SI is related to social change (Howaldt, Butzin, Domanski, & Kaletka, 2014). The review reaffirms the assumption that the concept of SI cannot be limited to one focus, be it social entrepreneurship or social economy, and demonstrates that widening the perspective is crucial for understanding SI. Hence, it makes an important contribution in terms of liberating SI from the silo of the third sector and opening up to other areas of society. To avoid the lenses of the uni-sectoral perspectives or also that of actor-centred approaches on SI learning, this deliverable focuses on the larger amount of literature on learning theories and processes with the aim of providing a starting point from which the SIC project can identify learning principles and processes in different SI contexts to avoid the silo of social entrepreneurship and social economy rather than giving an overview of relevant literature from all these related fields of research. Therefore, this literature review looks for different research contributions in the field of learning that will help to approach the main results observed in the SI case studies presented in sections 4 and 5.

The review stresses four areas of research on learning:

- Innovation Ecosystems;
- Organisations;
- Communities/networks; and
- Individuals



and synthesizes the main results and models of how learning works in these contexts with the idea of exploiting the main findings from these areas to explain the processes and principles that have emerged in the case studies.

Learning in ecosystems

Many evidence-based findings are showing the power of the concept of innovation ecosystems for explaining cooperative innovative activities that traditional innovation models are not able to explain (Yawson, 2009). The fundamental assumption behind the concept of ecosystems is to expand the capabilities of one actor beyond its own boundaries and transfer knowledge into innovation in collaboration with others (Adner, 2006; Mercan & Göktaş (2011).

The concept can be distinguished by its use of analogies with that of biological ecosystems (Lansiti and Levien, 2004; Moore, 1993, 1996). According to Moore (1993), a key feature of any ecosystem is co-evolution. Thus, in the case of a business ecosystem, the activities of any single organisation cannot be considered in isolation. They are caught up in a whole network of interdependencies, whereby change in one part of the system can have far-reaching, and often unexpected effects, in other parts of the system.

Thus, a systemic approach to innovation focuses on the interfaces of the so far differentiated and largely separate self-referential societal sectors of state, business, civil society and academia, of their corresponding rationalities of action and regulation mechanisms and at the associated problems and problem-solving capacities (Howaldt, Domanski, & Schwarz, 2015). With regards to the question how these interfaces can be reconfigured in the sense of sustainability-oriented governance, established steering and coordination patterns are complemented, extended and shaped by aspects like self-organization, cross-sector co-operation, networks, and new forms of knowledge production (Howaldt, Kopp, & Schwarz, 2015). Associated processes of “cross-sector-fertilization“ (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008) and convergence of sectors (Austin, Guitierrez, Ogliastrri, & Reficco, 2007) increasingly make possible “blended value creation” (Emerson, 2003).

Such collaborations are picked up by at least two different heuristic models, the quadruple helix (see Wallin, 2010) on the one hand, where government, industry, academia and civil society work together to co-create the future and drive specific structural changes, and in the field of SI the social innovation ecosystem (see Sgaragli, 2014) on the other hand, which also asks for interactions between the helix actors, but adds the notion of systemic complexity and looks at both the serendipity and absorptive capacity of a system as a whole. Academic knowledge on social innovation ecosystems is very scarce and the concept is still fuzzy. Once again, a key question is about the roles and functions of different societal sectors as well as relations and interactions among them.

In this context, we find it useful to distinguish between what we call a macro and a micro perspective.



This approach helps to better understand different challenges for learning in such ecosystems.

The macro perspective has to do with an understanding of learning in terms of adaptive imitation. Hence, it is neither about copying nor about inventing. This is especially important regarding the question of how SIs diffuse, how they are adopted, imitated or scaled. The micro perspective emphasizes the importance of agency and capacity-building within innovation ecosystems on the regional and local level. The macro perspective refers to how scaling out usually manifests itself across time and places; the micro level refers to strategies for achieving the goal of scaling-out.

Learning in organisations

Senge (1990) defines a learning organization (LO) as one where “people continuously expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continuously learning how to learn together”.

Watkins & Marsick (1996) identified eight shared characteristics of LOs:

- 01** Learning organization focus on organizational learning and transformation; it is not enough for individuals to learn.
- 02** Structures and systems are created to ensure that knowledge is captured and shared for use in the organization’s memory.
- 03** Leaders and employees at all levels think systematically about the impact of their decisions and work within the total system.
- 04** Learning is built into work structures, policies, and practices.
- 05** Learning is transformative in some way, although it is unlikely that some new learning will also be adaptive.
- 06** Learning has a greater impact when it involves a greater percentage of the employee population.
- 07** Organizational systems and policies are structured to support, facilitate and reward learning for individuals, teams and the organization.
- 08** Measurement systems benchmark current knowledge and culture and monitor progress toward becoming a learning organization.

In broad terms, a LO can be viewed as a social system whose organizational members have acquired the processes for continually generating, retaining and leveraging individual and collective learning. The organisational learning process can also be simplified into a sequence of three phases: information acquisition, information interpretation, and behavioural and cognitive changes. Organisations that have developed a strong learning culture, have in turn gained an important asset: the capacity to create, acquire and transfer knowledge, as well as modify behaviour to reflect the new knowledge and insight. LOs first acquire information, interpret it to fully understand its meaning and transform it into knowledge.



Consequently, LOs must implement the behavioural and cognitive changes if they want to reap the benefits of the learning and understanding processes. In the end, the successful realization of the aforementioned steps will lead to behaviour changes that can improve performance (Senge, 1990; Garvin, 1993).

Much of the literature on organization knowledge builds on Polanyi's distinction between knowledge that is "tacit" as opposed to knowledge that is "explicit" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1990; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 1966). Tacit knowledge refers to knowledge that one has but cannot explain (Polanyi, 1966). This kind of knowledge includes intuitions, values, and basic assumptions (Argyris & Schon, 1978), as well as "artistry" (Schon, 1987), and Zen mastery and expertise (Schon, 1983). Explicit knowledge involves knowledge that can be explained and codified. For example, facts, theories, recipes, standards, and procedures are all examples of explicit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). It is important to distinguish tacit and explicit knowledge because research indicates that more than half of the knowledge in organizations is tacit, and that an even greater proportion of the most valuable knowledge in organizations is tacit (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990).

Effective knowledge transfer focuses on transferring skills, experience and personal knowledge with others. LO as an intelligent organization, should be designed to utilise the intellectual power of all its organizational members. As a whole, knowledge transfer becomes a strategic component of a LO when it is effectively implemented to enhance organizational competitiveness.

Furthermore, social capital (i.e. the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership of particular social networks) is an additional mechanism for enhancing knowledge transfer both within and between organizations (Rhodes et alii, 2008). Social capital is a jointly owned set of resources that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of their social connections and can be significant in knowledge acquisition and transfer between network members. The structural dimension of social capital reflects that members can be positioned either on the network-core or the network-periphery whilst transferring knowledge both formally and informally. These variables impact the ability of individuals to engage others in the network to seek out resources and knowledge. Individual actors connect and share information with other actors to provide content and meaning in knowledge transfer; they create and maintain relationships with each other to enable collective and purposeful action to take place.

The 4I learning framework (Crossan, Lane & White, 1999) is an attempt to describe the complex connection between individual, collective (collaborative) and organisational learning. According to this framework, learning occurs at multiple levels through four socio-psychological processes that link learning from the individual to the organization: intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalising. The tension between introducing new knowledge (exploration) versus using the existing one (exploitation) (March, 1991) works as a learning trigger, shifting from the individual level to the group and the organisation as a whole. In this sense, tracing borders between the different levels seems quite difficult



and improper. and major organisational learning frameworks individualise connections among them. Crossan, Lane & White (1999) make one step ahead, describing how knowledge shifts from individuals to groups and organisations, and vice versa. *“A basic assumption is that insight and innovative ideas occur to individuals – not organizations. However, knowledge generated by the individual does not come to bear on the organization independently. Ideas are shared, actions taken, and common meaning developed. Complex organizations are more than ad hoc communities or collections of individuals. Relationships become structured, and some of the individual learning and shared understandings developed by groups become institutionalized as organization artefacts. There is a reasonable degree of consensus that a theory of organizational learning needs to consider the individual, group, and organizational levels.”* (p. 524).

Learning in communities and networks

In contrast with many learning theories that involve abstract knowledge, Jean Lave (1988) argues in a pragmatist tradition that learning is situated: learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. It is also usually unintentional rather than deliberate. Entering a new and unfamiliar field, learning often occurs in a process of “legitimate peripheral participation” (Lave and Wenger, 1990) from which people gradually move into more central roles. Acquiring professional or craft skills in a system of apprenticeships traditionally occurs through such a process leading eventually to full membership in a community of practice. Situated learning *“takes as its focus the relationship between learning and the social situation in which it occurs”* (Willman, Lave and Wenger 1991).

Usually the knowledge is presented in authentic contexts — settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. The social interaction and collaboration that comes with this form of learning are essential components — the learner becomes involved in a “community of practice” which embodies certain beliefs and behaviours to be acquired. In the case of the social festivals, the knowledge is communicated by each individual participant who gets involved in the community. At the same time, in developing their ideas and projects, the participants share and even develop common beliefs or values.

An even more important aspect in this theory is that the beginner moves from the periphery of a community to its centre with the effect that he or she becomes more active and engaged within the community (and eventually assumes the role of an expert). This aspect covers exactly the aim of the social festival, thus should be highly in the focus of the organizers. As many theories, also the Situated Learning Theory has been further developed. Brown, Collins & Duguid (1989) emphasize the idea of cognitive apprenticeship: *“Cognitive apprenticeship supports learning in a domain by enabling students to acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activity. Learning, both outside and inside school, advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge.”*

Given the fact that some funded projects might involve several committed stakeholders that share a



concern or a problem and interact on a regular basis for some time, also the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) might become relevant for the Social Festival. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) [10] hereby emphasize that the three components of (1) the domain, (2) the community, and (3) the practice are required in order to count as a CoP. In case of the Social festival, a group of people would find an identity defined by the shared issue they are taking up and the aim of finding solutions to that problem (1). The community (2) would be built by members of each project, interacting and engaging in shared activities, helping each other, and sharing information with each other. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. The core are people who interact and learn together in order for a CoP to be formed. If the members actively develop a shared repertoire of resources which can include stories, helpful tools, experiences, stories, ways of handling typical problems, etc., the developed project can be considered as a CoP.

Individual learning

Individual learning is thought of as an “acquisition and integration” process of new ideas and concepts based on an accumulative knowledge. This represents a cognitive and individual process type. Knowledge is “information without context” and is acquired, obtained and shared and is able to be transferred to a diversity of contexts more easily. The learning has a universal dimension. In this perspective, the notion of explicit knowledge (codified) always prevails. (Polanyi, 1967, Nonaka and Toyama, 2003).

But, knowledge is thought as a “participation and co-creation process” of new ideas and concepts based on a participation process. This represents a collective and constructive process type. Knowledge is “embedded information in the social context” of a specific practice, it is not universal but rather situational and the learning doesn’t exist before the practice. In this perspective, the tacit notion of knowledge always prevails. (Polanyi, 1967, Nonaka and Toyama, 2003).

Hence, these two streams differ from each other by the mechanism of learning: one of them individual (cognitive) and the other one collective (collaborative). In one of the mechanisms, something new is “acquired” while in the other it “takes part” in something new.

Therefore, the cognitive approach emphasises the individual mechanisms of the learning process (learning by acquisition) where the individuals own new knowledge while the constructive approach emphasises the collective interaction mechanisms of learning (learning by participation) where the individuals are the actors of the new knowledge through the creation of communities (impossible to know without creating the context for learning). (Brown et al., 1989, Brown and Duguid, 1998, Lave and Wenger, 1991, Sfard, 1998, Cook and Brown, 1999).

Research on learning styles is rooted in psychological types, and moves from the assumptions that



individuals may perceive and process information in very different ways: how much they learn has more to do with whether the educational experience is geared toward their particular style of learning than whether or not they are “smart” (Lawrence, 1993).

In literature, numerous learning styles and learning style models exist. The differences among definitions and models result from the fact that learning is achieved at different dimensions and that theorists define learning styles by focusing on different aspects. Shuell (1986) explains that “different ways used by individuals to process and organize information or to respond to environmental stimuli refer to their learning styles”. Jensen (1998) defines learning style as a sort of way of thinking, comprehending and processing information. To Kolb (1984), learning style is a method of personal choice to perceive and process information. In this sense, learning style is, on one hand, sensory and, on the other hand, mental. Kolb states that Experiential Learning Theory, which defends that learning is a combination of experience, cognition, perception and behaviour, lays the foundation of the Learning Style Model (Kolb, 1984). Kolb’s model of learning styles distinguishes concrete perceivers (those who absorb information through direct experience, by doing, acting, sensing, and feeling) and abstract perceivers (those who take in information through analysis, observation, and thinking); active processors (those who make sense of an experience by immediately using the new information) and reflective processors (those who make sense of an experience by reflecting on and thinking about it).

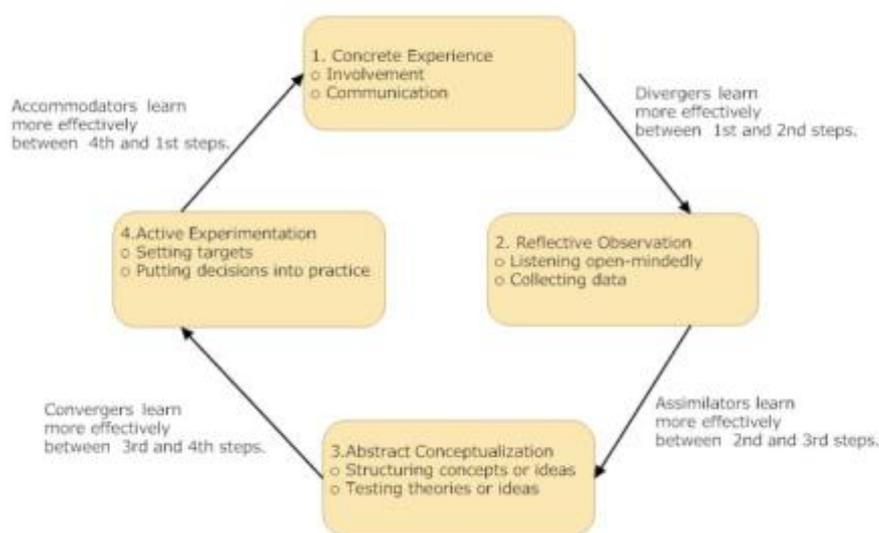


FIG. 1. KOLB’S CYCLE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. KOLB, D. A. (1984). EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: EXPERIENCE AS THE SOURCE OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT. ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS: PRENTICE HALL KOLB, D. A. (1985). LEARNING STYLE INVENTORY, REVISED EDITION. BOSTON, MA: HAY GROUP, HAY RESOURCES DIRECT.

Research on learning styles also states that traditional education tends to favour abstract perceiving and



reflective processing, in contrast with emerging educational approaches that put emphasis on intuition, feeling, sensing, and imagination, in addition to the traditional skills of analysis, reason, and sequential problem solving.

Honey and Mumford (1992) developed experiential learning further in learning styles theory, proposing four behavioural learning modes: activism, reflection, theorising and pragmatism. Mumford (1995) suggested that learning could be reactive or deliberate, and responsive or proactive, based on the level of conscious intent, and usefully confirmed that learning is both the process by which knowledge, skills and insight are developed as well as the end result of the content which is learned.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT SI EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Societies across the globe are increasingly faced with challenges that cannot be solved by the current and dominant ways of organising, knowing and framing. Social innovation is often mentioned as a promising solution for these challenges as it can contribute to societal change by offering new ways of organising, knowing and framing. The knowledge, skills and competencies that are needed for social innovation are often not part of the education that the people have followed or are currently following.

Social Innovation education has a big role to play in developing the knowledge, skills and competencies of all types of actors involved with social innovation processes. It can provide opportunities to learn about and for social innovation, creating environments for peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange. Social Innovation has emerged as a relatively new topic and practice to be offered in Higher Education programmes and Continued education, or in any case under the header as such. In recent years, there has been a steady increase in the number of degree programmes, stand-alone courses and professional education on offer.

In this section of the deliverable, we aim to capture some of the diversity of the current offer in social innovation education in Europe, to distil insights from the course descriptions and curricula in terms of multiple aspects such as the learning approaches, methods, thematic focus, types of programmes and types of learners and to identify gaps and opportunities.

We do this by developing a longitudinal analysis of a range of courses and programmes focusing on Social Innovation and related topics such as Social Entrepreneurship, Social Change and Innovation & Sustainability. For this analyses we compared 32 European courses and 7 networks, in order to get an understanding of what is currently on offer. The overview of this transversal analysis of the selected courses is shown in Appendix 1. We purposefully chose not to include learning in the form of incubators and accelerator programmes, as these are examined in different tasks and activities within SIC (see D3.1 Findings from stocktaking will be incorporated into a joint curriculum).



We then selected a number of courses that give a good representation of the range in learning approaches, methods, focus and types of programmes on offer and we describe them in terms of (1) the thematic focus area; (2) Learning approaches (traditional <-> innovative); (3) institutional context and (4) typologies of learners. On the bases of this information, we compiled a couple of mappings that illustrate the ranges in learning approaches.

The overall structure of this section of the deliverable is as follows. We start by presenting a number of the findings that are clustered in terms of thematic focus, learning approaches and typologies of learners. Some of these are illustrated by a visual mapping of the courses we looked at. We then present an overview of the twelve courses that we highlighted and five networks. In this overview, we have clustered the course according to its category: full degree programmes; university courses; summer schools; post-graduate and non-formal education and online courses. For each highlighted course, we provide a short description and summary of its focus area, target audience, learning approaches and methods, unique feature and its institutional context.

Findings and mapping

Degree of innovation in approach and organisation

In this paragraph, we present our findings in terms of the degrees to which the courses on offer are innovative. We consider courses 'innovative' not just in terms of their content, but especially in terms of their learning approaches, methods and tools used, as well as the impact they have on society in terms of solving wicked problems, creating new societal collaborations and changing current structures, norms and practices. As can be seen in our course descriptions in section 2, the majority of the courses not only include social innovation as a theme but are (socially) innovative themselves.

The map below gives a visual impression of the degree to which the courses are innovative. Courses score higher along the axis of innovation when either being particularly innovative in one or more ways.

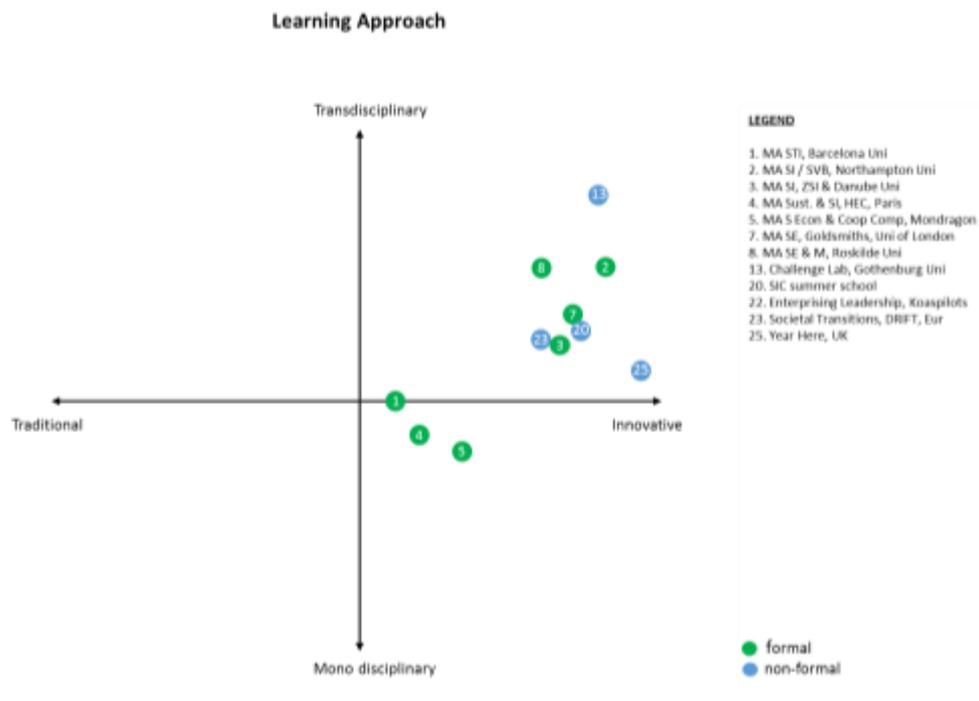


FIG. 2 MAPPING OF SI COURSES AND PROGRAMMES IN TERMS OF THE DEGREE OF INNOVATION AND DEGREE OF INTER- AND TRANS-DISCIPLINARITY

This mapping captures the first result, most of the courses on offer are relatively innovative:

- 01** SI programs often differ in their learning approaches from more traditional educational approaches by combining theory and practice, working on concrete challenges in teams and combining experiential learning with theoretical understanding and critical reflection. The combination of theory and practice is, for example, a core element of the Master of Design in Social Innovation at Ravensbourne University and the Master in Social Innovation at University of Northampton.
- 02** They also differ in that they support students to develop soft skills such as leadership and communication skills, team work capacities and self-reflection and positive attitudes. This might be done by working together on real cases, placements and/or combining part-study with actual social entrepreneurship. And reinforces the need to be innovative in the type of learning approaches and methods that are used. Some of the educational programmes, such as +ACUMEN and Kaospilot focuses on the development of leadership skills. Other programmes, like Challenge Lab at Chalmers University, the Masterclass Societal Transition of DRIFT and the School of System Change emphasise on system thinking and self-reflection. Others, such as the MA in Social Entrepreneurship at Goldsmiths, University of London and the MSc in Social Enterprise at Stirling University particularly encourage entrepreneurship skills.



- 03** Some educational programmes are (socially) innovative because they enable collaborations between multiple societal stakeholders and support new synergies and configurations among societal sectors and domains such as university, business, NGOs, local communities and administrations. This provides students an innovative learning environment. In this way, the course might also directly contribute to social change in the longer term. The courses that are like this are often either operating on the fringes of the educational institution they are connected to, or as in the Northampton case (and to a degree Roskilde University) are part of an institution that has put social innovation as a core value across the institution.

Degree of inter and transdisciplinarity

In our analyses, we found that most of the courses are interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary in their approach. The mapping on the previous page shows the ranges that we found. The courses that score high on the list are those that are not just interdisciplinary in terms of their learning approach, student population and teachers, but also include innovative partnerships across sectors. Examples of this last category are the Challenge Lab and Roskilde's MA in Social Enterprise and Management. In the first case of Challenge Lab, students interact with regional stakeholders in order to understand the system from different perspectives and therefore recognise critical leverage points to take into account to solve local issues. The MA in Social Enterprise and Management at Roskilde University is an international programme and it is part of an international network of universities in Asia, Latin America and Europe that allow the exchange of knowledge and experiences between students and teachers worldwide.

Many of the courses we looked at explicitly argued for the need to take an interdisciplinary approach with regard to the type of problems that social innovation aims to address. As our overview and course descriptions suggest, the majority of the programmes are strongly implying a multitude of interconnected themes and topics such as intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship, sociology, system complexity, management and leadership skills, etc. One very interdisciplinary course identified in our research is the Master in Social Entrepreneurship and Management at Roskilde University that combines multiple disciplines such as sociology, social innovation, social enterprise, organization leadership and governance, CSR and social accounting. Another very interdisciplinary programme is the Master in Social Innovation at Ravensbourne University where students work with a cross-disciplinary team of professionals and dive in multiple themes related to social innovation such as sustainability, corporate social responsibility, community resilience, venture philanthropy and organisational agility.

Degree of Theoretical versus Experience based learning

One of the findings we observed is the difference among courses is in terms of knowledge and skills



related to theoretical understanding, researching, and analysing SI versus experiential knowledge and skills related to the real practices of SI in context. The map below shows the degree to which a course focuses on either or both of these learning approaches.

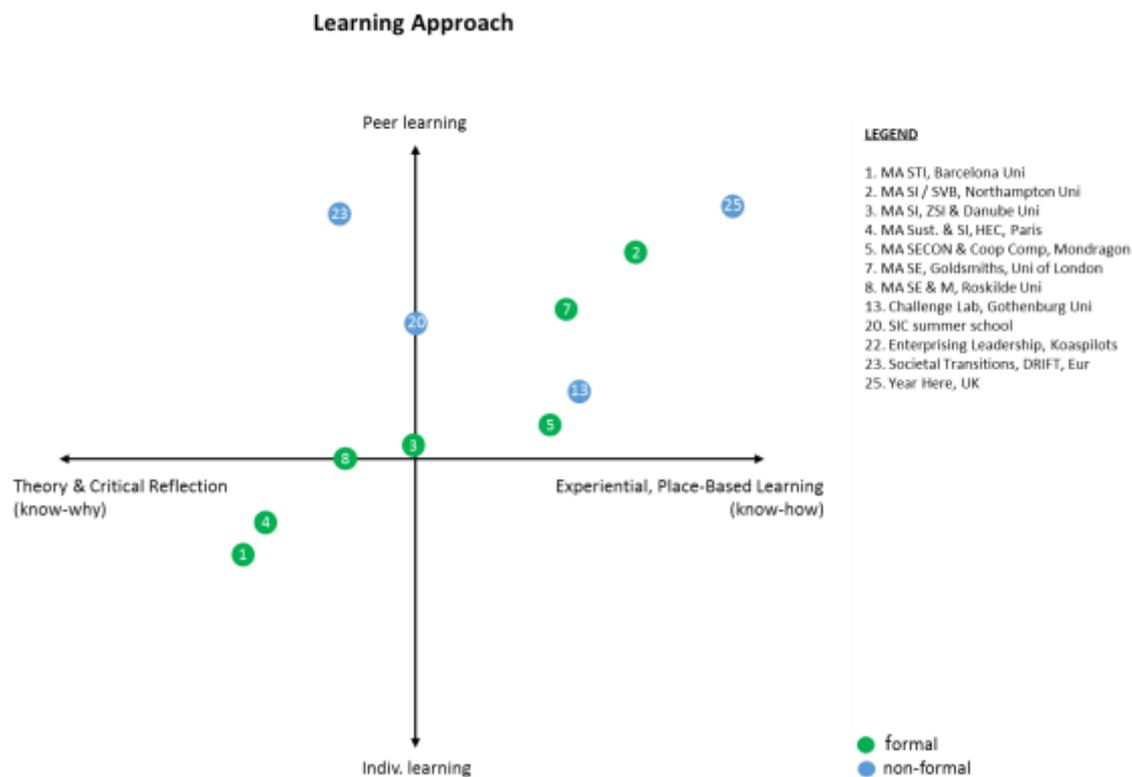


FIG 3. MAPPING OF LEARNING THEORIES AND LEARNING MODES

As the map above shows, there certainly is a wide range in focus from theory to practice. Courses such as Barcelona’s Social Transformations and Innovation and the MA in Sustainability and Social Innovation at HEC focus more on theoretical understanding, research skills and analysing social innovation. Many of the courses and programmes however emphasize the importance of non-traditional, ‘place-based’ and experiential learning experiences. As such, the courses we looked at differ from an average university course or degree.

Most courses offer a combination of both, i.e. learning about and for SI. Examples of programmes that combine both relatively equally are the MA degrees offered by ZSI, the SIC summer school and DRIFT’s Societal Transitions masterclass. There are also examples that focus predominantly on the practice of SI by different (groups of) actors. YearHere, with its placement programme, consultancy work and incubator programme has the strongest focus on experiential learning. Off course, the exact balance of the two will end up varying per individual learner in the programmes, based for instance on the type of casework they bring into the programme.



Intuitively it seems that this range would be closely related to the learning approaches that are used in the sense that traditional forms of knowledge transfer are more common in the courses which focus on theory and research. If one looks at both maps, we can see that this is generally the case, but that there are also exceptions such as the MA in Social Entrepreneurship and Management at Roskilde University. In this case, in fact, students do not learn only theories and concepts but also practices related to social entrepreneurship and on how to manage and organise a social enterprise. Through experiencing leadership and management processes in complex contexts and multi-dimensional organisation, students are promoted to develop the skills 'for initiating, analyzing and managing social innovation processes'.

Typologies of learners

Mixed target audiences and emphasis on peer-to-peer learning

Many of the programmes on offer are open to a wide variety of students. The identified courses are not targeted only to youth willing to develop a career and enter the job market but also to professionals with the interest to deepen in their knowledge and skills and especially learn about processes related to social innovation. For example, the MA Social Enterprise at Stirling University is aimed both at professionals working within social enterprises, consultancies, (governmental) organisations and other institutes and those wishing to develop a career in social enterprise.

In the case of non-formal education courses, such as +ACUMEN and Year Here, students to be admitted to the courses need to be highly motivated to contribute to transformative change. This means that they should be driven by an intrinsic motivation and they should be already aware of the current societal challenges to face.

In many of the identified courses the participants have very different background and have experience in different societal domains such as business, third sector, government, academia, etc. and from different societal sectors. The Masterclass Societal Transitions at DRIFT, for example, is targeted at a diverse combination of professionals, researchers, government officials and other change makers.

The high diversity of the participants in term of background and experiential knowledge permit them to learn from each other and exchange their experiences working in different societal spheres. Peer to peer learning is therefore highly encouraged and accelerate the learning process of the participants.

Thematic focus areas & Institutional contexts

When we were compiling the course overview we searched for education programmes that were explicitly focussed on SI. We also looked for programmes that are similar in their content and skill development,



but might use a different language and/or have a different thematic focus. In the following section, we discuss some findings related to the thematic focus areas of the investigated courses.

Entrepreneurial and business development

Many programmes and courses take entrepreneurship and business development as main thematic areas. This means that the courses focus on the development of social entrepreneurship skills and on learning theories and methods needed to start-up companies and social enterprises. Some of the analysed courses, such as the MA Social Entrepreneurship at the London University, supports students to develop their own social enterprises that can belong to different sectors like health, environment, education, etc. Students learn how to identify and build relationships with stakeholders, how to measure the impact of the social enterprise, as well how to communicate clearly and effectively. Other courses focusing on social entrepreneurship as a thematic area are, for example, the Master in Social Entrepreneurship and Management at Roskilde University in Denmark and the MSc Social Business and Microfinance at the Glasgow Caledonian Yunus Centre in UK.

Systemic social transformation processes

Other courses focus on social change as the main thematic area. This means that the educational courses support students on learning how to foster, stimulate and evaluate SIs and social change. The MA in Sociology: Social Transformations and Innovation of University of Barcelona, for example, focuses on processes of social transformation and innovation, and considers these processes at different scales: the local, regional and global level. The MA in Social Innovation at ZSI and Danube University Krems gives particular emphasis on social transformation processes in organisations, consulting and the supervision industry.

Another very interesting program in this area is the one offered by the School of System Change delivered by Forum for the Future and partners. The seed program consists of a three-month 'learning journey' where students are instructed to use systems thinking to solve real-life complex sustainability challenges and to implement systemic change in the student context.

Sustainable development

Some of the investigated courses directly connect SI to sustainability, in all its environmental, social and economic domains. Projects are intended to solve wicked problems finding strategic sustainable solutions and innovations. The students are therefore encouraged to learn both SI and sustainable development principles and to put their knowledge into practice. Some of the courses that give a particular emphasis to the sustainable development theories and practice are among the formal education courses the master on sustainable business at Utrecht University and the extra curricula course and programme called



Challenge Lab at Chalmers University. Among the non-formal education programmes, the masterclass Societal Transitions (SOTRA) combines sustainability transitions and transition management process with several other topics such as social entrepreneurship and/or intrapreneurship skills, leadership, power and empowerment, actor analysis and personal development. The Master in Sustainability and Social Innovation at HEC in Paris (France) gives particular emphasis on the creation of more environmentally friendly and sustainable business models.

Skills developed

Social innovation education encourages the development of multiple soft skills. In this section, we describe some of the main soft skills that we encountered in our analysis of courses on social innovation.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been defined as the process of designing, launching and running a new business. Social entrepreneurship is the process of starting up, developing, funding and implementing companies aimed at strategic solutions to social, cultural, or environmental issues of society. Entrepreneurship capacity is consequently the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business by innovation and risk-taking. Many of the identified courses pay particular attention on the development of entrepreneurship skills. For example, the Master in Social Entrepreneurship and Management (SEM) at Roskilde University promotes the development of skills for initiating, analyzing and managing social innovation processes and for running, shaping and transforming social enterprises and innovation-led organisations. Other courses put particular emphasis on the development of entrepreneurship skills are the MSc in Social Enterprise at Stirling University, the MSc in Social Business and Microfinance at the Glasgow Caledonian Yunus Centre and the master in Social Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation and Sustainability at the Malmö Centre for Social Entrepreneurship.

Creative problem solving

Social innovation is often seen as response to pressing social issues and 'wicked problems' that require new ways of thinking and perceiving the world. Creative problem solving is the capacity to find new, innovative and creative solutions to problems. These solutions are independently searched and created. Many of the identified courses specify the importance of the ability to identify and solve problems using new and innovative approaches and solutions. This is the case, for example, of the Master of Design in Social Innovation at Ravensbourne University and the School of System Change of Forum for the Future.



Leadership

Leadership skills refer to the ability to lead effectively a group. The courses that we analysed often identify or assume a different type of leadership that is needed for social innovation processes, under headings such as creative leadership, collective leadership and transformative leadership. Transformative leaders are able to motivate and empower the people around and create a (work) environment characterised by trust, enthusiasm and respect. Many of the analysed courses take leadership skills into consideration through teaching theories about leadership and related topics but especially allowing the students to learn by doing through their active engagement with external stakeholders and through peer-learning and group projects. DISL and +ACUMEN, for example, particularly focus on leadership skills and in their courses and workshops support the development of transformative leadership skills. Kaospilots's Enterprising Leadership Programme takes leadership to the core of their educational approach. Students learn by doing how to be effective leaders and how to initiate and run a social enterprise as well as creative and sustainable processes.

System thinking

System thinking is a skill closely related to creative problem solving. Students are encouraged to 'think out of the box' and to look at reality in a more critical way, going beyond the status quo and envision the future in an alternative and innovative way. Perceiving the world in a different way is key for them also in order to find strategic, more effective and long term solutions. Being able to look at the holistic and systemic picture of a certain context allows them to find rooted and deeper problems and therefore go beyond the superficial resolution of them. Additionally, systems thinking allows to find connections and interrelations between different domains and therefore understanding how a system is working as a whole. Challenge Lab at Chalmers University and the Masterclass Societal Transitions at DRIFT give particular emphasis to system thinking and critical self-reflection.



Programmes typologies

The identified courses are very different in terms of the institutional context. Some courses are part of the university curricula and are therefore fully embedded in the institution while other courses are extra-curricular.

Formal Degree programmes

MA in Sociology: Social Transformations and Innovation, University of Barcelona

Course link: [MA in Sociology: Social Transformations and Innovation](#)

Focus. The main aim of the master's degree in Social Transformations and Innovation is to train scientists and professionals to lead the study and practice of social change at different levels (e.g. local, regional, global) and from different sectoral spheres. Participants are encouraged to create social technologies, find innovative solutions to collective challenges and become experts in social, institutional and organizational change. Through the course, students have the opportunity to learn about current social challenges and to develop transferable skills for the scientific analysis of processes of social transformation and innovation, as well as to acquire skills on designing and evaluating intervention models and solutions.

Target audience. Students holding a bachelor's degree in sociology or in any other discipline that encompasses study of areas of sociology, or in related disciplines in the social sciences and humanities and health sciences. The programme aims to form highly skilled researchers and professionals at international levels of excellence by developing their skills and capacities to analyse processes of change and social transformation and to find innovative solutions within and between organizations.

Learning approach / methods/ principles. The master programme builds knowledge and skills to take on leadership roles and to become innovative social researchers. The programme includes training for the planning, design and implementation of social transformation and innovation initiatives. It offers a solid base of theoretical knowledge and technical competences in the field of sociology and the analysis of social transformation and innovation. One of the focuses of the programme is the diagnosis and analysis of the complexity of social transformations through the use of specific models and methods. Additionally, methods are used for the identification and evaluation of options for change, strategies of interventions fostering creativity, innovation and new possibilities. For a full breakdown of the course materials and modules please see the [MA Social Innovation NILE site](#).

Unique feature(s). The formation of experts and researchers in social and organizational change, combining leadership skills, understanding of social complexity and analytical skills in order to solve



challenges and find innovative and transformative solutions in the public, private or tertiary sector.

Institutional context. The MA is part of the University of Barcelona (UB), Spain's leading research university.

MA in Social Innovation, ZSI and Danube University Krems

Course link: [MA in Social Innovation](#)

Focus. [Social Innovation, digital & interactive media, management of SI] This Master of Arts degree in Social Innovation is designed for professionals and aims to provide them the opportunity to learn how to stimulate, accompany, manage and evaluate social innovations “in order to contribute to the social dimension of economic and technological change”. Participants of this course will build knowledge related to the development, planning and implementation of social transformation processes in organisations as well as in the consulting and supervision industry.

Participants are trained as independent innovators or as consultants and supervisors of social innovations in multiple types of organisations and institutes such as private enterprises, social, political, cultural or educational institutions and non-profit organisations (NPOs).

Target audience. Professionals such as executives, employees and freelancers aiming to qualify for invention, implementation, evaluation and supervision of social innovations in enterprises or other organisations.

Learning approach / methods/ principles. The degree modules are delivered through a blend of online distance learning and a set of face-to-face sessions held at Danube University Krems. The programme combines knowledge of social innovation theory and the development of practical projects supporting the professional development of students.

Unique feature(s). This part-time MA is specifically designed for professionals and focuses particularly on the potential of social innovations in digital and interactive media, that play a role not only as a product, but especially as a driver for social change processes. Participants can also choose to take a less demanding study load of 72 ECTS which gives them an Academic Expert certificate.

Institutional context. The MA is part of the Department for Interactive Media and Educational Technologies and the Zentrum für Interaktive Medien at Danube University Krems, Austria.

MA in Social Innovation/SVB, University of Northampton

Course link: [University of Northampton – MA in Social Innovation / SVB](#),



The MA Social Innovation/Social Venture Builder (SVB) programme combines a social venture incubation methodology with an accredited programme, that builds skills in social innovation. The programme is highly interdisciplinary focusing on innovation and commercialisation. The programme aims to understand the challenges of the current time and the complex social problems in order to find strategic solutions. The course builds competences on social entrepreneurship in order to find strategic and innovative solutions in the social market. The course is very multidisciplinary including economic related topics (e.g. finance and accountants), policy science, and social innovation theories. The programme includes both theoretical and practical-based courses (e.g. social Innovation in practice and a work-based project). An additional value of the programme is the inclusion of courses related to personal development and leadership skills.

Target audience. Perceptive, entrepreneurial and creative applicants who are self-motivated, passionate and enthusiastic about social Innovation.

Learning approach / methods/ principles. The programme is built on 20 credit modules focusing on different themes related to social innovation and a 60 credit synthesis module including a dissertation or a project of the students' choice referring to a specific application of social innovation. The entire programme is based on a social venture incubation programme that aims to develop not only the skills and competences of the students but also to set up a real social venture both investable and marketable. To achieve this goal, students receive continuous tutoring, business support, mentoring, and online resources. More information about the course content can be found [here](#).

Unique feature(s). The Social innovation Master's degree has been designed to build skills and competence within the social enterprise sector and developing investable and marketable socially enterprising solutions, addressing unmet social needs in original and innovative ways.

Institutional context. The MA Social Innovation/ Social Venture Builder (SVB) is a programme run by the School of Social Sciences, in conjunction with Northampton Business School. In 2013, Northampton was the first European University to obtain the 'Changemaker Campus' label. This designation, awarded by AshokaU, recognizes educational institutions as hubs of social innovation, with pioneering programs, partnerships, and curriculum in social entrepreneurship. Northampton researchers have been publishing on social innovation and changemaker education throughout and beyond the process of attaining the 'Changemaker Campus Label'.

MA Social Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths University of London

Course link: [MA Social Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths, University of London](#)

This international MA provides practical and sociological tools to individuals motivated to design novel



solutions to profound societal challenges. Students learn how to develop alternative economic practices and frameworks to address these challenges through, for example, social enterprises, collaborative innovation networks, hubs, digital platforms, support intermediaries and/or policy proposals. The programme is designed to encourage students to further develop or create their own social enterprises, which might be research-based, policy-based, practice-based, or a combination of such. The aim is to provide them the required managerial or entrepreneurial skills for a strong social, and where appropriate, financial return on investment.

The programme consists of both theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship, innovation, social problems and policy (with organisational sociology as the base discipline) while supplying practical tools in relation to entrepreneurial modelling and SROI.

Target audience. Current social entrepreneurs (many part-time while working in the field); undergraduates aspiring to become social innovators and changemakers; intrapreneurs interested in organisational transformation within the creative (or other) sector(s); support organisation/infrastructure architects and policy makers; academic researchers.

Learning approach / methods/ principles. Predominantly small-group seminars/workshops, with significant levels of individual tutorial support, particularly for independent projects. A significant amount of the learning will be delivered through group projects. An interactive peer-review process is used to raise the quality of student output. Students as well as teachers bring in international perspectives and case examples.

Unique feature(s). A declared focus on creative, cultural and social processes. The combination of a deep examination of the theoretical and practical foundations of social innovation. A learning community more closely linked to the creative and cultural sector compared to traditional business/management-driven courses.

Institutional context. The MA is part of the Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE) department of Goldsmiths University. Goldsmiths is a renowned provider of creative education spanning the arts, humanities, social sciences, cultural studies, computing, business and management. The ICCE department focusses on entrepreneurship, cultural management and policy education within the creative and cultural sectors.

MA in Social Entrepreneurship and Management, Roskilde University (DK)

Course link: [MA in Social Entrepreneurship and Management](#)

The Master Programme Social Entrepreneurship and Management (SEM) is inter-disciplinary and draws upon areas such as sociology, organization leadership and governance as well as research in social



innovation, social enterprise, CSR and social accounting. The focus is on gaining skills for initiating, analyzing and managing social innovation processes. The aim of this two year Msc programme is to prepare academically-oriented practitioners for running, shaping and transforming the next generation of social enterprises and innovation-led organisations. The programme combines theoretical, empirical and practical knowledge with the aim of enabling students to analyse present and future challenges of the public, private and third sectors and to lead change. It also has a strong international focus.

Target Audience. Students that have completed their bachelor degree and are interested in becoming change agents and process facilitators in private, public and social enterprises.

Learning approach. Students learn through case-studies, problem-oriented learning, individual and project based group work. In the project work students can create or help develop a social enterprise or facilitate a social innovation process within and across the public, private and third sector. The degree has established a network of businesses and social enterprises from the private and public sector as well as the civil society which enables students to work with contextual knowledge and gain experiential understanding of the interconnectedness of innovation with organizational practices and financial opportunities.

Unique Feature. The combination of a strong social focus with management, leadership and innovation skills. Students can do a track that is focussed on 'social accounting' as a different approach.

Institutional context. The degree is offered by Roskilde University, whose primary objective is to contribute to experimental, innovative forms of research, learning and problem-solving that contribute to society. The institution employs an interdisciplinary approach and project and problem-oriented approaches to knowledge creation are central.

Other Full Degree programmes

- Ravensbourne UK, **Social Innovation MDes**. Social Innovation and Design
- HEC – Master in Sustainability and Social Innovation - <http://www.hec.edu/Masters-programs/Master-s-Programs/One-Year-MSc-MS-Programs/MSc-Sustainability-and-Social-Innovation/Key-Features>
- Utrecht University, MA in **Sustainable Business and Innovation**. Social Entrepreneurship and business.
- **MSc Social Business and Microfinance**. Glasgow Caledonian Yunnus Centre. Social Entrepreneurship and business.



- [MSc in Social Enterprise, Stirling University, Applied Social Sciences](#). Social Entrepreneurship and business.
- [BA in Social Enterprise](#), Ulster University organisational development programme for social enterprise businesses.

University Courses and Summer Schools

Challenge Lab course: leadership for Sustainability Transitions, Chalmers U, Gothenburg, Sweden

Course link: [Challenge Lab Course](#)

Leadership for Sustainability Transitions is a 7.5 credit master-level course, that equips students with relevant tools to explore, lead and act upon global challenges that face us in the 21st century. The aim of this course is to provide students with perspectives, methods and tools that are useful in taking on and leading challenge-driven sustainability transitions. The challenge lab is an innovative, inter- and transdisciplinary course focusing on societal challenges and systems thinking. The course is not directly on SI, but offers very relevant skills and competencies for students wanting to continue in that direction.

Learning approaches. Back-casting from sustainability principles is a key methodology during the whole course. It helps break free from path-dependency and to develop a holistic approach in dealing with complex global challenges. Students are introduced to tools to understand complex systems and to find critical leverage points as to understand where to intervene in the system. They will also learn and apply tools related to ideation, design thinking, self-leadership and multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Unique. During the course, students will connect with stakeholders from academia, government and industry on a strategic level to get an overview and understand the system from different perspectives. (e.g. researchers in the Areas of Advance at Chalmers University of Technology, civil servants in the City authorities, and industry representatives). During the course students also work towards formulating a transformative project that they can take up in a second phase outside of the course.

In the Master thesis in Challenge Lab, the will gain hands-on experience in transformative and co-creational projects - with students from other educational backgrounds and nationalities.

Other university courses and summer schools

- [Social Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation and Sustainability](#), a 7.5 ECTS course that is part of a 1 year MA degree on [Leadership for Sustainability](#).



- [Social innovation/Mobile applications](#), Copenhagen University. A 7.5 ECTS course, with a focus on ICT to push development in third world countries.
- [Entrepreneurship Course \(Innobandis\)](#), DEUSTO, San Sebastian. A specialization course on Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Students can take this course simultaneously to their degrees and double degrees at the San Sebastian Campus. MA in Social Innovation (by Deusto Social Innovation in collaboration with the Social and Human Sciences Faculty) offers a specialized, interdisciplinary and advanced training on research, consultancy and social innovation.
- [SIC summer school on Social Innovation](#). In 2016 the first of three SIC Summer Schools was organised as a participatory learning event on 'Urban Social Innovation'. The summer school was conducted in collaboration with Tilburg University's European Social Innovation Week 2016 / NL. The programme offered a balanced mix of theory and practice with a mix of in-class lectures, case studies and interactive workshops, all addressing urban challenges. The lectures and tools are accessible [via this link](#).
- [OIKOS Summer School in Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation](#). In 2015 OIKOS organized a Summer School on Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation (2015) for international and Georgian participants, focusing on the SE process from idea-generation to the prototype design, testing and validation of a business case. **Unique feature:** setting (Georgia) and connection to leading student organization in the field of sustainable economics and business: OIKOS.

Post-graduate / executive courses; non-formal ED

Enterprising Leadership, Kaospilot | Aarhus

Course link: [KAOSPILOT | AARHUS](#)

KAOSPILOT | AARHUS school in Denmark consists of non-formal learning programs for social innovation leadership and design. One of the programs is a 3-year program titled "Enterprising Leadership". The programme is rooted in action, students join a training arena aiming to make them develop the skills, mindsets and knowledge needed in a world of constant change. Practical experience is key; therefore, the programme is project driven and involves external clients with high expectations.

Through the programme the students take responsibility for their learning process and they dive into the complexity of problems, challenging them to develop awareness and management skills and find new possibilities and opportunities for change.

Target audience. Anyone seeking inspiration, new challenges and perspectives and willing to learn and develop new skills and a to become more aware of personal potential.



Learning approach / methods/ principles. The learning process includes both individual and group coaching. The main learning outcomes of the programme are the development of leadership skills, capacities to build a viable business, initiate and run sustainable and innovative projects and design change processes for different clients. The programme is based on experimental learning: the students are challenged to work on multiple projects and assignments. More information about the learning outcomes and the structure of the course can be found [here](#).

Unique feature(s). The course takes into account the practice of Enterprising Leadership that uses a combination of leading theories, methods, tool and frameworks to address existing problems. The students will use and adapt all of the different methods and practices into their projects and work and therefore they will learn how to adapt a practice to the unique context of each work or assignment. Students will have the opportunity to learn through experiences such as facilitating a multi-stakeholder process, developing a new product, starting a new business, organizing a cultural event, etc.

Institutional context. Kaospilot is a hybrid business and design school, based on a multi-sided education in leadership and entrepreneurship, located in Aarhus in Denmark.

Masterclass on Societal Transitions, DRIFT's Transition Academy & IHA

Course link: [Masterclass in societal transitions](#)

This post-graduate masterclass combines a critical perspective on societal change with pragmatic tools and insights from transition management and entrepreneurial practice. It does so by tapping into the latest research and practice on social innovation and sustainability transitions. The course is divided into different modules focusing on multiple topics and themes connected to transition thinking, transition management, social intrapreneurship and/or entrepreneurship, power and empowerment, stakeholder mapping and personal development and self-reflection.

The masterclass combines theory and practice of social innovation and aims to empower change makers to think and act for transformational change. The students work both individually and in groups during the masterclass and they have to prepare an assignment and experiment in order to put into practice the learning outcomes of the course.

Target audience. A diverse combination of (young) professionals, researchers, policy makers, government officials active in multiple fields and contexts that would like to improve their knowledge, skills and empower themselves as change makers.

Learning approach / methods/ principles. The course is interdisciplinary and combines theory and applied action learning as well as individual and group works. The masterclass combines transition theories and transition methods with other methods related to social intra/entrepreneurship,



empowerment, self-reflection, etc. It strongly encourages peer-to-peer learning and deep critical reflection. It also challenges students to apply the theoretical lenses directly to their own change projects,

Unique feature(s). Unlike other courses there is a strong focus on long-term transformative change and the role that social innovation can play in this. The course aims to empower participants to connect their work efforts and projects to systemic change. The masterclass offers students a variety of theoretical lenses to better understand the field and practice of social innovation. And stimulates them to discover their personal goals and formulate their own narrative of change.

Institutional context. The masterclass is organised in collaboration between DRIFT's Transition Academy and the Impact Hub Amsterdam, which both operate as a social enterprise. This collaboration sprang forth from previous involvement within the TRANSIT research project, but is run without any external subsidy.

Year Here, London, UK

Course link: [Year Here](#)

Year Here is a postgraduate course in Social Innovation based in London. The focus is on learning in the real world rather than in a lecture hall. Through three major projects in very different contexts, students have multiple opportunities to build a smart, scalable response to some of society's toughest challenges. The focus is on societal challenges such as isolation and inequality and the aim is to help fellows address these issues, *with* and not *for* people. In addition to the project work, students receive a crash course in social innovation, from design thinking to social investment, through five week-long bootcamps. They learn the ropes of subjects like service design, business model development and community organising with partners like [IDEO](#), [Bain & Co](#) and [Citizens UK](#).

Approach. Experiential and place-based learning are a core component of the learning approach. This ranges from: 1) placement in a social service organisation, in which students are challenged to lead an innovation project; 2) gaining experience operating as a consulting team for a government client; 3) starting a social venture from scratch, and pitching it at a crowdfunding event. Students will also receive regular coaching and mentoring sessions.

Unique. This programme is immersive, action-oriented – and grounded in the daily experience of those at the frontline of inequality. Unlike many other programmes, this programme offers in depth acquaintance with the different institutional spheres that are relevant for social innovation through experiential learning in the form of placement, a consulting project and an incubator.

Institutional Context. Year Here is a social enterprise based in London. The five week-long bootcamps are run in partnership with leading innovation players and a social venture incubator that will take them



through the building blocks of a social business.

Other post-graduate and executive courses

- Thnk. School of Creative Leadership. THNK's Creative Leadership Program focuses on creativity, business model innovation, and entrepreneurship for social impact. It's learning approach is fully focused on learning-by-doing. Instead of lectures and academic study cases, participants work together on business concepts and open innovation projects to discover new avenues of perspective and potential. During the programme, participants work on innovation projects that address large-scale, complex societal issues with a technology dimension and lend themselves to enterprise solutions and collective initiative. THNK is a privately funded social enterprise with campuses in Amsterdam, Lisbon and Vancouver.
- ASVI, Social Change School. The Social Change School is an international non-profit and non-governmental institution active in 'social transformation' since 1997, based in **Europe** (London, Madrid, Milan, Rome) It's focus is on training management for social innovation in the Non Profit sector and Civil Society Organizations. It used to run a master on SI, Start Up and Social Business, but it doesn't seem to exist anymore.
- The Master of Studies in Social Innovation, University of Cambridge, Judge Business School. This part-time, post-graduate programme is designed for practitioners of the business, public and social sectors who wish to lead innovative solutions to pressing social issues. The programme provides an overview and understanding of social innovation and approaches to address social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges and opportunities. It examines key concepts, theories, frameworks, and emerging ideas for creating, developing, and enabling social innovation in the public, private and social sectors in the UK and internationally.
- URise. Master in urban regeneration and social innovation, Istituto Universitario di Architettura (IUAV), Venezia, Italy. Taught by a mixture of academics, social entrepreneurs and representatives of local institutions, the U-RISE degree aims to foster a critical and action oriented perspective on urban regeneration through social innovation practices. By combining lectures and workshops with practical fieldwork in urban labs participants learn about about co-creation processes, active citizenship and fundraising and gain experience in managing partnerships in the increasingly complex relationship between public and private.

Networks delivering or stimulating Social Innovation education

There are also several networks active in the field of Social Innovation that either offer educational programmes about and for social innovation or stimulate universities to included social innovation into



their curricula and in some cases explicitly aimed at institutional change.

DSIL – Designing for Social Innovation and Leadership. The DSIL Course is a professional development program designed for individuals from all sectors and disciplines who want to gain knowledge and skills in Innovation and Design Thinking. It combines live DSIL Virtual Classrooms with 10-day field immersions across Asia. Participants will build an expanded network of individuals, progressive start-ups, social enterprises and for-profit companies that dedicate their work to social impact over the course of 5 dynamic months.

Ashoka - Changemaker Campuses. An interesting and influential network in the field of social innovation education is AshokaU, which explicitly takes an institutional change approach to social innovation education. They do this by collaborating with colleges and universities to break down barriers to institutional change and foster a campus-wide culture of social innovation. Exemplary institutions are awarded the status of 'Ashoka Changemaker Campus'². This designation recognizes institutions as hubs of social innovation, with pioneering programs, partnerships, and curriculum in social entrepreneurship. By creating examples that can inspire more universities and colleges to create similar learning environments, their aim is to build a movement of institutional change.

School of System Change, Forum for the Future, UK. Forum For the Future is developing a school of system change that aims to become a global community of change agents with the capacity to lead system change initiatives addressing complex sustainability challenges. The School will offer flexible access to the best learning experiences, tools, case studies - both from selected partners and the Forum's own offers. This innovative training program is currently in development. Read more about it in [this brochure](#).

+ACUMEN is a global learning community for social change makers. Their mission is to change the way the world tackles poverty. They contribute towards this goal by providing emerging leaders around the world with the skills and the 'moral imagination' they need to meet the complex challenges of our time and be more effective at changing the way the world tackles poverty. The organisation offers a broad selection of online masterclasses and tutorials with a strong focus on leadership development.

² There are currently over 30 Ashoka Changemaker Campuses - public and private institutions that range in size, institutional type and geographic location. In an interview with Rahin Kanani of WISE ('Driving Social Innovation in Higher Education', accessed 20 May 2016), Ashoka U director Marina Kim explains that their theory of change is to empower innovators from within higher education as experts, to advance social innovation ecosystems at their institutions.



Online courses

Iversity - Social Innovation MOOC (EN)

Course link: [Iversity - Social Innovation MOOC \(EN\)](#)

Focus. Iversity's MOOC on social innovation aims to support participants with knowledge and understanding of social innovation. The students will learn the most important theories and debates related to social innovation as well as the methods and tools to develop, implement and scale social innovations. Students are supported to reflect and develop their own ideas and experience for themselves social innovation through the use of methods and exercises. They will learn to change their perspective and challenge the status quo in order to recognise opportunities to solve societal problems with social innovations.

Learning Approach /methods/principles. Design Thinking and Lean Start-up will be explained and tools provided to help participants design social innovations together with (future) beneficiaries. They also get acquainted with the importance of some techniques for effective storytelling. Through case examples participants learn from other social innovators, typical mechanisms of social value creation and how to overcome resistance.

Skills and competencies. Opportunity recognition, understanding, challenging status quo

Other online courses

- University of Oxford (continuing education) –[Social Entrepreneurship \(Online\)](#)
- **+ACUMEN's** Global learning community for social change makers offers a wide range of courses. See for instance the course on [Networking Leadership 101 course](#).
- **UPEACE Centre for Executive Education, [Diploma in Social Innovation](#)**

Discussion: Development in the field

One thing that has stood out while making our overview and mapping is (still) a strong focus on the entrepreneurial and business development aspects of SI even in the degrees whose name suggest a broader focus. We find that in many examples there seems to be substantially less attention given to other aspects of SI such as questions around governance, partnerships, policy, social inclusion and social movements. This certainly has something to do with the institutional context from which these programmes emerged and the development of the field in general. Those degrees not directly linked to business departments, such as the Goldsmiths MA offer a broader focus.



In her blog '4 Evolutions in Social Innovation Education Happening Now and the 4 Evolutions to Come' Marina Kim tells us that AshokaU's 2014 censuses has shown that a shift in terminology is taking place in the field of SI education, from "Social Entrepreneurship" to "Social Innovation". Kim argues that this shift has allowed for a greater variety of disciplines and approaches to get involved, as entrepreneurship "can be polarizing for non-business disciplines, who feel it doesn't relate to them".

Based on our study of the offer in Europe, it seems to us that this shift is in its early stages. Our overview suggests that there is (still) a strong focus on the entrepreneurial and business side of SI. Other important aspects such as movement building, systemic change, collaborative leadership etc. are often included to a lesser degree or not at all.

The AshokaU censuses also revealed a shift in skill development: from narrow skills for launching a venture to broad tools and methodologies for creating 'maximum social impact'.

*"Increasingly campuses are looking to create "student pathways" and "learning journeys" that allow students to learn about a range of social change and community development methodologies, in a focused and deliberate manner. There are lots of relevant insights students gain by participating in a service-learning experience, followed by a design thinking training, then using their new skills and mindset to create a community engagement project, and finally finding a role within the social innovation ecosystem. This community-based learning journey, paired with an understanding of social innovation methodology gives students a more robust framework to create social impact."*³

There are not yet many programmes that offer such a comprehensive learning journey. Year Here and the School of System Change seem to be front runners in this regard.

Something like the Ashoka Changemaker Campus label can have an accelerating effect in this regard: as Universities who want to apply are encouraged/inspired not only to develop individual programmes, but have to show how they are integrating SE (and SI) into their core curriculum. In Europe, the University of Northampton and Dublin are examples of institutions that are reorganising and reorienting their core activities to the capacities required for social innovation.

³ Marina Kim, '4 Evolutions in Social Innovation Education Happening Now and the 4 Evolutions to Come', Ashoka U, 2015 <<http://ashokau.org/blog/4-evolutions-in-social-innovation-education-happening-now-and-the-4-evolutions-to-come/>> [accessed 31 May 2016].



3. HOW WE INVESTIGATED SI LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES IN CONTEXT

The overall research was conducted through a mix of bottom-up and top-down research methods, to achieve the expected objective of individualising the SI learning principles and processes within different contexts. By following such an integrated approach - from the general analysis of literature to the more concrete and specific analysis of SI processes in context - the report provides evidence-based knowledge on how learning works in SI practices.

The construction of this analysis followed the below-described process:

- 01** The first step - based on desk research activity - was meant to investigate the learning principles and models elaborated in 3 different areas: individual and organisational learning, communities of learning, and learning in ecosystems (see section 1);
- 02** In the second step leading questions meant to investigate SI learning processes in real-life contexts were extracted from the analysis of literature carried out in step 1;
- 03** The third step was dedicated to the development of in-depth case studies – adopting a unique template - primarily focused on investigating the learning processes in place in each of the individualised learning areas;
- 04** The fourth step - based on triangulation of data and bridging of extant theories and practical observation – led to the development of the SIC learning framework, which links learning principles and processes with different aspects and levels of the SI process;

At the end of this process the conclusions have been produced primarily in the form of advice and possible trajectories and opportunities to revise and complement the current training curricula to bridge the gap between the required knowledge and the one currently developed within extant training pathways.

First step. Desk research on learning principles and processes

Desk research, based on results of previous projects on SI and on a literature review on learning principles and processes, was conducted to map learning principles, models and frameworks useful to enhance learning on SI.

The main areas of analysis were:

- theories and frameworks of individual and organisational learning;
- theories and frameworks of learning in communities;



- theories and frameworks of learning in ecosystems.

Second step. Development of guiding questions

The results of the desk literature research produced a set of guiding questions for the construction of the case studies, and a selection of learning principles and models that can be applied to SI, even though primarily developed with other objectives and in other contexts.

The unique set of guiding questions developed include specific questions for each area of learning. This ensured the possibility of having both a set of comparable cases and an in-depth investigation of different learning areas and typologies of cases.

Third step. Development of case studies as instruments to extrapolate SI learning processes

The case studies, which will constitute also self-standing research outputs meant to enrich the SIC learning repository, verified learning principles in action and documented learning processes in real SI contexts.

SI learning case studies are descriptions of cases of SI learning processes that occurred across Europe during recent years. Their construction was based on case study methodology, as a research frame particularly appropriate for examining a «(...) contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident» (Yin, 2014), or else to give answers to «how» and «why» research questions within an environment rich with contextual variables. Such a qualitative approach «(...) explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information» (Creswell, 2013).

SIC learning cases advanced the understanding of the learning aspects of already-known and described cases, by means of deep qualitative desk research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), during which the authors collected and compared information coming from different sources: scientific publications, non-scientific publications, interviews or presentations of the case initiator(s), leader(s) and funder(s), and websites of the initiatives among others. The use of multiple sources enabled the exploration of complex situations, allowing for the gathering of multiple perspectives. The selection of cases was conducted through the application of a set of criteria such as, among others: the quality of the documentation, the correspondence of the cases to the previously-listed areas of investigation, and their capacity to provide an account of the different stages of the SI lifecycle (prototyping/piloting, implementation, scaling).

The template for the preparation of the cases was articulated in 2 sections. The first reported objective



information, avoiding judgements and conclusions, as far as possible. The second section, dedicated to the discussion, included the interpretation of the authors, or else subjective information. Both the development of cases and their discussion and interpretation were constructed following a sound methodological process, adopting clear guidelines and a standardised structure to facilitate their comparative analysis.

Fourth step. Design of the SIC learning framework

The design of the SIC learning framework links principles and processes on the basis of different process models of SI. Desk research results and insights from case studies will be triangulated to obtain the SIC learning framework.

4. SIC LEARNING CASE STUDIES IN A NUSHTELL

SIC developed 14 case studies with the aim to analyse and point out how learning occurs in SI development and which characteristics it shows with respect to the nature and contexts of SI. Cases have been classified on the basis of 4 different SI contexts:

- 01** Social Innovators. A SI led by an entrepreneur who has founded it;
- 02** SI organisations. A SI initiated and led by a public or a private organisation;
- 03** Community/network based SI. A SI initiated and developed by a community;
- 04** SI ecosystem. A favourable context for SI flourishing

Shifting from the first to the last typology, a relevant change in the learning framework occurs, as we progressively move from a well-defined and concrete learner (the individual and the organisation) to a more undefined (or difficult to be defined) and abstract learner (the community and the ecosystem at large).



Social Innovators	SI organisations
1. Progetto Quid 2. Solartaxi 3. Taste of Home 4. Nova Iskra	1. Humana (No profit organisation) 2. Agintzari (Social Cooperative) 3. Girls education Challenge (Public organisation) 4. Lernhaus (Third sector Organisation)
Network based SI	- SI ecosystem
1. Koopera (Network of Cooperatives) 2. Project based learning (network of intermediaries) 3. Social festival - Keep the ball rolling (community based SI)	1. Emilia Romagna Region (Regional Ecosystem) 2. Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training (Industrial Ecosystem) 3. Realising ambitions (Public ecosystem) 4. Dynaklim (Regional Ecosystem)

FIG. 3. THE MAP OF THE SIC LEARNING CASE STUDIES

In the following we report a synthesis of each of the developed case with a short description of the learning processes observed in the process of establishing and leading SI. The long version of each of the cases is available in the appendix 2 of the deliverable.

HUMANA NOVA	<p>Humana Nova is a social cooperative with the mission to employ disadvantaged persons in the labour market through recycling and redesigning discarded textiles. The foundation of the social enterprise started with the ESCO project, initiated by the non-government organization ACT (Autonomous Centre Cakovec). The project provided initial funding for purchasing the sewing, ironing, washing and drying machines, as well as computer and office equipment. Moreover, one of the project activities was requalification training, enabling eight disabled persons to gain sewing skills and an accompanying certificate. As the non-government association ACT is one of the leading civil sector organizations in Croatia dedicated to the support of social entrepreneurship, the decision to start the cooperative came easy and naturally. Today, the NGO runs six social enterprises covering different areas from accounting, graphic design to organic farming.</p> <p>Processes of learning occurred at different levels and they focused on both knowledge and competences related to the management of the cooperative, the market and the customers as well as knowledge, competences and skills related to production. For both, explicit and implicit process of knowledge acquisition have been activated. Of particular interest is the management of disadvantaged human resources. For this issue, explicit education does not exist and the management</p>
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	<p>applied a trial and error strategy to establish a fruitful human relationship within the organisation.</p>
Nova Iskra	<p>Nova Iskra is an educational and research platform for design, architecture, new technologies, social theory and practice and a fully independent venture. At the same time it is one of the first co-working spaces for the professionals related to creative industries in Serbia. Relying on design-thinking methodology as the basis for conceiving, developing and testing contemporary ideas and concepts, Nova Iskra supports the development of innovation through the exploitation of design thinking approach.</p> <p>A foremost driver of the learning process was the fulfilment of needs coming from professionals from the creative industries that emerged as consequences of both economic crises and the general lack of support. However, none of this would be possible without constant capacity building of the core team of Nova Iskra. Although one part of the learning process included proactive learning that occurred during the ideation of the platform, the majority of acquired knowledge was the result of the strong interaction with the clients and other stakeholders. Their collaboration and cooperation resulted in the new services that were offered to the creative community.</p> <p>Constant interaction with the local community led to the development of new solutions for their unmet needs. Partnerships with many stakeholders working on various issues or projects at the local, regional and global level supported Nova Iskra to develop know how in different creative sectors and develop interdisciplinary teamwork based on the combination of fragmented knowledge through dialogue and the involvement of users.</p>
Taste of Home	<p>The collective 'Taste of Home' gathers 30 refugees and volunteers/activists and is primarily supported by the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), an NGO based in Zagreb. A Taste of Home started as a culinary-cultural-research project that introduces the culture, customs and societies of origin of the refugees in Croatia by recording their memories of home, smells and tastes of their cuisine.</p> <p>The collective has grown into a social cooperative now. While it still gathers asylum seekers and collects personal memories and refugee experiences, it is mainly focused on the development of a cooperative that emancipates refugees and</p>



	<p>migrants as both a reality for some and a sustainable model for others. Additionally, the need to help develop and promote skills amongst the refugee/immigrant population could be applicable and beneficial to the domestic economy meant that cooking was a natural fit as there is a general deficit of quality cooks in the country, particularly during the tourist season.</p> <p>Taste of Home is an interesting example of an implementation of a deliberate strategy of learning elaborated on the basis of the analysis of the lacks of competences, knowledge and skills of all the people involved from initiators to the groups targeted by the project. Diversifying skills sets amongst individual members developed into an important aspect as a result. There were two primary strategies of diversifying skills. One aspect was developing skills of management in the cooperative from macro (cooperative as an inclusive social entrepreneurship business with a clear vision and strategies) to middle (human resources, infrastructure, cooperation) to micro-management (managing the kitchen and marketing of catering business). The Second aspect covered developing cooking and serving skills for catering as a primary small business established with the cooperative. All our cooks have therefore enrolled in courses at Pučko Otvoreno Učilište.</p>
<p>Koopera</p>	<p>Koopera is a Social Network of Cooperatives and not-for profit companies officially defined as Koopera Social Network Gizarte Sarea. The network emerged in 2008 in Bilbao as a social cooperative of public utility, although most of the associations and cooperatives that compose the network today have been active since the 1990s. The objective of the network is the employability and social reintegration of people in situation of risk and social exclusion through activities focused on the provision of environmental services, reuse and recycling, sustainable consumption, training programs, and other activities, which help support this objective.</p> <p>The learning process of Koopera has not been easy. Koopera as a network emerged in 2008 when the economic crisis had just exploded. Funding and services provided by city councils were substantially reduced, which significantly slowed Koopera's growth in activities where they traditionally were having an important impact, such as selective recollection of wastes and sustainable mobility. They tried to overcome this situation in what is now one of the main aims of the organization's expansion strategy, that is to say, dedicating a great effort to establish new connections with companies of their own environment to facilitate the integration into the market of</p>



	<p>people trained by the network. In this sense, the learning and expansion processes have been based in the progressive integration of social companies that wanted to join the network's cooperative model, by grouping the different labels and companies through a single name (Koopera), and in the process favouring the expansion and visibility of the network.</p> <p>Other challenges have been found in the environmental sector where increased expertise, technological progress, public regulations favouring bigger companies, and little public awareness in the importance of environmental care, have been a significant barrier. This knowledge has been part of the learning process that has helped the network of social cooperatives grow into a perfectly coordinated chain of production, which has evolved from the process of just waste recollection, to the recycling and production of new goods that are later sold in the Koopera chain stores (cross sectorial knowledge transfer between the different companies that are part of the Koopera network have been crucial in their expansion and in the growth of the social cooperative.</p> <p>Finally, the scaling to a wider and more complex context of operations (in Chile and Romania) triggered other learning processes on how to adapt to the challenges and constraints found in the changing context.</p>
<p>Agintzari</p>	<p>Agintzari is a social cooperative of public utility that has been located in Bilbao (Basque Country) since 2000. Although deeply engaged in social movements and community development since 1977, the organization didn't grow to become a social cooperative until 2000. This change was seen as an important step towards growing professionalization and expertise inside their context. The cooperative has mainly focused its work in community development through publicly funded socially innovative projects, community training programs, and delivery of social services oriented towards the social needs of vulnerable and socially excluded sectors of the population.</p> <p>Agintzari holds three important lines of work. The first line of work is related to Community Intervention, which manages socio-educational and psychosocial services. The second line of work is related to Fostering and Adoption, which manages programs of infant protection through a service called Arlobi Adoptia that is promoted by the cooperative. The third line of work is linked to Intervention in Violence and Relational Conflicts. It manages services, which are part of the Policy Social Services of the Basque Country.</p>



	<p>The majority of the knowledge gaps in the innovation process of Agintzari have been related to its process of expansion and the management and on-going re-adaptation of the organization.</p> <p>These gaps have been fought through the involvement in networks, the creation of self-managed teams and the importance of marketing and communication strategies. Learning has been acquired basically through the innovation process, that is, they have been learning as they have been growing as an organization. In this sense, the learning process has been mainly reactive to the problems they have encountered. These problems have been mainly related to the need to achieve more funding and influence inside public administrations, the diffusion of the impact of our activities, the engagement with new actors/agents, and improving the management of the organization as it was evolving.</p>
<p>Dynaklim</p>	<p>Dynaklim (Dynamic adaptation of regional planning and development processes to the consequences of climate change in the Emscher-Lippe region) was a project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) running from 2009-2014. It aimed at enhancing the knowledge about the effects on climate change for the geographic region of Emscher-Lippe (located in the German Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia) and setting up an inclusive strategy for dealing with them. The project was rather complex, as it tackled many (also technical) aspects related to water management, including the development of future climate scenarios, used different activities to increase outreach and tangibility of such an abstract topic, including the creation and implementation of pilot projects, whereby the single activities and tasks were interdependent.</p> <p>The core idea of Dynaklim was initially to develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the project region. During the course of the project, the Roadmap process gained more importance, as it was used to develop a common strategy for the region using a participatory format involving actors from different institutional and disciplinary backgrounds. Therefore, the core idea was still the same, but realized in a broader sense.</p> <p>The contemporary problem Dynaklim mainly addressed was the lack of cooperation between relevant stakeholders. With the road-mapping process, Dynaklim was able to get them closer. The Roadmap 2020 process, which was used to develop a common strategy for the region using a participatory format involving actors from different institutional and disciplinary backgrounds, was of primary interest.</p>



	<p>As Dynaklim is such a big project, the networking factor is fundamental in the description of the learning processes occurring in the context.</p> <p>The project required cooperation between actors who normally did not work together. Examples for this were the nine networking workshops, concentrating on different specialisations, connecting scientists and practitioners.</p> <p>The project coordinator's ability to jump back and forth between different types of partners (partners from technical sciences and from social sciences as well as practitioners) and keep them on the same track was also quite important. This ability made it possible to serve the needs of science and research as well as those of the practical application and political framework. So, this part of networking did work quite well, thanks to the project coordinator.</p>
<p>GT VET</p>	<p>In the project "Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training" (GT VET) a pilot training module on green skills has been developed which is supposed to accelerate the implementation of industry-relevant qualifications in company related training and national VET systems continuously. It contains four elaborated sub-modules on topics directly relevant for green skills and ecological awareness: Energy, Waste, Noise, and Raw Materials.</p> <p>This European training module helps to obtain comparable European learning outcomes in the field of green skills and sustainable awareness within technical VET (focusing on preventing pollution and securing occupational health and safety). The module was adapted and tested by four steel companies (ThyssenKruppSteel, TataSteel, ArcelorMittal Poland and Acciai Speciali Terni) in four member states (Germany, United Kingdom, Poland, and Italy). All steel companies were GT-VET project partners, along with research institutes in the respective countries ("tandem approach"). In GT-VET, a sectoral learning ecosystem has been initiated. While the implementation of learning in this case takes place on the regional and local level in the four participating steel companies' countries, GT-VET has implemented a cascading learning approach for promoting green skills.</p> <p>The main result of all these efforts is a European Framework Module on Green Skills and its sectoral integration, which will be developed further by ESTEP (the European Steel Technology Platform), with an ECVET approach, as a basis for continuous</p>



	<p>adjusting of the existing module against the background of new skills demands.</p> <p>While the primary target audience was and still is the European steel industry, cross-industrial transfer has always been part of the envisioned learning loop. So a secondary audience are neighbouring industries in which the introduction of green skills is also becoming more and more relevant. In the meantime, a transfer project has started which builds upon the GT-VET learning approach and develops green skills in the automotive industry.</p>
<p>Progetto Quid</p>	<p>The case describes the learning process in the establishment of Progetto QUID, a social cooperative based in Verona that trains and employs marginalized women to make clothes from discarded material coming from top fashion companies. The fashion brand is led by two young founders, Anna Fiscale and Ludovico Mantoan, and was officially founded as a social cooperative in 2013. The social innovation (SI) gained a lot of traction in its initial stages, winning several SI competitions, both on the national and European level, which provided the team with mentorship, networking possibilities, seed capital and credibility. The SI also strongly benefitted from being set in the fashion industrial district of the Veneto Region, allowing the team to tap into industrial know-how and expertise.</p> <p>The main evidences and insights drawn from the case are that: (1) the majority of the skills needed to start up the SI came from the experiences had throughout the innovation process; (2) the academic background of the team in economics was useful towards its initial development, also in terms of idea generation; and (3) the context in which the SI developed was key towards the SI's successful growth in terms of providing resources, skills and know-how. The case also confirms that teams in SIs are constructed without focusing too strongly on the skills required and a condition of unbalanced competences seems to emerge as a core trait of most newly established social ventures.</p>
<p>Emilia Romagna Region</p>	<p>The case describes four examples of social innovation in Emilia Romagna. Emilia Romagna is a territory with a high number of social innovation experiences representing specific learning processes. The analysis of the cases, of their evolution and of their learning process will help to understand if their success depends on specific and local dynamics or whether a social innovation ecosystem can be identified. This provides also the basis for a brief discussion of the factors which could promote a real ecosystem of social innovation in Emilia Romagna.</p>



	<p>The main features which have emerged, such as the replicability, the learning processes, the hybridization, and the different kinds of partnerships between the State, the private for profit and non-profit organisations make this region a useful case to discuss.</p>
<p>Girls' Education Challenge</p>	<p>This case analyses the processes of learning by which the UK Department for International Development has evaluated the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC). The Challenge Fund was launched in 2012 with the intention to disburse £300 million to 37 different projects across 18 different countries.</p> <p>This is an example in which a government intervention is utilising the tools and methods of social innovation- namely the challenge fund model- in order to engender social change. It is therefore an example of government operating as a social innovation 'intermediary'. This is a very large project constituting the largest donor funded programme on girls' education. The initial business case for the project stated that the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL) processes were planned to be ambitious because of the size of the project, its innovative character and the opportunities to fill gaps in knowledge for future policy makers and donors.</p> <p>The MEAL had three different dimensions⁴: (1) An independent external evaluation conducted by a consortium led by COFFEY International- selected through competitive tender (2) The Fund Manager, a consortium led by PwC, who will support projects in monitoring and evaluation (3) Individual projects also have the responsibility to collect some of their own monitoring and evaluation data.</p> <p>The programme was subject to logical frameworks from the start and the business case defined a set of expected results and critical success criteria. The project was also subject to continual learning and adaptation processes which meant that learning could inform the functioning of the project, this has been managed through an annual review process. Key aspects of learning have been the following: (a) assisting in developing the broader evidence base around best practice in extending educational provision in developing country contexts; (b) understanding emerging critical intervention areas within education; and (c) learning from the programme implementation in order to be able to adapt the programme to achieve better</p>

⁴ Girls Education Challenge (2012) Business Case v.4.
http://iati.dfid.gov.uk/iati_documents/3717197.odt



	<p>outcomes. In particular, learning how to better adapt frameworks to context.</p>
<p>Project based learning</p>	<p>The case describes the processes of learning involved in the 'Learning Through REAL Projects' programme developed by the Innovation Unit and the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF). £906,000 of funding was given by the EEF to investigate the efficacy of project-based learning in raising educational attainment and engagement in UK schools.</p> <p>This case can be seen as an example of multiple intermediaries cooperating in order to design, pilot, implement and evaluate a project of work. In particular, it demonstrates social innovation in the field of education, through the implementation of an approach which had not previously been attempted in the UK context.</p> <p>It illustrates some of the challenges of intermediary-led research with randomised elements. The project protocol has been refined to reflect some of the budgetary and time-related challenges relating to the RCT phase, as well as practicalities which have changed.</p> <p>The learning methodologies applied during the intervention are mirrored by some of the processes of learning for intermediaries, demonstrating the value of situated learning for all stakeholders. This also provides an interesting insight into real-world research with accessible output and dissemination of findings.</p> <p>The learning processes involved in this case operate on two different levels. Firstly, the learning process of the programme leads (researchers from Innovation Unit together with staff at the schools) about the effectiveness of project-based learning as an educational intervention. Secondly, the learning of the students involved in the programme and the innovative methods by which they gained knowledge brought to an understanding of the effectiveness of the Project based learning approach in supporting pupils engagement in their regular education activities.</p>
<p>Realising ambition</p>	<p>The case describes the learning process within the Realising Ambition programme in the UK. Realising Ambition is a funded 5 years programme providing support to organisations which replicate evidence-based or promising interventions aimed at preventing young people entering the pathways into crime. The programme was developed to embed learning both within the 22 organisations delivering interventions but also within the consortium partnership delivering the programme. Learning is focused not only on what works in youth crime prevention but, and</p>



	<p>distinctly for the Realising Ambition programme, on what works in replicating interventions in new geographies or with new populations and the support necessary for organisations to successfully do so.</p> <p>The main insights drawn from this case are that: (1) the scale of the learning gathered around what it takes to successfully replicate to enhance future practice (2) embedding a learning process from the outset and gathering learning through a variety of methods and from a range of sources enabled learning which is relevant and can be targeted to specific audiences; and (3) having an influencing communications plan which included the delivery sector and commissioners, funders and policy makers has allowed the programme to not only develop and share learning about best-practice at the delivery level but also to influence practice at the institutional level. Realising Ambition is an interesting case of learning processes within an intermediary due to its multi-faceted approach to learning and its scale.</p> <p>Reflection amongst consortium partners at the end of Year One about the process through which learning was captured led to the development of a Learning Log. Each partner would complete and share the Learning Log prior to the 6-weekly consortium Operational Board Meetings. These Learning Logs included information about successes, challenges, lessons learned and reflections. The introduction of this sought to enable the consortium to be more agile in its reaction to any challenges and to embed a process of regular reflection in its working. Intermediary learnt how to better support SI projects, processes and policy.</p>
<p>Social festival - Keep the ball rolling</p>	<p>This case study describes the learnings of the organisational team in the implementation of an Austrian social innovation: the social festival, Keep the Ball Rolling. The goal of Keep the Ball Rolling is to encourage people living in the respective hosting region to come up with ideas, to reflect on their environment and develop new or enhance already existing thoughts and strategies that could help to improve individual living conditions and those within their communities. The festival provides a framework for socially relevant activities; these activities, however, are expected to come from the people concerned, to be derived from their own experience and expertise.</p> <p>All social festivals were accompanied by a research team. Main evidences in the cases show that learning occurred at 2 different levels. From the first festival edition to the last one, the research team learned: how to manage the process of entering a community and mobilising it through a large framework project based on the</p>



	<p>engagement of people; how to help people in conducting small scale projects; how and to what extent the festival was effective in mobilising the communities in a process of change of their everyday life. People from the communities learned how to manage small projects starting from a problem and looking actively for its solution together through a process based on problem solving and learning by doing.</p>
<p>Solartaxi</p>	<p>The case describes the learning process in the establishment and upscaling of the Solartaxi Heidenreichstein. Austria's first e-taxi powered with electricity from solar power plants offers low-fare mobility services in a small Austrian municipality. For the price of 2 EUR or 2 Waldviertler (the region's complementary local currency which has been a success in promoting local business so far) passengers may ride anywhere within the municipality of this small village in Austria's economically, socially and infrastructure-wise weakest region. Thus, affordable and sustainable mobility is offered to the not-so-well off and also the necessity of owning more cars per household (this region also has the highest car per capita ownership in Austria due to its weak infrastructure) is lessened. The SI is well embedded in the region's solidary economy system and well connected with key stakeholders. However, getting to this point was not easy and the project team had to undergo a steep learning process, especially in the initial phase of the implementation process.</p> <p>The learning process during the implementation of the social innovation was a multidimensional one. A key requirement to understand the specific learning processes in innovative projects is to know about the history and personal experience of the key players in the innovation. For this case, the key innovator, Karl Immervoll, was the driving force behind the efforts to establish Solartaxi in Heidenreichstein.</p> <p>The project developed thanks to different types of learning processes occurring during (and before) the project implementation that were crucial to the success of the project. These learning processes are mediated through different forms of knowledge acquisition and distribution, from identifying local needs through researching new subjects such as legal matters to developing enriched and innovative service roles and competencies) and are fundamentally connected to both personal and regional development.</p>
<p>Lernhaus</p>	<p>The Lernhaus, established in 2011, is an institution run by the Red Cross in Austria where children and youth between six and 15 years receive teaching aid and</p>



tutoring free of charge.

Families in disadvantaged groups frequently struggle to assist their children in school matters, either because the parent generation is poorly educated or because they lack other social or financial means or space and time to look after their children's homework. The guiding principle of Lernhaus is to assist children to graduate from compulsory school and thus build capacities and opportunities for socially and/or economically disadvantaged groups. Even though the project does not exclusively target groups of migrants and/or refugees, a significant share of Lernhaus-children belong to these groups. The actual residency or citizenship status of children is of no concern for the Lernhaus organization. Lernhaus started out as a top-down initiative of socially responsible companies and executives seeking for an issue to address. It is a distinct and somewhat new project of a large NGO that is active in many fields. Entering a new and emerging field with a combination of externally hired project creators, fairly young project managers and volunteers, the project soon established its own domain, and managers enjoyed considerable discretion - but at the cost of some overburdening and staff turnover.

Stakeholders had to learn to balance their targets and publicity benefits against the operational logic of the project, and project managers learned to better transfer knowledge and also to formalise some procedures and practices: having disadvantaged youths negotiate targets with project managers, monitoring their progress with a software tool and improving both children's and volunteers' attendance through the introduction of a contract are new practices and methods with roots in new public management, consultancy and pedagogy.

Lernhaus emerged as more of a top-down charity initiative by established large partner organisations, and strategic adaptations of target groups and expectations took place on this level. Operations are run by Red Cross and since it is a new activity in the organisation, the Lernhaus locations enjoy considerable discretion in running and adapting their activities. Managers of the sub-projects made most decisions themselves and checked for approval later. This eventually led to an actual division of decision-making processes between the global strategic questions, which are discussed within KAA and decisions on the operative level which are taken by the respective local project managers. Learning also occurred on these levels separately: with its top-down character, the project's learning chiefly consisted in negotiating partners' different interests, identifying an attractive and meaningful



	cause, and balancing CSR, upscaling and target orientations. On the operative level, project managers and employees developed the voluntary and informal learning and support settings in interaction with the respective local environments. However, the operative level managed to shift the focus of partner organisations somewhat to a focus on end-users and quality support rather than top-down target setting.
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5. SI LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES AT WORK

In this section we describe the main learning processes we observed at work in the 15 cases studies. As a general result, learning mechanisms in SI do not differ significantly from those at work in other contexts of innovation as already pointed out in the literature on learning theories (as reviewed in section 2 of the deliverable). Despite this evidence, really few studies have tried until now to correlate or apply this knowledge on the learning processes that work in SI contexts and to exploit the results to address the question of how social innovation education can be advanced.

The issue of SI education has been formally faced until now mainly in the areas of social entrepreneurship and social impact where consistent research as well as educational programmes already exist.

A relatively new trend is the introduction of the design thinking approach in SI as an area of education/learning based on learning by doing mechanisms. Design thinking and learning by doing would be the best process and approach to support the development of SI from inception to impact, where the single innovation has scaled enough to produce changes in the system in which it takes place (Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulgan, 2010; Bates, 2012).

Even though this trend represents a consistent and interesting trajectory to be observed and further developed in the way in which it is actually implemented it presents some limits:

- contrary to its production the SI development model - described by existing frameworks as a rational and structured sequence of prompts, proposals, prototyping, sustaining and scaling - actually takes place in constrained contexts and typically develops as a frugal answer to a social problem (Terstriep et alii, 2015). Also our cases show how SI is characterised by a much less formalised process, in which some of the phases described in the ideal models do not exist and some of the objectives are not seen as relevant by the innovators (e.g.: the emphasis on scaling up that we find in SI literature). From this perspective, transferring design thinking produces conflicts and gaps that have to be further addressed:
- each stage of the model necessitates different skills, structures, resources and most likely actor constellations. This consideration brings the idea that design thinking and learning by doing are not enough to support the process of SI development as described by the model.



In the following, the main results observed in the analysis of 15 cases of diverse SI typologies. The cases showed how learning mechanisms in SI do not differ from other innovation contexts and do not differ among typologies.

Differences in the learning mechanisms depends on: the main learning actor; the contexts in which learning occurs, the specific goal pursued through the activation of the learning activity, the actors involved, the scale at which learning occurs and the occurrence of similar learning processes.

In the following we report the main learning mechanisms detected in the case studies and for each of them we report a detailed discussion and examples.

Collaborative learning

All the cases analysed are based on network developing activity. Networking is a central area of competences in SI and it has different aims. When networking works as a mechanism of learning, it supports the principle of knowledge sharing, mutual learning and collaboration in the process of SI development. Collaborative learning works from SI innovators to SI ecosystems, adapting along the typologies: the scope of the collaborative learning activity, the groups/networks of learners among which it occurs and the modalities through which actors learnt.

SI often develops thanks to a process of learning that occur by establishing collaboration and co-design activities with beneficiaries and customers.

Working with the involvement of the beneficiaries and or the customers is one of the most well recognised features of SI. Those that will benefit from the SI are often those that produce, at a certain degree of involvement, the SI. In addition, the involvement of end users and customers especially in the initial phase of any kind of innovation is a diffusing strategic asset for general growth and prosperity: information coming from this intensive learning processes are applied to better fit solutions to the customers and beneficiaries needs as well as to evolve continuously the portfolio of solutions that is offered.

In the case of Nova ISKRA a transdisciplinary platform and a fully independent venture that connects the creative community to potential partners and supports the realization of their ideas on the market, both mechanisms were at work. The idea was initiated by two young professionals with vast experience in cultural management, product design, creative industries and project management. Their previous knowledge about the sector gave them understanding of the unmet needs of the young professionals and creatives regarding the supporting environment for their professional development. However, awareness about the needs was not sufficient. In order to find an appropriate way to fulfil these needs a conduction of a research on customer need and expectation was conducted before the implementation of the platform in its ideation process. The platform services then developed and adapted thanks to the continuous



feedback of their users (reactive learning).

In the case of Solartaxi the concept is a non-profit taxi service offering sustainable e-mobility services (a taxi powered with mostly solar and a bit of wind energy) to citizens in Austria's least developed region. It has the organizational form of a club and only members of the club can use the services of the two taxis, which are operated by part-time working professional drivers. For this case the key innovator was Karl Immervoll who was the driving force behind the efforts to establish the Solartaxi in Heidenreichstein. As a first step in the learning process he confronts the people of the project region with his ideas or even gets his ideas for innovations just by talking to ordinary people. Through this first step he makes sure that the planned innovation fits the needs of the population and does not artificially create an innovation where there is none needed or where other problems are more pertinent. He used surveys, newspaper announcements and presence in local market places to present the idea and to learn about the specific needs of the people.

SI organizations often benefit from collaborative learning with the actors with whom they coproduce value.

Collaboration among all the actors of the value chain is a well-recognized practice in the for profit field. SI is quite advanced in establishing collaboration with those partners with whom it shares social value but it should become more capable to take advantages and learnt also from those partners with which it collaborate to produce real services, the process the product it delivers. Establishing strong collaborations with stakeholders that can help in the production of SI can bring a consistent learning improvement in the core competence of the organization.

In the case of **Humana nova** a social cooperative with the mission to employ disadvantaged persons in the labour market through recycling and redesigning discarded textile, the partnership with the Croatian design brand ELFS was useful in several ways. Due to ELFS, the cooperative had to restructure its production process in order to be able to fulfil their demands and had to become more flexible and able to deliver orders in a short time. Moreover, because ELFS is a popular brand in the higher price range, Humana Nova had to raise the quality of its services and introduce quality standards.

In the case of Progetto QUID, a project of production of fashion items from recycled textile, the innovators had the chance to learn from the specific industrial context in which the project growth (in fact the project developed in Regione Veneto one of the most competitive Italian district for clothes production) as well as from the fashion brand with which they established collaboration and commercial agreements.

In SI ecosystems, collaborative learning mechanisms take the forms of explicit knowledge sharing and explicit knowledge transfer.

Contrary to a community, an ecosystem is composed of different typologies of actors that differ from each



other for their scope, motivation, kind of competences and knowledge. In an ecosystem, collaborative learning supports processes of explicit knowledge transfer and cross-sectorial knowledge transfer. The aim of these kind of mechanisms is to develop a common level of knowledge within the ecosystem with respect to a macro scale issue that needs a multidisciplinary perspective and support all the actors of the ecosystem to improve their overall level of awareness on the faced issue.

In the case of **Dynamlink** a large framework programme to develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the Ruhr region the problem was how to face a cross-cutting issue affecting a variety of public institutions and actors. Hence, addressing it adequately, it required cooperation between actors who normally did not work together. The cooperation was centrally coordinated by the project leader, but the different actual actors also networked among themselves. This group consisted mainly of experienced practitioners and researchers who were not involved in their organizations' board or coordination of working groups which gave them the freedom to act relatively independent. Generally, there was a high exchange of knowledge and important interaction. This also was influenced by the actors' background and high level of competences. As every actor brought a specific knowledge, the project benefited from these extensive facilities.

In the case of Realising ambition a 5 years programme to provide support to organisations which replicate evidence-based or promising interventions aimed at preventing young people entering the pathways into crime. One of the main insight drawn from this case is that of the scale of the learning gathered around what it takes to successfully replicate to enhance future practice This processes was explicitly designed on mechanisms of knowledge sharing, transfer and collaboration among all the supported projects.

Experiential learning/ Learning by doing

Concepts of experiential and organisational learning can usefully be applied here. Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) is a holistic perspective that combines "concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation" (Moon, 2004). It is dedicated to the development, testing, evaluation and re-design of actions addressing issues that have been identified in diagnosis. Indeed, on both the executive and operative levels, stakeholders and managers inevitably learned "by doing" and interacting with their target groups, peers and the wider institutional environment. SI exhibits a high occurrence of not planned learning by doing. In fact, many evidences and case studies have already shown the casual nature of SI development which often relies on a bricolage attitude of the innovators or on reactive mechanisms to gaps that exist in especially the public service sector (Terstriep et alii, 2015). In line with these findings also the SIC cases show that learning by doing is a process that occurs in the practices and that it is supported by mechanisms such as trial and error, problem solving and reactive learning.



Social innovators exhibit mechanisms of learning by doing based on reactive and trial and error learning mechanisms.

In the case of **Progetto Quid** a SI based on recycling textile to produce new branded fashion items, the SI has codified some of the learning through training sessions, but the majority of the experience-based learning is double-looped, in which the two founders test various methods and change their strategy based on corrected assumptions made on customers, products, services and/or strategies (Argyris and Schòn, 1996). The knowledge acquired is then shared with the core team and new strategies are devised. For example, the decision to make co-branded products and have them distributed in their partner's distribution channels was the result of having made an incorrect assumption on the product and the production process. It was also made due to a more accurate analysis of customer needs. The decision to change involved the entire team as it involved the whole organization. While the input was given by Anna, the learning process involved the whole team.

In the case of **Agintzari social cooperative** The majority of the knowledge gaps in the innovation process have been related to its process of expansion and the management and on-going re-adaptation of the organization. Learning has been acquired basically through the innovation process, that is, they have been learning as they have been growing as an organization. In this sense, the learning process has been mainly reactive to the problems they have encountered. These problems have been mainly related to the need to achieve more funding and influence inside public administrations, the diffusion of the impact of our activities, the engagement with new actors/agents, and improving the management of the organization as it was evolving. Being a social cooperative of public utility implies that they had to follow and be consequent with what being a cooperative means in terms of salaries, the professionalization of the organization, etc. Among the different tools they have used to face the growth of the organization there has been the development of co-creation activities, extended leadership in the management of the different projects through new management teams, project teams, informative assemblies, screening activities and proposals. These are recognized by Agintzari as tools that serve the model of management and that they see as socially innovative tools since they involve different actors, agents, partners, social target groups, etc. Involving the different array of actors, institutions, partners, social groups, agents and social entrepreneurs has been crucial. Learning has been built through activities of collective creation among all the interested parties. In Mikel's words *"if you belief in what you do you are able to create, and if all parties aren't participating and are part of this creation it is very difficult that they belief, they have to be protagonists and feel they are part of something that is being collectively generated" (...)* *"if we conducted these activities through for example, social labs it would be very difficult to adapt the ideas generated in these labs to reality, social innovation cannot be built in a lab"*.



Situated learning

Following the premises of situated learning theory, in a “community of practice”, the context influences the learning capabilities of the group or the organizations through the development of its activities. This community shares a common set of problems, they learn about these problems and how to find solutions by mutually influencing each other, increasing in the process their knowledge and their level of expertise (Wenger, 1998).

But in SI, the strong level of context dependency of the solutions is higher than in other forms of innovation and the concept of situated learning can be applied to different SI typologies beyond the one based on communities. This characteristic is mainly due to multiple factors: while problems to be addressed tend to be quite transversal, ways in which they are addressed, resources employed in addressing them, and networks of actors who implement solutions tend to be reconfigured in relation to the specificities of the contexts in which SIs are introduced or diffused.

SI based on communities often exhibit situated learning mechanisms that support tacit forms of knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer

Implicit forms of collaboration occur in communities where people’s physical and emotional proximity make learning happen on the basis of mechanisms like doing things together, direct observation of each other and exposing people to the same kind of knowledge. Since proximity and observation are the basis of situated learning the knowledge shared is often procedural based on how to make things instead of abstract kind of knowledge liked with theories, principles, and facts. People in communities are often quite similar, they share the same concerns, values, wishes and desires.

In the case of the Social festival - Keep the Ball Rolling the key idea is to motivate people to think about (societal) needs and challenges within their region/community, and to support them in realising their ideas to bring about change. The knowledge is presented in authentic contexts — settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. In the social festivals, the knowledge is communicated by each individual participant who gets involved in the community through direct involvement. At the same time, in developing their ideas and projects, the participants share and even develop common beliefs or values. The knowledge of the local population is passed on to other players in the region as a source of inspiration. The relationships and exchanges between the community of practice and the other actors active in that territory is based on the transfer of explicit knowledge on the community as the basis on which to make the SI sustainable.

In the case of Kooperera a network of cooperative operating in the field of environmental services the capabilities of the network to develop social innovations are more related to problem solving skills to create new knowledge, than on their learning capabilities; that is, their capability to assimilate existing



and new knowledge directly from the context where it operates (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). In this context, the knowledge transfer modes inside Koopera have been based on their own experience and their close connection to the Basque context where it emerged; a process of tacit knowledge transfer where the proximity to other organizations (social companies, public administrations, social organizations) inside their environment potentially increased their “absorptive capacity” to openly grow and diversify their activities.

In SI organisations, situated learning mechanism refers to the process of knowledge acquisition from the context of production and consumption.

Path and context-dependency have been already described as connected to other forms of innovation, with particular reference to organisational behaviour and to the dynamics of innovation in local clusters. The idea that proximity and belonging to a local cluster may play a relevant role in the development of commercial firms has been widely discussed in different bodies of literature, ranging from that on industrial clusters, to that on technological paradigms and trajectories, and to that on organisational behaviour and change. Nonetheless, our cases show that SIs are most often configured as local solutions, widely influenced by the national and local institutional settings, and based on networks of actors that operate in specific socio-cultural environments.

In the case of **Progetto QUID**, as can be seen, the founders were given substantial support from their initial partners and benefitted greatly from the industrial district in which they are located, giving them access to a network of territorial actors with the know-how and experience able to support their development and bridge their gaps in skills, knowledge and experience.

In the case of Nova Iskra, the constant interaction with the local community led to the development of new solutions for their unmet needs. The partnerships with many stakeholders working on various issues or projects at local, regional and global level supported Nova Iskra to develop know how in different creative sectors and develop interdisciplinary teamwork based on the combination of fragmented knowledge through dialogue and involvement of users.

In the case of Lernhaus, a third sector initiative to support disadvantage children in their school activities, SI emerged more as a top-down charity initiative implemented by many similar projects. Learning also occurred on these levels separately: with its top-down character, the project’s learning chiefly consisted in negotiating with partners from the contexts their different interests, identifying an attractive and meaningful cause, and balancing CSR, upscaling and target orientations. On the operative level, project managers and employees developed the voluntary and informal learning and support settings in interaction with the respective local environments. However, the operative level managed to shift the focus of partner organisations somewhat to a focus on end-users and quality support rather than top-down target setting. On the project level, knowledge was exchanged continuously both with other, similar



projects and within the project. During the time the project was initiated, a comparable project ran in the Austrian city Graz, the 'Lerncafé' led by Caritas. The external expert, who was responsible for developing the Lernhaus project, was in close exchange with the Lerncafé. Some months prior to opening the Lernhaus, the 'Wiener Lerntafel' was founded in late 2010, which has a portfolio comparable to the Lernhaus, and Lernhaus employees visited on-site to see how work is done there. Generally, the operative, project-level employees working with children has been a major driver for the project to be successful.

Replicating/Adapting

The process of replication/adaptation of solutions is the learning mechanism through which SI diffuse and scale in different contexts to solve similar problems in learning. Evidences from many research projects show that problems to be faced are often not local, but depending on transversal macro-trends that are similar - although with different degrees of intensity depending on local conditions - all across the EU, and in most cases all over the world (Terstriep et alii, 2015, Concilio et alii, 2013). Populations of rural areas, integration of migrants, care of ageing population, job placement of young people, establishment of equal opportunities, climate change and other similar issues are transversal challenges affecting almost all EU countries. Nevertheless, while challenges and macro-trends affecting them are homogenous, at the meso- and the micro levels a variety of ways of solving problems and creating solutions to the challenges emerges. In other words, societal challenges are transversal, but solutions, or rather the specific configuration of SIs, tend to adhere to the characteristics of the meso- and micro-environment of innovation.

In other words, the same challenge may lead to different solutions in different places depending on the adaptation of a SI to the characteristics of the specific contexts in which it is replicated. The role played by local networks in establishing and in giving shape to SIs emerges as one of the most relevant reasons behind the context specificity of SI. The specific characteristics of the local networks and of the context in which they operate often call for a reconfiguration of the solution, which turns the SI into a sort of open platform of learning (in terms of offered services, ways producing them, subjects involved in the co-creation and co-production processes) to fit local conditions.

Replication is one of the learning mechanism through which SI diffuses.

In the case of Greening Technical VET, GT-VET "Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training" (GT VET) was created: a pilot training module on green skills developed to accelerate the implementation of industry-relevant qualifications in company related training and national VET systems continuously. The module was adapted and tested by four steel companies (ThyssenKruppSteel, TataSteel, ArcelorMittal Poland and Acciai Speciali Terni) in four member states (Germany, United



Kingdom, Poland, and Italy). All steel companies were GT-VET project partners, along with research institutes in the respective countries (“tandem approach”). Modules could not simply be copied from one country to the other, but they needed thorough adaptation, depending on the sector, the industry, the concrete target group, the resources available, and many other factors. As a result, different nationally adapted training modules for strengthening green skills during apprenticeship and beyond are now implemented in local and regional learning ecosystems in which the companies, VET institutions and social partners are playing key roles.

The case of Regione Emilia Romagna describes a SI enabling ecosystem where many examples of social innovation can be observed. Main characteristics of this ecosystem is the important role that the regional and local governments played to support SI not only by promoting policy in support of it but also by experimenting directly with new forms of private public partnership to implement social innovation. The case reports 4 examples of innovative PPPs:

The nurseries’ experience shows that a level of early childhood services adequate to the European targets has been achieved by social innovation thanks to an initial strong role of public institutions. Nowadays, the crucial dimension of social innovation is the creation of public private partnerships, typically with social economy organisations, for the management and the realization of new nurseries and services. The San Patrignano Community is an interesting example of how a social enterprise involved in social agriculture, producing goods and services of high quality is a tool for supporting a new life chance for the residents in the Community. In short, a leading experience with a strong orientation to the market and the building of a “positive economy”. Social innovation is the result of a strong commitment of a non profit institution in order to develop an effective and sustainable social enterprise as the instrument to educate residents to a new opportunity for their lives. The reuse of confiscated land in Forlì is a case of social innovation based on the ability to find an innovative solution for the management of a confiscated asset. Social innovation is related to a strong and innovative collaboration between the Municipality and two social cooperatives, implementing a national law but also introducing local original solutions. Moreover, a new direction for innovation is represented by the interactions with other third sector actors and the university, with a strong emphasis on the educational dimension of this experience.

The model of Social Street is a small but relevant case of success for the efforts of a community that wanted to recreate a link with its space/territory thanks to the support of social media. This social innovation produced by spontaneous interaction of people living the same street also spurred the recognition by the Municipality of Bologna that has been the first in Italy to introduce a possible guideline for the management of the city commons, like social streets.

The main features which emerges from the case are: the replicability, the learning processes, and the hybridization of the different kinds of partnerships between the State, the private for profit and non-profit organisations within the territory of the region.



In the case of Realising Ambition which is about the support to projects whose aims are the development of path of learning to prevent young people to enter crime paths one of the specific learning objective was to understand what it takes to successfully replicate an intervention in a new geography or with a new population makes it stand out in the field of intermediaries and scaling and growth programmes. Replication was then pursued through a designed learning process among funded project to share knowledge and cross-fertilising each other.

Reflective learning

Reflective learning is the process through which knowledge is extracted and shared from the observation of a phenomenon or a direct participation to it. There are various definitions of "reflective learning" and much has been written on the subject. Nevertheless, it is generally understood that reflection as it applies to learning is a skill, that can be summarised as: the ability to look back over an experience and break it down into its significant aspects, such as any factors affecting success or failure, a means of learning by making links between theory and practice (or learning and action), a means of improving performance, by using the outcome of reflection to inform future practice, a way of recognising, and maximising the personal value of a learning experience, a way of turning surface learning into deep learning. Even though it may occur as subsequent phenomenon of each of the learning mechanisms described until now we believe it is important to distinguish it explicitly as a learning modality that occur in some of the cases we analysed. In fact, it seems to be possible to recognise explicit and specific mechanisms of reflective learning in all SIs that implement processes of monitoring and measuring of the SI implementation process.

SI benefits from learning how to collect evidences.

In the case of project based learning, the description of the processes of learning involved in the 'Learning Through REAL Projects' programme developed by the Innovation Unit and the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) to investigate the efficacy of project-based learning in raising educational attainment and engagement in UK schools is reported. The project is an example of a very rigorous analysis of intermediary support. It has not only put in place good processes for baselining and for capacity building but it has also built in scope for adaptation to interim findings. We are currently at the stage where findings have formed the basis for recommendations and these must feed in to the project: (i) Learning on the challenge of the program: i.e. young girls' education; (ii) Learning on the performances of the funds distributed; (ii) Learning on the performance of the overall project. Data will be used to improve the programme as well as to give guidelines and recommendation for the development of new education tools and policy.



In the case Girls' Education Challenge of processes of learning by which the UK Department for International Development has evaluated the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) is analysed. The GEC is a form of intermediary support that focuses particularly on supporting and scaling innovative ways of improving access to and quality of education. The articulation of support in the form of a challenge fund can be viewed as the direct use of a common social innovation tool. The aim of the project is not just to find new and innovative ways of tackling the gaps in girls' education but also to capture and share significant learning on how to improve access and quality of education for girls. As a result of this, significant time and resource has been put in to understanding the performance of the challenge funds, learning and adapting to that knowledge.

In the case of Realising Ambition it results to be distinct from many scaling intervention programmes as it moves beyond a pure focus on what it takes for the individual intervention or innovation to be successful and takes a broader, sectoral view of factors which influence successful delivery and replication. There is significant evidence to date regarding the success of individual interventions in the youth crime prevention field,⁵ where Realising Ambition progresses the field of learning is its focus on gathering evidence on what it takes to successfully replicate those interventions which have been shown effective in a particular context. Indeed prior to the programme there was limited evidence of replication of proven intervention.⁶ Realising Ambition, through its combination of practice and learning has gone some way to address both the gap in knowledge and the gap in delivery as identified by the Centre for Analysis of Youth Transitions:

“There is an urgent need to find the structures and modes of organization that will allow the findings of prevention science to be widely and successfully applied.”⁷

The Realising Ambition programme, and its learning outputs contribute to our understanding of how to deliver future programmes that help to close of 'pathways to offending', and how to replicate programmes that work well.

⁵ Centre for the Analysis of Youth Transitions. (2011) Prevention and Reduction: A review of strategies for intervening early to prevent or reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ross et.al (2011) Prevention and Reduction: A review of strategies for intervening early to prevent or reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour. CATY. Department of Education



6. OTHER INSIGHTS ON SI POTENTIAL LEARNING SUBJECTS

In the following a list of subjects/issues identified in the case studies are reported that show some relevant areas of content in SI practices that should be integrated in current SI educational programs.

SI initiators and SI beneficiaries need to be supported with the development of different sets of skills, knowledge and competences.

Often SI involve beneficiaries as active actors in the process of SI delivery. Those that will benefit from the SI are also those that produce, at a certain degree of involvement, the SI. Beneficiaries are often vulnerable people (marginalised people, refugees, homeless, children or women victim of violence) that need to be reintegrated in the society through active mechanisms based on capacity building and development of emotional skills. In reality, many cases are showing that when beneficiaries are active resources of the social innovation solution they need to receive education on the core competences needed to perform their job as well as on other skills that can vary from language and cultural skills, to procedural and processes skills and legal and regulation knowledge. This is suggested from the following cases: Taste of Home, Solartaxi, Progetto QUID, Dynaklim, Girls education Challenge, Social festival - Keep the Ball Rolling.

SI benefits from learning how to manage complex participatory processes.

This recommendation comes from the evidence as in many of the cases analysed SI is not often the results of a process of alignment of complex set of stakeholders that can have different interest and needs and together with which it is important to find collaborate to come to the final solution. Cases such as Dynaklim, Koopera, Humana Nova, Solataxi, Lernhaus, Regione Emilia Romagna demonstrate the complex nature of the processes of networking and collaboration in SI. Contrary to this evidences today SI is plenty of co-creation toolkit to open participation to end users and scarce attention is devoted to the management of the complex networks of actors that are dealing with it.

SI benefits from learning how to influence public organisations and public decision making.

The importance of favourable policy for the development of SI is strategic. The capability that some of the actors to work together with the public sector and with actors representing the decision-making level of a context has been fundamental in many of the cases analysed: Koopera, Regione Emilia Romagna, Girls' education challenge, Social festival - Keep the Ball Rolling, Realising Ambitions.

SI benefits from learning about how to produce high quality products.

SI quite often is the expression of complex business models that rely on a fragile balance between its social and economic proposition. In addition, the stress that derives from the need to show immediate



social impact prevent SI to invest and take care of the quality of the product process or service delivered. As a consequence, the economic sustainability of the solutions can suffer from the scares quality of the delivery. Some of the analysed cases show that SI sustainability is highly dependent from the quality of the delivered products: Koopera, Solartaxi, Progetto QUID, Agintzari, Humana Nova, Girls' education challenge, GT VET are all cases where learning about the need to produce high quality solutions has been a turning point for the success of the initiative.

SI benefits from communication and marketing competences.

Related to the previous recommendation there is the one which refers that SI benefits from learning how to communicate about the initiatives as well as from developing marketing and strategies and brands for the delivered products. Humana nova, Progetto Quid, Agintzari, Solartaxi, Social festival - Keep the Ball Rolling show how the integration of communication and marketing competences in their organisations has been strategic for the further development of SI.

HR competences related to disadvantaged people support the better development of SI.

Many definitions refer to the idea that SI main concerns would be the empowerment of vulnerable people through their active engagement in the SI solutions (Terstriep et alii., 2015). In the majority of the SI education programmes there is scares attention on the vulnerable as active resources of the SI and human resources management is often faced as a classical management issue. Vulnerable people often represents a part of the working force of SI, employees that daily operate in SI organisations and interact with customers and with the other members of the organisations in the process of value creation. Cases such us Taste of home, Progetto QUID, Koopera, Agintzari have shown how learning about the modalities to rely with these people is fundamental for the SI internal efficiency. Specifically, the cases demonstrated how SI benefits from HR competences for the management of vulnerable people and of the learning paths towards to support their empowerment.

SI benefits from learning how to develop an adequate organisational structure.

In socially innovative terms, the satisfaction of human needs, the empowerment of marginalised social groups and communities or the change in power relations, cannot be achieved without an adequate internal and external governance model (Moulaert et. al., 2007). SI learning should focus on the growth of the organization directly related to its connections with stakeholders and other partners. Our cases of SI organisations like Koopera, Agintzari, Progetto QUID, Regione Emilia Romagna show the critical role for SI played by the integration of vulnerable people in the working places.



7. SIC LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Learning can be seen both as the process by which knowledge, skills and insight are developed as well as the end result of the content which is learnt.

A learning framework should thus consist both of learning processes and of learning contents, connected to specific learning targets and objectives. These elements may sometimes refer to separate research settings and bodies of knowledge, and can be split to facilitate the understanding of some aspects of the framework, but they are clearly interwoven and interdependent. We may investigate learning modes and processes in a wide perspective, but we have to connect them to learning topics and objectives to provide an overall coherent framework. If we assume the perspective of educators, we cannot say how to teach without first understanding what to teach to whom, and for which purpose.

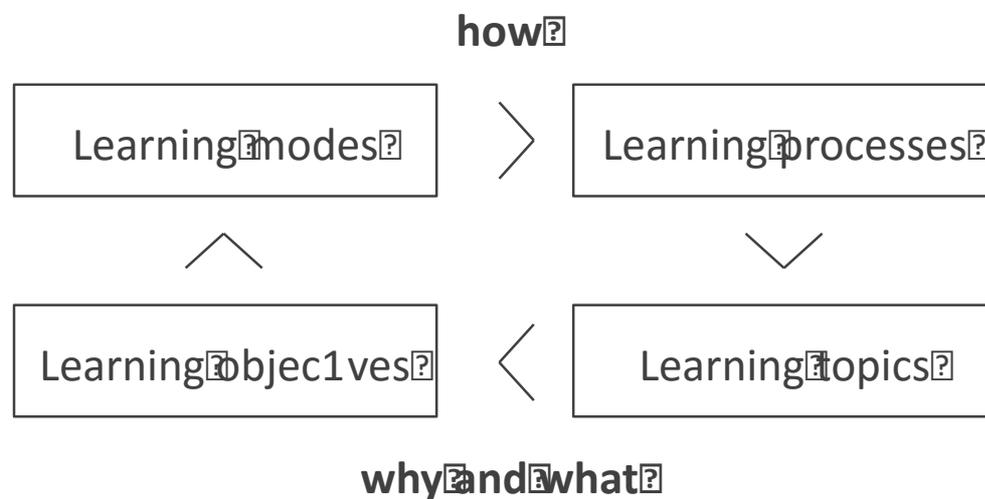


FIG. 5. LEARNING COMPONENTS FOR A SI LEARNING CURRICULUM

As our overall concrete objective is to understand learning mechanisms and principles for social innovation, the first question that we have to take into account is that we are operating in a quite recent and dynamic field, where knowledge is in progress. Existing curricula can only partially serve as references and sources of inspiration, as very few of them are really focused on social innovation. There is a vast educational offering in nearby fields, such as social economics, social entrepreneurship, social policy etc., while there are still few experiences explicitly focused on social innovation.

In formal education, social innovation is mainly treated as a theoretical question. On the contrary, in non-formal education, an experiential hands-on approach, primarily based on learning-by-doing, is common.



The emerging area of design for social innovation seems to work as a bridge between the two.

At the core of SIC learning framework resides the idea that innovation, organisational change, context transformation and learning are tightly interwoven, and that the experimentation of new practices can and should be integrated with a learning framework, engaging internal and external knowledge and resources, to establish a positive transformation of the context in which SI emerges (and of all the involved actors, who need to learn as much as they can do to play their role and address their objectives).

SIC learning framework thus proposes to combine SI advanced practices and development processes (knowing how) with a reflective process of knowledge extraction, using this combination to both analyse established and ongoing experiments (to draw insights and provide guidance), and to set up a learning environment (to provide a knowledge-creation space) in which to make possible for a range of diverse actors (from innovators to public administrations, from private organisations to communities and network) to experiment and find situated and tailored ways of integrating the new approaches and practices into the knowledge gaps/needs they have. In particular, we propose an experimentation/learning cycle, based on Kolb's experiential learning framework (1984) representing at the same time the core structure of a participatory design processes (which can be complemented with appropriate tools and applied to the co-creation of new SI) and of an organisational learning process (which can be complemented with appropriate structures and actions and applied to the introduction and integration of new knowledge).

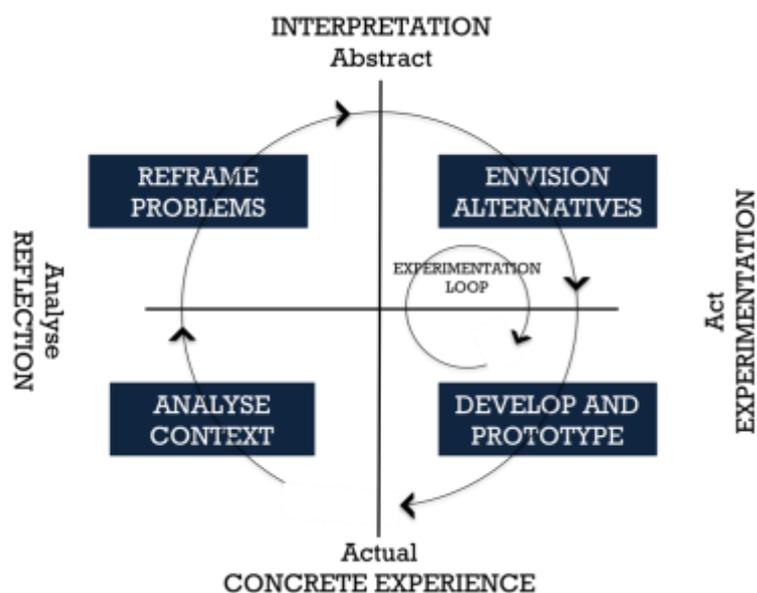


FIG. 6 THE SIC LEARNING FRAMEWORK



Fig. 6 depicts the SIC learning framework as the combination of the design thinking approach together with the Kolb's model of experiential learning: it suggests that design thinking can be exploited to design and pilot processes of experiential learning in SI.

The iterative nature of the design process based on loops of understanding-designing-and redesigning until when the faced problem is addressed is combined with the situated nature of the experiential learning that starts from the concrete experience of the current situation (actual) and moves to the design of an experimentation (act) by reflecting and interpreting. The act of experimentation is supported by the development of prototypes, those design artefacts that represent the concrete implementation of the alternative hypotheses formulated to change the initial experience and by the evaluation of their effectiveness.

The framework can be applied to a combination of diverse typology of learners as well as to different learning objectives.

By designing new solutions to unmet problems and challenges in a learning environment innovators, PAs, organisations, policy makers reflect and produce new knowledge in a process of continuous learning based on trial and error strategy, open to the resources of the contexts in which problems arise, tolerant with respect to failures, based on the culture of the engagement with potential users as co-designers and evaluators of the alternatives.

8. SI EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES: GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Based on our study of the offer in Europe, it seems to us that this shift is in its early stages. Our overview suggests that there is (still) a strong focus on the entrepreneurial and business side of SI. Other important aspects such as movement building, systemic change, collaborative leadership etc. are often included to a lesser degree or not at all.

A relatively new trend is the introduction of the design thinking approach in SI as an area of education/learning based on learning by doing mechanisms. Design thinking and learning by doing would be the best process and approach to support the development of SI from inception to impact, where the single innovation has scaled enough to produce changes in the system in which it takes place (Murray, Caulier-Grice and Mulgan, 2010; Bates, 2012).

Even though this trend represents a consistent and interesting trajectory it is too much unbalanced in favour of the application of tools to support innovators to deal with the phase of challenge understanding and idea generation as the proliferation of a consistent number of toolkits demonstrates.

On the contrary the framework SIC suggests to build on the interplay and cross fertilisation between



practices based on experimentation and new knowledge acquisition based on reflecting and abstracting starting from the experiments.

Experiments to be conducted need prototyping and processes of data gathering and data monitoring. The processes of prototype development and data gathering trigger reflection and abstraction and activate the positive loop described in Fig. 6.

The envisioning of trajectories for future SI education starts from these assumptions and furthermore develops along at least two interesting lines:

- 01** The area of formal SI education is today mainly represented by the tracks and courses on social entrepreneurship and Social Economy. The programs that do address social innovation in its full breadth in many cases mainly address SI as a theoretical issue. As such, significant gaps emerge on competences and knowledge on how to develop SI that answers to real challenges existing in social contexts and how these could contribute to transformative change of the social systems that sustain them. Innovation in this area of offering should be to include learning by doing activities based on experimenting with processes of SI design, evaluation and prototyping and applying insights from theory to practice with regard to topics such as complex social change processes, cross-sectoral partnerships, movement building and collaborative leadership. If offered in the right format, these could also be an interesting add-on to existing degrees.;
- 02** The area of non-formal education is today mainly occupied by intermediaries for the support of innovators and entrepreneurs. SI intermediaries have played an important role until now with respect to the diffusion of the idea that SI can be better designed through the application of a set of tools along a development cycle. The SIC deliverable 3.1 has already shown what intermediaries have done to support hundreds of SIs to become robust solution and to be sustainable in real contexts. But what has been done by intermediaries in the area of innovators is still missed in other fundamental contexts such as the one of PAs and public actors in general that deal with the delivery of services to the citizens. Developing education courses and programs for public actors (including municipalities and other public administrations) on (the governance of) complex social change processes through social innovation, represents a big of opportunity to push SI at the core of the process of innovation of the Public Sector.



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APPENDIX 1 LIST OF THE ANALYSED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

MA Programmes - Social innovation	Context	Country	Focus
MA in Sociology: Social Transformations & Innovation,	University of Barcelona	Spain	Social innovation
MA in Social Innovation / SVB	University of Northampton	UK	Social innovation
MA in Social Innovation	ZSI and Danube University Krems (continuing education)	Austria	Social innovation & digital
Master in Sustainability and Social Innovation	HEC, Paris	France	Social innovation
MA Social Economy and the Cooperative Company	Mondragon	Spain	Social innovation
Social Innovation MDes	Ravensbourne UK	UK	Social innovation & design
MA Programmes in Social entrepreneurship			
MA in Social Entrepreneurship	Goldsmiths, University of London	UK	Social entrepreneurship Social entrepreneurship and management
Msc in Social Entrepreneurship and Management,	Roskilde University	Denmark	Social entrepreneurship
MSc Social Business and Microfinance,	Glasgow Caledonian Yunnus Centre	UK	Social entrepreneurship
MSc in Social Enterprise,	Stirling University, Applied Social Sciences	UK	Social entrepreneurship
MA in Sustainable Business and Innovation	Utrecht University	Netherlands	Sustainable Business and Innovation
University courses & Summer Schools			
URise, Master in rigenerazione urbana e innovazione sociale	IUAV (Istituto Universitario di Architettura Venezia).	Italy	Urban planning and social innovation
Challenge Lab	Gothenborg University	Denmark	Sustainable change
Social Economy and Social Enterprise, 7,5 ECTS	Södertorn University, Stockholm	Sweden	Social Economy
Social Entrepreneurship. Social Innovation and	Mälmo University	Sweden	Sustainability Leadership Social Economy, non-profit management
University extension course in Social Economy and Cooperatives, Uni of Valencia	FH Vorarlberg, uni of applied sciences	Spain	Social Economy, non-profit management
Module Social Economy	OIKOS	Austria	Social Entrepreneurship
Summer School in Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation	University of the Aegean Summer Schools	International	Social Entrepreneurship
Summer School Social Investments and Social Economy –Theory, Practice and European Policies	SIC	Greece	Social Economy
SIC Summer School on Social Innovation	SIX, ESSI	Europe	Social Innovation
SIX summer School		Columbia	Social Innovation
Continuing education & (non) formal education			
Enterprising Leadership	KAOSPILOT AARHUS Transition Academy, Dutch Research Institute for Transitions (DRIFT)	Aarhus, Denmark	Social entrepreneurship & leadership
Masterclass Societal transitions	ASVI	The Netherlands	Sustainability transition, SI & SE
ASVI, Social Change School		International, some courses in London, UK	Social innovation
Year Here	YEAR here	Spain	Social change
Knowmads Lab	Knowmads lab		



International Executive Master Program in Intrapreneurship and Open Innovation	Mondragon	Spain	Open Innovation, entrepreneurs (not so social)
Social innovation/Mobile applications	IT University Copenhagen	Denmark	Social innovation and technology
Master in Social Innovation	University of Studies Cambridge,	UK	Social innovation
Online courses			
Social Innovation MOOC	Iversity	Online	Social Innovation
Social Entrepreneurship (Online)	University of Oxford	Online	Social Entrepreneurship
MOOC in Social Entrepreneurship	Copenhagen Business School	Online	Social Entrepreneurship
Diploma in Social Innovation	UPEACE Centre for Executive Education,	Online	Social Innovation
Networks			
Danish Social Innovation Club (DANSIC)	DANSIC	Denmark	SE & SI
DSIL - DESIGNING FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION + LEADERSHIP	DSIL	International	Social innovation and leadership
Ashoka U	AshokaU	US, Europe,	
+ACUMEN - Global learning community for social change makers	Acumen	International	Social change
Forum for the Future, School of System Change	FFF	International	Sustainability, innovation and leadership
Social Innovation Community	SIC	Europe	Social Innovation
OIKOS	OIKOS	International	Sustainability and finance



APPENDIX 2 SIC LEARNING CASES STUDIES

Social Innovators

Progetto Quid
Solartaxi
Taste of Home
Nova Iskra

SI organisations

Humana (No profit organisation)
Agintzari (Social Cooperative)
Girls education Challenge (Public organisation)
Lernhaus (Third sector Organisation)

Networks and communities based SI

Koopera (Network of Cooperatives)
Project based learning (network of intermediaries)
Social festival - Keep the ball rolling (community based SI)

SI ecosystems

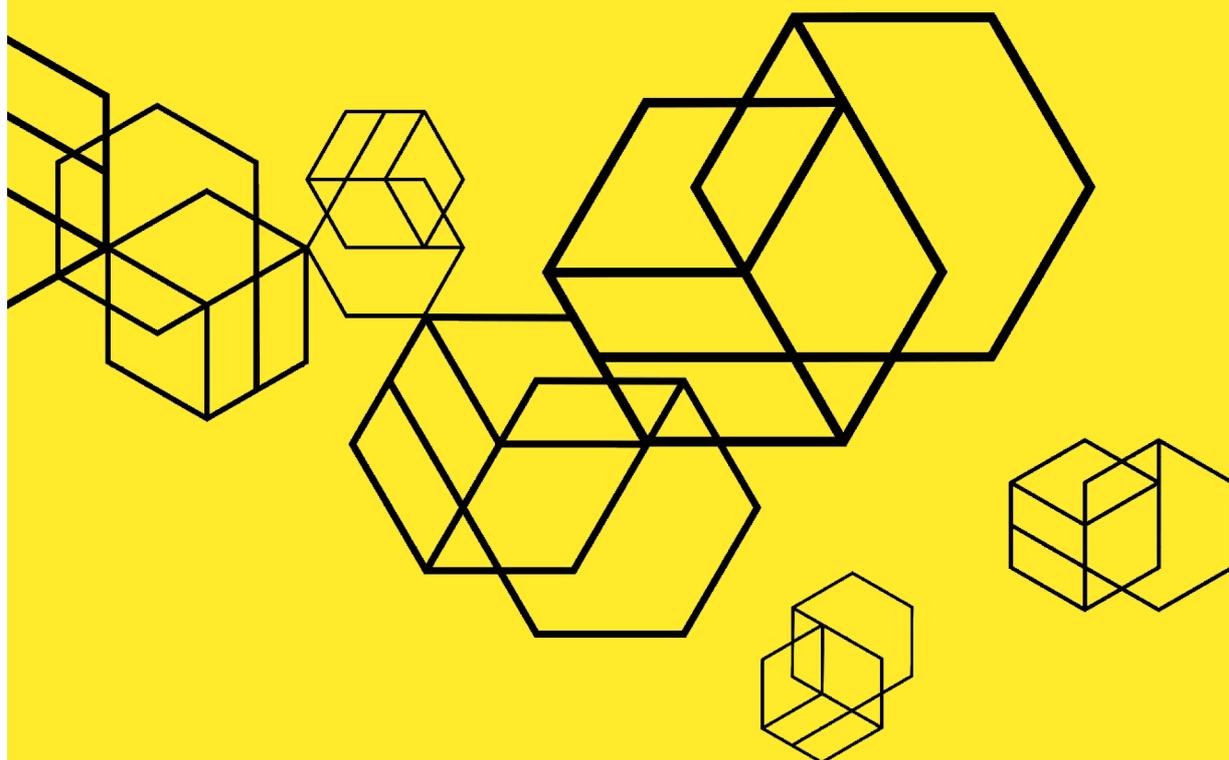
Emilia Romagna Region (Regional Ecosystem)
Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training (Industrial Ecosystem)
Realising ambitions (Public ecosystem)
Dynaklim (Regional Ecosystem)



**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Progetto QUID

University of Bologna (UNIBO)





Progetto QUID

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

The case describes the learning process in the establishment of Progetto QUID, a social cooperative based in Verona that trains and employs marginalized women to make clothes from discarded material coming from top fashion companies. The fashion brand is led by two young founders, Anna Fiscale and Ludovico Mantoan, and was officially founded as a social cooperative in 2013. The social innovation (SI) gained a lot of traction in its initial stages, winning several SI competitions, both on the national and European level, which provided the team with mentorship, networking possibilities, seed capital and credibility. The SI also strongly benefitted from being set in the fashion industrial district of the Veneto Region, allowing the team to tap into industrial know-how and expertise.

Anna and Ludovico started working on Progetto QUID directly after finishing their Master Degrees. Hence, the skills possessed by the team prior to starting Progetto QUID are mostly limited to their academic education, and little from work experience. The main evidences and insights drawn from the case are that: (1) the majority of the skills needed to start up the SI came from the experiences had throughout the innovation process; (2) the academic background of the team in economics was useful towards its initial development, also in terms of idea generation; and (3) the context in which the SI developed was key towards the SI's successful growth in terms of providing resources, skills and know-how. The case also confirms that teams in SIs are constructed without focusing too strongly on the skills required and a condition of unbalanced competences seems to emerge as a core trait of most newly established social ventures.





The context

Progetto QUID is a social cooperative located in Verona, in the Veneto Region in northeast Italy. The city's economic model follows that of the region, which is based on industrial districts or clusters.

Verona was recognized as a fashion district, VeronaProntoModa, in September 2003 by the Veneto Region. VeronaProntoModa comprises clothing companies particularly specialized in Fast Fashion: textile production, artisanal laboratories, machinery and material suppliers, service suppliers (stylists, dry cleaners, etc.), wholesalers and creative services (style centers & fashion trend research).

VeronaProntoModa is led by the Consortium Verona Moda.

Fast Fashion consists in producing clothes mid-season, basing production on products that have had the most success. This directly contrast traditional fashion, whose clothes are planned and produced entirely before the beginning of the season. Specializing in Fast Fashion allows for lower investment in the styling and prototyping phases but requires a larger organization of highly efficient work to cut production time. Verona Moda, as a consortium, manages the institutional relations of the industry, coordinates activities, promotes the members at fairs and other events and manages the regional funds given to the industry. Their leading markets, other than the Italian market, which absorbs up to 60-70% of the turnover, are: Spain, Russia, Germany, the Netherlands and France.

Youth unemployment levels in Verona are on the lower side of the national average and have in fact decreased from 10.4% in 2013 to 7.8% in 2014 for the 25–34 age group for both sexes. For women in the same years, the percentage went from 17.5% to 7.8% and for men it actually increased from 5.4% to 7.8%, making the unemployment level between sexes in 2014 equal. If we compare this to the rate in the next age group from 35+, female unemployment went from 5.6% to 4.9% while the men's went from 2.3% to 1.8%. It should be noted that the average age of Italian women in Verona having their first child is 31.5 and nationally, 33.5% of Italian women have their first child after 35. The postponement of having children is linked to adverse economic conditions. If we open the bracket to include 18 year olds and cut it off at 29, the numbers change quite dramatically with female unemployment reaching 18.2% in 2013 and falling to 15.6% in 2014, compared to male unemployment going from 10.1% to 9.1%. Education levels, however, influence the rate of employment of this age bracket: while employment levels between females and males are similar for those holding a university degree, the gap remains substantial between men and women holding only a high school diploma (50.8% to 37.2%). In terms of typology of work contracts, however, the level of education seems to work adversely on job security for young women, who are more often given temporary work contracts compared with young men (34.8% against 27.4%): the percentage actually increases based on the level of education with 28.8% of women with only lower level educational titles having temporary contracts to 35.0% for high school graduates and 40.6% for university graduates. Job positions should also be considered in order to have a better understanding of these statistics but is beyond the scope of this case.



The case

Progetto QUID, which means a “project for something more” is an ethical and eco-friendly “Made in Italy” fashion brand. The cooperative employs at-risk women to make clothing lines from salvaged textile coming from top fashion brands based in the territory. They have two types of products: (1) clothing branded only Progetto QUID and (2) co-branded clothing made in collaboration with their partner companies. Progetto QUID was founded to address the problem of social exclusion through work reintegration, particularly for women coming from adverse backgrounds including: domestic violence, prisons, prostitution, drug abuse or work exploitation. The SI also responds to youth unemployment, via its core team, which is made up of young professionals under 30. In addition to the social mission, the SI has an environmental mission to reduce CO² emissions through the re-use of discarded textile.

The two founders', Anna Fiscale and Ludovico Mantoan, primary objective was to provide employment and help to women coming from difficult backgrounds. After studying the market, the local economy and existing solutions – like Made in Carcere (a social enterprise making clothes with discarded cloth in a women's prison in Apulia) – Anna and Ludovico decided to focus on the fashion industry. Progetto QUID was founded, in 2012, as an association, and in 2013, it became a social cooperative. The initial idea was to re-style unsold items and sell them. To start off, they decided to commission the work to disadvantaged women working in two local social cooperatives, Santa Maddalena di Cannossa and Coop Vita. They found their first support from Fondazione San Zeno who funded their initial idea in 2012 with a contribution of €15,000 and who also put them in contact with some of the major fashion players in the territory, including Calzedonia. The contribution went towards supporting the initial costs of commissioning the re-styling work, the materials needed for the re-styling and renting the first temporary store.

Being young, they found it difficult to find potential clients and suppliers, as many were sceptical of the idea. However, after this pilot project, in which they re-styled unsold garments, they started to gain credibility. Furthermore, during the pilot and following a donation of scrap material, they realized it would be easier to make clothes from scratch. At this point, they changed strategies and started designing their own clothing lines. The items were at first sold in a temporary store sponsored by Fondazione San Zeno in Verona and then in Vicenza, Trento and Forte dei Marmi, thanks to an important partnership with Calzedonia. They now have 2 Progetto QUID stores, which are being leased free of charge from Calzedonia, and their products can be found in 15 retail stores across Italy. An online store will soon be launched.

Calzedonia was Progetto QUID's first partner. The collaboration was very important and perhaps vital to their current success. The know-how and expertise coming from this important brand assisted Progetto QUID change strategies from re-styling items to designing their own clothing lines with discarded material (following a large donation of un-used material), as well as opening a new line of products



made in co-branding with larger fashion brands. Other collaborations with companies along the co-branding strategy followed thereafter, with companies like Altromercato, DeN Store and Mood Milano. Likewise, in time, their list of textile partnerships grew and currently includes 22 companies¹. Thanks to the textile donations, Progetto QUID only spends 10% of their material costs for the accessories, like zips, buttons, etc.

In 2013, another important partnership was formed with Fondazione Cattolica, who helped Progetto QUID in its transformation from association to cooperative with a contribution of €30,000 to be divided into three sums: (1) €15,000 for the fees to become a cooperative in April 2013; (2) €5,000 in July 2014 after having accomplished specific objectives and (3) €10,000 in January 2015 upon accomplishing another set of objectives. The foundation provided only monetary support; no consulting services were offered to assist in the various phases. In the same year, Progetto QUID participated in and won Fondazione Unipolis' Culturability competition, which provided mentorship and support for the new social cooperative to enter the market, along with an award of €20,000. After a year of establishment, the cooperative joined Legacoop, a macro-cooperative of cooperatives in Italy, who provided guidance on cooperative legal issues and brand management.

In 2014, Progetto QUID participated in two SI competitions: the European Social Innovation Competition and the European Investment Bank's (EIB) SI Tournament. In both competitions, they received training and mentorship on their business model, sales forecasting, commercial strategies and marketing. They were also able to compare themselves with other social innovations across Europe. Both competitions were useful for networking, inspiration and the advice given by experts. Progetto QUID was the 2014 winner of the European SI Competition (and was granted €30,000) and a finalist of the EIB's SI Tournament. The prize money and donations were used to help the cooperative pay for the machines necessary for clothing production in their laboratory.

As can be seen, the founders were given substantial support from their initial partners and benefitted greatly from the industrial district in which they are located, giving them access to a network of territorial actors with the know-how and experience able to support their development and bridge their gaps in skills, knowledge and experience. Their economic performance is also reflective of this: the cooperative has consistently increased their turnover (donations accounted for separately). The primary source of revenue comes from their co-branding projects (70%) and the rest from direct sales in their stores (30%). In 2016, they would like 40% to come from direct sales and 60% from co-branded items.

¹ Berto Industria Tessile, Besani Srl, Deimos S.p.a., Delago S.r.l., Erco Pizzi S.r.l., Gilberto Capelli Maglificio, Grazia Bagnaresi, Hat Studio, Lanificio Faisa, Ledatex, Mabo S.p.a., Maglificio Maggia S.r.l., Mas S.r.l., Mazzocchi Passamanerie, Mekkitess, Olimpias Group, Piave Maitex S.r.l., Serikos, Staff Jersey Tessuti, TBM Group, Tessitura Rossi S.p.a., Tessuti d'autore and Zanetti Moda S.r.l



In terms of their social performance, Progetto QUID has also increased steadily the number of disadvantaged women employed in the cooperative rather than commissioned from local cooperatives. Progetto QUID's organizational structure is made up of a core team of the original founders, Anna and Ludovico, as well as two other partners, who are less involved. The cooperative currently employs: 12 disadvantaged women directly and 2 via the Cooperative Santa Maddalena di Cannossa; 2 professional seamstresses who train the women and direct the creative design and 1 from the core team, the President Anna Fiscale. There are 17 women in total and 2 men, 10 of whom have temporary work contracts and 9 of whom have permanent contracts. Salaries are in the average, with part-time contracts at €700/month and full-time contracts at €1,200/month. The division of work is based primarily on skills. Anna manages the commercial aspects and partner relations, while Ludovico deals with the administrative and bureaucratic aspects. The creative design is managed by two young women (22 and 29) who take care of designing the clothes and coordinating the training sessions for the women. The core team, which includes the founders and the creative department, reflects the cooperative's mission to also provide work to young professionals. Another output is the sourcing of the material in terms of the amount of material salvaged (recovered waste) and consequently the number of items sold, which signifies also a level of contamination in the community of the social and environmental values of the cooperative.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Progetto QUID is a young SI, both in terms of the SI itself having only 3 years of activity and the team being composed of young professionals. The learning processes are thus focused on the start-up period of the SI and the professional development of the core team. The primary knowledge gaps concerned know-how of the fashion sector; business skills, like: leadership, human resource management (both of the core team and particularly the disadvantaged women), production management and pricing; and professional skills, like how to present oneself and the company to different audiences.

Anna and Ludovico started Progetto QUID almost directly after finishing their Master's degree. Anna got her B.A. in Business and Economics from the University of Verona. She spent one year abroad via the Erasmus program in London and completed an internship in India for an NGO working on women empowerment. She then got a double-degree Master in Economics and Management of International Institutions and NGOs from Bocconi University in Milan and the Sciences Po in Paris. During her program, she worked for an NGO in Haiti for four months and the European Commission. Following her degree, she worked on a CSR project for a year in Verona for Cattolica Assicurazioni. During this year, she started working on Progetto QUID with co-founder, Ludovico, who got his Masters and P.hD. in Business and Economics. He's also a certified accountant and follows all of the administrative, bureaucratic and accounting needs of the cooperative. The formal education of both Anna and Ludovico, developed in university, gave them the basic skills to start Progetto QUID, i.e. how to make a



budget, resource planning, cost optimization, etc. In the words of Anna, her university experience gave her the *forma mentis* on which to build Progetto QUID (A. Fiscale, Interview, 5 July 2016). Beyond the skills related to the economic tools necessary to start a company, through her various internships in NGOs and CSR projects, she was able to acquire a sensibility and know-how of social problems, particularly those afflicting women from certain socio-economic backgrounds.

After settling on the idea of using fashion as a lever for social inclusion, Anna and Ludovico were confronted with the challenge of learning the skills necessary to create a brand. Nor Anna or Ludovico had experience in the fashion industry or with how to evaluate a product or work with creative professionals, all of which were picked up along the way, either through the help of their partners or by observing trends, competitors and conducting market analyses. As seen above, their collaboration with Calzedonia influenced their strategic development quite heavily, shifting their idea from merely re-styling already finished but unsold items to designing garments from scratch with discarded material and furthermore taking advantage of the partner's distribution channels. Co-branding, as seen in their revenue streams, is their most important activity for now. Through their interaction with Calzedonia and Altromercato, the team was also able to observe how to conduct themselves in the business environment and were given access to even wider circles of business connections. As a large part of business acumen comes from experience, being able to observe closely how their partners conduct business was of key relevance. Practical skills – like learning different ways to present the company to a potential client or a warehouse manager or a supplier – and business acumen were acquired also through experience and trial and error: for example, they learned how to plan the timing of a work order and its costs by failing to make a correct estimate and having to rush to finish the order on time (Fiscale, personal communication, July 7, 2016).

The founders also immediately sought out partners and collaborators possessing fashion design skills to team up with and include in their team. This however brought on another challenge of how to work with creative professionals. Where before decisions were made between Anna and Ludovico primarily on the structure of the idea and its sustainability, they now had to also manage the creative process in these decisions. Furthermore, as a social cooperative in Italy, Progetto QUID is required by law to hold regular board meetings with the cooperative members that are governed by a “one head, one vote” system.

Other critical learning moments occurred when the team competed in the European SI Competition and the EIB SI Tournament. Both experiences offered mentorship to the team on how to better construct their idea and transform it into an enterprise. The former worked specifically on how to structure a pitch for investors or to potential clients, as well as presenting the spectrum of social investment funds and tools available in Europe. The latter focused more on how to formulate a business model, while also focusing on how to present the product.

As mentioned above, the experiences had with their partners, particularly Calzedonia and Altromercato,



allowed the team to bridge skill and knowledge gaps, likewise, gaps were bridged also when interacting with suppliers, the disadvantaged women and the team itself. For example, Anna learned from Ludovico how to analyse the cost of a product, price them based on material costs and production time and understand the cost of every minute of production. Their co-branding projects in particular helped them acquire the knowledge needed to acquire a more professional working method and style. The managers, not only from the partner companies, fashion experts and fashion stylists, but also from the foundations they work with, provided them constructive criticism, which allowed them to move forward in their strategy. These moments were quite critical to their strategic development. They also learned how to find a communication strategy for both the project and the product.

Furthermore, working with the cooperatives from the very beginning when they were commissioning their work allowed them to learn a lot about the particular issues regarding employing women from difficult backgrounds and slowly develop an internal work structure and training process for those hired directly, which also takes advantage of the social capital created by the cooperative, i.e. the two volunteer seamstresses who train the women. Moreover, from a legislative standpoint, the founders learned the requirements of the law on type b social cooperatives in Italy (which require that 30% of the workforce belong to a disadvantaged category) and were further supported by Legacoop. More knowledge in this area was also acquired from their labor consultants who help them make the work contracts for the women and for themselves.

As a young SI with limited resources, there are currently no feedback mechanisms at present or formal evaluation tools.

3. DISCUSSION

Progetto QUID contradicts some of the characteristics of newly established social ventures, in which we typically observe gaps in business and managerial knowledge (Terstriep et al., 2015). Both founders were formally trained in business and economics, which is unusual. In the majority of the cases, the expertise of founders of mission-driven organisations is bound more to the social problems being tackled than to the transversal competences necessary to run the organisation (Ibid.).

The case also confirms that in the field of SI, the start-up teams are often created without the primary objective of setting up a balanced system of competences and experiences (Ibid.). The typical obsession seen in tech start-ups to integrate competences of startupper seems to be completely absent both in the founders and in their financial supporters. In the for-profit sector, a similar venture, having no internal knowledge in the specific business domain (fashion apparel), would have likely had difficulties raising consensus among business partners, financial supporters and stakeholders.

A condition of unbalanced competences seems to emerge as a core trait of most newly established social ventures, even if normally in the opposite way than Progetto QUID (lack of business and



managerial competences). These structural knowledge gaps are probably bound to the presence of multiple missions and bottom lines, which in a sense make mission-driven organisations much more complex than for-profits, and which would call for a wider integration of competences as a way to also combine antagonistic logics and assets, and achieve better results.

The case also highlights how introducing or strengthening product and brand design (alas: knowledge related to new product development and brand management) is an emerging challenge in ethical and cause-related marketing. As social and/or environmental values are not enough anymore to encourage consumers to choose products over other similar goods or services, and as competition has become tough also in this field, integrating knowledge on product and brand design is becoming ever more important. While Progetto QUID could externalise the design of the fashion collections, knowledge on brand design and management was built “in the making”, and internalised thanks to the relations had with many external partners and stakeholders. In both cases, being located in an extant industrial cluster played a relevant role in facilitating the provision of knowledge.

Looking at the case in the perspective of the background of the entrepreneurs (Rae and Carswell, 2001), it is confirmed that capabilities are developed in formal education but also through life and work: early life, early career, engaging and entering the venture and growing it are all relevant stages of the life-story of the two entrepreneurs, which set a connection between their individual learning and their achievements.

As Progetto QUID is a young organization with a small team, most of the learning occurs at the individual and team level, through typical mechanisms of cooperative learning (Smith & MacGregor, 1992). The case clearly shows that in nascent organisations the individual, team and organisational learning (as well as individual and organisational culture) tend to overlap.

The SI has codified some of the learning through training sessions, but the majority of the experience-based learning is double-looped, in which the two founders test various methods and change their strategy based on corrected assumptions made on customers, products, services and/or strategies (Argyris and Schön, 1996). The knowledge acquired is then shared with the core team and new strategies are devised. For example, the decision to make co-branded products and have them distributed in their partner’s distribution channels was the result of having made an incorrect assumption on the product and the production process. It was also made due to a more accurate analysis of customer needs. The decision to change involved the entire team as it involved the whole organization. While the input was given by Anna, the learning process involved the whole team.

Furthermore, as seen above, Progetto QUID is highly embedded in the local territory and has accrued a substantial level of social capital, through which it was able to acquire knowledge (e.g. through their collaboration with Calzedonia and Altromercato) and resources (e.g. their stores, textile, etc.). This is in line with what Inkpen and Tsang (2005) affirm: social capital, as a jointly owned set of resources that



accrue to an individual or group by virtue of their social connections, can be significant in knowledge acquisition and transfer between network members (Inkpen and Tsang, 2005).

Progetto QUID has furthermore benefited greatly from the knowledge transfer generated from the Verona Pronta Moda industrial district. Organizational knowledge transfer occurred through mechanisms bound to the network types (intra-corporate networks, strategic alliances and industrial districts), as they were described in literature (Gulati, 1998, 1999; Inkpen and Tsang, 2005). The knowledge held within the district was vital for the successful development of Progetto QUID.

As a young organization with few members, organizational learning is mostly fueled by the core team and rarely involves the peripheral levels of the organization. However, being young, failure is common and hence moments for learning comes at a frequent pace and new knowledge is discovered. With limited resources, it is difficult to imagine that the team will invest in knowledge transfer mechanisms in the near future. However, it could be interesting to see how the multi-stakeholder dimension of the cooperative could result to be a tool for organizational learning, as well as future impact evaluation mechanisms. Progetto QUID has already had a taste of this in its meetings with the Fondazione Cattolica, to whom it had to present performance indicators in order to be granted the next installments. This gives us the opportunity to highlight the importance of wider spread knowledge on impact assessment in the field of SI, together with simpler and less resource-intensive impact assessment tools.



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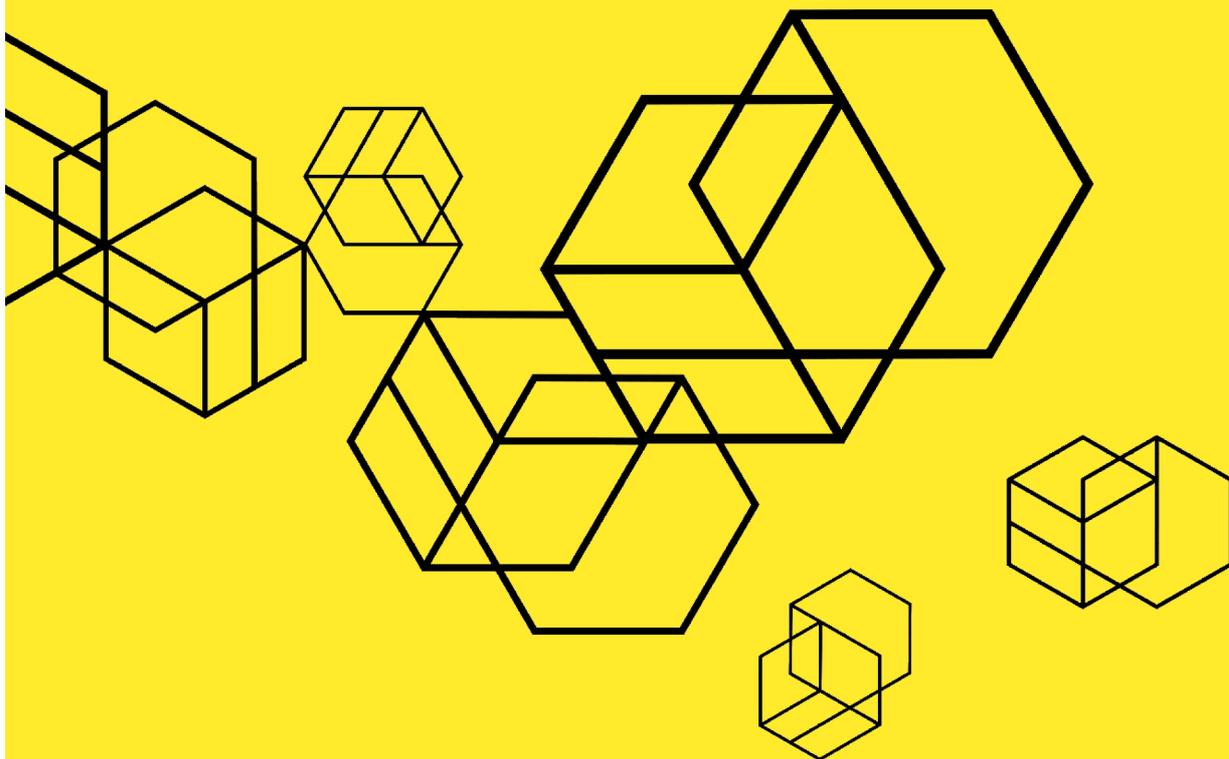
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Case Study „Solartaxi“ Austria

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Case Study "Solartaxi"

1. ABSTRACT

The case describes the learning process in the establishment and upscaling of the Solartaxi Heidenreichstein. Austria's first e-taxi powered with electricity from solar power plants offers low-fare mobility services in a small Austrian municipality. For the price of 2 EUR or 2 Waldviertler (the region's complementary local currency which has been a success in promoting local business so far) passengers may ride anywhere within the municipality of this small village in Austria's economically, socially and infrastructure-wise weakest region. Thus affordable and sustainable mobility is offered to the not-so-well off and also the necessity to own more cars per household (this region also has the highest car per capita ownership in Austria due to its weak infrastructure) is lessened. The SI is well embedded into the region's solidary economy system and well connected with key stakeholders. However, getting to this point was not easy and project team had to undergo a steep learning process, especially in the initial phase of the implementation process.

Getting the interests of various stakeholders aligned to allow a flourishing development of the social innovation was challenging. In particular, harmonization of various political interests and overcoming of reservations against the project is a long-lasting and still ongoing process. Social workers from local church institutions and project managers from Solarmobil Austria saw the need for such a service, which is offered in many other small municipalities in Austria with regular combustion-engine cars/small buses. The idea had been around for a while; however the role of the initiators (some of the region's older and trusted social activists, e. g. Karl Immervoll, a well-known theologian and local activist) was of big importance for this region. The region's poverty and lack in infrastructure on the one hand and its long history of local business initiatives with a strong social and environmental focus on the other was a clear success factor for the SI initiation.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT

The Solartaxi is Austria's first e-taxi powered with electricity from solar power plants offers low-fare mobility services in a small Austrian municipality. For the price of 2 EUR or 2 "Waldviertler" (the regions complementary local currency which has been a success in promoting local business so far) passengers may ride anywhere within the municipality of this small village in Austria's economically, socially and infrastructure-wise weakest region. Thus affordable and sustainable mobility is offered to the not-so-well off and also the necessity to own more cars per household (this region also has the highest car per capita ownership in Austria due to its weak infrastructure) is lessened.



Furthermore, a big problem of this region is the high rate of emigration. Due to the poor labour market conditions a lot of young people are moving away to the capital region of Vienna or other cities in the state of lower Austria where they expect better job opportunities. For example in the last three decades the municipality of the project has lost 1.500 of its inhabitants since its peak in 1973. Currently the town has just about 4000 inhabitants. Of these inhabitants more than 50% are 50 years or older which is well above the general age structure in Austria. At the same time the area of the municipality has almost doubled to 58,44 km². Commercial and industrial areas are at the outskirts of the city as are some neighborhoods which therefore are poorly connected to the city center and almost unreachable by public transportation. The lack of population density in the area (many people live in remote and very small neighbourhoods) makes any type of mobility/transport costly, which is why public transport in the region has been cut back or even cut off completely.

The SI is well embedded into the region's solidary economy system and well connected with key stakeholders. An important part of the solidary economy system in the region is the aforementioned "Waldviertler" (named after the region). This local currency was founded as a measure to combat capital flight from the economically weak north-east region of Austria and to revive economic cycles within this region. So far the currency has had considerable impact and is one of the most prominent examples of local currencies in German-speaking countries. As of Autumn 2016 206 businesses and cooperatives accept the "Waldviertler" as valid paying method. This shows that the social innovation was implemented in a context where some experiences with alternative modes of value creation exist. A small but very active scene of social innovators - such as the Waldviertler's Co-founder Karl Immervoll who is also involved in the Solartaxi - prepared the groundwork for the implementation of the case study in a region that faces multiple economic, social and political challenges.

The idea of a Solartaxi idea had been around in the region for some time, however a number of municipalities did not dare to experiment with the idea, not even Großschönau municipality, otherwise renowned as one of the leading sustainable energy municipalities in Austria. Most regions lacked the political/economic/social infrastructure. Heidenreichstein municipality adopted the SI as it is the epicentre of the regional alternative currency (the Waldviertler) and local business is always interested in solutions keeping money flows in the region. A big obstacle on the way to the successful implementation of the SI was the absence of political support from the governing parties. However, the strong network of socially innovative businesses with political and wider civil society contacts to other, made the implementation finally possible.

THE CASE

The concept of the Solartaxi Heidenreichstein is a non-profit taxi service offering sustainable e-mobility services (a taxi powered with mostly solar and a bit of wind energy) to citizens in Austria's least developed region. It has the organizational form of a club and only members of the club can use the services of the two taxis, which are operated by part-time working professional drivers. Members of the



club can simply call the drivers during operating hours and are then picked up and transported to a destination inside the borders of the community of Heidenreichstein. The membership is required due to legal reasons. In the course of the year 2016 the project team managed to secure various forms of funding (e.g. by aforementioned businesses or through the collection of a membership fee) that in the future will supplement and substitute parts of the public funding (e.g. though the state of Lower Austria) on which the project relies.

This affordable mobility service helps town centers to be revived again. Local businesses nowadays heavily support the service, but were skeptical at the beginning. However, in the first phase of the project implementation the local businesses saw that this service of affordable mobility brings people and thus customers back into town centers again. The region is otherwise known for its lack of infrastructure and its residents spread across the region to smallest residential zones, thus dependent on a car in order to participate in economic or social life. As mentioned before the region has Austria's highest rate of car ownership which is especially striking because it is one of the – relatively speaking – poorest regions as well. Other options like public transportation are either hardly available or comparatively expensive. At the same time the SI is tackling the issue of the environmentally problematic over usage of privately owned cars by offering a sustainable form of transportation to the inhabitants of Heidenreichstein.

Furthermore, affordable eco-friendly mobility offers many opportunities for social contact and exchange. This provides the opportunity for social inclusion for those who are otherwise excluded from social life for not being able to afford an own car. Especially because of the already described demographic structure of the region – over 50% of the population is over 50 years old – this social inclusion is a very important factor. According to Karl Immervoll, co-founder and key innovator during the implementation of the project, elderly people are one of the main user groups of the Solartaxi. He described cases of elderly people who were not able to go to the town center anymore because of a lack of public transportation and social connections now use the Solartaxi to go to the city center and do their shopping or go out for lunch together with other people. In this way the Solartaxi at the same time fosters social participation and supports local business like restaurants or the small grocery stores that are predominantly preferred by elderly people and add to a town's attractiveness. This way the Solartaxi offers a product that does not only substitute or supplement other services, such as the costly delivery of food to elderly people living remotely, but at the same time creates new possibilities for local business. Besides the usage of elderly people the taxi is also of interest to younger members of society. In the course of its implementation the Solartaxi was used increasingly by children and young people kids to meet up with their friends, be driven home from school if they live far off or get transport to various social activities like the practice of the local football club. This, at the same time, opens up possibilities for e.g. the mothers of children who in the countryside generally spend considerable amounts of time chauffeuring their children to these events. In some cases this even enabled mothers to take up job offers they had to refuse before.



In sum, the Solartaxi provides three kinds of resolutions to specific problems that exist in the region: Firstly, on a **social level** the SI enables that people who for either financial reasons or for other reasons such as age or disabilities are not very well embedded in the social network of the region and have no easy access to transport can easily and effectively be re-included into society. This does not only happen through the possibility of meeting friends in restaurants or doing shopping tours together. On a more basic level, for some people the regular interaction with the taxi-drivers is already a step towards breaking out of social isolation which is in fact a harsh reality for many, especially elderly, people in remote neighbourhoods of the region. To summarize it is to say that the Solartaxi is used by all demographic groups of the community but has a special focus on people who are in danger of social exclusion through a lack of mobility (e.g. elderly people or people with disabilities). Secondly, on an **environmental level** the dependency on car ownership is weakened, which contributes to a better ecological balance and less CO2 emission. Thirdly, on a **technological level** the two solar-powered electrical cars are high-tech vehicles that operate in a very resource- efficient way in a region where the network of non-fossil transportation methods is almost inexistent – and indirectly advertise the possibility of sustainable mobility.

One of the most important actors in the implementation process of the project was Karl Immervoll, a local social activist and innovator, who already gathered a lot of experience in other social innovation projects in the region. Through his network and contacts the idea – originally brought up by Mr. Ernst Kieninger, the president of the Austrian Film-Archive – was brought out and developed in close cooperation with the population of the region. Other important actors were the municipality of Heidenreichstein, local businesses, regional political players and also the local taxi-driver companies. While Mr. Immervoll and his team struggled to get local business on board in the beginning the real challenge was to get the political support to proceed with the project. Another critical issue was the relationship of the Solartaxi to the local taxi businesses who were initially very skeptical about the project because they had fears that their business revenues would decline. Only in a long lasting process was the project able to overcome these barriers and to ensure the successful implementation of the social innovation. These processes were not least also learning processes, which will be described in the next chapter.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The learning process during the implementation of the social innovation was a multidimensional one. A key requirement to understand the specific learning processes in innovative projects is to know about the history and personal experience of the key players in the innovation. For this case the key innovator was Karl Immervoll who was the driving force behind the efforts to establish the Solartaxi in Heidenreichstein. As an experienced activist and innovator in the region, he already had a considerable amount of knowledge about the phasing of a SI project and on the ways social innovations work and how they can be made popular, accepted, used and mainstreamed.



One of his most important maxims is never to start an initiative where the needs of the population are unclear and the benefits uncertain. As a first step in the learning process he confronts the people of the project region with his ideas or even gets his ideas for innovations just by talking to ordinary people. Through this first step he makes sure that the planned innovation fits the needs of the population and does not artificially create an innovation where there is none needed or where other problems are more pertinent. So in the first steps the following questions are asked:

- 01** Where do citizens perceive deficits?
- 02** How are these deficits changeable?
- 03** What are the skills/products needed to change the situation?

These are three guiding questions that do not only operate on an individual but also on a structural level and therefore are a suitable approach for all kinds of social innovations working on different levels. In the case of the Solartaxi the idea was born beforehand and then Mr. Immervoll approached the citizens through various channels and explored their opinion on it, if it would make sense to them and if they would use it. He used surveys, newspaper announcements and presence in local market places to present the idea and to learn about the specific needs of the people. When it became clear that there was a need for an innovation like the Solartaxi and that people thought of it as an useful mobility supplement he began with the more concrete acquisition of support on political, financial and personnel level.

Especially getting the support of the political players in the region or rather in the county government was rather difficult. Due to the political power relations in Lower Austria – the Conservative party has been governing without interruption since 1945 and in Austria's federal structure is a weighty actor on the national level as well – it is not easy to get something innovative and useful going if you are not a member of this particular party. The support that Mr. Immervoll received was mainly from the opposition parties, the Social Democratic and the Green party, which are not well able to contribute funds and do not have substantial influence in the allocation of municipal or country budgets. Therefore it was hard to get the project going because initial start-up funding was needed to e.g. buy the cars and install the garage for the cars. This problem was one that Mr. Immervoll had encountered in previous projects and already had learnt that a wide-spread network of people working in different kind of areas and with different political backgrounds is needed to overcome these barriers. Activating his widely spread network – he was able to overcome the hurdles and to get the project going.

A similar kind of problem was the conflict of interest with local taxi-driver companies. These companies were skeptical about the project because of the possible loss of customers and it took the project innovators quite some time to make sure that the clients of the project customers would not withdraw business from taxis. At this point it became necessary for Mr. Immervoll to get acquainted with the particularities of the Austrian law for transporting people. Mr. Immervoll described this as a mere task of "knowledge acquisition" where he only needed to collect knowledge that was available through either



documents or conversations with knowledgeable persons from his network

A next step in the implementation of the project, and actually an ongoing and continuous process is the one of “knowledge distribution”. As Mr. Immervoll already has a lot of experience with SI’s he is eager to accompany and counsel his fellow innovators on the various relevant topics during the implementation of an innovation. He described regular meetings among the project’s initiators where they discussed upcoming challenges and how they could handle them. While he clearly was the most experienced activist on the project he made a point of not putting himself in a hierarchically superior position but rather tried to openly share his knowledge and hereby enable collective learning processes. Meanwhile, the Solartaxis have been handed over to a newly formed association, of which Mr. Immervoll is no longer part. So in this project, as in many others that he initiated and managed for a crucial amount of time, he basically acted as a fixed-term initiator and promoter and prepared his co-workers from day one on to take over the project. So it is clear that in the course of the project implementation manifold learning processes took place. Sometimes Mr. Immervoll was at the center of the distribution of knowledge; sometimes he learnt something new for himself.

However, he describes the personal level as very important. With his background as social worker he is eager to approach people on an equal level and to give them the possibility to develop their abilities. This was also an important component in the selection of the taxi drivers. Very soon it became clear that they would have to be more than just drivers and would also have the opportunity to act in the capacity of some kind of low-threshold social workers (not unlike the traditional extra roles of grocers or postmen and –women in the country in times of less lean and cost-driven infrastructures). This was a very important learning processes for the drivers because their job actually was more than just driving and included the function of a “contact person” who was here for the customers – often socially isolated people – to talk to about everyday topics. Hence, drivers build up a kind of familiar relationship with their regular passengers and sometimes are also confronted with unknown situations or problems that go beyond the usual role of taxi drivers. To fulfill this role, it is of special importance that somebody supports them on this role learning process who has experience with social work, coaching or a similar field. Mr. Immervoll refers to this learning process as a “personal development” that is occurring in social innovations and that can be very beneficial for the people who work in this specific SI. He considers his work to be crucially connected to the abilities of the persons that are working on it and wants to foster and enable the development of these personal abilities.

Summing up, different types of learning process occurred during (and before) the project implantation that were crucial to the success of the project. These learning processes are mediated through different forms of knowledge acquisition and distribution, from identifying local needs through researching new subjects such as legal matters to developing enriched and innovative service roles and competencies) and are fundamentally connected to both personal and regional development. In the next chapter these different kind of learning processes will be embedded in a theoretical context and discussed from a scientific point of view.



4. DISCUSSION

In most cases learning can be related to several learning theories and paradigms due to the manifold aspects in individual and collective learning scenarios.

This applies also to the Solar Taxi innovation case. What is described as pure ‘knowledge acquisition’ (legal aspects of Austrian transport) obviously could be settled with the classical cognitive learning paradigm. Cognitivism is a learning theory according to which mental processes mediate learning and learning entails the construction or reshaping of mental schemata. Simplified cognitive learning considers how information is processed in the mind including how people perceive, think, remember, learn, solve problems, and direct their attention to one stimulus rather than another (Ertmer and Newby, 1993). Still, learners do bring some pre-knowledge with them, especially in the case of the main innovator, Mr. Immervoll. Thus, the learning that originally could be regarded as ‘pure knowledge acquisition’ could be viewed as well through a constructivist approach that posits that learning is an active, constructive process. The learner actively constructs or creates his/her own subjective representations of objective reality. New information is linked to prior knowledge, thus mental representations are inevitably contextualised and specific (cf. Cooper, 1993; Piaget, 2013; Vygotsky, 1980).

However, learning in social innovation generally goes beyond individual learning. The project and its key promotor deliberately paid close attention to ‘knowledge distribution’. This brings one further aspect to mind: learning that takes place in a specific group of people that share the same interests or have common problems to solve is addressed by the concept of “communities of practice”.

As for the first view, the pedagogical theory of Community of Practice (CoP) developed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger in 1991 fits well for the described case. Wenger (1991) summarizes Communities of Practice (CoP) as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.” Learning is not necessarily intentional, but three major components are required. Firstly, the domain that is a common topic or interest that is shared and committed to. Secondly a community, meaning a group of people that interact and engage in shared activities, help each other, and share information with each other. And finally a practice that develops over time in which the members develop a shared repertoire of resources, helpful tools, experiences, stories, ways of handling typical problems, etc.

The Solar Taxi case suggests that some sort of social learning occurred within this CoP and beyond. Social learning requires a group of people, or a community that learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modelling. This social learning theory by Bandura (1977) is often referred to as a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories because it encompasses attention, memory, and motivation. *“Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action.”* (Bandura 1977). Social learning theory explains human behaviour in



terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences. In his role as leading innovator and former social worker, we may conclude that Mr. Immervoll, deliberately sharing his skills and experiences, also acts as role model for the other innovation team members, especially due to the high efforts to engage different stakeholders.

Finally, the practical experiences of the drivers are explicitly mentioned in the case that leads to further learning and personal development.

On a theoretical approach, the situated learning theory by Jean Lave (1988) is one model of learning in a CoP that can serve well to this individual learning process. Lave argues that learning is situated. It is embedded within activity, context and culture and is usually unintentional rather than deliberate.

At its simplest, situated learning takes place in the same context in which it is applied. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning should not be viewed as simply the transmission of abstract and decontextualized knowledge from one individual to another, but as a social process in which knowledge is co-constructed; they suggest that such learning is situated in a specific context and embedded within a particular social and physical environment. In the case of the solar taxi drivers, a 'social learning' takes place in the taxis by the interaction with their customers that require high social competences. The collaboration and advice of other social workers is explicitly emphasised as a way to foster this individual social learning and development.

Within this CoP of the Solar taxis, the taxi drivers ideally will develop further in their social competences. They may, over time, play an increasingly important role in this community of practice through development of their user-facing role as representatives of the project and its socially innovative and inclusive aims beyond transportation,. As outlined in the case description, this was also the intension of Mr. Immervoll: to empower the taxi drivers and the other stakeholders to engage and commit resulting in competently acting within the social culture of the Solar taxi project and its wider aims as a focus of social innovation a region that both needs it and develops the capacities for it.



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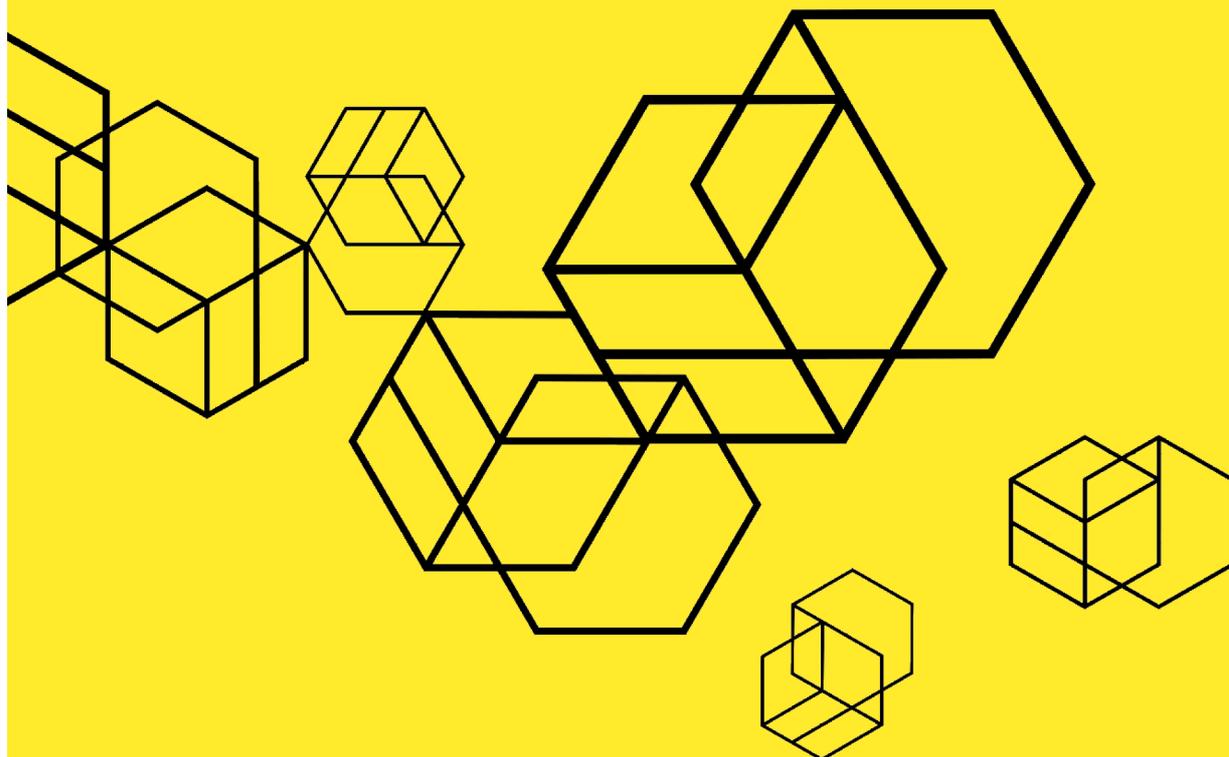
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**SOCIAL
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Taste of Home

Social Innovation Laboratory





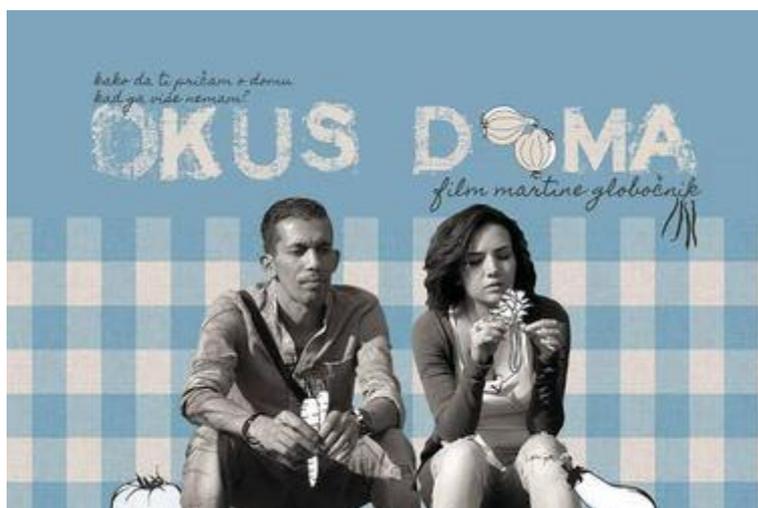
Taste of Home (“Okus Doma”)

From culinary and cultural research project to sustainable cooperative run by immigrants and asylum seekers

1. ABSTRACT

A Taste of Home started as a culinary-cultural-research project that introduced the culture, customs and societies of origin of the refugees in Croatia by recording their memories of home, smells and tastes of their cuisine. This was an experiment in sharing life stories and culinary skills of refugees and people from Croatia. By preparing food of their home, refugees were evoking memories and creating new experiences in their new home. Their vision was a colorful world embraced in hospitality. Their mission underlined economic emancipation of refugees and persons with migrant background through culinary and cultural exchange. They were led by values of appreciating human beings and their needs - Human beings in search of happiness and safety ready to offer the best of them – tastes of their childhood and youth hood as well as tastes of their adulthood in new society. Their resources were tastes of middle-eastern, Arabic, African and Asian *cuisine* (rather unrepresented in Croatia).

In considering what is domestically a mechanism for people to gain familiarity and put aside potential differences, the idea of using food and a bridge to help the domestic population connect with the immigrating population became an easy selection. Domestically gastronomy is a part of the fabric of life in Croatia and a willingness to experience new foods is an aspect of that.



2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT

The effort behind this project was born most substantially out of the recognition that there was a lack of effective and positive mechanisms to help integrate arriving refugees and migrants into domestic culture and economic activity. This was true in large part due to a lack of any clear policy direction from the Croatian central government regarding this process.

Croatian authorities have seriously neglected creation of integration policies especially those embracing work and education opportunities making refugees state service dependent even after two initial integration years. Only 7.5% of those granted protection are non-state dependent through temporary, rarely steady jobs.

As Croatia is a predominantly homogeneous society, with a population that lacks direct exposure to individuals from cultures that are remote from their own, (excluding general European cultures), there is a lack connection with these people. However, an existing connection to people who have undergone traumatic life shifts in having to leave their home countries because of violence and/or economic distress resulting from the Balkan wars meant that an ability to connect was indeed present.

The initiative is based on support, solidarity and knowledge exchange. It gathers people of different origin who organize cooking workshops, public show-kitchen activities, language courses. Public recognition and quality of offer resulted in initiating social cooperative to be specialized in: catering and further opening of a restaurant, food production, publishing cookbooks as well as language courses and interpreting services

No less important, this activity aims at sensitizing Croatian public to refugees needs and combating prejudice followed with opening to social hospitality process through culinary and cultural exchange.



The lack of policy support from the central government meant that access to funding for skills development in this regard was also lacking, (along with the lack of integration policy). As such, a model need to be developed that could be both functional in terms of generating both skills and aiding in social integration, but also that could maintain financial sustainability.

THE CASE

The goal of the project has been to push economic emancipation of the refugees and other migrants by using their knowledge, skills and earlier experience while sensitizing environment/society on potentials of their integration. The whole action relies on multi-cultural and intercultural theoretical model and practice.

The core of the project is to support and improve integration of immigrants and refugees from war torn and otherwise economically oppressed nations of Africa and the Middle east into Croatian society. It is an effort that seeks to provide a pathway both for the arriving and domestic population to interact in a positive shared atmosphere, as well as to enable the immigrants to develop marketable skills they can use to become full economic contributors and beneficiaries within Croatia.

A Taste of home started as a culinary-cultural-research project that introduces the culture, customs and societies of origin of the refugees in Croatia by recording their memories of home, smells and tastes of their cuisine. This was an experiment in sharing life stories and culinary skills of refugees and people from Croatia. By preparing food of their home, refugees and other immigrants were evoking memories and creating new experiences in their new home. Their vision was a colorful world embraced in hospitality.

Their mission underlined economic emancipation of refugees and persons with migrant background through culinary and cultural exchange. They were motivated by the values of appreciating human beings and their needs – by the human search to connect with the happiness and safety of their homes and have sought to do so by sharing the tastes of their homes in new and strange society. Their resources were tastes of middle-eastern, Arabic, African and Asian cuisine (rather unrepresented in Zagreb).

The collective 'Taste of Home' gathers 30 refugees and volunteers/activists and is primarily supported by the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), an NGO based in Zagreb.



The collective has grown into the social cooperative now. While it still gathers asylum seekers and collects personal memories and refuge experience, it is mainly focused on development of a cooperative that emancipates refugees and migrants as both a reality for some and a sustainable model for others.

Additionally, the need to help develop and promote skills amongst the refugee/immigrant population that could be applicable and beneficial to the domestic economy meant that cooking was a natural fit as there is a general deficit of quality cooks in the country, particularly during the tourist season.

Out of this, 'Taste of home' was developed. A non-profit orientation meant that it could both avoid issues relating to running costs by staying away from the usual market orientation, while at the same time, it opened the door to possible access to funding opportunities from international and other donors as the effort grew without being constrained by classic issues of financial return on investment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The learning process was multilayered and affected both the project implementers as well as the groups targeted by the project. In the earliest phases, during the period when the project was just in a conceptual phase, the implementers had almost no experience with actually developing a profitable business and were only scantily aware of the concept of social entrepreneurship or how they function. Additionally, while there was a base individual within the initial target group with professional experience cooking, the majority of other individuals had no professional experience in the field as such. Additionally, there was a lack of human resource capacities with the target group for marketing and other business management related skills. Critically, the shortcomings were recognized during the concept phase and developing skills in the deficit areas became a crucial aspect of the initial process.

The approach taken was deliberate, with eventualities and contingencies playing a role early in the process more than anticipated. For example, it took a long time to establish the actual cooperative, almost a year. This was due to several reasons: Legal requirements such as investment of 1000 kuna per participating target group member were a barrier for refugees and migrants, and as such mechanisms needed to be looked at in order to reduce this burden. Another aspect was a lengthy time waiting to get registration for the organization and learning the ins and outs of the bureaucratic procedures for establishing a social business. Other administrative issues were an issue that impacted the learning process such as the opening bank accounts and admin/legal activities that required a detailed review of potential liabilities and an assessment of the best functional structure to move forward with. Additionally, a number of members (asylum seekers) left the country due to negative decisions on their asylum applications. That situation required flexibility in starting certain processes



several times from the very beginning and having to adjust/taking over roles. This process was critical in assessing and adjusting the organizational structure in order to ensure its sustainability.

There was also a related issue regarding capacities insofar as there are limited internal absorptive capacities. Primarily, Centre for Peace Studies is an organization focused on social justice that mainly uses research, education, public awareness raising and advocacy as its' primary methods and tools. It had no such an experience of working in the areas related to business and entrepreneurship. It also knew it wanted to push for an economic emancipation of refugees and migrants and we have had tested it through establishing social cooperative. Few other organizations helped in that; Iskra with their social inclusion and working culture in Croatia; NESsT with their social entrepreneurship step by step workshops and finally CEDRA with social cooperative management workshops. All of that took just under a year and it was implemented under support of the EU's IPA funds within the project 'Quality Integration Solutions for Refugees' coordinated by the Fade In. Secondly, there are several other restrains to be aware of. One of them is that these kinds of projects need time; gathering group of refugees and immigrants that will stay involved in the process for several months with no assurance that business will be established and function well extremely hard. These people need assurances and they mostly need rather quick solutions in order to meet their existential needs and reach independency. Also, establishing social cooperative meant being ready to experience something completely different than what all of the team members had been doing by then; it was not only starting off business which brings socio-economic safety for refugees and migrants but also a non-hierarchical structure of decision making that is very complex. Moreover, this example is also a model of successful project done with refugees and migrants but it can also collapse rather easily due to public climate and support loss (xenophobic sentiments, lack of state based financial support to civil society organizations that are primary clients of ToH services, etc.). Understanding that this is for most participants a first experience of running a business, and in particular, a collective business, the process of gaining skills in this area can be slow and potentially difficult. As such, it was essential to build in a strong aspect of cooperative management with shared responsibilities so that transitions resulting from member turnover as new immigrants join the coop and others leave could be made as smooth as possible. Quite a lot of time was dedicated to shape the best possible model of management and collective decision making. And it is an ongoing process. The cooperative was founded by 16 co-founders. Half of them are refugees and migrants, and other half are local activists. There are three higher ranked responsibilities – president, vice-president and manager. President and vice-president represent membership, one is of migrant and the other one of non-migrant origin and then the manager is not a co-founder. Until today, almost a year after formal founding of the cooperative we have kept the same structure. More refugees and migrants are joining in, more local activists/volunteers/interested citizens too. They do not become members immediately, process of inclusion into membership is rather hard since membership now costs 2.500 kuna which is hardly affordable to anyone (according to the law, initial membership is



1.000kn to be paid before founding assembly; anyone joining in afterwards pays minimum of 2.500). Once having a cooperative and membership directives, experiencing turnover is not an issue anymore; difficulty was had in past related to asylum seekers who participated in establishing the cooperative hoping they would get refugee status. Once rejected, they had to leave the country. Asylum seekers do participate in many of the activities now and they cannot become members until granted protection status and receiving working rights according to the Asylum Act. Diversifying skills sets amongst individual members developed into an important aspect as a result. There were two primary strategies of diversifying skills. One aspect was developing skills of management the cooperative from macro (cooperative as an inclusive social entrepreneurship business with a clear vision and strategies) over middle (human resources, infrastructure, cooperation) to micro management (managing the kitchen and marketing of catering business). The Second aspect covered developing cooking and serving skills for catering as a primary small business established with the cooperative. All our cooks have therefore enrolled in courses at Pučko Otvoreno Učilište.

From the standpoint of the project implementers, all of the stated was new experientially and so there was a substantial level of organization capacity development from their perspective. Additionally, having recognized the lack of understanding of social entrepreneurship the implementers actively sought out their own internal capacity building, cooperating with international organizations in participating in an 18 month learning process. It was through this that critical skills were developed in order to ensure a successful project. Skills such as organizational management and access to start-up finances through crowd funding were developed and played essential roles during the earliest phases of the project. Within the 18 month project implemented under title 'Quality integration solutions for refugees' there had been participation in trainings on social inclusion and working culture, social entrepreneurship step by step (market research, our vision and ideas, business and financial plan) and social cooperative management (shaping up the structure of decision-making and strategic plans). That project was funded by EU IPA. The project ended in March 2015 and it took half a year to do more of an internal capacity building work and administrative work before organizational readiness was achieved. Once that was the case, the decision was taken to start off the crowdfunding campaign that was done in cooperation of the CPS and Taste of Home collective under mentorship of UNDP and Brodoto social enterprise. Additionally, gaining a broader understanding of SE organizations, domestic legal constraints, and how organizations such as this can function led to development of new "add on" services of the total organizational offering. Drivers and milestones beyond establishing a stable catering operation were developed, including eventually to open a restaurant, have an interpreting service for Arabic and Farsi (and other languages) to work with other refugees and migrants (used by different NGOs and institutions) as well as to have a language school / courses. Both ideas, food catering and language services are in line with Taste of Homes basic idea; learning about cultures and backgrounds of people who fled their homes and connecting with domicile population through spaces



understandable and acceptable to most.

Throughout the process probably one of the more difficult but nonetheless essential aspects of the learning process was how to keep a simple, straight forward business model, while also allowing for space to diversify activities in a way that would not become administratively burdensome. Work on sustainability is still a goal, and it is a part of the daily struggle. While full sustainability is not achieved yet, it is anticipated soon through setting up the diversified channels of income, through the translation and other related services. So far, there are daily catering and Arabic language courses. Launching off Taste of Home food products is under preparation as well as new language courses and interpreting services. Currently there are 7 people employed with minimum wages and the goal is to take that up to decent steady monthly salaries.

DISCUSSION

Okus Doma is a classic example of a social business/social entrepreneurship blend. It is also, both similar to and apart from classic efforts to develop social inclusion initiatives. Given the Center for Peace Studies has a substantial background in the social inclusion field as well as in capacity building for marginalized groups, this is not surprising.

As a result, unlike many other social entrepreneurship initiatives, this implementers were conscious from the beginning of the need to develop critical organizational development and management skills. There is no question that CPS's experiences previously influenced this outlook and undoubtedly played a critical role in the ultimate success of the effort. Their position as an organization that had little to no real experience with 'for profit' business development forced them to look to other mechanisms for their development of the cooperative. As CPS is an organization that tends to function on a grant based, funding cycle, (project-to-project) methodology, the recognition internally of the need to establish an organization that does not function in this fashion was essential to ensuring sustainability.

One of the most notable aspects of the development/learning process is the cooperative management function. Something that was learned more as a matter of experience, having had key individual members leave early on due to negative responses on their asylum applications could have easily ended the effort all together. There is no question that the education CPS received on social innovation and social entrepreneurship was essential in helping them to overcome these obstacles. This reinforces the idea that in order for SI/SE initiatives to succeed as a 'social business' (non-profit orientation with for-profit functionality), a deep understanding of the field is needed.

What is also important to recognize in this is the ability of the implementing organization to reach out and access capacity building for their own internal deficit. While many may recognize that they lack certain skills, the ability to access international partners and capitalize on well developed relationships



was critical in the early phases of the project. This does leave a question as to how successful the effort might have been without the presence of a reputable organization such as CPS. While others with strong networking skills may have also been able to do the same, there is no question that this does reinforce the importance of having quality organizations involved in such efforts. Certainly, it was easier for CPS than it might have been for a newly established NGO with minimal track record to build its reputation on.

Another item of importance to note in the project is the way in which it demonstrates that social innovation does not need to mean technical innovation. This effort in many ways is the antithesis of that. The innovation is in its process of establishment and its primary function organizationally rather than in its 'product' output. On that note, it is important to recognize that the mechanism of cooperative management as it has been implemented here is also an innovative way to both anticipate disruptions organizationally and plan effectively to mitigate their impact.

In many aspects, Taste of Home followed the path of typical social enterprise in Croatia. First of all, initiator of the whole project was NGO with vast experience in human rights and project management, but lack of business and managerial skills. This is in line with Strategy for Development of Social Entrepreneurship in Republic of Croatia in period 2015-2020 stating that "social entrepreneurs and CSOs in their work are facing difficulties regarding insufficient financial resources and knowledge about running, management and sustainability, as well as too high dependence on the funding from the public sector". Moreover, according to Comparative Report on Social Innovation across Europe: "initiators most of the time exhibit strong motivations and a high level of awareness about the problem they want to address but they also show a naive approach about how to establish and develop business" (Terstriep et al., 2015). Luckily, this knowledge gap was recognized at the beginning and first knowledge transfer occurred through formal training. The cooperative members attended a series of courses held by organizations and individuals experienced in social entrepreneurship; this education helped them to acquire basic theoretical knowledge about running a business. Although this was a well-designed learning process, it was not sufficient and most of knowledge acquisition occurred through experiential learning model, starting from "developing the competences needed to start a new venture to recognizing opportunities and coping with the challenges of the external environment" (Ferinz & Hortovanyi, 2015). This was especially the case with gaining skills necessary to overcome legal boundaries and administrative obstacles connected with employment of asylum seekers that seriously affected whole business process. Moreover, while the organization was able to quickly identify its learning needs and accordingly acquire explicit knowledge (external capacity building, trainings, vocational education etc.) the large part of the gained knowledge was tacit: "this is particularly true of operational skills and know-how acquired through practical experience" (Lam, 2002). Taste of Home proves the thesis that "the learning and innovative capability of an organisation is thus critically dependent on its capacity to mobilise tacit knowledge and foster its interaction with explicit knowledge" (ibid, p. 69).



In addition, networking skills and knowledge of partners and key stakeholders were transferred from CPS to the cooperative and in this sense it can be considered as a social capital i.e. "the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit" (Filiari & Algezai, 2014, p. 729).



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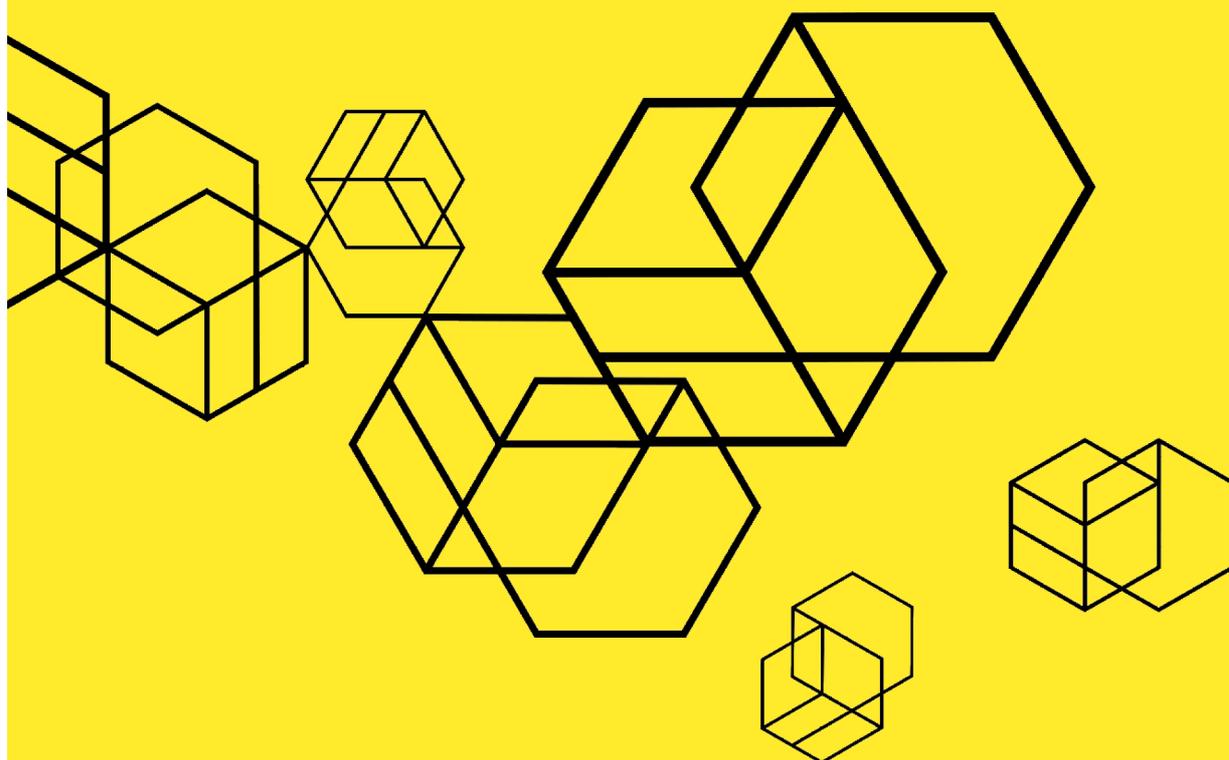
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Nova Iskra

Social Innovation Laboratory





Nova Iskra

A meeting point of leading creative professionals and companies open to innovative approaches to business and product development

1. ABSTRACT

Nova Iskra is an educational and research platform for design, architecture, new technologies, social theory and practice. At the same time it is one of the first co-working spaces for the professionals related to creative industries in Serbia. Relying on design-thinking methodology as the basis for conceiving, developing and testing contemporary ideas and concepts, Nova Iskra examines and supports the development of innovative, alternative and sustainable models of education, organization and production through collaborative work, experimentation and critical reflection.

Nova Iskra is conducting its operation on three levels:

- 01** Through running and renting an inspiring and dynamic space for work and creative collaboration - COWORKING
- 02** Through initiating projects and organizing various lectures, seminars, workshops and presentations for young professionals on various topics (sustainable production, alternative organization, green economy, new technology, design, architecture and entrepreneurship) - EDUCATION PLATFORM
- 03** Through creating business connections between professionals from the field of creative industries and private and public sectors - CREATIVE STUDIO.

Their multifaceted platform embraces the design process as a starting point for developing problem-solving ideas, projects and services by joining them with tailor-made, transdisciplinary teams comprised of leading experts, professionals and creatives. They use progressive ideas and experiences from the creative domain as tools to empower, update and develop small and medium-sized businesses, as well as to provide creative and business support to entrepreneurs, on a local or global level. One of the NOVA ISKRA objectives is supporting and enhancing the status of vulnerable and marginalized groups (youth, women, rural households) by placing the emphasis on developing knowledge and skills, creating employment, enabling inclusive participation in the labour market and general wellbeing of all people.



By managing design and employing innovation, they discover new values in the fields of creative business, education, social improvement and empowerment of local communities.

The initiative NOVA ISKRA addressed job search and matching, self-employment, social entrepreneurship, training and education, workplace innovation and organizational innovation.



2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT

Nova Iskra, a hybrid, transdisciplinary platform and a fully independent venture that connects the creative community, links it to the potential businesses and supports the realization of their ideas on the market, is a unique place with both organizational and service innovations.

The initiative has been shaped by the detected needs of new and emerging young professionals, particularly in creative industries, and some other factors: new and emerging occupations and changing market demands, a lack of networking and opportunities for affirmation as well as the lack of accessible programs for skill development and knowledge improvement for both young professionals/



entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized businesses (locally and globally). NOVA ISKRA addresses lack of economic opportunities and sustainable jobs, and brain drain as well as gaps between education outcomes and labor market requirements.

Direct communication of the initiative's founding members with (mainly) young professionals (e.g., designers, architects, developers, and other creatives) and cooperation with them led to the realization that there was no meeting point (space) for an easy and regular exchange of professional experience, ideas or knowledge.

Despite sporadic individual successes, even those who have received some public recognition (usually international) were not sure on how to further proceed. They had neither business plans nor knowledge of the market. The situation was much worse for those at the very beginnings of their career and business. They could see that some individuals were recognized, but the path to success remained opaque and vague to them. Besides, the opportunities for sharing stories (often painstaking) were very rare. Instead of inspiring the community, a success (perceived as something that “just happens”) was treated as something rare and suspect, even negative.

Although some so-called “guild-oriented” information that concerned the profession was available through universities and specialization studies, information about skill development or agency information was unavailable. The existing professional associations were mainly engaged in the promotion of design as a profession through exhibitions, but not engaged to educate and reveal success behind commercial part of it. There was not a place where one could get help in the process of realization of ideas or to better position oneself in the market.

For the initiative's core team, made up of professionals from the domain of culture and with a background in management, detecting the problem was “awakening” (N. Radenkovic, personal communication, August 15, 2016). There was no critical mass to address the problem, but at that moment a two-member team decided to start working on launching the initiative.

Obviously, there was a lot of potential, but a structured way to support the development of the creative community did not exist.

On the other hand, the youth unemployment rate in all sectors in Serbia, including the creative sector, was very high, and opportunity for employment rare. According to the reports by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the youth unemployment rate in Serbia averaged 45.09 percent from 2008 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 54.20 percent in the second quarter of 2014 and a record low of 32.70 percent in the first quarter of 2008. (Although the new data show that there was some progress made, the youth unemployment rate is still high: in the first quarter of 2016, it was 44.20 percent and decreased to 36.10 percent in the second quarter of 2016.)

(<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/serbia/youth-unemployment-rate>).



In addition, while there is a growing consensus on the importance of social entrepreneurship for inclusive growth, the notion of “social economy” is still not widely understood in Serbia. As the result of a series of awareness raising campaigns, trainings and projects of support to social enterprises, many by Nova Iskra and their partners, the concept of social entrepreneurship is becoming more popular and increasingly used by public officials, government officials involved in the social entrepreneurship policy making, CSOs and funders. However, there is still lack of a strategy or other policy document that would organize the strategic action for the promotion of social entrepreneurship, and the existing legislation is limiting the development of social entrepreneurship. Despite the weaknesses of a conceptual, legal, institutional and policy framework, social entrepreneurship has been developing for years in diverse legal forms. The Strategic Study on Social Economy Development in the Context of the South East Europe 2020 Strategy (2015) identified the lack of start-up support and disadvantaged access to public tenders as the main impediments that limit and slow down progress in the development of the SE.

Serbia is preparing for a membership in the EU, which also obliged the policy makers to adopt the policies to EU standards. Also, because Serbia has been using several funding programs, some ministries and agencies are promoting youth policy and social innovations.

THE CASE

Tailor-made, transdisciplinary teams comprised of leading experts, professionals and creatives applied the design process as a starting point in developing problem-solving ideas, projects and services. Their progressive ideas and experiences have provided creative and business support and empowerment to both entrepreneurs and small/ medium-sized businesses. By applying design thinking process and combining co-working, business incubation, social entrepreneurship, knowledge and skills development, networking, job matching and multisector linkages, NOVA ISKRA enables inclusive labor market, where emerging creative professionals and vulnerable groups (youth, women, rural households) have opportunities for employment and self-employment and be, along with forward-thinking businesses, agents of change and sustainable economic growth.

The initiative's multifunctional space was officially opened on Dec 6, 2012. Since, it has become the focal point for the local and regional professional communities related to all fields of design and enterprise, while it is at the same time the first functional co-working space opened in Serbia. In the first six months more than 3,000 freelancers and coworkers visited Nova iskra workspace “to co-work, to extend their knowledge, to do business or just to dream together.”

The reconstruction and furnishing of the physical space in which the initiative has been brought to life was a challenging task. In late 2011, the project found two main sponsors that promised to cover 10%



of the projected total budget at the time, but the team of now four members decided to take the risk and start with the first stage of the project implementation. The credibility of those two first sponsors helped attract further support. In the early stage, the project was supported by the Municipality of Savski venac and the companies (Telekom Serbia, Erste Bank, IKEA, Simpo-Šik, JTI and Guardian Inglass) joining with mainly in-kind donations, becoming in that way “the examples of good practice.” The main technical partner of NOVA ISKRA was Samsung, while further technical partners included companies such as SBB, Dremel, Canon, Division, Art Media Group, Geze, Global Press, AWS, Doncafe, Pavle glass company, Ecolab and Beohouse. Each subsequent stage of the initiative was conducted with co-financing. The co-investors were mostly companies that have already been Nova iskra users. For some segments, the initiative has been applying to public tenders. For example, their project “Urban Garden” gained the support of the Serbian Oil Industry through the company's open call. For some of the last segments of the initiative's expansion, such as the development of infrastructure, the Development Agency of Serbia provided financial support, which was an important milestone in communication with state institutions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

NOVA ISKRA, a hybrid type of organization consisting of three legal entities (NGO, design agency, LTD company), binds together the fields of creative industries, commerce and civil society and uses design thinking and user-centered creation as main methods in creating solutions. Organizational innovation and workplace innovation play a key role for the actors and the users of NOVA ISKRA as well as in the practice field.

The idea was initiated by two young professionals with vast experience in cultural management, product design, creative industries and project management. Their previous knowledge about the sector gave them understanding of the unmet needs of the young professionals and creatives regarding supporting environment for their professional development. However, awareness about the needs was not sufficient. In order to find an appropriate way to fulfill these needs they conducted a research among key stakeholders (young professionals, freelancers, designers, NGOs, companies etc.). Basically, it was a number of meetings with key actors and detecting their needs and expectations in connection with shared working place, educations, networking opportunities etc. The second phase was learning and exploration of the similar incubators and hubs abroad that are examples of good practice. In this respect, knowledge gained through this process can be regarded as proactive learning because it occurred before the innovation process. However, despite the good preparation the main learning process occurred during the running of the initiative This was firstly the case with financing the



realization of the project. While the project was initiated in 2010 its realization was postponed due to the lack of the funding interest. The value of that experience was in fact that it helped the team to realize that different approach to funding is necessary. They strengthened the team with new professionals and started a strong fundraising campaign and negotiations with the potential investors. Their efforts resulted in the support from the municipality, large companies such as Ikea, Samsung, Generali etc. but also local community as well as local producers and designers that provided in kind donations. When Nova Iskra finally started to work on it, their premises was used by 36 professionals as co-working space, but also it became a focal point for many other designers, free-lancers, activists, etc. That was the moment when the ongoing learning process started and it was focused on the constant interaction with the key actors and broadening the range of the services in accordance the acquired information regarding their needs - they were constantly applying the "learning by doing" method, actively exploring and research the market and client needs.

Firstly, it was detected a need for the organizational innovation that requires a culture of innovation supporting new ways of doing business. The team realized that it encourages individuals to think independently and creatively in applying their knowledge to organizational challenges. At the core of organizational innovation is detected a need to improve or change a product, process or service. These findings were in line with the view of the European Commission, according to which a workplace innovation is a motor for innovation and competitiveness, and as a way to transform workplaces to make better use of human talents and skills (Eurofound, 2015). The initiative's workplace innovation means a change in business structure, management, relationships with users and other stakeholders, and in the work environment itself. Co-working space is a vibrant working space that provides flexibility and choices for where, when and how to work, but it is also a workplace design tactic to recruit and retain the best talents. Different entities and a broad platform with various programs and activities can be also perceived as a one-stop center for creative industries. The team of Nova Iskra insights in the needs of their existing and potential clients were evolving through time: from a working office or a table, Internet connection, laptops and equipment to complex educational program (lectures, seminars, workshops, training and development, communication and networking, business meetings and cooperation, mentors, assistance in problem solving, inspiration and feedback, employees and employers/ customers and producers, co-creation and co-production. This ongoing research about key actors' requirements and needs have resulted in whole range of new services that immediately met the needs of old and attracted new clients. The final result was increased productivity and better solutions to challenges for users but also contribution to smart and inclusive growth for local community (which is also an aim of the Europe 2020 Strategy).

They learned that training and education has to be one of the most relevant programs because they help creatives to stay informed, gain or improve skills, learn, and network. Realizing that life-long learning is the core precondition not only for team members, but also for the development of innovative



ideas of the professionals and clients of Nova Iskra, the education program has been realized in cooperation with NGO's, corporations, SMEs, a wide and diverse network of local, regional and global experts from different fields and, since recently, with one state agency. For many young professionals from the creative field in Serbia, where the youth unemployment is very high (almost 50%, at the moment), Nova Iskra became the place where they can both improve themselves and create better opportunities to find a job or to create one (the same applies to SMEs). More importantly, they have been matched accurately (their particular skills mix and qualifications well-suited to jobs).

A foremost driver of the learning process was the fulfillment of needs of the creative industries professionals that emerged as consequences of both economic crises and the general lack of support. Nova Iskra, however, is an expanding and successful initiative. Several factors, which sometimes overlapped in various stages, determined the success: team culture, financial stability, community involvement, a number of new programs with different aspects of social innovation, recognition by the state (financial support) and, very important, a network of partnerships (across all sectors).

It can be said that development and progression of Nova Iskra is marked by constant rethinking of the existing solutions and working on the new ones, more efficient, effective and sustainable. Their programs create new products/ brands like FOLKK and SIDE EFFECTS (launched recently), which provide job opportunities for social enterprises around the region. In order to be able to provide such programs and solutions, permanent interaction with the local community is necessary. Nova Iskra team uses methodological approach in investigating, experimenting and implementing concepts, theories and practices that are formed around the idea of a common (good) in the local / regional context.

This approach resulted in establishing educational formats such as Studies of Commons that are focused on three themes:

- 01** The common areas of work and life,
- 02** Participatory organization and management of shared resources
- 03** The co-production.

These Studies are designed to encourage critical thinking and performance, offer theoretical and practical knowledge concerning model or approach to participatory development and management of shared space and other resources, as well as examine the possibilities for collective production. Program methodology is based on the process of design thinking and consists of three modules: Understanding (Research) Ideation and Prototyping. It is not only that initiation of such program is an ongoing learning process, but also its realization contributes to acquiring new knowledge for team members as well as new networking opportunities.

While it is too early to talk about social change(s) that are a result of this particular initiative, the main



ideas and the initiative's processes have been well adapted by the users and all those participating in any way in the initiative. In order to adopt to ever changing world and demands, dedication to lifelong learning is a requirement for both the initiative and its users and partners. One of the main insights acquired through experience was that complex challenges, such as youth unemployment cannot be solved by a single social innovation. Instead, systemic innovation is required. Systems are slow to shift because of the tendency to maintain the status quo and because necessary changes in mentalities, structures and processes are hard to achieve. Systemic change often requires involvement across all four sectors (business, government, civil society organizations and households), which is very time consuming and difficult process. On the other hand, there is a significant role for networks and new forms of collaboration in driving systemic change. Through constant learning-by-doing, the team realized that it was easier and more dynamic when they partnered with either the civil or private sector. It was easier and faster as they have similar understanding of the process, tools and methodology that can be used in the problem solving action. In the social sphere, however, systemic innovation is rarely achieved through a single organization or sector and without a complex interaction of public policy and reforms to legislation, changes to business cultures and practices as well as shifts in consumer attitudes and behavior.

Moreover, the team members realized that the initiative's absorptive capacity can be developed only through individual, organizational and community capacity building. Without gathering knowledge and employing experts from around the world to be a part of their network and share information, knowledge and their resources, they wouldn't be able to continue their development or to foresee the future trends. Both the initiative's team and their users need to constantly improve those skills. For the initiative, a huge inspiration comes from the field of commons. When they think about new projects or resources and development they see people and knowledge as one of the main resources for their business.

One of the particular fields important for targeting young entrepreneurs is technology. This area also demanded ongoing learning and monitoring of the trends for team members. One of the obvious reasons for the emphasis on technology is the phenomena of nomad workers, global citizens who are using technology to do their work from different geographical locations. Aside enabling new forms of work and networking, digital connectivity and online and mobile technology platforms allow the initiative to have ongoing dialogue with the different audiences in convenient ways. This provides better market insights and, based on a level of cooperation, a co-creation of valued solutions. Social media particularly have a very important role in that dialogue. Co-creative approaches to shaping products and services help include other stakeholders (e.g., partners) whose insights are extremely valuable in informing the innovation.

Technology moves quickly and it is a challenging task to use what is available in the most effective way. For the initiative, digital commons (generally freely available) are extremely important to keep abreast of



the latest trends and tools. Technology increases efficiency and effectiveness, facilitates new types of bottom-up and decentralised forms of collaboration, and helps configure new types of social and business models, which otherwise wouldn't be possible. This leads to the transformation of existing processes, roles and relationships, particularly because their forms and impacts are not easily predictable. Nova Iskra's educational formats are responding to specific needs of the community in order to gain contemporary knowledge and fresh skills when it comes to digital communication strategies development, or UX design, creative coding or similar professions that are using every opportunity to upgrade and evolve. At the same time the management process depends on usage of various digital communication and organizational tools (google, Slack, Trevo, Asana...etc).

DISCUSSION

Nova Iskra is an alternative model of economic organization, potentially an important source of employment and growth. Success is perceived by the number of people empowered through their capacity building program, the number of new initiatives (solutions) and the sustainability of the initiative and created solutions.

The initiative's impact is presently visible on the micro-level (the impact on user), mezzo-level (the impact on the community and organization) and, to much lesser extent, macro-level (the impact focusing on society).

Nova Iskra emerged as a pragmatic response to needs experienced by individuals and groups in their daily life, bypassing bureaucratic procedures. The initiative's undertaken actions at community/local level improved their users' quality of living by meeting the needs that were not met by the public or traditional private sector alone. Within the last 3 years, Nova Iskra has conducted more than 120 educational programs (lectures, presentations, workshops, study visits, mentorship and consultancy programs) with more than 9,000 beneficiaries and topics varying from entrepreneurship and design management to R&D, innovation and sustainable development.

However, none of this would be possible without constant capacity building of the core team of Nova Iskra. Although one part of the learning process included proactive learning that occurred during the preparation process, the majority of the new insights were acquired during the innovation process i.e. through reactive learning. As it is presented on the example of the various services offered by Nova Iskra, the majority of acquired knowledge was result of the strong interaction with the clients and other stakeholders. Their collaboration and cooperation resulted in the new services that were offered and this methodology became the basic learning tool for the team. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that the cross-sector knowledge transfer mechanisms emerged as the result of the cooperation with the



actors from civil, private and public sector. Constant interaction with the local community led to the development of the new solutions for their unmet needs. The initiative emerged from sharing and networking between a wide range of actors. It has been building partnerships among many stakeholders that work on various issues or projects at local, regional and global level. Interdisciplinary teamwork has been established in a mixed and extended work collective with the new type of professionalism that has combined fragmented knowledge through dialogue and involvement of users. In this respect, networking is not only a service offered by Nova iskra, but it is the process used by the team for own development as well.

Although the team members had previous formal knowledge as well as working experience, the complexity of the project and constant changes in the environment caused stronger orientation on the tacit knowledge transfer as the ongoing "learning-by-doing" process. This was not only the case with the development of the new services, but also human, financial and organizational management.

The initiative proved that despite the unfavorable economic situation and complexity of stakeholders, it is possible (with the new thinking and practices) to create opportunities and to reach sustainable solutions. Using Design Thinking as a methodology proves that the initiators of Nova Iskra understand that the best solutions are not possible without the good insights into human behavior. Human-centered innovation begins with an understanding of users' unarticulated or unmet needs. Design thinking is "learning by doing." It includes different steps (observing, interviewing, empathy mapping, storyboards, associational thinking, prototyping, and decision-making analysis) and results in sustainable solutions. The programs of Nova Iskra build and strengthen human and social capital.

The management team of Nova Iskra today consists of eight members of managers and professionals with broad experience in cultural management, marketing and PR, production, education and trainings, consultancy, program and project coordination etc. They all brought explicit knowledge into organization gained through their formal education and trainings as well as tacit knowledge gained through previous working experiences and certain degree of the knowledge transfer occurred between the team members. However, the capacity building within the organization was mainly result of the tacit knowledge i.e. learning-by-doing and in this respect "new knowledge is generated through the dynamic interaction and combination of these two types" (Lam, 2002). Thus, although the research findings suggest that "intangible barriers to social innovation are associated to the capacities of the human capital" or more concretely "capacity and skill shortages, lack of managerial skills" and "under-skilled work forces" (Terstriep et al., 2015), this is only partially true for Nova Iskra. The fluctuations within the team members happened mostly due to the overload and burn-out syndrome, while on the other hand lack of experience was also a reason of leaving of few team members.

However, majority of the knowledge transfer was gained through interaction, collaboration, co-design



and co-creation with the young professionals, creatives, users and stakeholders. While Bagheri and Pihie (2011) suggest that "entrepreneurial learning has four dimensions: experience, reflection, social interaction and observation", it can be inferred that the crucial role in capacity building of Nova Iskra was social interaction and sharing of knowledge, information and ideas.



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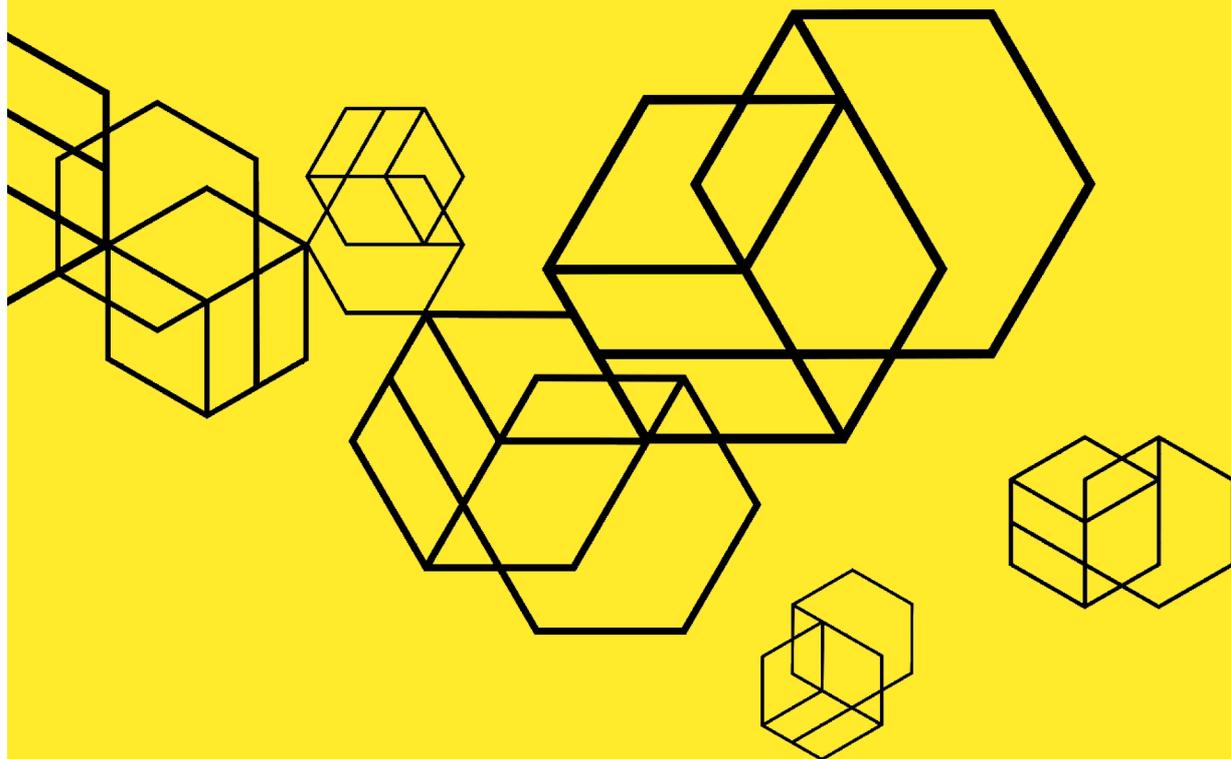
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Social Cooperative Humana Nova

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Social Cooperative Humana Nova

From textile recycling and employment of the marginalized population to social impact

1. INTRODUCTION

The social cooperative Humana Nova is a social enterprise dedicated to finding solutions for social, ecological and economic problems. It does so in several ways:

- 01** Reducing textile waste: in 2015, Humana Nova collected 370,943 kilograms of discarded textile items. Its reuse, sorting and recycling resulted in a reduction of 1,335,000 kg of CO² emissions in the atmosphere (produced by the decay of textiles in landfills); reducing the use of 2,226 billion liters of drinking water and reducing the use of 11,300 kg of fertilizer and 74,200 kg of pesticides used in the production of raw materials in the textile industry.
- 02** Employment of marginalized groups in the labour market: the cooperative employs 14 workers of which four persons with disabilities, 5 long-term unemployed women over 50, 1 highly educated young person, two long-term unemployed young mothers and one long-term unemployed man. Economist and manager Ivan Bozic, the only non-marginalized person, manages the cooperative.
- 03** Creating positive social impact in the community: in 2015, the cooperative donated goods and services to 80 families and individuals and 10 local organizations.

The cooperative was founded in 2011 as the result of the project “ESCO - Education for Social Co-Operatives: New Opportunities for People with Disabilities” implemented by a non-governmental organization active in Medimurje County: Autonomous Centre (ACT). The aim of the project was to provide education for people with disabilities in order to increase their competitiveness in the labour market. The participants in the program gained new skills and qualifications starting from web administrators, accountants and professional sewers leading to the foundation of several social enterprises employing people excluded from the labour market; one of which was Humana Nova and their members are four associations of persons with disabilities in the region, as well as employees.

Today Humana Nova has sewing manufacture in Cakovec, which converts clean but unusable



textile items into new products such as patchwork covers, handbags, slippers, laptop and mobile bags, garments etc., which can be bought in the cooperative's shops in Cakovec and Koprivnica or in other greenware shops in Croatia . In addition, the manufacturer sews for other external clients, converts unusable textile into industrial cloths or delivers it to the recycling companies. In addition, usable textile after cleaning and sorting is sold in second hand shops. Moreover, in September 2016 Humana Nova opened a new outlet shop and sorting unit in Zagreb thanks to the support for social entrepreneurship provided by City of Zagreb. The financial investment of half a million kuna (roughly 66.000 EUR) donated by the City of Zagreb contributed to the realization of this project resulting in the employment of an additional 4 workers last month and 3 new persons from marginalized groups that will be employed in the next few days.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT

Humana Nova was founded in Cakovec, capital of Medimurje County, the northernmost county and according to the surface, the smallest Croatian county. Situated on the intersection of important European corridors, it represents the "Croatian door" to Central and Eastern Europe. It has a long industrial tradition, especially in the segment of the textile industry. Unlike the rest of Croatia, this county attracts significant amounts of foreign investments. Having a favourable business climate and an educated workforce attracted not only numerous foreign companies to the area but also contributed to the growth of small and medium enterprises, resulting in one of the lowest unemployment rates in Croatia (after Varaždin and Istria County).

While during the 70s and 80s the textile industry was one of the main drivers of economic development, the recession the textile industry in Europe has been experiencing over the last 30 years has affected Medimurje County as well, resulting in the continuing trend of job loss, decreases in profit and low levels of average salary. Average wage in Medimurje County is below the Croatian average because a large proportion of the workforce is employed in labour-intensive industrial sectors such as the textile industry.

According to the Croatian Employment Service, the unemployment rate in Medimurje County in September 2016 was 9.9% meaning that 4,370 people were unemployed. Although the overall unemployment rate decreased in comparison to the previous year, the latest data showed trends of unemployment growing among the young population and people over the age of 50. Moreover, unemployment is considerably greater among women (56%) than men (44%).

In Croatia, there is more than 530,000 people with disabilities, while in Medimurje County there is more than 12,000 registered people with disabilities and most of them are in active working age. In June 2016, Medimurje County had 174 unemployed people with disabilities. The total number



of registered unemployed people with disabilities in Croatia was 7,542 in February 2016. Taking into account that there is more than half a million people with disabilities in Croatia, at first sight the number of unemployed disabled persons might give the wrong impression that the situation is not so bad. However, only about 17,000 of these people were employed, and together with registered unemployment, there are only 24,000 disabled persons active in the labour market. The reason why a huge number of disabled persons are outside the labour market is the experience of difficult employment, leading to a large number of them rather "choosing" supports from pension or social welfare systems instead of coping with the uncertainty of the labour market. The reasons for the bad position of these people in the labour market are numerous starting from uncompetitive qualifications due to limitations of the educational system which is not adapted for these people, to the prejudice of the public and employers whether persons with disabilities can perform various tasks. Employment of people with disabilities is not only socially responsible, but it is also a legal obligation for companies with more than 20 employees. However, change in legislation so far has not been sufficient for significant improvements.

In addition, Medimurje County is the region with the largest population of Roma in Croatia, who are also disadvantaged in the labour market. Hence, social and working exclusion of disabled persons, women over 50 and young people without working experience, Roma and other marginalized groups in Medimurje was one of the main problems that ACT decided to address and the main motive why they founded this social cooperative. Moreover, a long-standing textile tradition in the region accompanied with the new learning and skills obtained through the ESCO project naturally led to starting Humana Nova.





THE CASE



Humana Nova is a social cooperative with the mission to employ disadvantaged persons in the labour market through recycling and redesigning discarded textile. The foundation of the social enterprise started with the ESCO project, initiated by the non-government organization ACT (Autonomous Centre Cakovec). The project provided initial funding for the purchase of the sewing, ironing, washing and drying machines, as well as computer and office equipment. Moreover, one of the project activities was requalification training, enabling eight disabled persons to gain sewing skills and an accompanying certificate. As the non-government association ACT is one of the leading civil sector organizations in Croatia dedicated to the support of social entrepreneurship, the decision to start the cooperative came easy and naturally. Today, the NGO runs six social enterprises covering different areas from accounting, graphic design to organic farming.

Although at the start the cooperative gained public support, they had to raise their visibility in the local community and encourage the cooperation of citizens. Under the motto "Textile is not waste" they organized actions of collecting unused textile from citizens. Together with the public utility companies, several events were organized at which citizens could bring their outdated and unused textile garments and other items knowing that they will be used for a good purpose and in an environmentally conscious way. The cooperative started with promotional activities and participated in several events and fairs connected with the themes of ecology and social responsibility. In this first phase, in Cakovec and Varaždin, two so called "Little Stores" were opened that sold redesigned items while also working as



second hand shops. When it started to work, Humana Nova had one employed person and eight members of the cooperative. In 2012, Humana Nova worked on capacity building and empowerment of the team. At that time, 10 persons were employed along with the new manager Ivan Bozic. His employment was a great contribution to the team. Firstly, his 12 years of experience in the textile industry in different positions enabled him to gain valuable knowledge about the sector, the production process, suppliers, market and other important facts and actors. Moreover, a young and highly skilled engineer of textile technology (but without previous working experience) was employed and her young enthusiasm and creativity upgraded the design of the recycled products. In addition, several workers were employed with experience in the textile industry with skills in sewing, tailoring and sale management. The more skilled employees transferred their knowledge and skills to their less skilled colleagues through joint work on everyday delivery of customer orders. However, as the government supports the employment of disadvantaged groups, the total cost of their salaries was lower at the beginning. The major challenge in this first period was the prevailing “project” way of thinking.

Specifically, the cooperative was founded as the result of a project that also provided funding not only for equipment and education, but also for some operative costs. On the other hand, several workers were employed under the active labour market policy measures aimed at unemployed persons who are disadvantaged in the labour market. Due to these measures, the cooperative gained funds for the salaries of the newly employed workers for the first year of their employment. On the other hand, funds gained through donations and the project created a false sense of security and insufficient engagement in the creation of a sustainable business model after the exploitation of project money. A lot of organizational and HR problems occurred creating a lot of pressure for the new manager who came from the business sector and had a very different perspective. Nevertheless, he successfully addressed problems and started with a complete restructuring of the cooperative.

First of all, as the cooperative worked on its visibility, they were gaining more orders from larger companies that needed tailoring and sewing services. One of the most important partners was ELFS, a very popular and successful Croatian design brand. Along with them, other prominent designers and Croatian brands found their interest in cooperation with Humana Nova like Goran Cizmesija, Maja Virgej and Jet-lag, Roba je roba, Mini Greeny, Rodin let and others. It was not only due to the professionalism and quality of the provided services and product (which had to be raised in order to fulfil their demands), but also because giving an advantage to Humana Nova over the other similar manufacturers improved their image as socially responsible brands and companies.

The cooperative was targeting two groups; on the one side, they were focused on a young, conscious, urban population looking for redesigned products and from the other side, an affordable collection for low budget groups (second hand shops). However, due to the reduced purchasing power and negative economic trends, low-income collection had much bigger commercial success than redesigned products. The third target customers were large companies reselling second hand clothes.



In 2013, the cooperative had 17 employees including six seamstresses, two saleswomen, two women working on the sorting of the clothes, a sorting manager, a designer, an administrative assistant, a head of the Koprivnica office and a cooperative manager. Although 2014 did not start well (store in Koprivnica was closed, the year began with the debts that had to be covered by the loan), it ended well due to several new partnerships. The main source of income became sewing the uniforms for preschool teachers in the county and the production of textile bags. One of the lessons learned from that year was that the cooperative needed much better planning and thus 2015 was more successful due to more careful planning of the business processes. Moreover, cooperation with ELFS was extended on more garments resulting in the employment of four new seamstresses and one salesperson. In addition, cooperation with two EU companies was established. One of them was DNA Merch from Berlin and the other was Göttin des Glückes from Vienna. Both companies searched for a partner with incorporated social and human values within its business and they found it in Humana Nova. For DNA Merch, the cooperative produces t-shirts made from organic cotton while for Göttin des Glückes a complete collection of linen garments is sewn. Both partners are satisfied with the high quality standards provided by Humana Nova.

2016 started with also new challenges. One of the biggest was that the already approved ESF project was cancelled which resulted in the change of the whole business plan for 2016. An additional obstacle is insufficient support on the institutional level. While there is a lot of “talk” about inclusion of the disabled people in the labour market, in practice concrete measures are missing (regulations are missing or they exist but are not enforced in practice, state support to cover lower productivity of disabled persons is not sufficient etc.). These circumstances create additional pressure and a constant need for higher levels of competitiveness of the cooperative.

However, despite not so favourable circumstances one of the major accomplishments is that almost all employees are members of the cooperative (out of 16 employees, 13 are cooperative members) meaning that they share the same values and vision necessary for the further growth.



DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The cooperative was founded with the mission of employing the disabled and other marginalized groups in the textile industry. It was founded as the result of the ESCO project through which several persons with disabilities were re-qualified and later employed. The project provided funds not only for education but also for equipment and part of the operating costs. Moreover, support from the Croatian Employment Service covered a large portion of salary costs for one year. However, without all these supports the business model as it was set in the beginning was not sustainable. The situation had to be changed before the funds were spent. The new manager was engaged with vast experience in private sector and textile industry. With the background of the private sector, he immediately detected several gaps in competences and skills from organisation, marketing and visibility, business planning to creativity and design. One of the biggest problems was the lack of defined responsibilities among employees, goals and ways of their achievement. The organisational structure was not clear and employees were not aware what their duties were, who was responsible for which part of the work and so on. Furthermore, some mistakes were made in the beginning causing additional costs for the cooperative. One of them was the complicated way of calculating the price for the second hand products: it was calculated for each item and it was very time consuming. This was changed and pricing per kilogram of the second hand items was set up. However, one of the most painful changes was salary cuts that had to be made in order to achieve viability. All these changes created many tensions among employees and cooperative members. The manager said that it was not only that he had to persuade employees that the former business model had to be modified, but it was also that he had to learn HR skills and find a way to keep the employees motivated despite such unpleasant changes. Specifically, this meant that he had to dedicate a considerable time for talk with employees and consider their position from the different perspectives. They were not "only" workers but persons with specific issues arising not only from their health problems but also lack of the support from institutions, the community and sometimes even family members. On the one side, they needed someone to hear



them and on the other, the manager had to learn to take all these circumstances into account. In his own words, it took time until they finally learned how to detect problems and find appropriate solutions. Despite the salary cuts, this personal approach resulted in a higher degree of motivation because the employees gained the feeling that they work in company for which they are not only a working force, but actual persons.

In addition, it was important to find strong and reliable partners that could ensure stable orders and cash flow. This decision resulted in the termination of cooperation agreements with some actors from the civil scene because they did not have clear missions and a worked out business model. The cooperative oriented itself to the several new partners. On the one hand, Humana Nova started cooperating with designers not only because of the help with the redesign but also because there is a lack of the manufacturers of cotton products in Croatia, created new market niche in this segment. One of the most important partnerships was established with successful Croatian design brand ELFS who needed a tailoring and sewing service of high quality. The partnership was useful in several ways; not only that it contributed to the stability of the cash flow but also it required several other changes. Due to ELFS, the cooperative had to restructure its production process in order to be able to fulfil their demands and had to become more flexible and able to deliver orders in a short time. Moreover, because ELFS is a popular brand in the higher price range, Humana Nova had to raise the quality of its services and introduce quality standards. These efforts were recognized by ELFS and they became long-term partners, supporting the work of the cooperative and gaining in return a reliable partner able to provide high-quality services. Humana Nova started with tailoring and sewing four ELFS garments and now more than 20 items are sewn on a regular basis. Moreover, successful cooperation was established with other Croatian designers (Roba je roba, Maja Virgej, Goran Cizmesija and other) helping the cooperative team to gain new skills and competences, not only needed for redesign but also for the business in the fashion industry.

In addition, the problems that occurred with the sale of unused textile required changes in the approach and search for new customers. Previously, the majority of textile was sold to domestic clients, but during 2014, Humana Nova had to find new markets in order to get out of debt and achieve positive business results. Finally, a new partner was found in a Belgian firm that was exporting second hand textile to India and thanks to this move, the cooperative was back on a positive track in summer 2014. Moreover, the shift towards public institutions was made as they were recognized as the natural partner in supporting the social mission of the cooperative. Hence, cooperation with the preschool institutions in the region was established and Humana Nova made the most of its revenue on sewing the uniforms for the preschool teachers.

Moreover, it became clear that the cooperative had to improve its visibility and invest in marketing. In this area, the cooperative benefited from another social company also founded by the ACT group: ACT Printlab that transferred skills and knowledge in market positioning, promotion and visibility. In addition, a new employee responsible for marketing and promotion was employed. The redesigned collections



became an important tool for increasing visibility through participation in the various fashion shows (such as Cro A Porter etc.).

The turbulence that occurred in 2014 helped the team of the cooperative to learn that they need better business planning. The seasonal character of their business led to the situation that several months during the year generated huge costs and little revenue; for instance, during January, utilities costs are high due to heating while on the other hand the purchasing power is lower due to the excessive spending during the Christmas season. Thus, a more careful planning of the business process was made in order to bridge the gaps and ensure stable cash flow. Specifically, it was agreed that long-term partners' delivery and payments of the larger projects will be executed in that "critical" period. Moreover, it was realized that there are companies willing to cooperate with Humana Nova because in that way they achieve their social goals and a step forward toward the EU market is made in that segment.

However, the policy actors remained the factor of the instability for the cooperative. Several important issues need to be solved. One of the most important is the low state support for lower productivity of people with disabilities. Specifically, lower productivity is "compensated" by the state with only 1,000 HRK (approximately, 130 EUR) which does not cover all the costs incurred due to the health problems of the employees. Moreover, there are several other problems at the institutional level: a lack of regulations for waste management resulted in total chaos in the market, a strategy for the development of social entrepreneurship was not implemented, the Croatian Employment Service did not provide centres for the support of the employment of the disabled people although the deadline expired in January 2015, etc. All these circumstances put an additional pressure on the sustainability of the cooperative. The team decided to deal with this problem by using a bottom-up approach and by involvement the working groups in different strategies and laws regulating employment of marginalized groups. In this area, the cooperative gained a lot of help, knowledge transfer and networking from the ACT group who has a long experience in initiating social changes, lobbying and bottom-up initiatives.

However, the most important segment of the learning process occurred in human relations. The manager, Ivan Bozic admits that the employees are faced with a lot of problems, starting from their health issues to the lack of understanding and support from the health system, institutions and sometimes even from their families. For him, this was very different from the business sector that was more profit than people oriented. In order to keep up the motivation, they all had to learn to communicate their problems and try to find appropriate solutions. Regular weekly staff meetings became part of the routine and way of achieving higher degrees of efficiency. Today they are all proud of the large number of employees becoming the cooperative members and to paraphrase the manager it was all due to the lot of "talk, talk and talk".

In the context of the existing literature on the learning and social innovation, several conclusions can be drawn. First of all, like many newly founded social enterprises Humana Nova at the beginning had lack of the business and industry knowledge as well as managerial knowledge (Terstriep et al., 2015). While the establishment of the cooperative was followed by clear social mission and vision (employment of



the marginalized women and textile recycling), on the other hand there was a serious deficit of knowledge about textile industry. Examples of these gaps in skills and knowledge varied from price calculation that was inefficient and time consuming to insufficient understanding of the sector, suppliers, distributors, buyers and other key actors. After 2011, it became obvious that once the funds from ESCO project will be spent, the cooperative will not be sustainable any more. In addition, the cooperative was founded by civil society organization that had experience in work with marginalized group, but the founders were not so much involved at the operational level and also had no experience in the textile industry sector. Luckily, this gap was recognized on time and new manager was employed with vast experience in the sector as well as in the business management. Although he proved to be the perfect person to fill that gap, it turned out that he lacked skills in working with vulnerable groups. In this respect, case of Humana Nova slightly diverges from research findings and literature stating that "considering the experiences of engaged people in the SI process it becomes evident that the initiators and almost any actor from the inner core has experiences in working with vulnerable people"(Terstriep et al., 2015, p. 48). Moreover, case studies from SIMPACT project showed that specific HR skills for work with vulnerable people are result of the "school and academic education" (Terstriep et al., 2015, p. 49). None of that was case with Ivan Bozic and Humana Nova; his knowledge in HR management with disabled and marginalized people was result of the learning through experience; trials and errors methodology rather than theory. Although, the manager as well as other employees attended trainings and educations, they had a far greater benefit from the tacit knowledge which "unlike explicit knowledge which can be formulated, abstracted and transferred across time and space independently of the knowing subjects requires close interaction and the build up of shared understanding and trust among them" (Lam, 2002, p. 68). The case of Humana Nova confirms the thesis that "the learning and innovative capability of an organization is thus critically dependent on its capacity to mobilise tacit knowledge and foster its interaction with explicit knowledge"(Lam, 2002, p. 69). The employees of the cooperative participated in various trainings ranging from vocational and professional educations to courses in social entrepreneurship and social business trainings (for instance, Investment Ready Program, trainings in sewing and tailoring etc). However, considerable transfer of knowledge occurred between the manager and employees proving that "individual learning intention and knowledge absorption from individual to group to organization could be significant for effective organizational knowledge transfer" (Rhodes et al., 2008, p. 245). On the other hand, while the manager transferred some of his business skills to the employees, he also learned a lot from them about human resources and work with vulnerable groups. Finally, this transfer of knowledge resulted in improvement in the financial (higher sustainability) and non-financial performance (Rhodes et al., 2008, p. 248) (improvement in processes etc).



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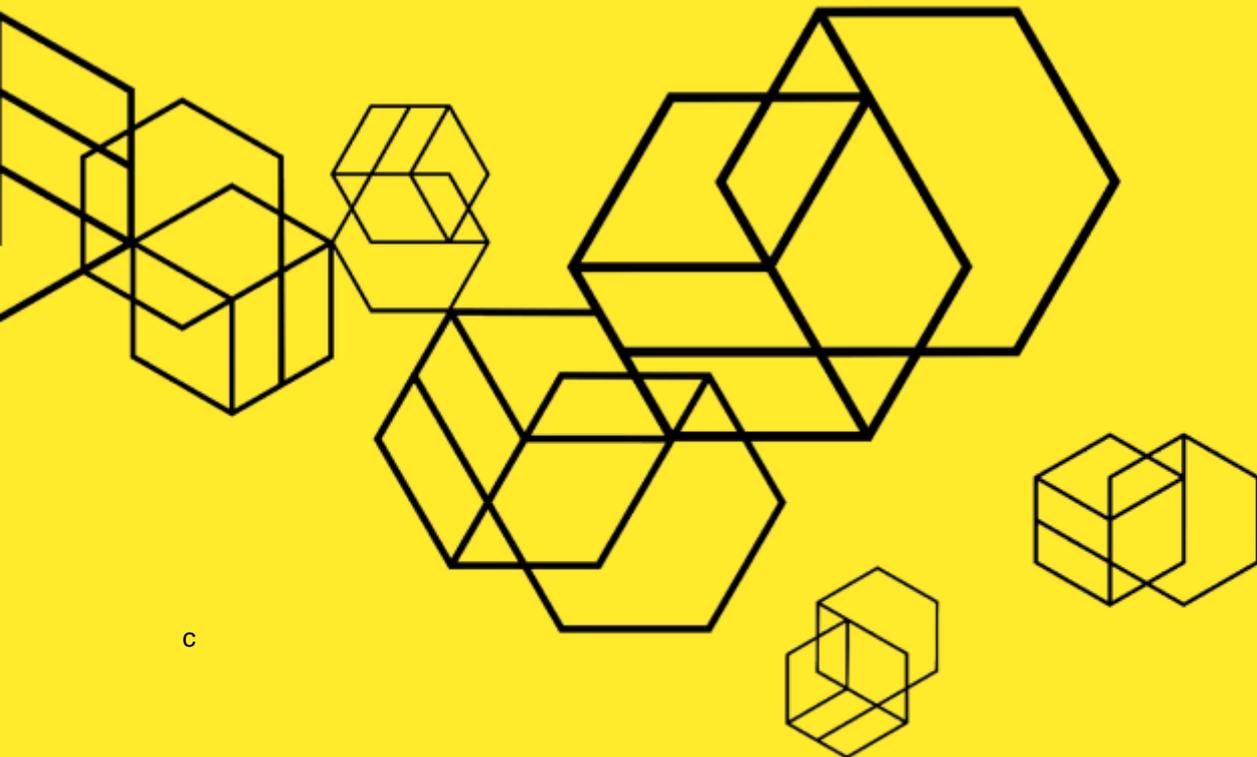


**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

The case of Agintzari

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The case of Agintzari

Abstract

Agintzari is a Social Cooperative of public utility located in Bilbao (Basque Country) since 2000. Although deeply engaged in social movements and community development since 1977, the organization didn't grow to become a social cooperative until 2000. This change was seen as an important step towards growing professionalization and expertise inside their context. The cooperative is mainly focused its work in community development through publicly funded socially innovative projects, community training programs, and delivery of social services oriented towards the social needs of vulnerable and socially excluded sectors of the population.

Agintzari holds three important lines of work. The first line of work is related to Community Intervention, which manages socio-educational and psychosocial services. The second line of work is related to Fostering and Adoption, which manages programs of infant protection through a service called Arlobi Adoptia that is promoted by the cooperative. The third line of work is linked to Intervention in Violence and Relational Conflicts. It manages services, which are part of the Policy Social Services of the Basque Country. Agintzari has strongly influenced the detection of policy failures and the need for the new design of social services inside the Basque local and regional institutions, by improving social policy and having an important effect in Basque social policy, specially in the province of Biscay. Since 2010, the organization has focused in expanding its activities to the whole region and also at the national level.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

The context

Agintzari is a non-for profit social cooperative of public utility since the year 2000. It is currently composed of 500 members. Initially the name of Agintzari before becoming a cooperative was linked, since 1977, to social movements in Bilbao formed by a collective of young social workers which worked along the University and the Church, mainly focusing on the work in the streets and with local communities to attend social needs. This movement was built soon after the Spanish Dictatorship and the strong industrial and economic crises suffered in the 1980s, which immersed the Bilbao City Region in a very difficult historical period. This historical period also gave birth to the baby boom and the first young generation, which was able of attending University.

In 1991 this work initiated a close connection with the local public administration in the Bilbao City



Region. It was then when Agintzari saw the opportunity and the necessity to professionalize itself, due to the long time knowledge and experience they accumulated through the years. In the year 2000, the work with the community and other public administrations started to build up closely related to the work and the influence in the design and construction of public social services, municipal services and commonwealth communities inside the province of Biscay in the Basque Country. This trajectory consolidated itself in 2010 when Agintzari reached a strong influence inside the province reaching 250 employees.

Nowadays, Agintzari holds three important lines of work. The first line of work is related to Community Intervention, which manages socio-educational and psychosocial services, which have become key in the range of social services advocated in the Law 12/2008 of the 5th of September of Social Services of the Basque Country. This line of work also manages prevention programs in the scholar and family environments, and other consulting projects and professional training.

The second line of work is related to Fostering and Adoption, which manages programs of infant protection through a service called Arlobi Adoptia that is promoted by the cooperative. This service provides services of psychosocial attention, consulting, and family and professional training, having built a network of entities with those Agintzari cooperates.

The third line of work is linked to Intervention in Violence and Relational Conflicts. It manages services, which are part of the Policy Social Services of the Basque Country. The nature of these services is diverse, and includes services of telephonic and online attention, socio-educational services of residential fostering of women victims of violence, and specialized services in psychological explorations in situation of family sexual abuse.

Agintzari also pilots diverse innovative programs, on of the most important ones is called “Family Nests” (“Los Nidos Familiares”); an experience that is supported by the Basque Government focused on new processes to address childhood care through the promotion of conciliation strategies between family and work life. Another important piloting experience is the “Network of Houses” (“Casas en Red”), which was initiated in 2010, as an intensive and integrated innovative social resource, to prevent family adoption failures or ruptures.

The case

Since becoming a social cooperative of public utility in the year 2000, Agintzari has focused on its geographic expansion. Along the years, the cooperative has become a major influence in the design of actual social services, some of them non-existing until the cooperative started working closely with public administrations. These services have been mainly influenced and built through a bottom-up approach, involving different social collectives, and closely working with the Basque Public Institutions. Today the cooperative has been able to build an action network involving 16 city councils, building 5



common wealth communities, and the Provincial and Basque Governments of the Basque Country. These networks are well connected but are composed of self-managed individual teams, which are closely linked to the specific problems present in the different municipalities.

The target groups of these services of public utility that are managed by Agintzari are mainly focused in the users of Primary and Secondary Social Services, integrated by childhood and youth populations, adults (women), and families which are socially excluded, unprotected or dependant, needing socio-educational and psychosocial attention

The diversification of different lines of work and the provision of multiple and innovative social services, along with the organizational capacities to build a strong, influential and connected network inside the Basque Country, has made of Agintzari an important social innovation case. As described by Cristina Ojanguren, referent of innovation of Agintzari, *“Agintzari are people which work with people and for people, closely working with public institutions to attend and solve social problems through an innovative approach...”* (...) *“our values are based on innovation, social progress, social justice, equality and democracy, through a self-managing process, which has become innovative in its own way”*. Transparency, inter-cooperation, the social and economic sustainability of their programs has build a self managed organizational model where social innovation is seen as a collective process involving multiple agents through four important principles:

- **Autonomy:** The small teams are directly linked to their environments of actions and have autonomy to make their own decisions with the client and the social target group. The social target group co-participates in the different activities and services with the public institutions.
- **Creativity:** The activities of the organization are based in spaces of co-creation linked to the different projects and the different activities where participants work together to improve the quality of the services and provide a quality attention to solve and attend different social needs.
- **Shared Leadership:** Important decisions inside the social cooperative are made at different strategic levels, depending on the context of action. Every team inside the cooperative has a person responsible for the work of the whole team, representing its members in the important organic decisions. These decisions reach the different social action collectives.
- **Heterogeneity:** Actions are different and adapted to the diverse contexts and target populations of the places where they are applied. These actions always have an experimentation and creative phase where specific co-creation teams can be build depending on the social need or problem.



Agintzari's activities depends on public funded programs and projects delivered by public administrations and other institutions through public contracts where we identify four different types of clients at different levels: 1) Municipal Public entities from the Social Services Departments; 2) Territorial and Regional Public Entities of the Basque Government; 3) Public Entities from other Regions in Spain; 4) Local based entities focused in the delivery of Social Services. The model of intervention is therefore based on public-private partnerships and modes of collaboration, where Agintzari strongly identifies and influences new social needs and social problems that need to be addressed, that is, policy failures that haven't been identified by the public institutions.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The majority of the knowledge gaps in the innovation process of Agintzari have been related to its' process of expansion and the management and on going re-adaptation of the organization. The organization was composed in 1990 by 15 workers, in 2010 there were 250 and in 2016 they have grown up to 500 people working for Agintzari. The management of the successful milestones achieved by Agintzari derived in a big internal crisis inside the organization. In words of the Director of Innovation Mikel Gorostizaga:

“One of the major challenges that we have been able to learn about has been the huge changes in the managing model of the organization, which evolved into an important crisis, and was basically related to the lack of capabilities to manage the growth of the organization and the rate of complexity it was acquiring”.

These gaps have been fought through the involvement in networks, the creation of self-managed teams and the importance of marketing and communication strategies.

The organization realised the importance of networks inside and outside the cooperative's domains to create new knowledge, manage this knowledge internally, and train and find working profiles that would best adapt to the goals of the organization. Learning from what other entities are doing, both nationally and internationally has been very important. The establishment of open networks of collaboration with public institutions and universities such as Innobasque and the different Universities in the Basque Country has been crucial to identify and analyse new social needs. Agintzari is now part of different networks such as:

- The Forum of Immigration of the Basque Country
- The Basque Commissions of Social Services and Infancy
- The Networks of Entities of Alternative and Solidary Economies (REAS-Redes de Economías Alternativas y Solidarias)
- The European Anti-Poverty Network
- Gizardatz (Basque Network of Entities of Social Intervention)



- International Federation of Educational Communities (FICE)

Another important gap has been related to the Agintzari's economic and technical dependence on public administrations. The inclusion and collaboration with the mentioned networks has also been crucial in this process. Through these memberships and participations Agintzari not only generated new knowledge and identified new social needs to be addressed, but it also reached some degree of lobby pressure over public administrations to support what the cooperative evaluates important and innovative social projects. An example of this process can be found in the cooperative collaboration with REAS (the Networks of Entities of Alternative and Solidary Economies) that works in different regions of Spain. An important part of the activity done by this network is focused on raising awareness about the different activities that are held in the different regions, influencing Public Administrations to fund and support the activities and entities which belong to the network, and creating a collaborative community of social organizations and entrepreneurs. According to Mikel Gorostizaga:

“We also use networks to face public administrations and generate some influence on the social factors we think should be supported. If we had to face on our own these relations with the public administrations it would be very difficult to influence and make a difference”.

Among the different tools they have used to face the growth of the organization there has been the development of co-creation activities, extended leadership in the management of the different projects through new management teams, project teams, informative assemblies, screening activities and proposals. These are recognized by Agintzari as tools that serve the model of management and that they see as socially innovative tools since they involve different actors, agents, partners, social target groups, etc.

Involving the different array of actors, institutions, partners, social groups, agents and social entrepreneurs has been crucial. Learning has been built through activities of collective creation among all the interested parties. In Mikel's words *“if you belief in what you do you are able to create, and if all parties aren't participating and are part of this creation it is very difficult that they belief, they have to be protagonists and feel they are part of something that is being collectively generated” (...)* *“if we conducted these activities through for example, social labs it would be very difficult to adapt the ideas generated in these labs to reality, social innovation cannot be build in a lab”.*

Communication activities have also been an important factor inside the organization. However, the approach to communication and marketing strategies has been more focused on face to face encounters rather than in the use of new technologies of information and communication. They have their own training rooms inside Agintzari, where they organize different activities such as workshops, training programs, weekly informative meetings, etc.



Following Mikel Gorostizaga's words *"we want people to come to our organization to see what we do, to get to know us. All activities are physically developed here, we have two training activities per week where we have 20 plus participants, a General Assembly with the different partners once every month, dissemination activities of what we have been working on are held twice a year, and we also develop three Annual Reports to inform about our work. We diffuse these Reports to all the people that we work with. We have a very active newsletter, and we are always trying to engage with new organizations"*.

Learning has been acquired basically through the innovation process, that is, they have been learning as they have been growing as an organization. In this sense, the learning process has been mainly reactive to the problems they have encountered. These problems have been mainly related to the need to achieve more funding and influence inside public administrations, the diffusion of the impact of our activities, the engagement with new actors/agents, and improving the management of the organization as it was evolving. Being a social cooperative of public utility implies that they had to follow and be consequent with what being a cooperative means in terms of salaries, the professionalization of the organization, etc. For example, they don't hire new workers without a University Degree as major policy inside Agintzari's Human Resources department

This learning process has also dealt with the discovery of new social needs that emerged in their contextual domains and had to be addressed. Agintzari emphasizes the fact that a lot of the social services that the Public Institutions deliver today were first addressed by organizations like their own. These needs and services have been institutionalized and there are always new policy failures and gaps to be identified. This implies that they have to stay alert and learn from the context and the people they work with, being able to understand what their problems are and how can these problems be solved. Once they do that, they have to manage to influence Public Administrations to address these problems through the funding of new projects or by directly changing or modifying the social services they deliver. That is to Agintzari a very important social innovation and a learning process in itself. Without this measures, Agintzari, would not have been able to develop the different training programs and socio-educational public services it has co-design along with the social services departments of different city councils in the Basque Country.

3. DISCUSSION

Agintzari has grown to be the social cooperative it is today in relation to the ways in which they shared their problems, their knowledge and managed their success. Communication and gradual adaptation to the different contexts and historical periods has also been very important for the continuous growth and attraction of different resources. Also, most of the actions developed by Agintzari were framed inside specific projects and training programs, which were directly connected to a certain way of self-management through specific teams and extended leadership. According to Tomasso Vitale, this



approach “favours gradual processes open to ongoing correction and modification, and attracts resources from outside the organization, while creating arenas for involving and making the most of each contribution to the projects (both in financial terms and in terms of voluntary work)” (Vitale, 2010: 89).

Agintzari also demonstrates a high degree of reflexivity behind every activity and strategy they put into practice. This and the fact that all its members are well trained graduated workers, increases the organisations’ capacity to plan, analyse, anticipate and better understand the social problems they are addressing, also increasing the chances for internal and external learning. The historical trajectory of the organization, the experience of its workers and their high engagement with the context benefits and legitimizes their connection with the rest of actors and agents they work with, by demonstrating a very high level of expertise.

In this sense, Agintzari doesn’t answer to untrained social organizational models where there is a big distance between their capabilities to manage the organization and the expertise applied to the social problems they are trying to solve. Agintzari learned in a gradual incremental manner professionalizing itself and increasing its level of complexity, but always focused on the institutional environment where the organization developed their activities (Martinelli et al. 2010).

In socially innovative terms, the satisfaction of human needs, the empowerment of marginalised social groups and communities or the change in power relations, cannot be achieved without an adequate internal and external governance model (Moulaert et. al., 2007). This model focuses the growth of the organization directly related to its connections with stakeholders and other partners. Following the premises of situated learning theory, in a “community of practice”, the context influences the learning capabilities of the group or the organizations through the development of its activities. This community shares a common set of problems, they learn about these problems and how to find solutions by mutually influencing each other, increasing in the process their knowledge and their level of expertise (Wenger, 1998, 2002).

In the case of Agintzari, public funding could be seen as an important constraint, but the level of engagement with public institutions has also helped influence the public design of social services by detecting and analysing social needs and policy failures that weren’t recognized by public institutions. This has strongly legitimized the position and prestige of Agintzari in the contextual institutional environment where it develops its activities.

Acknowledging that learning activities can be classified into different levels: individual, group, organization, etc.; in the case of Agintzari, the network level has been equally important. That is to say, the open “inter-organizational network learning” (Knight, 2002) has been an important asset for the organisations’ internal and external acquisition of knowledge. Most of Agintzari’s success as a social cooperative has been based on the importance on its’ capacity to engage with networks at different



levels, not only by influencing and sharing knowledge, but also by supporting their activities and favouring their expansion.

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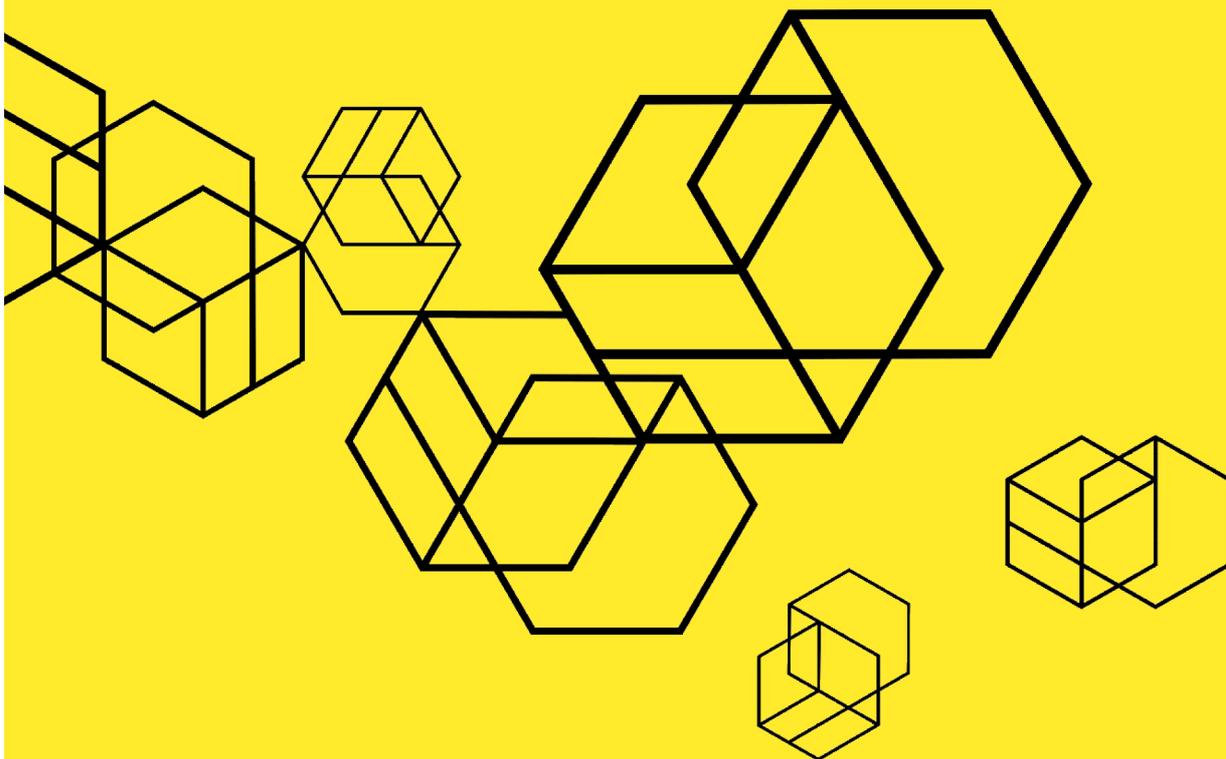
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

T4.1: Girls' Education Challenge

Young Foundation





T4.1: Girls' Education Challenge

ABSTRACT

This case analyses the processes of learning by which the UK Department for International Development has evaluated the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC). The Challenge Fund was launched in 2012 with the intention to disburse £300 million to 37 different projects across 18 different countries. This is an example of where a government intervention is utilising the tools and methods of social innovation- namely the challenge fund model- in order to engender social change. It is therefore an example of government operating as a social innovation 'intermediary'. This is a very large project constituting the largest donor funded programme on girls' education. The initial business case for the project stated that the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL) processes were planned to be ambitious because of the size of the project, its innovative character and the opportunities to fill gaps in knowledge for future policy makers and donors.

The MEAL had three different dimensions (See the Girls Education Challenge Business Case for more information): (1) An independent external evaluation conducted by a consortium led by COFFEY International- selected through competitive tender (2) The Fund Manager, a consortium led by PwC, who will support projects in monitoring and evaluation (3) Individual projects also have the responsibility to collect some of their own monitoring and evaluation data.

The programme was subject to logical frameworks from the start and the business case defined a set of expected results and critical success criteria. The project was also subject to continual learning and adaptation processes which meant that learning could inform the functioning of the project, this has been managed through an annual review process.

Key aspects of learning have been:

- Assisting in developing the broader evidence base around best practice in extending educational provision in developing country contexts.
- Understanding emerging critical intervention areas within education
- Learning from the programme implementation and in order to be able to adapt the programme to achieve better outcomes. In particular learning how to better adapt frameworks to context.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT



The Girls' Education Challenge is a £355 million fund provided by the Department for International Development. The fund was established in order to help improve the lives of up to one million of the world's most marginalised girls and young women (Griffiths et al., 2015a).

Globally 62 million girls between the ages of 6 and 15 are not in school (World Bank Group Education, 2016). Indeed 16 million girls between the ages 6 and 11 will never enter school, compared to 8 million boys (World Bank Group Education, 2016). This inequity provides a very clear reason to focus on the gaps in educational provision. Moreover there is a sizeable literature suggesting that the benefits of educating young women outweighs the benefits of educating young men, particularly when the impact on fertility and the next generation is taken into account (Klasen & Lamanna, 2009; Hill & King, 1995).

It is estimated that in low income countries every dollar invested in schooling, and particularly in educating girls, generates \$10 dollars in earnings and health benefits (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity, 2016). In addition there is some evidence (based on Solow-growth frameworks) that gender gaps in education have a large and statistically significant impact upon GDP (King & Hill, 1997; Knowles et al., 2002).

We must caveat these findings to acknowledge the inherent difficulties in trying to quantify the social and economic benefits of women's education, however there is now significant data available on this issue to suggest that there are indeed positive impacts.

With this in mind, the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) was developed. The GEC business case (2012) for the project states:

“The rationale for this proposal to invest an additional £355 million on girls' education rests on a large body of evidence suggesting that improved female education is causally related to economic growth, reduced poverty, significant reductions in under 5 and maternal mortality and a range of other social and environmental benefits.”

The project has been implemented in 18 different countries, many of which exhibit characteristics of complex emergencies (such as conflict and/or disasters). The project attempts to target some of the world's most marginalised girls and therefore almost half of the girls targeted live in unstable contexts, such as Afghanistan, Somalia and South Sudan, in which access to education is tied to issues of security.

In addition the GEC has had to adapt some very extreme conditions including the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa and the earthquakes in Nepal (Girls Education Challenge, 2015). The difficulty of negotiating some of these situations has called for a particularly adaptive approach to management of projects, as well as to MEAL (Girls Education Challenge, 2016).

From a UK Government perspective DFID has been one of the most progressive departments when it



comes to building an evidence base with which to make decisions. The UK's aid budget is consistently under scrutiny and therefore looking to demonstrate value for money. In 2011 the Independent Commission on Aid Impact (ICAI) was developed in order to scrutinise British aid. This combined with the stewardship of Chris Whitty, DFID's Director of Research and Evidence, has led the department to take an approach, particularly to this flagship programme, which is focused on learning and on evidence generation and use.

This case, then in line with the departmental context and the wider need to facilitate greater access to and quality of education for girls, has put in place an intricate and multifaceted process of monitoring, evaluation and learning.

THE CASE

The Girls' Education Challenge project began in 2012 when the Department for International Development pledged a challenge fund in order to improve educational provision for one million girls and young women.

The GEC is a form of intermediary support that focuses particularly on supporting and scaling innovative ways of improving access to and quality of education. The articulation of support in the form of a challenge fund can be viewed as the direct use of a common social innovation tool. Challenge Funds are frequently used along with approaches like acceleration, incubation, and co-design in order to foster social innovation.

The fund operates a four-year implementation cycle and is designed to try and ensure that high quality delivery and monitoring are built into the delivery of each project.

The structure of the project includes:

- **Fund managers:** The funds are outsourced to a consortium, a common donor practice, due to the high administration costs. Outsourcing is conducted through competitive bidding. DFID has selected management consulting companies such as PwC, KPMG, Landon Mills, Coffey International and Nathan Associates. There are two consortiums working on the project: one is responsible for management and the other for external evaluation and therefore learning.
- **Internal GEC team in DFID:** The DFID team provides strategic oversight. An independent provider is contracted to monitor and evaluate the functions of the Fund and assess its effectiveness.
- **Evaluation consortium:** An external consortium was convened in order to analyse programme performance from an external position.

The DFID contract for the GEC sets out clear design principles for the Fund, with justifications. It is supposed to be administered in a way that is (Murray et al., 2015):

- Competitive – to drive high performance
- Responsive – so the GEC can adapt to emerging evidence and fund a variety of projects
- Structured – with clear criteria and incentives to derive the full benefits of scale



- Straight-forward – with a clear rationale for its model and approach, keeping the level of complexity to the minimum compatible with achieving the Fund’s aims.

This project operates on a payment-by-result dimension wherein projects must achieve certain targets in order to access the full funds. This additionally pushes up the need to ensure that a robust way of measuring outcomes is delivered. It also increases the need for projects to learn from the various monitoring and evaluating processes (e.g. the baselining).

The fund is administered in three streams, or ‘windows’ across 37 projects in 18 countries. Whilst each of these windows work towards the same high-level GEC outcomes around improved retention, attendance and learning for marginalised girls, each window has a specific focus on a particular way or stage of innovating

In order to build an innovation eco-system the GEC approach recognises that different kinds of innovation are necessary. In the first place support is required for approaches that are totally new. Secondly support is needed for those ideas that are looking to scale. Thirdly support is needed in order to build partnerships of people who wouldn’t ordinarily work together, as collaboration of unlikely partners can be a key driver of social innovation. The GEC recognises that stimulation may be necessary to encourage new partners to engage and that some projects need lower, initial levels of support to demonstrate their effectiveness. This is why GEC adopted the multi-window approach which are structured as:

INNOVATION:

Within the Innovation Window, the GEC awarded £30 million across 19 projects that test new ideas to support marginalised girls to learn.

These innovations could include technological solutions, the development of new partnerships, applying successful approaches to new contexts, communities or age groups, and engaging women in decision-making.

The innovation window aims to support 246,000 marginalised girls across 12 of the GEC target countries (Griffiths et al., 2015).

STEP CHANGE:

The step-change stream scales up successful interventions that are already having a positive impact. Projects are chosen that complement innovative and well-evidenced projects that already have agreement from state authorities and demonstrate sustainability beyond the life of the Girls’ Education Challenge.

As of 2015 there were 14 step-change programmes put in place through ngos and charities



(including: CARE International; Save the Children UK; PLAN International)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:

This stream is focused on creating new partnerships with the private sector including: Discovery Communications; The Coca-Cola Company; Avanti Communication; and Ericsson.

Up to £15m of match-funding is provided to support Strategic Partnerships between Department for International Development (DFID) and private sector Lead Partners working with other organisations who want to engage in this important area. This has proved to be a challenging stream and as of a review in September 2015 there will be further consideration of how to take this further.

The projects that are supported are selected through a process that has been designed for transparency. They are each assessed according to their ability to develop and implement innovative ways to:

- 01** Increase the number of girls in school
- 02** Increase the amount of time girls spend in school
- 03** Improve the quality of the education that is received.

The GEC funds a wide range of stakeholders from NGOs and charities to the private sector and has a particular focus on establishing partnerships, particularly with the private sector.

This project was originally envisaged as an 8-year programme, with the first phase planned to span from 2012-2016, however the first stage has now been extended to 2017 in order to adjust for delays in delivering the monitoring and evaluation requirements.

The aim of the project is not just to find new and innovative ways of tackling the gaps in girls' education but also to capture and share significant learning on how to improve access and quality of education for girls. As a result of this, significant time and resource has been put in to understanding the performance of the challenge funds, learning and adapting to that knowledge.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The project is an example of a very rigorous analysis of intermediary support. It has not only put in place good processes for baselining and for capacity building but it has also built in scope for adaptation to interim findings. We are currently at the stage where findings have formed the basis for recommendations and these must feed in to the project.



AIMS OF THE LEARNING

From the very earliest stage of the project there has been in-depth consideration of how the monitoring and learning functions should work. This led to a programme design which had highly embedded research and learning. This was put in place in order to feed first three of the main learning aims:

- Assisting in developing the broader evidence base around best practice in extending educational provision in developing country contexts.
- Understanding emerging critical needs within all of the education projects
- Learning from the programme implementation in order to be able to adapt the programme to achieve better outcomes. In particular learning how to better adapt frameworks to context.
- Applying learning to future projects.

METHODOLOGY

The structure of the monitoring, evaluation and learning of this project appears like this:

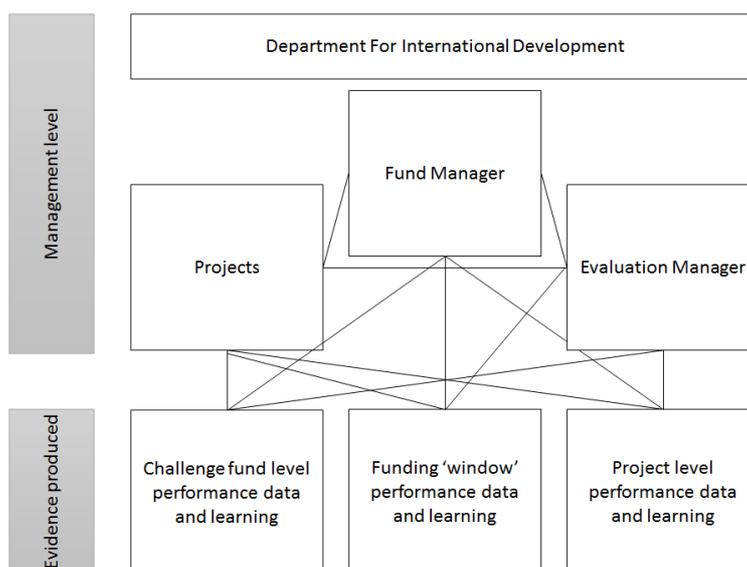


Figure 1: Evidence gathering structures

The monitoring, evaluation and learning works at multiple levels in this project. It happens at the fund level as well as at the programme level. The MEAL framework (ibid), therefore, had three different dimensions:

- 01 The Fund Manager** is in place to support projects in monitoring and evaluation. They lay out acceptable methodologies for each programme evaluation which is tailored to the



kind of project. In addition managers lay out requirements on issues like sample sizes and targets.

- 02 Individual projects** have a responsibility to collect some of their own monitoring and evaluation data. Each project must have a clear theory of change by which their intervention will deliver and specify a number of realistic outcomes over a given timeframe. These outcomes form the basis of a payment-by-results framework. Projects are kept under regular review to ensure that inputs in their project application's theory of change are in place. These take the form of quantitative measures like the number of school textbooks purchased and qualitative measures like gender-specific teaching. Innovation window projects and partnership projects are not subjected to the same payment by results requirements, because they focus on discovering new approaches that could be scaled up and rolled out in the future.
- 03 Independent Evaluation Manager**, this was conducted by a consortium led by COFFEY International- selected through competitive tender. The evaluation managers conduct baselining across the different windows as well as supporting the projects and providing a broader view across the project as a whole.

These three streams work together in order to ensure that there is enough data to analyse the following three dimensions of the project:

- 01 Project performance:** Information and learning is collected that focuses on the performance of projects and the extent to which the projects meet the objectives of the fund, namely increasing access to and quality of girls' education. It also seeks, where appropriate, to understand project context and reasons behind projects struggling to meet their objectives or to fulfil their monitoring obligations.
- 02 Funding window performance:** Each funding window goes through a baselining and evaluation process in order to learn how each of the funding windows are performing and to gather learning on the processes required in order to effectively foster the types of projects in each window.
- 03 Challenge fund performance:** The fund is also reviewed on a higher level in order to understand how the project is functioning.

The mission to build the evidence base out of this work means that there are attempts to include programme level customised research methodologies as well as cross project comparable data and higher level process based evidence. In addition, the external evaluators use a customised approach at the funding 'window' level. This means in practice that different types of methodologies are used for the different kinds of projects being funded. A project in the step-change window can be subjected to more rigorous testing than one in the 'innovation' window. As a result of this different methodological approaches are used in both.

The independent evaluation, conducted by the independent evaluation manager, as already stated, uses a number of different methods including case studies, qualitative interviews, quantitative surveys and ethnographic thematic research in four countries. In some cases randomised control trials have been used in order to try and establish the effect size of interventions. However, this has been used where appropriate and was clearly not applicable to every setting or for every window.



LEARNING AND FINDINGS

Whilst the project has not yet been completed it is the case that a number of findings have been reported both in annual review and in the external evaluation. This learning is being incorporated into the project in order to improve performance. Below are a selection of findings from the project up to this stage (Griffiths et al., 2015; Girls Education Challenge, 2015b).

Four intervention areas have emerged in early learning as critical across all projects. They are:

- Securing foundational learning skills in literacy and numeracy
- Ensuring teachers have appropriate skills, positive attitudes and continued support to improve
- Increasing girls' self-esteem to engender support from peers and family
- Providing economic support for communities, parents and girls.

Projects have struggled to understand and address the complexities of educational marginalisation.

Projects were supposed to target the 'most' marginalised however there was a lack of information about levels of marginalisation. Where projects defined their target groups narrowly this, in some cases, resulted in difficulties addressing the full complexity of marginalisation.

An inception phase was badly needed in order to meet the demands of the anticipated outcomes.

The inception phase would have been useful from both an evaluation and a management perspective. When a complex programme is in place that demands multiple levels of monitoring and evaluation, it is necessary to design and set up the management systems from the start in order to facilitate this. The time scale on this programme meant that this was not in place and this presented problems including confusion for applicants as well as knock on effects throughout the contracting and baseline stages.

Monitoring and evaluation can be conducted even in challenging contexts as long as it is properly managed and the capacity is present.

Consistent application of rigorous standards is possible even in the most difficult settings. However, it is often resource intensive and can require significant amounts of 'hand holding'. M&E capacity has in some cases been lacking and this has had the potential to undermine the quality of the evidence produced.

Involving DFID Country offices is beneficial, even in this centrally funded project.

Country offices are frequently sources of knowledge. There was little role for country offices in the initial plans for the project however it was found that when officers from country offices were engaged there



were positive outcomes.

The strategic partnerships window has been difficult to implement and new approaches are needed for engaging with private stakeholders.

Private companies frequently have different methods and processes of working than INGOs and this will require that there are adaptations made to the way that they are engaged with.

Payment by results can lead to robust evidence of results but context must be considered in implementation.

Whilst payment-by-results was an effective way of raising the level of rigour in evaluation, many smaller organisations, or those working in fragile contexts, struggle with payment-by-results. Some had worries about the ethical, security and practical issues surrounding payment-by-results requirements such as around the use of control groups.

LEARNING PROCESSES

The GEC has a number of processes by which learning takes place. First of all, this occurs through the work that the fund managers do with programmes. This is supplemented with reporting that takes place along the way, both external and internal.

In addition, the GEC, along with the Centre for Education Innovations is hosting an online community of practice for members of GEC-funded projects to share knowledge and learning from their own experiences. Members can contact one another, ask questions and participate in discussions.

There are also indications that the learning from this programme is being incorporated into the development of future projects.

3. DISCUSSION

There is very little research that looks to analyse the monitoring, evaluation and learning practices of intermediary support for social innovation. The social innovation community is relatively new and whilst there is now a greater focus on understanding processes and practices there are few tools in place to help people to do this more effectively. The EU Tepsie (2014) project looked at research on intermediaries and found:

"Within the literature we reviewed there is a lack of research on the role of intermediaries, federations and umbrella organisations in the spread and growth of social innovations. In particular it is important to understand how best to structure these intermediary organisations so that they can be most effective."



There are some fields within social innovation where there is a greater emphasis on monitoring, evaluation and learning. If we look for example at impact investing there are a large number of tools available that help people to learn. IRIS metrics, for example provides a large number of tools that impact investors can use to understand the performance of an enterprise. However other forms of intermediary support have less well developed monitoring, evaluation and learning tools available.

The EU funded project Transition utilised a case study based analysis in order to draw lessons about how best to support and scale social innovation transnationally. Indeed the case study approach has tended to be the most popular form of data used when attempting to understand how social innovation intermediaries are performing. This is perhaps understandable given the very context specific nature of innovative projects. Certainly if we look at the GEC there has been an understanding that the innovation window requires different approaches to monitoring and learning that, for example, the step change window which is more focused upon scaling.

In addition, participatory and action research techniques are sometimes used in order to address issues that innovators may be facing throughout their support process. What is interesting in the way that the learning has functioned in this project is that it appears to have used case studies and an action learning style approach but they have also combined this with other qualitative and quantitative methods (including RCTs) and log-framing in order to build up a multifaceted evidence base that not only measures progress but vets the nature of that progress.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning processes are increasingly embedded into the development community. Development researchers have long utilised a wide variety of qualitative, quantitative and participatory methods to try and capture an understanding of how projects are implemented. This case study can be seen to be a thorough- even by international development standards- analysis of intermediary support.

This case demonstrates the leading edge role that can be taken by government departments in producing evidence and learning around projects. The process of monitoring, evaluating and learning using the methods required by this project can be costly, and often is too expensive for organisations to bear. In the case of the GEC the cost of the M&E represents 5% of total grant disbursement (Brain et al., 2014). Operations of this size can be an efficient way of delivering learning for a number of other stakeholders when efforts to monitor and evaluate are effectively coordinated.



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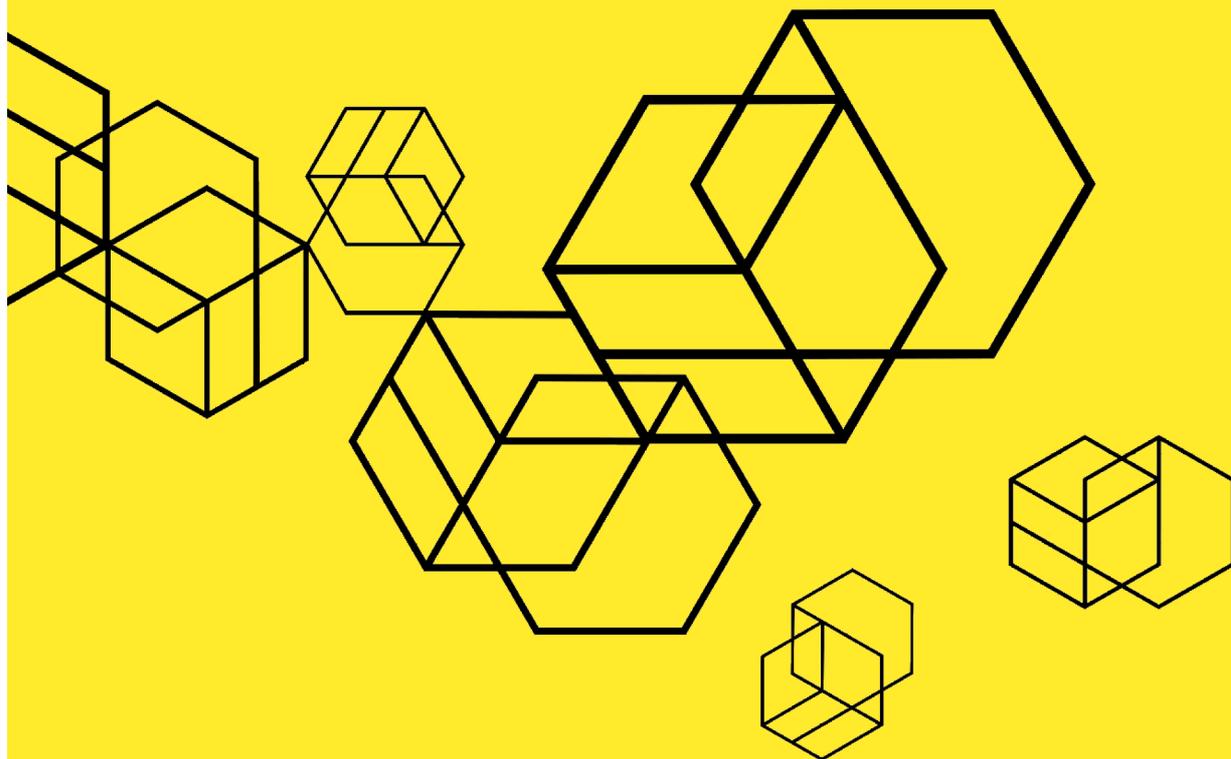
**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Case Study „Lernhaus“ Austria

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Case Study „Lernhaus“ Austria

1. ABSTRACT

The Lernhaus, established in 2011, is an institution run by the Red Cross in Austria where children and youth between six and 15 years receive teaching aid and tutoring free of charge. Lernhaus provides this service mostly in a non-school environment with professional personnel supported by volunteers who work with children in small groups or individual settings. Early assistance, starting in elementary school is a key asset of the project. This helps to prevent early discouragement or negative routines settling in and thus to overcome deficits and social exclusion. For older children during their year of graduation (at age 15) the project offers specific modules for finding occupations or further forms of education. Lernhaus has one location in Vienna, supporting ca. 60 children and young people each year, and three smaller locations in Lower Austria (the province around Vienna) and two in Tyrol. These locations are generally smaller and tied closer to individual schools.

Lernhaus started out as a top-down initiative of socially responsible companies and executives seeking for an issue to address. It is a distinct and somewhat new project of a large NGO that is active in many fields. Entering a new and emerging field with a combination of externally hired project creators, fairly young project managers and volunteers, the project soon established its own domain, and managers enjoyed considerable discretion - but at the cost of some overburdening and staff turnover. Stakeholders had to learn to balance their targets and publicity benefits against the operational logic of the project, and project managers learned to better transfer knowledge and also to formalise some procedures and practices: having disadvantaged youths negotiate targets with project managers, monitoring their progress with a software tool and improving both children's and volunteers' attendance through the introduction of a contract are new practices and methods with roots in new public management, consultancy and pedagogy.

2. CASE DESCRIPTION

The Lernhaus, established in 2011, is an institution run by the Red Cross in Austria where children and youth between six and 15 years receive teaching aid and tutoring free of charge. Lernhaus provides this service mostly in a non-school environment with professional personnel supported by volunteers who work with children in small groups or individual settings. Early assistance, starting in elementary school is a key asset of the project. This helps to prevent early discouragement or negative routines settling in and thus to overcome deficits and social exclusion. For older children during their year of graduation (at



age 15) the project offers specific modules for finding occupations or further forms of education. Lernhaus has one location in Vienna, supporting ca. 60 children and young people each year, and three smaller locations in Lower Austria (the province around Vienna) and two in Tyrol. These locations are generally smaller and tied closer to individual schools. The guiding principle of Lernhaus is to assist children to graduate from compulsory school and thus build capacities and opportunities for socially and/or economically disadvantaged groups. Even though the project does not exclusively target groups of migrants and/or refugees, a significant share of Lernhaus-children belong to these groups.

The new solution that is delivered by the Lernhaus is first and foremost the assistance for children in school related matters mostly in a non-school environment. Combining professional teachers and social workers and volunteers is nothing entirely new or innovative in itself, but leads to a high-quality service and positively widens interactions between children and the adults teaching them. The project relies on three distinct pools of volunteers: first, Red Cross volunteers who choose to work at the Lernhaus, second, the University of Business and Economy Vienna (WU Wien) initiated a programme in cooperation with the aid agency Caritas, under the name 'Lernen macht Schule' (Learning catches on/makes a school – a pun in German), where university students become volunteers for one of the participating organizations and third, cooperating companies send employees as volunteers to work at the Lernhaus (foremost the consultancy Accenture).

THE CONTEXT: The Austrian education system

Children and young people from socially and economically disadvantaged groups in Austria have very low projected levels of higher education and often struggle to get employment. The Austrian school system is notoriously socially selective. Children are streamed into higher or lower secondary education at age 10. Many schools offer classes only half-day, assuming one parent is available to provide childcare, supervise often extensive homework and educational leisure activities in the afternoon. This system renders public schools particularly unable to fully include migrant children and children of other disadvantaged groups into the education system. Families who lack social and/or economic capital and language skills, with parents often working long or antisocial hours for low wages, frequently struggle to keep up with the daily school routine. As the more advantaged children tend to gather in secondary school or grammar school ('Gymnasium'), children from poorer and lower-educated families tend to concentrate in lower secondary education (formerly 'Hauptschule', today 'Neue Mittelschule'). In general, the educational standard in lower secondary schools is significantly lower than in high schools and a common problem concerns the mediocre levels of German spoken and written by the children. Nonetheless, receiving a formal degree of lower secondary school is deemed critical for entering an apprenticeship, the paid, dual mode of vocational training in industry, some services or trades. Hence, tutoring and establishing café-like learning spaces (that may count as 'third spaces' in between home and school with extra possibilities for interactions and experience) appears as a social innovation that mostly compensates the deficiencies of the education system in including and supporting disadvantaged children and youths.



THE INITIATIVE'S HISTORY

The start: a charity fund looking for a purpose

The initiative has its roots in a charity foundation (KAA) established by a newspaper and several companies in collaboration with the Austrian Red Cross first to provide humanitarian aid for natural disasters. After 2011 the fund changed its emphasis. The founding members looked for targets for aid that were in line with Austrian regulations of foundations' public benefit status, with founding members' marketing strategies and CSR considerations, and opened the possibility to receive public funding as well. With this mix of objectives, focusing on children and young people as a target group seemed obvious. In cooperation with Accenture the project was expanded to a wider target group, including youth up to school-leaving age.

Founding members were the Austrian Red Cross, the federal guild for construction, the banking conglomerate Raiffeisen and the insurance company UNIQA. Other sponsors were acquired over time. An important partner was found in the University for Business and Economics Vienna, which established a project for distributing volunteer students to various initiatives and also hosted the Lernhaus. Two years into the project, the consulting company Accenture, a long-time (financial) partner and sponsor of the Austrian Red Cross was approached and invited to cooperate on the Lernhaus. Accenture in this cooperation provides financial funds, pro bono consulting (and IT application development).

Among partners, two conflicting logics can be discerned: on the one hand the funding partners strived for a publicly well-known showcase project. The Austrian Red Cross was focused on implementing a high-quality project, providing services for its clients. Accenture was most keen about getting publicity about the activities via the newspaper. Working out how to balance the different interests and outcomes between questions of quantity and quality, publicity and orientation towards its clients, and what the project evolved to over the years, took time and discussions. On the operative level, in the geographically and substantially divergent Lernhaus, managers of the sub-projects enjoy considerable discretion nevertheless. They took most decisions themselves and checked for approval later.

While early on the initiative worked on a small scale in terms of numbers of supported children, it continuously grew until in Vienna, it reached the facility's limits capacities around 2014/15. The initiative was then taken up in two other Austrian provinces by regional divisions of the Austrian Red Cross. The first Lernhaus outside of Vienna was founded in Neunkirchen, Lower Austria in early 2013. A second location in St. Pölten opened in in late 2013 in cooperation with a local elementary school (sharing the school facilities). The third location in Lower Austria was established in 2014 in Gänserndorf. In 2014 another Lernhaus was founded in Kufstein, Tyrol and in 2016 a Lernhaus in Wörgl, also Tyrol, opened its doors. There are also talks with the Styrian Red Cross Association about opening a location there. However, provincial Red Cross organisations need to find their own funds to set up a Lernhaus.



Gaining momentum and professionalization

While early on the initiative worked on a small scale in terms of numbers of supported children, it continuously grew until in Vienna, it reached the facility's limits capacities around 2014/15. Expanding the initiative was deliberately planned. The programme was set out to act as a model for the education for disadvantaged groups and, using publicity channels via the Kurier newspaper, strategically aimed for media and public attention for both the initiative and its sponsors. It was clearly designed as a blueprint for imitation by Red Cross associations in other Austrian provinces and for external actors. The Lernhaus for instance was an agenda point at an annual Red Cross meeting on migration, where other Red Cross province representatives attended and where local projects were made available for imitation. However, provincial Red Cross organisations need to find their own funds to set up a Lernhaus.

Even though the newly founded locations are based on the same principles and concept, they are no mere imitations but have been adapted according to needs, possibilities and the specific environment. Establishing a new location was driven by identifying the need for support and while the chosen locations satisfied this aspect, funds were scarce and it was decided not to use separate facilities, but rather to use existing structures or to cooperate with schools where the need was most prevalent.

Knowledge transfer happened concerning expansion to Lower Austria and expansion in Tyrol. Representatives from Lower Austria and from Tyrol visited the Vienna Lernhaus and learned about how to organize and structure such a project in their environments and within existing structures and possibilities. Even though the newly founded locations are based on the same principles and concept, they are no mere imitations but have been adapted according to needs, possibilities and the specific environment. As funds in the provinces were scarce, it was decided not to use separate facilities, but rather to use existing structures or to cooperate with schools where the need was most prevalent. As a result, the programme had to be adjusted to the existing context, using facilities when available, working with fewer employees and focusing on pupils from specific schools and also accepting restrictions imposed by schools. The Lernhaus branches in Lower Austria and Tyrol have no own facilities but cooperate with local schools and use classrooms at the school's premises in the afternoon. The focus lies only on elementary students; youths are not included.

Networks of projects

At present, the Lernhaus project is generally deemed a success and further regional expansion is possible, but there are structural and resource-based limitations - and other, similar initiatives in the field are also being developed. This is not seen as competition since Lernhaus is very aware of its limited resources and the operative level certainly has a preference for focusing on quality over rapid expansion.



Lernhaus was soon joined by other, similar initiatives with different roots in established and new NGOs, civil society and the municipality of Vienna. When the Lernhaus started, a Caritas Lerncafé in Graz was visited to see how work is done there. After the Lernhaus was already established in Vienna, Caritas decided to open Lerncafes in Vienna as well and for this purpose the founders visited the Lernhaus and information and knowledge was exchanged back again. The relationship between these programmes is described as very open and forthcoming. Over the past few years new players entered the field or established players extended their portfolio towards similar activities as a result of firstly, general concerns about inclusion in education, and secondly recent immigration. The programme 'Förderung 2.0' (Support 2.0) initiated by the social-democratic city government of Vienna (in response to the persistent lack of progress in national reforms of the education system) and the municipal community colleges (Volkshochschulen) aims at providing learning support for children. As neither the Red Cross nor KAA were involved in the implementation, it is debatable if the newly established initiatives were merely based on the apparent need for learning support or if they took the Lernhaus as a model.

There are few formal institutional structures that determine the network structure of the field, but there are regular meetings between professional sub-groups of organizations or individuals (regulars' tables). Organizations are usually open to share information with other players and cooperation is a mode to bundle resources or to get access to expertise. Jointly organized workshops, visits in other institutions or the simple transfer of clients to other institutions are common practice in the field and allow information and knowledge to spill to other projects or areas.

SOCIETAL IMPACT

End-users and volunteers

The Lernhaus foremost has impact on the participants' daily lives, improving their chances to successfully graduate from school, of participating in the labor market and of social integration. Due to the focus on high-quality services, the initiative has so far been limited with regard to the overall number of children and youths participating.

Besides the impact for the target group, the volunteer model allows for a wider expansion of social experience through the regular encounters between Accenture mentors, university learning buddies and Red Cross volunteers. These encounters are described by a mentor as extremely fulfilling. In a master's thesis on the project written by a volunteer the relationship is defined as 'modern volunteerism', where volunteers with different interests and motives are addressed and can be involved in the programme in tailored engagements according to their needs (Speckmayr, 2015).

Success and ways to get there were defined from the beginning. Success was defined as improvements in children's and youths' grades and graduation rates in school. Twice a year the Lernhaus employees write reports on the children's and youths' improvements and individual or project-



specific goals to concentrate on. This process is supported by a software application that helps monitoring the pupils learning progress, developed by the partner Accenture. Getting publicity-returns through the Kurier cooperation was also defined as an indicator of success for funding parties. Over time some of these initial goals changed, while others remained stable: Expansion plans were relying on the acquisition of new partners and funds. Likewise, expectations regarding publicity also fundamentally changed over time. Partners who had demanded regular coverage on the Lernhaus-engagement early on, later, with decreasing novelty of the Lernhaus, sensibly put less focus on this coverage.

Although the Lernhaus contributes to the reduction of educational disadvantages, its quantitative impact is not too great and over the past years many actors have started to work towards similar goals from varied starting points in education policy, other non-profit organizations and civil society. Still, the organization has some advantages over other actors that make them an influential initiative: with the Red Cross, it has a big umbrella organization that supports and helps to diffuse the idea and publicity is assured. Thus it can be argued that the initiative had more influence on the practice field than the bare numbers imply, but still must be considered a small project in a large landscape with many different actors.

TENSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Limited diffusion in Vienna

Even though the programme itself is regarded as rather successful in terms of assisting children and youth, enrolment numbers or attendance rates, there is still only one Lernhaus location in Vienna but already five in other provinces in Austria. There are (at least) two possible, interrelated explanations: first, friction between Austrian Red Cross and Viennese Red Cross over the responsibility for the project, and secondly, the political ties of the project.

Generally, in the current organizational structure of the Austrian Red Cross, the regional subsidiaries (on the province level) carry out actual project-work and accordingly have considerable discretion over their activities. However, Lernhaus was initiated on the federal level. This caused friction with the Viennese Red Cross which supposedly was not directly approached and offered to implement the project. Secondly, since the initiative started the founding members had repeatedly but unsuccessfully tried to approach the Viennese government for funding. This blockade may be ascribed to actors' different political camps (Christian conservative on the initiative's side and social democratic on the Viennese side) – a division that in Austria permeates wide sectors of civil society. These different political alignments made public funding and recognition difficult. There were several attempts to get the Mayor of Vienna interested in the project, but so far he has steadfastly declined every invitation. Possibly just because the subject and practice field is so uncontroversial in the general public's perception, competition and territoriality over small differences are exacerbated.



Budgets and staff turnover

Other constraints are somewhat common to the NGO sector. Despite having very potent funding parties, long-term budget planning is very difficult at Lernhaus. Pledges for funding usually are provided only for one year, making planning beyond this point very difficult for operative management as well as for the strategic side. Uncertainty about the project's future hampered the development and put extra strain on the employees.

The project also faced several crises due to staff turnover which at least slowed down the project's development. In the initial phase of project development an external person was hired to form a project around the idea. When the Lernhaus finally commenced, and was handed over to the Red Cross Division Law, Migration and Education, this person left, officially, because he saw his part fulfilled. However, the knowledge transfer that should have happened was difficult. Interviewees supposed the the external expert was offended by having his project wrested from him by the larger organization and was hence reluctant to transfer knowledge to the head of the Law, Migration and Education division who took over. In 2013 both managers of the Viennese sub-projects (for younger and for older children respectively) left the organization and the wake of these leavings created some confusion over the Red Cross commitment.. However, the project's continuation was never severely threatened. On the operative level a number of different people managed the respective sub-projects, usually only staying less than two years. Even though staff repeatedly changed over the years, the project itself was less affected than in the beginning, because knowledge was increasingly passed on to other employees and colleagues and processes were already running and established.

Reasons for these multiple changes of staff lay in the uncertainty of the positions' ranking in the organization: the Red Cross initially defined the positions as students' part-time work positions at a low entrant's pay grade, defining the work as rather unskilled. However, the positions' actual requirements turned out to be very demanding in terms of skills, workload, stress level, responsibilities and psychological strain. Consequently, project managers were likely to feel overburdened and undervalued.

CONCLUSION: LEARNING ACTORS; ACTOR'S LEARNINGS

Lernhaus emerged as more of a top-down charity initiative by established large partner organisations, and strategic adaptations of target groups and expectations took place on this level. Operations are run by Red Cross and since it is a new activity in the organisation, the Lernhaus locations enjoy considerable discretion in running and adapting their activities. Managers of the sub-projects made most decisions themselves and checked for approval later. This eventually led to an actual division of decision-making processes between the global strategic questions, which are discussed within KAA and decisions on the operative level which are taken by the respective local project managers. Learning also occurred on these levels separately: with its top-down character, the project's learning chiefly



consisted in negotiating partners' different interests, identifying an attractive and meaningful cause, and balancing CSR, upscaling and target orientations. On the operative level, project managers and employees developed the voluntary and informal learning and support settings in interaction with the respective local environments. However, the operative level managed to shift the focus of partner organisations somewhat to a focus on end-users and quality support rather than top-down target setting.

The stakeholder level - negotiating expectations

Two conflicting sides can be discerned in partner organisations: on the one hand the funding partners strived for a publicly well-known showcase project, [which they could add to their social responsibility list]. The Austrian Red Cross was focused on implementing a high-quality project, providing services for its clients. Accenture was most keen on getting media coverage of its activities via the newspaper (Kurier) in exchange for its significant financial, volunteer and IT development contributions. The company also pressured its long-standing partner organization, the Red Cross, to influence Kurier towards increased coverage. Working out how to balance the different interests and outcomes between questions of quantity and quality, publicity and orientation towards its clients, and what the project evolved to over the years, took time and discussions.

Accenture in particular shifted its expectations. The consultancy's role is in funding, but company's employees also work as volunteers in the Lernhaus and Accenture provides pro bono consulting. Accenture's participation was part of the mother company's corporate citizenship programme 'Skills to Succeed' which set out to "advancing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for individuals by using technology to drive impact at scale". The entire programme was targeted to reach 250.000 people until 2015 (a goal which was achieved and has been expanded to reach 3.000.000 people by the year 2020). Accenture labelled the Lernhaus commitment as fostering education for migrants to 'make them ready for the labour market', which led to the extension of the programme to youths at school leaving age, and the Austrian branch always aimed at upscaling the initiative. In the earlier stages of the cooperation Accenture mainly focused on quantity and evaluation, pressuring the initiative to increase the numbers of participating children to reach the targets the company had set internally for its CSR activities. After around two years a meeting at the Lernhaus finally convinced the Accenture decisionmakers of the intrinsic value of the project as it was - and possibly of the limitations to rapid upscaling.

The project level

On the project level, knowledge was exchanged continuously both with other, similar projects and within the project. After the first bottlenecks when the original initiator left (see above), procedures and experiences were increasingly made explicit. Generally, the operative, project-level employees working with children are a major driver for the project to be successful. They provide the link between the



financial backers and the work on-site, explaining and demanding necessary strategic adaptations and orientation. From the start, their willingness to contribute went well beyond the regular employment contract and brought stability and was a significant driver for the project. In this way, the boundary between regular employment and volunteering became permeable. Overall, the employees' work with volunteers also contributed to a successful programme and their efforts to include volunteers into daily routine and assisting volunteers and children/youth to establish a trusting relationship secured high quality standards. The cooperation with the University for Business and Economy Vienna also contributed to this success. Volunteers from the university receive thorough training sessions and ongoing counselling provided by the university and its partners, and in this way volunteering contributes to students' education and skills - and may, indirectly, feed the experience of Lernhaus back into the education of future teachers and other professionals.

The Red Cross generally has substantial experience in managing and deploying volunteers. For the work with children and youth continuity and stability were recognized as vital. In this context, ensuring continuity in volunteer staff turned out to be far more challenging than the continuous participation of children and youth. Therefore the Lernhaus team decided to set up an informal contract between the older pupils and the volunteers, in which respective obligations were stipulated and signed by both parties. The contract on the one hand creates mutual commitment and on the other hand includes relatively clear cornerstones on the volunteers' mandatory presence. Volunteers need to be able to show up at least once a week and are required to tell the project managers in advance if they cannot make it. This move towards more formalized obligations was not undisputed, especially among long-term Red Cross volunteers, who saw their position and their accomplishments under threat, but regularity and long-term volunteer commitment could in fact be improved over time.

Usually the initiative is able to implement new information and knowledge into the programme. Some institutionalized regular meetings exist in the Lernhaus context. There are for instance regular workshops for volunteers and employees on varying topics, such as preventing violence or German as second language. Current project managers themselves are trained in educational contexts or are still in training and are thus able to use and apply newly acquired information at the Lernhaus. For successful deployment of new practices, room for testing and sufficient (time) resources are essential. discussion: learning and social innovation.

Learning concepts

Concepts of experiential and organisational learning can usefully be applied here. Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) is a holistic perspective that combines "concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, active experimentation" (Moon, 2004). It is dedicated to the development, testing, evaluation and re-design of actions addressing issues that have been identified in diagnosis. Indeed, on both the executive and operative levels, stakeholders and managers inevitably learned "by doing" and interacting with their target groups, peers and the wider institutional environment.

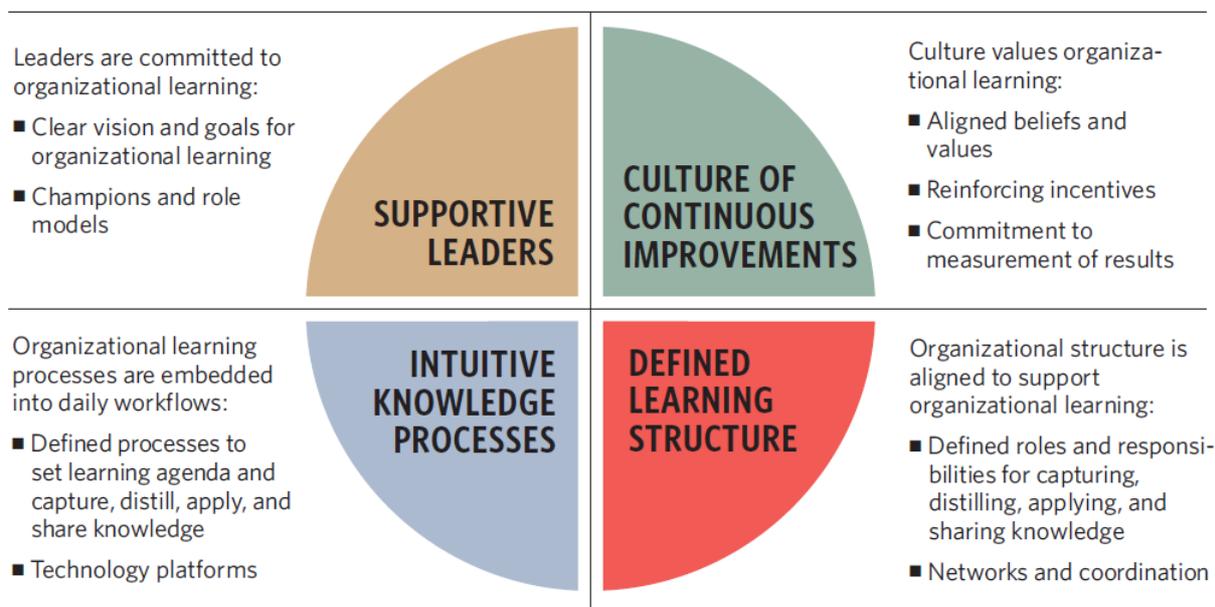


Organisational learning (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Milway & Saxton, 2011) addresses the question how to translate the experience, knowledge and reflection developed by individuals to the organisation as a whole - a non-trivial task as the first experience of Lernhaus with the departure of a key project manager showed. Milway and Saxton (2011) identify four elements of organisational learning (Figure 1): commitment by leaders, a culture of continuous improvements, intuitively usable knowledge processes supported by technology platforms but still making space for face-to-face exchanges, and a defined learning structure.

Indeed, the organisation managed to improve its knowledge sharing processes - although the data do not suggest initiatives were very specifically targeted at organisational learning. Targets were chiefly set and monitored on the level of actual operations whereas stakeholders' strategic targets of upscaling and news coverage were toned down as the initiative took larger efforts to fit into its respective environments that turned out to be regionally, institutionally and politically diverse. Efforts to share knowledge across the Red Cross were taken up by regional sections, one initiative has been known to fail, and diffusion in Vienna was limited for both internal and external political reasons - but the issue of overcoming disadvantages in education is certainly addressed by a range of different projects with very varied roots. We may conclude that the project developed successfully by pragmatically adapting to limitations, retaining its focus on quality provision for its end users, and maintaining a certain "leanness" in its structure that does not leave space for very elaborate organisational learning provisions.

Figure 1: Organizational Learning

FOUR ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING



Source: Milway and Saxton 2011, p. 47



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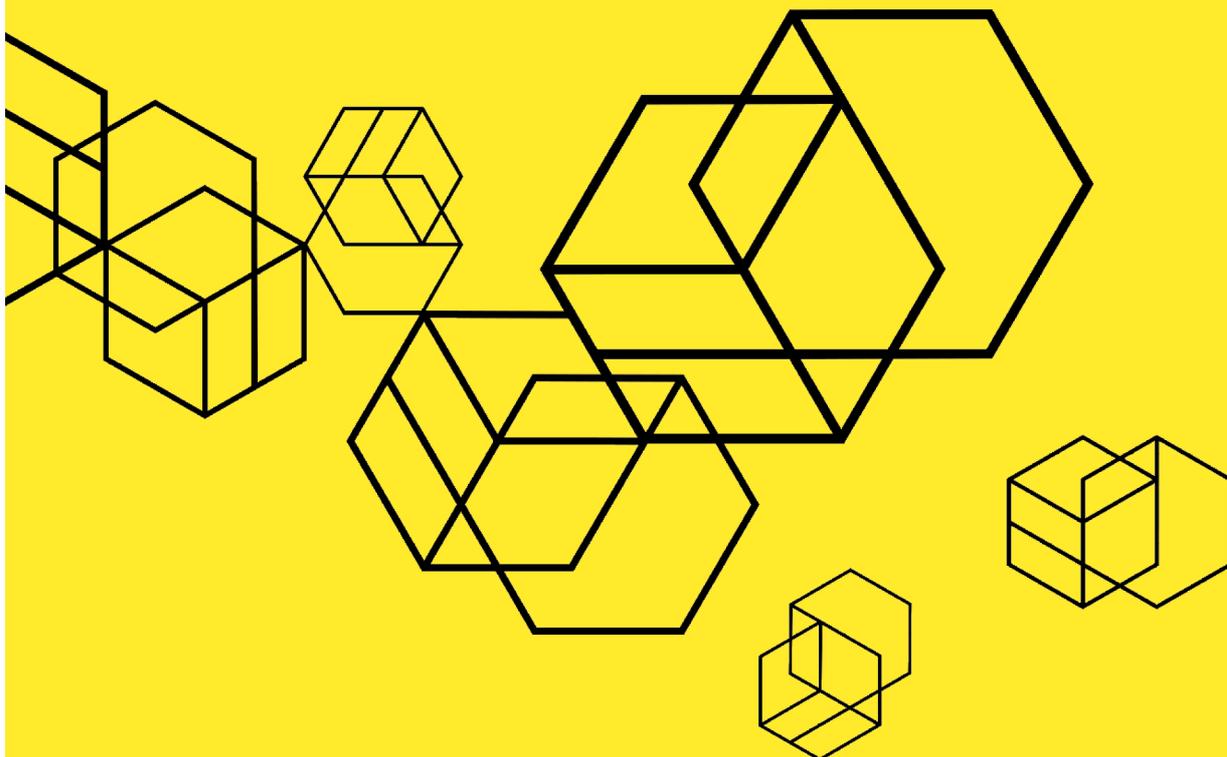


**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Koopera case study

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Koopera

Abstract

Koopera is a Social Network of Cooperatives and non-for profit companies officially defined as Koopera Social Network Gizarte Sarea. The network emerged in 2008 in Bilbao as a social cooperative of public utility, although most of the associations and cooperatives that compose the network today have been active since the 1990s.

The objective of the network is the employability and social reintegration of people in situation of risk and social exclusion through activities focused on the provision of environmental services, reuse and recycling, sustainable consumption, training programs, and other activities, which help support this objective. The network follows six important principles based on equality, employment, cooperation, environmental care, non-for profit activities through self- sustainable formulas, where the economic benefits are automatically reinvested in the growth of the network. This formula has derived into an interconnected chain of activities that has transformed Koopera into a circular economic model, where each activity is dependant and influences the next.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

Context

Koopera is a Social Network of Cooperatives created in Bilbao in 2008 that is focused on the inclusion and employability of people in situation of risk or social exclusion. Their main objective is to help disadvantaged people by employing them in environmental services through the recollection, reuse and recycling of different wastes (paper, cardboard, textile, furniture, etc.). These services are connected to a chain of sustainable consumption stores where the different recycled and reused goods are sold to the general public, creating a business model that supports part of the whole chain of operations. The network also provides different training programs directed to the social and educational needs of the socially excluded, where people that were socioeconomically rescued by the network also participate.

Moreover, the network is supported by a major Spanish Non-for-profit organization called Caritas which provides Koopera with 400 volunteers. The network also counts with the support of public sector funding programs developed by the Basque Government and other local and regional Public Administrations such city councils, provincial governments, etc. Part of this support comes from their publicly acclaimed recognition through different social prizes that the network has gained through the years.



This recognition has been wisely exploited by Kooperera by influencing public policies in their region. As a result, agreements to develop new training programs for new employment opportunities with Public Administrations have been reached, also collaborating in the design of social innovation policies with the Basque Provincial Governments. Kooperera has also expanded and diversified their base of operations through the negotiation and inclusion of private companies inside their activities by making use of their Social Responsibility Programs. Consequently, companies have seen in Kooperera a good opportunity to invest and support their social projects, both through charity measures, and by employing socially excluded people coming from Kooperera's training programs.

Today, Kooperera is integrated by 18 different cooperatives and social entities¹ that have expanded nationally and internationally through two important projects that are being developed in Rumania (Ekorropa) and Chile (Kooperera Chile). Kooperera Chile is based in the expansion of Kooperera's chain stores to the city of Santiago, in Chile. Through this project, Kooperera has been able to build a new warehouse that allows the whole sale of Kooperera's goods in that country. This project has been replicated in Rumania where Kooperera has opened two second hand stores, employing local people and reproducing Kooperera's model of sustainable consumption.

Most of the entities that compose the Kooperera network today have been active since the early 1990s. These entities were originally created at a time when Bilbao was submerged into a deep socioeconomic crises after the industrial model of the city collapsed. The crisis left behind high unemployment rates (over 25% in many municipalities of the Metropolitan Area) and increasing poverty. These social entities started working with social excluded groups through social integration programmes based on the employability of these groups inside activities developed by the entities. Most of these activities were focused in the recollection and management of wastes. Rising immigration at the end of the 1990s in the Basque Country has expanded Kooperera's focus towards new and excluded segments of the population.

Today Kooperera employs 433 people, 56% of which are part of their employability programs. The Kooperera network has also built a club of members which voluntarily supports its activities by buying in their stores or contributing through charity measures. This club counts with 61,643 members through out the world. The network counts with a total of 37 stores, 19 of them based in the Basque Country

¹ The Kooperera network is composed of the following entities: Alkarbiziz, Berjantzi, Berzioarso, Cáritas Kooperera Astur, Ecolabora, Ekorropa, Kooperera Ambiente, Kooperera Consulting, Kooperera Mediterránea, Kooperera Servicios Ambientales, Lanberri, Oldberri, Reci plana, Arro pa, Cáritas Kooperera Almería and Recuperaciones El Sembrador



and 18 in the rest of Spain. Since 2008, Koopera has attended a total of 6,819 people in situation of risk or social exclusion.

Some of the most important cooperatives that are part of the network today include: Berohi, dedicated to textile recycling and reuse; Ekiber, an entity focused on activities of reintegration through environmental projects; Ekorrepara, dedicated to the recollection and reuse of electrical appliances; Ekorropa and Berjantzi, focused on retail trade; KPR consulting, which provides consulting and counselling services; Rezikleta, dedicated to recycling services; and Lanberri, a specific training project program for the young.

The case

The network follows six important principles based on equality, employment, cooperation, environmental care, non-for profit activities through self- sustainable formulas, where the economic benefits are automatically reinvested in the growth of the network. The economic dimension is equally important, as Koopera supports social enterprises that want to be part of the network, by also providing management training programs to these newcomers.

In the field of social inclusion and labour, the network develops training and labour programs and offers company contracts to facilitate the reintegration of socially excluded groups by employing them in their own services. As for the improvement and care of the environment, the network raises awareness about the importance of prevention through a wide array of activities focused on the recycling, treatment and reuse of wastes.

They select, classify and treat different goods such as toys, books, furniture, electronic devices, batteries organic matter, etc. The network has managed to acquire a collecting service of trucks, which selects all the described goods and divide them into dividing them into different containers where they are distributed, treated or recovered among their six different warehouses. In 2012, Koopera gave birth to its most important reusing and recycling centre; a 4500 meter squared complex for the automatic treatment of wastes located in the province of Biscay, in the Basque Country. This centre is supported by both the Provincial and Basque Governments and is known for its advanced technology based on a voice interface which automatically selects and treats the different goods and wastes. Thanks to this new installation the province of Biscay has been able to duplicate the tons of recycled goods in less than two years.

After being recycled, this material is distributed among the 37 stores that the network has in the Basque Country and the rest of Spain where it is sold. These products are sold through a network of solidary and faire trade stores, where they also sell bio food products, making the population directly participant of their process of social change. They also have an online store where all these articles can be



purchased.

The network also has a service of sustainable mobility having developed a system of public transport that encourages the use of conventional and electric bicycles. Moreover, the network has a series of gardening services focused on the preservation of natural spaces. Other activities include sustainable construction services and increased awareness through training programs and public campaigns.

In the field of social action and social services, the network offers housing services and home assistance for the elder and dependant children. The people that manage these services are part of the reintegration programs so Koopera has been capable of creating a bilateral system of social integration where the reintegrated segments of the population are also providing important services to the community.

Furthermore, Koopera promotes different projects in developing countries through volunteering programs where the local populations are empowered by managing and being active in these projects right from their beginning. In this context, Koopera supports the solidary economy by backing different entrepreneurial activities in social enterprises, which seek to develop innovative, more efficient and sustainable services.

Therefore, the obtained results are not only environmental but also social and economic, being a good example of a socially innovative and sustainable case. Koopera works to improve the situation of excluded segments of the population by giving priority to creativity and innovation. Throughout its growth, Koopera has also created Social Responsibility Programs that they offer to private companies who want to support and be part of the network. In this sense, Koopera has slowly increased its influence at different levels inside the Basque Country by connecting with different kinds of actors and institutions.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The learning process of Koopera has not been easy. Koopera as a network emerges in 2008 when the economic crisis had just exploded. Funding and services provided by city councils were substantially reduced, which significantly slowed Koopera's growth in activities where they traditionally were having an important impact, such as selective recollection of wastes and sustainable mobility.

They tried to overcome this situation in what is now one of the main focus of the organization's expansion strategy, that is to say, dedicating a great effort to establish new connections with companies of their own environment to facilitate into the market the integration of people who are finalising their training agreements. Part of these training agreements are reached in connection with public sector employment programs and private companies which collaborate with Koopera or are part of their network. Throughout the years, this situation has been solved through the expansion and settlement of



new agreements with private companies who were interested in using Koopera as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility Programs. These companies started to support Koopera's activities both in practice and economically directly financing some of their activities, and employing disadvantaged people coming from Koopera's training programs.

Other challenges have been found in the environmental sector where increased expertise, technological progress, public regulations favouring bigger companies, and little public awareness in the importance of environmental care, have been a significant barrier. These challenges have had a major impact in the environmental sector, where competitiveness has increased between companies, in a time where natural resources are more scarce and climate change is a reality. Koopera encompassed this situation through the construction of a "circular economy" where the companies that form Koopera are able to become part of an integrated exploitation chain of new and reused goods and resources. This chain includes social companies dedicated to the recollection of wastes, recycling companies, transport and distribution entities, and the Koopera network of chain stores, which sell their products to the general public. This has been a win-win situation due to the self-sufficient support of the whole chain of interconnected and interdependent operations.

Moreover, at a time where the social demand to be trained and be provided with a job inside the Koopera network increased due to the crises, the demand for responsible consumption of companies and individuals, also increased generating more opportunity for the activities developed by the network. In this sense, the learning and expansion processes have been based in the progressive integration of social companies that wanted to join the network's cooperative model, by grouping the different labels and companies through a single name (Koopera), and in the process favouring the expansion and visibility of the network.

The regulation and legal support to companies like Koopera has also favoured the learning process of the organization by facilitating the acquisition of contracts and funding reserved to the public sector. The funds and the support provided by the public sector has nourished the expansion of Koopera by being able to introduce and support new activities inside their business model. These activities have been part of the learning process that has helped the network of social cooperatives grow into a perfectly coordinated chain of production, which has evolved from the process of just waste recollection, to the recycling and production of new goods that are later sold in the Koopera chain stores. Koopera also developed in 2012 their own Prizes, called Premios Koopera Saria, in order to give more visibility and raise social awareness of the need for a change in the environmental model, and the utility of activities and services developed by Koopera. These Prizes were established as a way of recognizing and showing gratitude to other socially innovative initiatives that were being developed. They were also seen as an important marketing and communication measure for the network. The prizes were divided into four different categories:

- The Koopera Prize for Sustainability



- The Koopera Prize for Social Integration
- The Koopera Prize for Social Compromise
- The Koopera Prize for Responsible Consumption

Furthermore, cross sectorial knowledge transfer between the different companies that are part of the Koopera network have been crucial in their expansion and in the growth of the social cooperative. The entities which employ excluded and disadvantaged people for the recollection of wastes are connected to other companies inside the social cooperative network, which recycle these wastes to transform them into new goods. The human capital, the knowledge and the experience acquired throughout the years in the initial stages of Koopera's activities have been scaled to a wider and more complex context of operations, building a more diversified, self-sufficient and self-dependant group of social companies that feed from one and others activities.

Consequently, Koopera has created a social economy network chain which takes advantaged of the whole process of production and knowledge transfer, crucial for the expansion and growth of the social cooperative. The diversified range of activities developed by Koopera through the cooperation networks and the support of their own companies has been an important approach towards finding complementarities inside their own business model. In this context, the learning process has been mainly adapted to the challenges and constraints found through the adaptation to the changing context. As a result, their way of learning has been mainly reactive to the problems and challenges it has encountered to expand its' own model.

3. DISCUSSION

In order for a company to learn from its' activities and absorb new knowledge, it is important that the organizations' needs had a prior related knowledge base to build upon. The storage of knowledge is developed by associative learning that in the context of Koopera was prior to the acquired knowledge it has developed today. That is to say, there was an important level of expertise on most of their activities prior to the implementation of their business model.

In words of Cohen and Levinthal (1990) *"the notion that prior knowledge facilitates the learning of new related knowledge can be extended to include the case in which the knowledge in question might be a set of learning skills"* (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990: 129-130). In these terms, a company also "learns to learn" (Ellis, 1965).

Applying this approach in relation to the process of innovation itself, the capabilities of Koopera to develop social innovations are more related to problem solving skills to create new knowledge, that on their learning capabilities; that is, their capability to assimilate existing and new knowledge directly from the context where it operates (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990: 130). In this context, the knowledge transfer modes inside Koopera have been based on their own experience and their close connection to the



Basque context where it emerged; a process of tacit knowledge transfer where the proximity to other organizations (social companies, public administrations, social organizations) inside their environment potentially increased their “absorptive capacity” to openly grow and diversify their activities.

The process of interaction and collaboration has also been very important. Koopera functions as a network of networks and can only develop their business model if the other companies inside the cooperative’s network successfully develop their own activities through a circular economy based on shared resources.

In this sense, the metaphor of the “bricoleur” (Levi Strauss, 1966) suits Koopera’s model very well through an attempt to assimilate new ideas and being able to exploit them through new modes of collaboration. This process is related to the concept of “learning by opposing”, (Baker & Nelson, 2005) “creating more from less”, or simply taking advantage of a series of diversified business services and principles (reuse, recycle, train, reintegrate, provision, etc.) that are extended and amplified through other companies belonging to the network. This can be defined as a collaborative learning approach inside a collaborative learning economy, where the organization openly learns in connection to the activities inside their own network, and by trying to adapt and diversify these activities to other contexts inside and outside their region.



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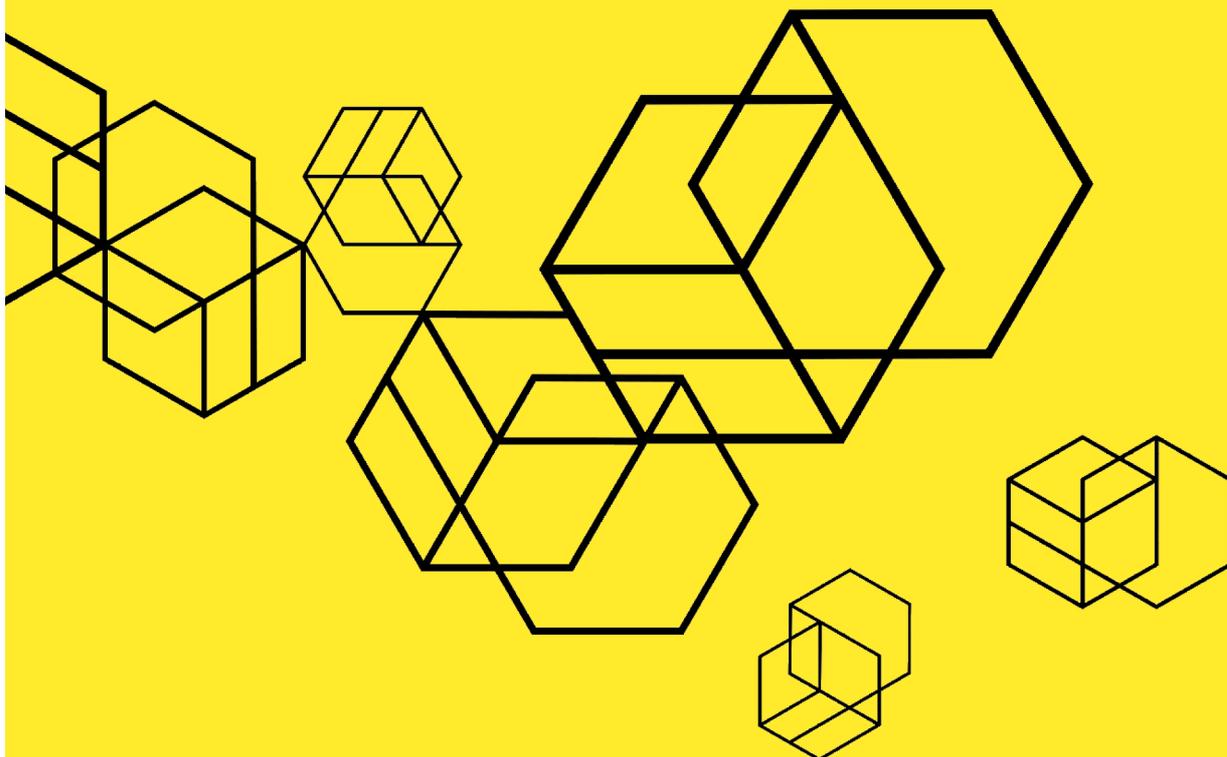
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
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T4.1 Project Based Learning

Young Foundation





Project Based Learning

ABSTRACT

The case describes the processes of learning involved in the 'Learning Through REAL Projects' programme developed by the Innovation Unit and the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF). £906,000 of funding was given by the EEF to investigate the efficacy of project-based learning in raising educational attainment and engagement in UK schools.

This case can be seen as an example of multiple intermediaries cooperating in order to design, pilot, implement and evaluate a project of work. In particular, it demonstrates social innovation in the field of education, through the implementation of an approach which had not previously been attempted in the UK context.

It illustrates some of the challenges of intermediary-led research with randomised elements. The project protocol has been refined to reflect some of the budgetary and time-related challenges relating to the RCT phase, as well as practicalities which have changed.

The learning methodologies applied during the intervention are mirrored by some of the processes of learning for intermediaries, demonstrating the value of situated learning for all stakeholders. This also provides an interesting insight into real-world research with accessible output and dissemination of findings.



1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

THE CONTEXT

Engagement in education is crucial to attainment; research in the 1990s found that students who are more interested and invested in their own learning tend to perform better (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). Interventions which seek to better engage pupils in their learning therefore have the scope to improve educational outcomes more broadly. One such approach, which is the focus of this case, is project-based learning.

Project-based learning (PBL) is a teaching approach which presents pupils with real-world problems and scenarios which form the basis of collaborative student-led projects (Markham, 2011). These may be cross-curricular and combine material from different subjects. Students are asked to actively acquire and apply their knowledge to provide practical answers to questions and present them, often in non-traditional formats.

For example, a group of high school students might design an interactive art exhibit to demonstrate their independent scientific learning, whereas traditional pedagogical methods might have asked them to conduct desk-based research and a written piece of work. A primary school class could develop skills in mathematics, literacy, geography and social interaction to produce a map of their neighbourhood, including interviews with local residents. (A variety of further examples of how project-based learning practices have been applied in the UK and the USA can be found in the Innovation Unit's guide to Project-based Learning (Innovation Unit, 2012).)

- Project based learning is frequently considered to:
- be organised around an open-ended question or challenge;
- create a driving need for essential skills and knowledge;
- facilitate the development critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration;
- empower students by offering them a voice and choices;
- incorporate revision in such a way that builds the capacity of students to cope with constructive feedback.

PBL is by nature a collaborative process because it requires students to work together on projects over a set time period to enable each other's learning. Additionally, it requires a high level of collaboration between teaching staff from different subject backgrounds, so that the particular project effectively incorporates multi-disciplinary learning material.

Educationalist John Dewey developed a pedagogy of 'learning by doing' in the late 19th century, which has evolved into contemporary project-based learning practices. This approach has had proven success in trials in schools in California and Arizona, where it has been particularly effective in raising economic literacy and problem-solving capabilities among high school students. Further research in the USA has shown that students in PBL-focussed environments obtain higher test scores than students in traditional classroom contexts (Krajcik et al., 2006).



However, there have been comparatively few impact evaluations carried out into PBL approaches in the UK and the programme discussed here set out specifically to address that gap.

Furthermore, it was also envisaged that this programme could specifically target the 'Year 7 dip'. This refers to the observed lack of progress made by pupils in their first year of secondary school. Through engaging students in PBL at the age of 11, it is possible that their attainment will not drop as is often seen.

THE CASE

The Learning Through REAL Projects' intervention (Educational Endowment Foundation, 2016a) began in 2014 and has been developed by the Innovation Unit with funding and support from the EEF and input from both High Tech High and the Buck Institute of Education, two organisations with expertise in leading PBL approaches in the USA. The evaluation process is being led by the Centre for Evaluation and Measurement at Durham University, and the University of York.

The programme described in this case outlines many of the challenges involved in carrying out innovative policy interventions with rigorous evaluations. The case has been chosen because it is an example of collaboration between a social innovation actor and an independent educational charity, drawing support from two academic institutions. Furthermore, these organisations have been brought together by an innovative government-led partnership, the What Works network (2016), which connects government and non-government organisations to share high quality evidence for decision-making and innovation in public services. What Works is a globally pioneering approach to combining academia with policy-making within an innovative evidence ecosystem (Shepherd, 2014).

Intermediary support has been provided to schools through a combination of programme design and monitoring and evaluation. The joint specialisms of the partner organisations reflect expertise in developing and scaling socially innovative projects, with a specific focus on working with schools to raise educational attainment.

Intermediary support has primarily been provided by:

- The Innovation Unit, a UK based organisation which designs innovative public service interventions. They have provided assistance in the **design phase** of the intervention
- The Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF), which is a grant-making organisation which invests in evidence-based interventions which aim to raise the educational attainment of children aged 5-16 years old. It is also a designated What Works Centre. It has **provided funds** and helped to guide the shape of the project.
- Durham University, an academic institution that has contributed support in the form of the **evaluation**, together with the University of York.

This case has been shaped by the broader context of British policy making which has in recent years, increasingly invested in building a framework for evidence-based policy making and programme



evaluation. The flagship of this process has been the development of the What Works Network.

In March 2013, the EEF and Sutton Trust were jointly designated by the Government as the What Works centre for improving education outcomes for school-aged children. As part of this work the EEF funds programmes which aim to raise attainment, or to research the efficacy of particular methodological or policy interventions.

As part of the What Works commitment to sharing high quality evidence, the results of all programmes funded by the EEF (2016) are added to its accessible online Teaching Learning Toolkit. This enables education practitioners to easily find information about possible interventions, ranked according to their relative costs, the strength of the evidence and their measurable impact in trials. This includes the outcomes of studies and interventions which have resulted in little or no demonstrable impact. ‘What doesn’t work’ is communicated as clearly as ‘what works’. The role of the EEF as an intermediary is not therefore limited to its monetary contribution, but also facilitates dissemination of the learning it finances, within and beyond the What Works Network.

The emphasis on evidence-based work is a fundamental principle of the What Works network, which operates seven centres, each focussing on a different strand of public service policy. Building “communities of reflective practitioners” in this way has been seen to aid the diffusion of knowledge and also encourages effective habits of cross-disciplinary learning (Avas & Zeniuk, 2001). This ethos underpins the relevance of the Learning Through REAL Projects’ programme which is the subject of this case.

The case itself was designed with reference to project based learning interventions in the USA, which have gained significant traction among some in the educational community. Two US organisations, High Tech High and the Buck Institute, fed existing knowledge of US based project based learning programmes into this case. High Tech High is a cluster of high schools in San Diego, California which has achieved excellent educational outcomes through implementing PBL practices throughout its curriculum. The Buck Institute offers professional development to teachers wanting to incorporate PBL into their schools.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The learning processes involved in this case operate on two different levels. Firstly, the learning process of the programme leads (researchers from Innovation Unit together with staff at the schools) about the effectiveness of project-based learning as an educational intervention. Secondly, the learning of the students involved in the programme and the innovative methods by which they gained



knowledge.¹

The programme itself has consisted of two phases: firstly, a research and development test phase, followed by the main trial and impact evaluation. It was initially planned as a two year randomised controlled trial (RCT), but due to funding constraints this was reduced to a one year RCT and delivery phase. The evaluation is still a two-year process.

Following programme design, a pilot trial was carried out, beginning in September 2013 with a small number of participating schools. The main trial then began in September 2014, with 24 schools. All year 7 pupils (aged 11-12 years old) in participating schools took part in a project designed by their teachers, with the goal of producing a publicly-exhibited output. A total of 3,000 students worked in mixed-ability groups, on projects which accounted for a minimum of 20% of their timetable throughout the school year. Training was provided by Innovation Unit to all staff members involved in delivering the intervention, in the form of a comprehensive induction as well as ongoing support throughout the programme duration.

In the evaluation process, the primary outcome was literacy as measured pre-trial by looking at the attainment of children at the age of 11 and post-trial by specially designed tests set for the children. There was therefore a requirement that the English department of each school be involved, in conjunction with staff from at least one other subject background. Attitudinal measures were also used to capture students' engagement levels and their interest in education as a secondary outcome. A team from Durham's CEM developed a methodology for capturing the broad concept of 'engagement with school and learning'. This drew on the literature around educational engagement as well as the Innovation Unit's theory of change model for the intervention and used a four point Likert scale. The conceptualisation of engagement and how it is measured was refined following the pilot phase.

The evaluation process for the programme is comprehensive, accounting for the complexity of the intervention and the shortened time scale. It includes focus groups with both teachers and students in participating schools, as well as direct observations by programme researchers. Semi-structured interviews with head teachers and/or senior leadership staff were also carried out. Surveys of teachers and pupils were used to specifically gauge their views of PBL, separate from their engagement in learning as a wider concept. All of these evaluative mechanisms continued into the following academic year from the original intervention, to assess whether PBL practices have been retained and if the impact remains after the conclusion of support from Innovation Unit. The findings of this intervention are

¹ All factual information in this section and subsequent details about the project is taken from the latest version of the Project Protocol, available from the EEF website:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Protocols/EEF_Project_Protocol_ProjectBasedLearning.pdf



ongoing and have not yet been published as of October 2016.

Regarding the processes involved in PBL learning environments, Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006) list 5 fundamental stages of the approach which have been applied by the schools involved in this programme:

It begins with a driving question or problem to be solved.

- 01** Students explore this driving question by participating in authentic, situated inquiry. As students explore the driving question, they learn and apply important ideas in the discipline.
- 02** Students, teachers and community members engage in collaborative activities to find solutions to the driving question. Throughout the inquiry process, students are supported by learning technologies that help them participate in activities normally beyond their ability.
- 03** Students create a set of accessible, tangible outputs to address the driving question and represent the collective learning.

At a micro-level, these mirror the learning processes of research and programme evaluation involving intermediaries, with an emphasis on collaborative work and presenting evidence in an accessible format. For example at the conclusion of the project based learning evaluation there were a number of key conclusions (Educational Endowment Foundation, 2016a):

- Adopting PBL had no clear impact on either literacy (as measured by the Progress in English assessment) or student engagement with school and learning.
- The impact evaluation indicated that PBL may have had a negative impact on the literacy attainment of pupils entitled to free school meals. However, as no negative impact was found for low-attaining pupils, considerable caution should be applied to this finding.
- The amount of data lost from the project (schools dropping out and lost to follow-up) particularly from the intervention schools, as well as the adoption of PBL or similar approaches by a number of control group schools, further limits the strength of any impact finding.
- From our observations and feedback from schools, we found that PBL was considered to be worthwhile and may enhance pupils' skills communication, teamwork, and self-directed study skills.
- PBL was generally delivered with fidelity but requires substantial management support and organisational change. The Innovation Unit training and support programme for teachers and school leadership was found to be effective in supporting this intervention.

This information was then lays out the impact of the intervention, the cost of the intervention and the level of security in the finding. The level of security In the finding was measured to be low because of the high rates of attrition from the study.

3. DISCUSSION

The 'Learning Through REAL Projects' programme and the accompanying evaluation process is the



first of its kind within the UK education system.

Many educational interventions focus largely on the classroom context without analysing the learning for intermediaries. Consequently, there is often a gap between theory and practice when it comes to educational innovation. There is scope for greater cooperation between practitioners and researchers in the field of education (Vanderlinde & van Braak, 2009). Other scholars suggest to the contrary that there is a need for a “critical distance” between research and practice in education (Biesta, 2007). The involvement of multiple and diverse intermediaries in this case may facilitate that, whilst still bridging the gap between theory and practice.

For learners involved in the project, self-reflection and mutual constructive criticism are both built into the PBL pedagogy. Pupils of all ages critique each other’s work, leading to iterative improvement throughout the project span. This continuous process of peer review and refinement is also seen in the development of the programme evaluation, which was revised after analysis of the pilot phase data.

This case illustrates the complexity of carrying out evaluations which give an effect size within a heavily-regulated system. Previous evaluations of project-based learning methodology have mainly taken place in flexible contexts. High Tech High, whilst a clear specialist in the field of project-based education, is a collective of charter schools and therefore has more freedom to construct an innovative curriculum. Recreating a similar programme within the confines of the UK system is more complex, requiring “many different aspects of the education processes to work together in new and... quite different ways.” (Education Endowment Foundation, 2016b)

A study of teachers in Australia and the USA found that practitioners are likely to dismiss academic research for being inaccessible or impractical (Gore & Gatlin, 2007). This criticism is potentially true of interventions which involve collaborations of multiple academic/political bodies. However, the What Works network places importance strongly on producing work which is evidence-based and disseminating it effectively. The EEF’s online toolkit accessibly communicates research and is directed at teachers. The involvement of intermediaries from within the What Works network introduces greater emphasis on the sharing of the evidence base and its relevance beyond academia.

As acknowledged by the updated project protocol, the RCT method is costly and time-consuming. Funding changes led to a shorter trial phase, because the initial budget did not cover two years of RCT methodology. Furthermore, the randomised aspect of the programme was reduced due to the short recruitment period. Schools which had intended to deliver the intervention to a random proportion of the pupils instead delivered it to all Y7 pupils, except for one school which selected based on ability. This change to the delivery phase is indicative of the difficulty and complexity involved in rolling out a fully randomised control trial.

This project is therefore interesting in that it demonstrates some of the challenges of trying to implement a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework, particularly one that includes a randomised element.



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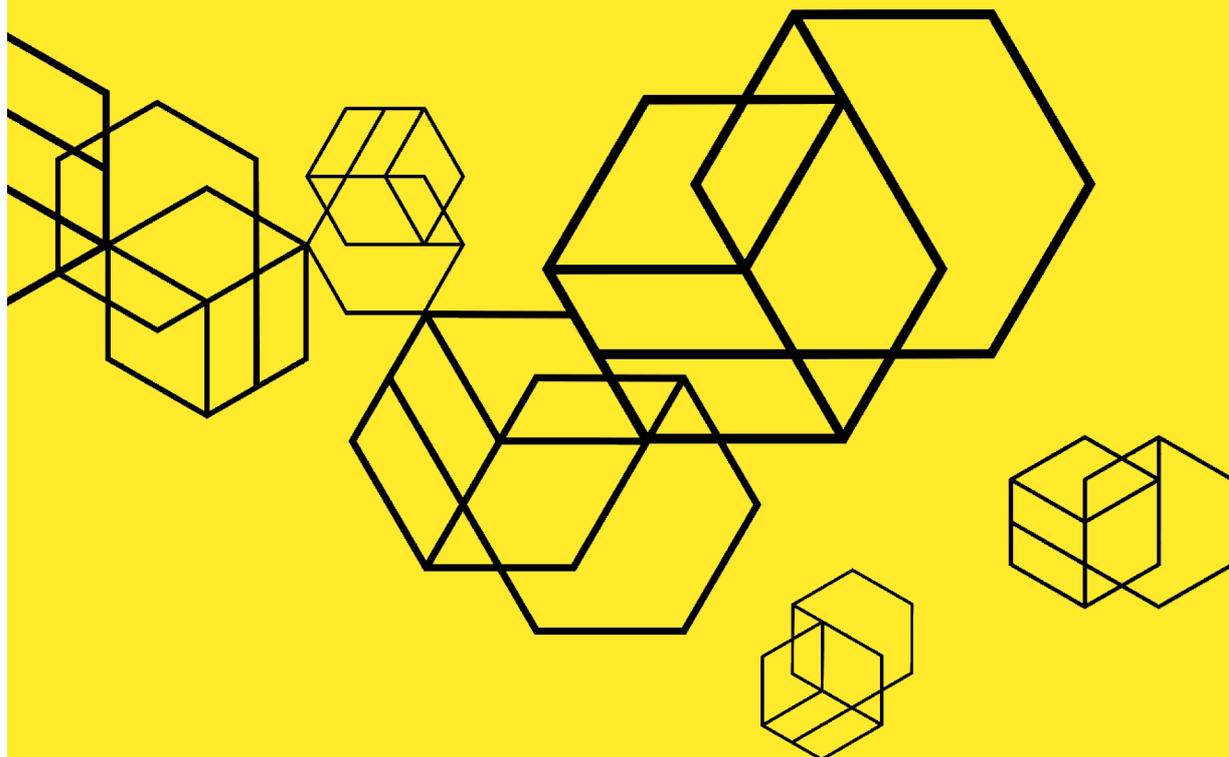
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Case Study „Social Festival – *Keep the Ball Rolling*“ Austria

Maria Schwarz-Woelzl





Case Study "Social Festival - *Keep the Ball Rolling*"

1. ABSTRACT

This case study describes the learnings of the organisational team in the implementation of an Austrian social innovation: the social festival, Keep the Ball Rolling. The goal of Keep the Ball Rolling is to encourage people living in the respective hosting region to come up with their ideas, to reflect on their environment and develop new or enhance already existing thoughts and strategies that could help to improve their individual living conditions and those within their communities. The festival provides a framework for socially relevant activities; these activities, however, are expected to come from the people concerned, to be derived from their own experience and expertise. Keep the Ball Rolling explicitly follows a bottom-up approach. The working title was actually "Regionen gelebter Menschlichkeit" which could be translated as "regions of practised humanity." As the project design developed into additionally emphasising celebration and joy, however, it seemed appropriate to call the project a "social festival." Keep the Ball Rolling is hosted by a selected region for a period of 18 months. By now, the social festival has taken place four times (from 2011 to 2016).

All social festivals were accompanied by a research team. They describe (in the interview) their learning as follows: i) Beneficiaries of the social festival need enough time for building up a basis of trust in the innovation team and among themselves; furthermore, they need sufficient time to develop sustainable project ideas; ii) People who have no experience in conducting and managing funded projects need support in developing project ideas and an implementation framework; iii) The success of bottom-up projects crucially depends on leaving the ownership of an idea to its creators; iv) Projects should be carried out not by single individuals but rather by teams of at least two partners.

2. CASE DESCRIPTION

THE CONTEXT

People who are socially excluded cannot participate in cultural and social activities that are deemed to be a matter of course within a region, even if they would like to. The festival innovators are convinced that poverty is not only about large-scale economic deprivation and thus, poverty cannot be alleviated by means of large-scale measures of action only (however important they are!), but also by taking small



steps toward gaining a greater understanding and establishing a responsible and supportive community on a regional/local level.

The initiator of the social festival (Professor DDr. Clemens Sedmak – theologian and philosopher), former head of the Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research at Salzburg University, formulated nine theses for social cohesion based on the capability approach developed by social philosophers Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen. He asserted that people belonging to a region should think about what kind of society or community they would like to be a part of. They are to determine the area's capabilities and resources. The quality of the structure of public space (social, cultural and moral framing conditions of regional living conditions and lifestyles) should also be kept in mind. Human identity grows by means of relationships, collective experiences and shared memories, thereby forming a sense of belonging. When people have more self-esteem, they also have more confidence in the idea that they are capable of bringing about change. If people belonging to a region reflect on the good life and a better society, the question of exclusion must also be answered, namely exclusion due to a lack of economic resources and exclusion caused by segregation. In conclusion, communities have to think about shared values. [1]

Keep the Ball Rolling aims to make a contribution (in terms of strengthening self-initiative and cooperation) to fighting social exclusion. It is guided by four main concepts:

- 01** Self-efficacy: Everyone is capable of changing the world by mean of their own actions.
- 02** Gross regional happiness: What makes me happy? What makes life successful?
- 03** Local knowledge: Local people who have knowledge that is quite special.
- 04** “Ubuntu”: Humanity toward others (term by Desmond Tutu).

THE CASE



Source: http://www.tu-was.at/system/html/TuWas_MuehlviertlerAlmIMG_0615_700x200-fea01e25.jpg

This vision from the initiator, Mr. Clemens Sedmak forms the basis of this social innovation: Together with a consortium of Austrian private foundations (known as “die Sinnstifter”), the social festival, *Keep*



the Ball Rolling was brought into being. Austria's first social festival offers the opportunity to realise ideas for more social cohesion, social structures and regional economic cycles in small-scale regions in rural areas. The goal of Keep the Ball Rolling is to encourage people living in the hosting region to come up with their own ideas, to reflect on their environment and to develop new, or enhance already existing thoughts and strategies. This could help to improve their individual living conditions, as well as those within their communities. It is designed explicitly with a bottom-up approach, thereby providing a framework for socially relevant activities. However, these activities are expected to originate from the people involved. The framework supports people in implementing their ideas, providing them with relevant and helpful contacts, in addition to financial help.

The idea behind the social festival Keep the Ball Rolling is to motivate people to think about (societal) needs and challenges within their region/community, and to support them in realising their ideas to bring about change. It is about supporting committed people and institutions in realising small project ideas that aim to increase the quality of life in their respective communities and regions. The social festival provides an organisational and scientific framework, as well as research and scientific guidance for implementing such ideas. Furthermore, those who successfully submit a project (nomination process through a jury) will also receive financial support. The festival also aims to encourage people to stay within rural regions that all have noticeable problems with regard to emigration and unemployment, as well as poor infrastructures (in Austrian remote and rural regions, as elsewhere, an ongoing decrease in population has been accompanied by noticeable consolidation of public and social infrastructures ranging from schools and post offices to banks and shops). The festival motivates people to interact and strengthen the awareness of a region in addition to strengthening social networks.

Objectives

The objective of Keep the Ball Rolling is primarily to promote the self-initiative of citizens.

- 01** Strengthen peripheral and structurally weak regions through public participation.
- 02** Celebrate the local community and the interaction associated there with – not just for a few days, but for a period of eighteen months
- 03** Motivate people to interact and strengthen the self-awareness of a region in addition to strengthening social networks.
- 04** Find and encourage ideas/projects with a team of 'local experts' to fight poverty and reduce social segregation.

Thereby, the social festival promotes measures and offerings that promote coexistence between generations and cultures as well as fight poverty and social exclusion, thereby making everyday life more humane within the scope of the regional economy, the workplace, and within society in addition to strengthening small-scale social and economic ties. Keep the Ball Rolling is an invitation extended to the inhabitants of a region to become active in project communities supported by local and scientific facilitators, and to develop ideas and implement projects. The projects should not simply be "ideas", but



actual plans of action with “a twist”. The projects should be well anchored in the region (**anchor principle**), bring together people who would not normally cooperate otherwise (**cooperation principle**), be organised according to the principles of economic factors and effectiveness (**economic factor principle**), also with regard to the environment, and have at least one perspective that is at least medium-term (**sustainability principle**). The goal of the projects should be to improve coexistence and the social cohesion within the region as well as to strengthen people’s opportunities to participate (especially those who are discriminated against or put at a disadvantage). Along the lines of a festival, Keep the Ball Rolling wants to establish a spirit of optimism and mobilise people – especially those who are otherwise not present within the public sphere.

Each festival lasts 18 months.

In total, there are up to **EUR 150,000** available for the implementation of projects and initiatives per social festival.

During the course of a public tender, regions throughout Austria with a related concept can apply to be a Keep the Ball Rolling region every two years. Based on a hearing / visits to the region, a region is selected where the social festival will take place in the course of a two-year period.

- 01** As part of two calls for action, inhabitants in the select region can bring forth their project ideas. The first meeting entails groups of people (at least three people) and associations.
- 02** The second meeting entails groups of people and village communities.

All those who have submitted something are supported by a team of academic experts during the development of their idea. Following the idea-development process, the projects are presented before a committee (consisting of policy makers and citizens), which will then take a decision with regard to financial support. All winning projects are supported during execution (within the period the festival takes place over the course of two years) by the regional office and the *Keep the Ball Rolling* team.

Stakeholders

- 01 The innovators:** The social festival, Keep the Ball Rolling is being held by the Association for the Promotion of the Social Festival (Verein zur Förderung des Sozialfestivals). In the **Association’s Management Board, strategic decisions are taken.**
- 02 Funders/sponsors** of the social festival: The Sinnstifter foundation (<http://sinnstifter.org>) was founded in 2010 by six private Austrian charity foundations and has since supported joint social projects throughout Austria.
- 03 Operative and scientific accompanying research:** The project management department is responsible for execution at an operative level, being headed by a member of the **content-related scientific advisory team.**



- 04 Beneficiaries:** The social festival is open to everybody living in the respective festival region. It is not necessary to be member of an association or party, etc. Keep the Ball Rolling aims to enable every member of society to contribute to an improved level of coexistence with one another, regardless their social, institutional, religious or geographical backgrounds.

History

The social festival, which launched in 2010, started in the Lungau region in the province of Salzburg, Austria (<http://tu-was.at/lungau-2011.html>). This innovation has been inspired by existing projects, such as European Capitals of Culture. The conference, “The Logics of Change”, organised by the CEPR (Centre for Ethics and Poverty Research at the University of Salzburg, Austria) and the ifz (international research centre for social and ethical questions, Salzburg) in November 2011, was a spin-off from the social festival in the Lungau region. Between December 2010 and May 2011, three calls for projects were made. A low-threshold and area-wide announcement that specifically addressed everyone living in the region ensured a satisfactory level of participation. Each call was dedicated to one of the three main festival issues. Mottoes included: “good community life”, “good poverty alleviation”, and “good working and business”. All in all, 120 projects were submitted and presented to the jury, which consisted of representatives of the Sinnstifter foundation, the Federal State Government of Salzburg, members of CEPR and ifz, and well-known personalities from the Lungau region with a great deal of local expertise. A high level of acceptance was demonstrated throughout the region. Almost 70 projects were selected by the jury and have since been implemented. Some of these projects are small and some are large-scale; some were proposed by individuals, young and old; some were proposed by groups of people; some by institutions doing social work.

After a festival in the region ‘Steirische Eisenstrasse’ (<http://tu-was.at/steir-eisenstrasse-2012-61.html>) in the years 2012 to 2013, the 2013–2014 festival took place in the region ‘Mühlviertler Alm’ located in the federal state of Upper Austria (<http://tu-was.at/muehlviertler-alm.html>) and the ongoing festival 2015 to 2016 is taking place in the ‘Mostviertel’ region in the federal state of Lower Austria (<http://www.tu-was.at/projekte.html>)

Success factors and barriers

Social cohesion and identifying beneficiaries by means of a bottom- up approach are the key success factors for social innovation. However, barriers include

- 01** Financial constraints: Innovation is designed to support small to medium-scale projects on a regional level. Thus, a number of valuable ideas cannot be promoted due to financial limitations.
- 02** Regional boundaries: The festival takes place in one region at the time. It is not possible to promote initiatives, however well-designed, that do not have a clear



focus or connection to the region the festival is held in.

- 03** Economic self-interest: Innovation concerns social matters only. However well-intended, initiatives that do not have a clear non-profit approach are not supported.

Selected examples of projects:

The number of funded projects varies among the different social festivals. In the social festival 'Mühlviertler Alm' (2013/2014) 32 projects were implemented. Examples of projects in five categories are:

- 01 Solidarity & community:** older people in a residential home spent two days together with primary school pupils;
- 02 Nature & environment:** Grandparents support school pupils in getting aware of healthy nourishment: together they lay out a herb garden, organise excursions to organic farmers, help together in the harvest of potatoes, etc.;
- 03 Education & culture:** Network-building of parents with learning disabled children: monthly jour fixes, lectures by experts and group guidance by pedagogues;
- 04 Crafts & tradition:** special benches in the village are dedicated for storytelling; people are invited to sit down and tell each other stories. And there are additional offers for young and old, such as readings at full moon, etc.
- 05 Youth & Mobility:** care drivers, who are willing to give hitchers a lift, can show this on an indicating sign they put into the car window. This 'driver' sign is available for free on every municipality.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

All social festivals are accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation team, who publish their research findings in the form of a 'Network Analysis and Social Atlas' every year, reflecting the changes made and the results within the region as well as the outcome of an entire festival. This research concentrates on the extent to which the social festival within a region demonstrates an effect on local knowledge, social capital and a good level of coexistence. The learning processes up until this point have been derived from four social festivals held in different regions and spanning over a period of six years.

Primary learning concerned the **target-group-specific** use of **terms**, e.g. poverty. At the beginning, a common language had to be found in order to reach the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, it was ascertained that much more **time** is required than had been originally planned for building up trust between beneficiaries and the innovation team as well as between the beneficiaries themselves. "The factor of time should not be underestimated." (interview with Ms. Susanne Katzelberger, ifz) On the one hand, time must be spent to explain the social-festival objectives in order to acquire beneficiaries to participate. On the other hand, the project team realised that the social



festival had to initially achieve a certain degree of recognition within the region and that requires time. More time was also needed by the beneficiaries to develop project ideas. The original period of one week was extended to three months. The innovators' original assumption that everyone knows everyone on the countryside was wrong; it gave room to the realisation that individuals had to get to know each other first in order to be able to submit joint projects. This process also requires time.

Another important observation entailed beneficiaries requiring **support** in developing **project ideas**; the innovators soon started to provide coaching during the idea-development process. Additionally, coaching guidelines were developed for the involved innovators.

Furthermore, it proved to be decisive to leave the **ownership** of project ideas to the beneficiaries themselves. This is communicated to the beneficiaries in such a way: "You have a special, local level of knowledge that we are able to take advantage of due to the initiative. However, apart from the provision of coaching during the idea-development process, for the final application process, – namely the completion of the application form – you will not receive any support and the innovation team will not interfere, thereby leaving ownership up to you."

To follow a pure bottom-up approach in accordance with the paradigm, the innovator team do not see their role in the management of the project processes, but in providing input and supporting networking. This bottom-up attitude is communicated to the beneficiaries in such a way: "We would also like to learn from you during the scope of this process." The local knowledge of the beneficiaries helps the innovator team to promote other projects in the best way possible. The innovator team sees their task in spreading knowledge and re-utilising it, but not in managing.

Furthermore, it became clear that the drop-out rate of single-person projects was much higher than that of projects carried out by a group. Therefore, the innovators changed the terms of participation very quickly; the policy now is that each applying project requires **at least two partners**.

With regard to lessons learned in relation to transversal competencies and skills, here are a few examples as follows:

- 01** Organisation and HR Management: It is important to have a dedicated team in the festival region. The commitment of the on-site team is crucial for success.
- 02** Marketing and communication: Currently, funders are unsatisfied with the degree of dissemination. However, it would require a much higher budget to meet these expectations.
- 03** R&D and design: During the course of the project, the project team realised that
 - The design of research had to be adapted. It was changed from traditional accompanying research to participative action research. As was already mentioned above, it was also recognised that the idea-generation process should be designed in a more participative manner. At first, the regional



office was the sole point of contact for those providing ideas, now the beneficiaries are supported in a participative manner by the research team during the course of generating ideas. This also has the effect of marginalised groups participating more with projects than previously was the case.

- Already in the idea-generation phase, the projects should be linked to one another. The knowledge of the local population is passed on to other players in the region as a source of inspiration. That means that the research teams already conduct networking during the initial phase and not in the implementation phase as was previously the case.

04 Networking: As has already been mentioned above, the residents of a region know each other less than was originally thought. Therefore, it is fundamental to plan enough time for the networking of interested parties and to offer suitable instruments for this. Events are organised in order to promote networking.

05 Team working: At the beginning of the social festival, the project management team was separated from accompanying research. It turned out to be more effective to integrate both functions.

06 Leadership: Leadership tasks were focussed mostly on project management. However, it soon became clear that leaders primarily needed a pronounced level of communication skills. They had to be able to successfully communicate with a wide range of different stakeholders – spanning from researchers and funders all the way to the inhabitants within the region. Another characteristic of a successful leader is her or his presence within the region. ...

HOW DID THE LEARNING OCCURE?

01 Events:

- Initially, there was difficulty in creating projects that spanned across various communities and villages. Therefore, the ongoing social festival started with a conference spanning across all communities.
- Before the regional process starts, an evaluation is held with the foundations and the Association for the Promotion of the Social Festival; only then is the process coordinated with the regional office.
- Recently, a regular monthly meeting has been established in order to ensure coordination.
- A lively exchange of information now takes place between the projects.
- Once a year, the results of the scientific monitoring process are presented to regional players as part of an interactive workshop (e.g. by means of the World Café method). Among other things, this generates further input for the remaining period.
- One year after the social festival has ended, an evaluation workshop is held again.
- Three years after the social festival's end, a written survey is distributed investigating the effects of the social festival.



02 Team learning:

- The research team involved and the local project office take a lot of time for internal reflection; e.g. with regard to the challenge of working with people that have never created and implemented a project and are not used to formulating their needs: supporting them where needed but not intervening too much in order to leave ownership with the local population.
- Conflicts regarding objectives had to be overcome in the team. If the funders were more interested in short-term goals, the scientific advisory team was more oriented toward middle-term goals. A consensus had to be found first on how to define success. While funders would much rather have an active level of management, the advisory research team had the idea of staying in the background during the idea creation process, believing in self-direction of projects.

4. DISCUSSION

Due to its broad activities, the festival might be discussed in several aspects of learning and learning theories.

SITUATED LEARNING THEORY

In contrast with many learning theories that involve abstract knowledge, Jean Lave [2] argues in a pragmatist tradition that learning is situated: learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. It is also usually unintentional rather than deliberate. Entering a new and unfamiliar field, learning often occurs in a process of “legitimate peripheral participation” [3] from which people gradually move into more central roles. Acquiring professional or craft skills in a system of apprenticeships traditionally occurs through such a process leading eventually to full membership in a community of practice. Situated learning “takes as its focus the relationship between learning and the social situation in which it occurs” [5].

Usually the knowledge is presented in authentic contexts — settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. The social interaction and collaboration that comes with this form of learning are essential components — the learner becomes involved in a “community of practice” which embodies certain beliefs and behaviours to be acquired. In the case of the social festivals, the knowledge is communicated by each individual participant who gets involved in the community. At the same time, in developing their ideas and projects, the participants share and even develop common beliefs or values.

An even more important aspect in this theory is that the beginner moves from the periphery of a community to its centre with the effect that he or she becomes more active and engaged within the community (and eventually assumes the role of an expert). This aspect covers exactly the aim of the social festival, thus should be highly in the focus of the organizers.



As many theories, also the Situated Learning Theory has been further developed. Brown, Collins & Duguid emphasize the idea of cognitive apprenticeship [4]: *“Cognitive apprenticeship supports learning in a domain by enabling students to acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activity. Learning, both outside and inside school, advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge.”*

LINKS WITH CHARACTERISTICS TO OTHER LEARNING THEORIES

Problem based Learning

Significant for the social festival is also the understanding and definition of the problem by the beneficiaries, its learner centred activities and the role of the supporters. These major characteristics can be contextualised with other learning theories focusing on problems, contexts and practical experience. Problem-based learning for example holds that [7] [8]:

- 01** The learning is driven by challenging, open-ended problems with no one “right” answer,
- 02** Problems/cases are context specific,
- 03** Students work as self-directed, active investigators on the methodology and problem-solvers in small collaborative groups or teams,
- 04** A key problem is identified and a solution is agreed upon and implemented,
- 05** Teachers adopt the role as facilitators or supporters of learning, guiding the learning process and promoting an environment of inquiry. The philosophical pedagogical approaches from Freire in 1973 [9] can considerably contribute to the understanding of changing roles, contributing to the new relationship between teacher, student, and society. His approach to treat the learner as a co-creator of knowledge can be considered as a basis of the problem based learning approach.

As stated previously, the participants apply in groups thus some time needs to be dedicated to find ways and strategies to work with each other (team/group work), single applicants are rejected due to the experience with their high drop-out rates. Each project defines the problem or issue themselves but receive initial help in concrete definition and approaches from the supporting team. Still, the solution, the way of working as well as the methods, the format of outcome and every decision rely on team members or participants of the social festival. This can only be done by the change of role of the innovation team: their role is to give inputs, to guide and to network and support. This requires a high amount of trust and confidence on both sides. On the one hand, once that the team members are the ‘experts’, know what is needed and what outcomes find acceptance by the community. On the other hand, that the innovation team has specific abilities (that go beyond purely financial support) that will elaborate the project further in the spirit of the own project. As mentioned, the experience has shown



that the establishment of trust takes more time than expected, but can be seen as the basis for a well working social festival.

One major criticism of PBL is that the student is not in the position to really know what might be important for him/her to learn, especially when no prior experience exist [5]. The same argument can be taken in the Social Festivals: Are the participants even aware of their own social need? Thus can the participants define clearly the major problem? Even with the support of the organisational team: Can they really find solutions that acquire well in their environment? This implies that the social innovator team must carefully assess abilities (ie. as mentioned before the ability of communication) and needs in order to fulfil their roles as supporters and facilitators, not taking over the lead and decision of the projects.

Communities of Practice

Given the fact that some funded projects might involve several committed stakeholders that share a concern or a problem and interact on a regular basis for some time, also the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) might become relevant for the Social Festival. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) [10] hereby emphasize that the three components of (1) the domain, (2) the community, and (3) the practice are required in order to count as a CoP. In case of the Social festival, a group of people would find an identity defined by the shared issue they are taking up and the aim of finding solutions to that problem (1). The community (2) would be build by members of each project, interacting and engaging in shared activities, helping each other, and sharing information with each other. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. The core are people who interact and learn together in order for a CoP to be formed. If the members actively develop a shared repertoire of resources which can include stories, helpful tools, experiences, stories, ways of handling typical problems, etc. , the developed project can be considered as CoP.



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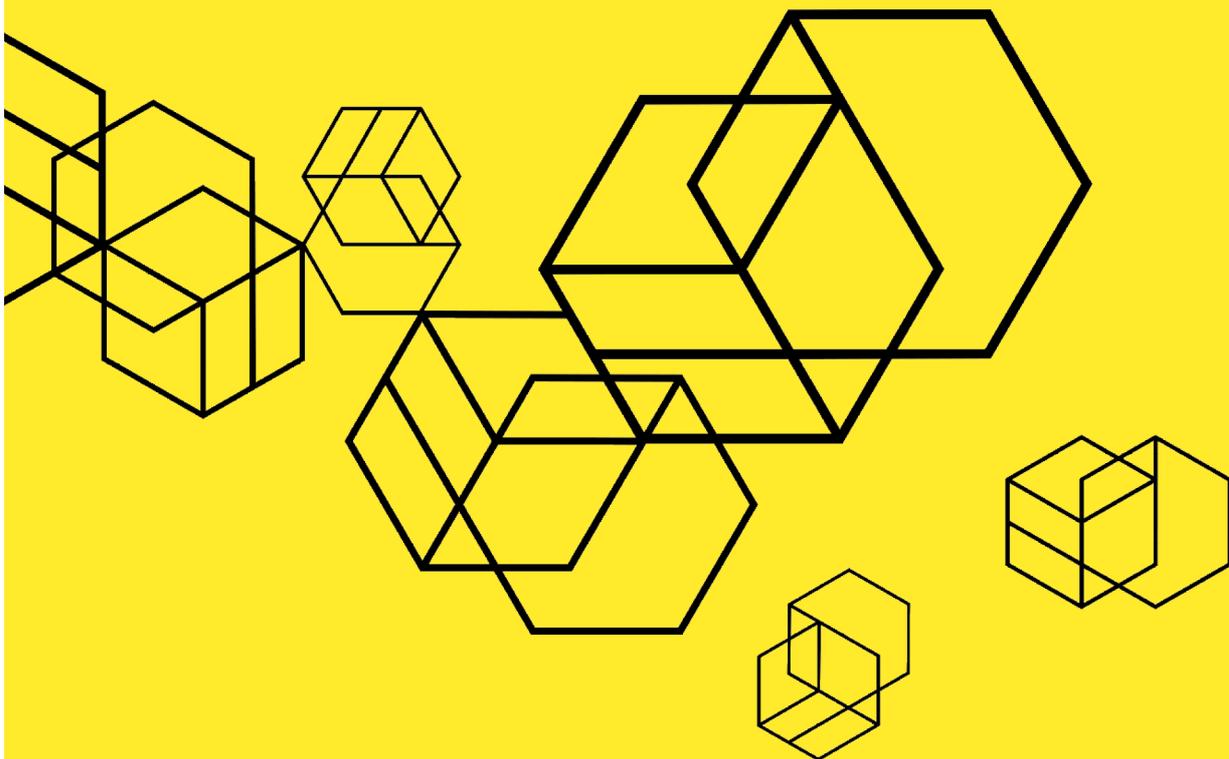
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Case study on Social Innovation in Emilia Romagna

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ABSTRACT

This case describes four examples of social innovation in Emilia Romagna. Emilia Romagna is a territory with a high number of social innovation experiences representing specific learning processes. The analysis of the cases, of their evolution and of their learning process will help to understand if their success depends on specific and local dynamics or whether a social innovation ecosystem can be identified. This provides also the basis for a brief discussion of the factors which could promote a real ecosystem of social innovation in Emilia Romagna.



1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

The context

Emilia Romagna is a dynamic Italian region from an economic and social point of view. Emilia Romagna is the 7,3% of the national population and represents 9% of the Italian GDP. It is also one of the fifteen richest regions of Europe (in terms of nominal GDP), the sixth European region for number of employees, the first Italian region for per capita export. Emilia Romagna can be also considered as the Italian hub for the food industry (for examples parmesan and balsamic vinegar) and motor vehicles production (for example Ferrari, Lamborghini, Ducati) as the first European bio medical district. It is a community with a strong attitude to economic innovation and it is the first Italian region for European patents.



Emilia Romagna is also a territorial community with high quality social services and a strong presence and tradition of cooperative and social economy. There is a growing relevance of social economy at European level representing 10% of the total enterprises and 6,5% of the total employees and Emilia Romagna is one of the most important regions in this respect (Regione Emilia Romagna, 2014). In Emilia Romagna is based 8,24% of the total Italian organizations of the social economy, 13,7% of the paid employees and the 9% of the total volunteers (Regione Emilia Romagna, 2014). Two thirds of the total regional employees in the Third Sector are working in one of the 723 social cooperative (56% are social cooperatives of type A, 21% are social cooperatives of type B and 17% are social cooperatives of mix type)¹. Despite the crisis, social cooperatives grew in numbers and in employees and in their contribution to the regional GDP. The importance of social cooperatives in this territory, their links with the rest of the cooperatives sector and the interaction between cooperatives and for profit enterprises makes Emilia Romagna a potentially interesting case study of social innovation creation and dissemination. These elements make Emilia Romagna often regarded as a social and economic model of regional success.

Two additional points should be worth mentioned in this regard. Regional economic and social differences across Italy have been analyzed in a recent study (Bigoni, Bortolotti & Casari, 2016) where the authors investigate the role of social norms in order to explain them. Following the influential contribution of Putnam (1993) who identified in the collective disposition towards cooperation and good government the reasons of the differentiations between parts of Italy, the authors present evidence based on the first laboratory in the field experiment² conducted on the Italian North – South differences, where the city of Faenza, based in Emilia Romagna, is one of the four selected at national level. They developed a representative sample of the population, measuring whether regional disparities in ability to cooperate emerge even if differences in geography, institutions and criminal intrusion are silenced. They argue that a behavioral gap in cooperation exists so Northern and Southern citizens react differently to same incentives. Tolerance of risk, as proxy of social capital and amoral familism is not the crucial variable because at least a part of the disparities derives from persistent differences in social norms *“the ability to cooperate appears as inherently social and can*

¹ Social co-operatives were legally recognised in 1991 through Law no. 381/91. They fulfil their activities ‘for the general benefit of the community and for the social integration of citizens’. Type A social cooperatives can deliver health, social or educational services. They operate as commercially orientated businesses, with workers and volunteers being members of the co-op. Social cooperatives of type B integrate disadvantaged people into the labour market, giving them greater involvement in the operation of their enterprise. Type B co-operatives seek to be financially self-sustaining, but their core function is to provide working environments and social integration for marginalized people. At least 30% of workers in a B co-operative must be disadvantaged. The main typologies of disadvantaged involved as members and workers are people with physical or learning disabilities, people with sensory difficulties, people treated for mental illness, drug and alcohol addicts, refugees and people with an alternative punishment to prison.

² Authors run the experiment in four cities, two in the North and two in the South, choosing medium-size cities, Faenza, Cuneo, Crotone e Ragusa, “large enough to study cooperation beyond the family circle but small enough to have a stable community in which dispositions should be shared and deep-rooted”. In each location, they recruited a sample reflecting the composition of the national population for a total of 618 participants.



spread as a beneficial bacterium, in a self-reinforcing process". They finally find evidence of the high attitude to cooperate in Emilia Romagna.

Another relevant regional aspect is level of density on entrepreneurs. Most of the literature finds the explanation for these differences across regions in terms of availability of resources, mainly financial, that influence the propensity to become entrepreneur. Guiso, Pistaferri, and Schivardi (2016), using data from 1950 to 2015 of the main Italian Provinces and Metropolitan towns, find evidence that the explanation is based on the learning environment produced by the presence of a strong entrepreneurial opportunities. They stress the fact that *"Those who grow up in an area with higher entrepreneurial density are found to be more likely to become entrepreneurs themselves"*. They use this interpretation in order to explain the evolution of entrepreneurial density across Italy and it is relevant that the province of Bologna is always ranked in the first three provinces for entrepreneurial density in Italy.

In this context, many examples of social innovation can be observed in this region and thus it could be useful to evaluate whether these examples create a collection of single positive cases or represent an enabling ecosystem.



2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESSES

Emilia Romagna is a context rich of social innovation. In the following we are going to present four representative experiences of social innovation in Emilia Romagna, each of them with specific features in terms of learning processes and possible scaling up.



Nurseries and early childhood services.

Emilia Romagna is one of the Italian regions with the highest level of early childhood education services with almost fifty years of experience characterized by elements of social innovation and scaling up. The early childhood education received the first official public intervention in Italy in 1971 with the Law no. 1044/71 that introduced a public funded plan for the institution of public nurseries. The services were delivered for the 0-3 population as “social service of public interest” in order to ensure assistance to families, to facilitate the access of women in the labour market and to offer an educational qualified opportunity to children. The law allowed municipalities to build and manage childcare services: national funds were allocated to Regions, responsible for planning and regulations while the Municipalities, through the national contributions granted by the Regions, had the duty of managing and controlling the services. In this framework, in Emilia Romagna the main cities as Bologna, Modena and Reggio Emilia started a local public plan for offering early childhood services. The law was very innovative, as it was innovative the idea of a public funded plan for establishing a system of early childhood services on the national territory.

This opportunity was largely used in Emilia Romagna where this created the conditions for building a system of public nurseries, supported by a very innovative and qualified team of pedagogics who were in charge of the coordination at local level of all these services.

In terms of numbers, in 2014 Italy offers a coverage rate of 22,5% against the European target of the 33%. Emilia Romagna has a coverage ratio of 35,2% and it is the Italian region with the highest number of public nurseries, that represent the 59% of the total regional offer of places available. See table 1.

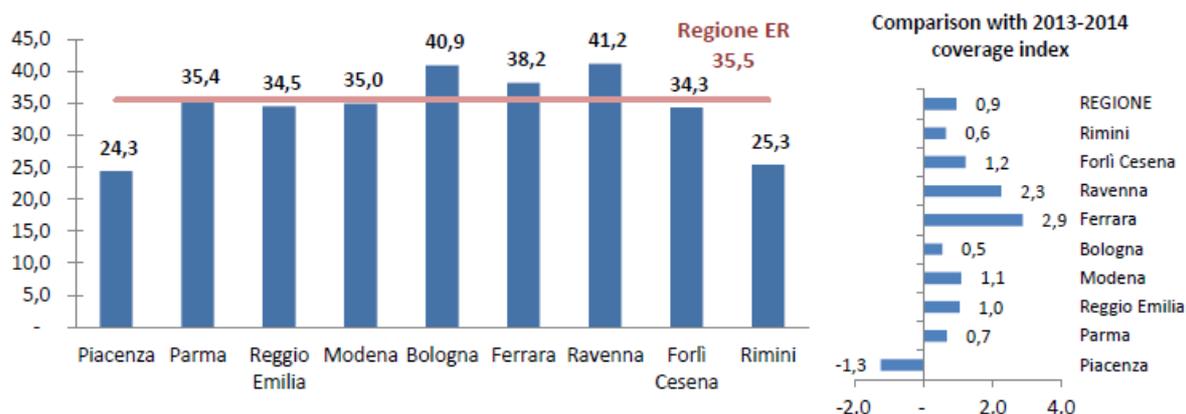


Table 1: rate of coverage of Emilia Romagna provinces

In the last decades the reduction of public budgets and the growing propensity to demand early childhood services led to the necessity of introducing innovation also in terms of institutional nature



of the players able to offer quality services. A mixed system of providers, a differentiation of the services, a public managed pedagogic coordination of the mixed network of offer made possible to grow the rate of coverage of the service in a context of high quality services.

All the process has been characterized by a high level of innovation in different steps and forms.

The first step of innovation in the 70s was strongly linked to the legislative innovation of introducing in Italy a plan of funds and opportunities for building a system of nurseries across the country. Emilia Romagna was one of the regions that took the opportunity and used the public funds in order to build a public system of offer of services for the early childhood.

The service focused on a double innovative aim: a social aim related to the opportunity of woman to enter the labour market and of children to receive high quality services and an educational aim linked to the educational innovation of a large scale public service with high pedagogical standards.

The pedagogic coordination of the services was a very innovative approach able to reach the highest levels of innovation and experimentation of high quality services in Italy. Strong attention was also devoted to produce positive spill overs and exchanges between operators and different nurseries. The so called “pedagogic February”³ introduced in Bologna during the 60s and 70s, a kind of open training for all the operators involved in the organization of the nurseries is still one of the most significant examples of dissemination of knowledge in order to improve and scale up high quality services.

Nurseries are also an important milieu of integration for families coming from other territories and the ways in which the participation of the families could help this process in a good interaction also with the profession employees involved in the nurseries is a powerful environment of social innovation also outside the service.

The level of social innovation has been strongly supported by public actors in the first part of the organization of these services. Nowadays the driver of innovation is the way in which a mix system of supply is built, recognized and supported in a continuous process of improvement in order to raise the level and the quality of the services. From this point of view many differences can be seen in the

5 The “Febbraio Pedagogico” was introduced by the Municipality of Bologna in 1962. It was almost a month of open discussion about the crucial aspects of the pedagogic views, didactic methodology and education services organization, It was an open opportunity of training for professionals involved in early childhood services.



different Municipalities of Emilia Romagna, and some scholars, as Bassi and Lazzari (2016) argue that the level innovation now is favored by the presence of private suppliers whereas the high percentage of public coverage is often a hinder to innovation. On the other hand, the strong network of pedagogists managing the public early childhood public services has been and is also crucial in order to make possible to integrate the system of supply with non profit providers.

In general terms, it is possible to recognize an important role of the networks of actors and of their interconnections. Social economy organizations, above all social cooperatives, play a growing role in the provision of services for the early childhood. Positive cases support the idea that good non profit actors can help to introduce elements of social innovation even in a context with high quality standards. Among the others, the use of the spaces also for other social purposes, the flexibility in the opening and timetable times of the structures are elements of innovation introduced by these suppliers.

Another expression of innovation is the growing number of company nurseries who started linked to some big enterprises or public institutions (for example, the cases of the multiutility Hera, the University of Bologna, the Coesia Group). In all cases the innovative and crucial point is that these suppliers are anyway integrated with the public network of pedagogic coordination in order to build a pluralistic system able to offer specific answers for the enterprise needs but also an opportunity of new places under the public managed system.

Another important example of innovation is based on the networks of small enterprises creating company nurseries inside the territory but within a system of pedagogic coordination. In this case, the innovative challenge is also linked to the opportunity to build networks of small enterprises coordinated in order to reach the needed scale for offering early childhood services. Thus, innovation is linked not only to the new provision of services but also to the ability to cooperate of some small enterprises that would be unable, working alone, to provide them.

The high quality of the public and integrated services has also built the opportunity for activities of counseling, research and dissemination based on the “Emilian way” of building and managing early childhood services. This is the case of the Reggio Children Foundation that is operating at international level for training, counseling and research activities about early childhood services.

Finally, it is possible to argue that the level of social innovation in the provision of early childhood services in Emilia Romagna is still relevant, but it changed from an initial completely public system to a mixed system of supply. It is possible to argue that this experience is an excellence at national and international level thus the process of innovation can be of interest from many other points of



observation and can be targeted as replicable in other contexts. Their constant production of social innovation made of this case a possible paradigm for other regions at national and European level.

SAN PATRIGNANO COMMUNITY

San Patrignano is a community founded in 1978 near Rimini for the assistance and the rehabilitation of drug addicts. It started as a so called “recovery community”, a nonprofit experimental institution that at that time were the only answer to the drug dependency. In addition, it always worked with a specific style and a high level of innovation. Hybridization, education to practical competencies with the creation of social enterprises have always been crucial characteristics of this experience.

The program of the drug rehabilitation inside the community takes in general three or four years with an average of 1500 people living inside and a total of more than 25.000 people that have been hosted by the community since its beginning. San Patrignano operates with a total annual budget of 15 millions of euro covered by donations and fund raising and without monetary contributions of the residents. The Community is managed through a foundation that is the holding of other two social cooperatives and two associations dealing with the different aspects and activities.

San Patrignano focused since the beginning on the idea of offering to the young guests an opportunity or a new start of their lives based on work experiences inside social enterprises involved in production of goods and services of high quality. Vincenzo Muccioli, the founder of San Patrignano, was used to say *“I don’t want that people could buy products made in San Patrignano only because they are made by addicts as you do when you buy a charity. I want that people could buy our products because they are good, nice, and of high quality.”*

In general terms, the vocational training often used in the recovery communities in San Patrignano has been always linked to a market orientation of all the projects. High quality standards, innovative tools of management, innovative system of organization are always a special characteristic of the San Patrignano style.

San Patrignano has always recognized high quality social agriculture an important area to develop its activities. In this perspective, they produced excellent wines, winners of important recognitions at national and international level and now their brand is famous and appreciated. They also produce meat, milk, vegetables, olive oil, cheeses and bread. In order to motivate the former drug addicts to return to a ‘normal’ lifestyle the idea is to have the opportunity to work in a high standard production inside a social enterprise. It is also possible to argue that their activity produced positive externalities



in all the rural area around San Patrignano where the production of wine grew in quality and in reputation.

This market orientation is a basic characteristic of the activities of San Patrignano, based on the idea that in order to help people to start a new life they need also to contribute to build a better economic system. Under this perspective, they introduced also innovative approaches in order to organize their socio economic activities. A social micro franchising⁴ has been started in order to scale up the internal pizzeria⁵ and in order to bring their brand and products in other regions of Italy. In addition, they have an excellent restaurant “Vite”, a shop “SP.accio” where they sell all their agricultural products, food and handcrafts.

In general, they also offer a location for enterprises interested in social responsibility in order to use their services and to build different kinds of interaction and partnerships. This process of collaboration and positive contagion with the business world is also targeted by a new educational, research and campaign activity, called the “positive economy” with the aim of scaling up and disseminating the vision and the social innovation they introduced in their experience.

LEGALITY. THE CASE OF FORLÌ, WITH SLOW FOOD.

The fight against mafias is a very important issue in Italy from an economic and social point of view. The reuse of confiscated assets previously owned by mafias is an effective tool in that fight. The law no. 646/1982⁶, introduced the possibility of the confiscation of the goods of mafiosi. The law no. 109/96 introduced the possibility, following the Ostrom (1990, 1996 & 2000) approach, to use them for social purposes. Despite these important laws in many cases the reuse of a confiscated good is a complex process with many difficulties for the Municipalities involved. In order to facilitate this process of concrete and symbolic reuse the Regione Emilia Romagna introduced with an ad hoc law, the law no. 3 of 2011, a system of positive actions and policies in order to support Municipalities dealing with the reuse of confiscated assets in their territories. This regional support defines an

⁴ During the 2016 summer the pizzeria “Squisito!” was open in Verona, the first “San Patrignano” pizzeria outside San Patrignano., the first step of a network of social franchising pizzeria started by San Patrignano.

⁵ The San Patrignano pizzeria is one of the thirty best Italian pizzeria according to the ranking of the Italian guide Gambero Rosso.

⁶ This law, known as the law Rognoni - La Torre, passed by the Parliament in April 1982, following the assassination of Pio La Torre, (a Sicilian politician standing for the necessity of an economic fight against mafias, based on the possibility of confiscated their patrimonies) introduced into the Italian Penal Code under the article 416-bis, the possibility of confiscating the goods and assets of mafiosi.



enabling and innovative environment and the reuse of the “podere ex Limonetti” in the town of Forlì is an interesting case to discuss the role of social economy actors in collaboration with local public institutions.

The confiscated asset, the “ex Limonetti”, is an agricultural terrain in the urban area of Forlì. The land and the two related buildings were confiscated on grounds of a felony of usury, confirming the dimension of money laundering and of the presence of the “colletti bianchi”. The land was entrusted via public selection to two Type B social cooperatives to find work placement for disadvantaged subjects. The two social cooperatives, CoForPol and Ecosphera, that in 2015 merged in For.B. dedicated their first efforts to clean the terrain which had become a sort of dump of different material from refrigerators to fiber cement siding and other ruins (Mazzanti, Ecchia & Komatsu, 2016). The two buildings, on the other hand, have been temporarily transformed into a warehouse for public institutional use, one of which will be soon devoted to educational activities.

The first step in regenerating the terrain was to verify that no harmful materials had been deposited or spilled on the land. The next steps were: to treat the land; dismantle the illegal shacks that had been used to raise courtyard animals and finally, plow and mill the land. The asset is about six hectares, of which five are cultivable. During the year 2012/13 the first three and half were cultivated with grain. The following year, three hectares were cultivated with vegetables for local shops and restaurants run by social enterprises. The remaining hectare has been cultivated with cereals and the other half of hectare will be designated to the start up of social gardens. The cultivation has been done under the prescription of the organic approach. The garden part of the asset has been divided into two subsections: one for private use and one for those in need through the help of Caritas who will cover the cost of the project with the funds coming from its 8x1000 campaign. The renters will pay an annual fee for a subsidized price, which includes the supply of the necessary working tools for the terrain.

The cultivation of vegetables is the result of a project done in collaboration between For.B. and Altro Giardino, a cooperative that works with physically and mentally challenged individuals who cultivate and transform herbs into aromatic herbs. Altro Giardino will take part in the project by cultivating the vegetable plants in a greenhouse, which will then be transplanted onto the asset by the employees of Ecosphera. The remaining part of the terrain has been left uncultivated due to the high density of nut plants and has been designated to be a recreational area for the visitors who come to visit.

The regeneration of the buildings, on the other hand, is under way and it has been founded by a grant of Regione Emilia Romagna and cofounded by the local municipality. The buildings have been designed to support the agricultural activities of the asset: to store material and agricultural machines and to create an educational center of legality and responsible citizenship for the Romagna’s area. In particular, the center seeks to offer an innovative response to the growing demand to visit confiscated assets by school children in the Emilia-Romagna Region. Hence, on top of the agricultural activities



done with the citizens of Forli, the center would create an opportunity to engage with a larger part of the territory. The history of the asset could also create the ideal environment for educational activities on responsible consumption and ethical financing and educate the territory in responsible citizenship in the areas of: legality, organic techniques, urban gardening and sustainable finance and economics.

After the first year of activity the project gained the interest and the collaboration of the Observatory of Legality, a co-project of the Municipality of Forlì and of the Forlì Campus of the University of Bologna. The idea of the educational part of the project in fact came out of the collaboration and research of the Observatory and should enable the project to improve the effectiveness not only of the use of the land and of the buildings but also the cultural work regarding legality, active citizenship and civic lifestyles.

A very innovative collaboration has been introduced during the last year between For.B and Slow Food. Slow Food is a “global, grassroots organization, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, based on the idea that through our food choices we can collectively influence how food is cultivated, produced and distributed, and as a result bring about great change”. Slow food started a partnership for supporting all the educational needs of people interested in managing a social garden in the “Podere Limonetti”. Slow Food has a strong international experience of social gardens, but this is the first case in which social gardens have been developed inside a confiscated and reused assets.

According to the last decade experience we can recognize three main models of reusing confiscated assets in Italy: the Libera Terra⁷ experience, the Goel Consortium⁸ experience and a third model linked to the main urban areas of Centre and Northern Italy. For all the three models a strong evolution in terms of scaling up is desirable. The confiscated asset in Forli has a high impact potential for the Forli

⁷ “LIBERA TERRA MEDITERRANEO is a non-profit consortium that includes the social cooperatives of Libera Terra as well as other operators that share the same principles. It was established in 2008 with the purpose of bringing together the farming activities of the different cooperatives in order to penetrate the market in a united and efficient manner. It is organized into different sectors, with, among others, product/market divisions. Highly-qualified professionals from different backgrounds deal with the different steps of product merchandising. It coordinates the production phases of its individual cooperatives and oversees the transformation from raw materials to finished product, looking for the best way to boost its products' qualities and ensuring economic value. *Libera Terra* guiding principle is always to stay true to its fundamental mission: the social re-use of confiscated property. The creation and safeguarding of farms with a promising future, which provide stable employment, is made possible by producing and selling the best goods, with outstanding price/value ratios. The pursuit of excellence guides every decision that has to be taken - and one of the payoffs is to see the products sold in the most prestigious Italian and international stores”.

⁸ Goel is a consortium of social cooperatives based in Calabria and in Milan. The mission is to support an economic, social and personal freedom of people and communities from Ndrangheta. Social cooperatives, a fashion brand, bio agriculture and responsible tourism are the main field of activity.



territory and its surrounding area. Firstly, by providing a positive and concrete response to reusing confiscated land for community benefit. Some of the more important and characterizing aspects of the confiscated asset in Forli include: (1) its location: in Northern Italy and in an urban area; (2) ability to generate awareness in the Forli citizenship not only about the presence of the mafias on its territory but also in positive terms about its ability to offer an answer for re-using it; (3) the management of the asset as a community asset; (4) the service mix between agricultural products and activities and educational programs; (5) the specific and innovative experience of social gardens with the educational and training support of one of the leading social enterprise dealing with the culture of food, the culture of the heritage and the social and sustainable agriculture as Slow Food. The agricultural products will be sold in various channels: organic stores, fairs, supermarkets, and restaurants managed by the cooperative and non-profit sector in Forli. (6) The educational part will start next year as soon as the work for the renewing of the first building will be finished. The activities and the follow up will be for the Forli citizenship but not only; the project has been ideated for all of the surrounding areas of the Romagna, mostly for the schools and for the youth but also for interested individuals. (7) The target is to transform a shame and a drain on the social and economic tissue into an opportunity for growth and future opportunity. The possibility of combining the land use with an educational component directed at legality and critical consumption is an innovative and sustainable solution that can be scaled up in other contexts with similar situations and problems at a national and international levels. (8) The collaboration with the University of Bologna through the Observatory of Legality is also another specific and innovative item of the Forli case. (9) The project, finally, is highly innovative for its use of a confiscated asset and transforming it from a form of violence as it was under the mafia into a form of common pool resource and hence asset based strategy for a better human development.

The support of Slow food is very important because it makes possible to relate the civiness approach of the restitution to a community to the heritage dimension of a new relation with the land and with its history. This kind of project has been introduced for the first time in Forli and it has a strong potential of diffusion in other similar contexts of reuse of assets in other parts of Italy. The use of social economy and the role of Slow Food makes the “ex Limonetti” case an experience for Emilia Romagna and possibly for other Italian regions.

Finally, this case is a positive example of how a local community can respond to a problem as big as the presence of mafias in non-traditional areas, quite similar to other parts of Northern Italy and Europe. The State’s efforts against the mafias are now making available a high number of confiscated goods and enterprises around Italy. Good management of these assets is now crucial in order to support the activity of the State and also to use these resources for producing wealth and opportunities for the local communities. The challenge is both concrete and symbolic: confiscated lands, assets and enterprises confiscated must be better used than when they were owned by mafiosi. When this outcome is achieved the positive consequences are very effective; likewise, should the opposite occur, the consequences are equally negative and become relevant. The scale of the problem



is considerable as the values of the assets are so high that pivotal experiences need to be expanded, replicated and innovated at the local and international level in order to be effective in re-using the confiscated assets. The positive re-use of confiscated assets for social or institutional purposes is a strategic issue for a State and a society that want to promote social and economic development.

2.1.4 SOCIAL STREETS

Social streets are a movement born in 2013 in Bologna from the experience of a group of residents of via Fondazza⁹ who built up a local and closed facebook group of people living in that street in order to socialize, exchange knowledge and organize common projects. The project was aimed to find an answer to the isolation of people living in urban areas through actions aimed to re-establish the importance of social relations.

They use closed groups of Facebook as a free medium for sharing informations and as facilitator of the transition from “virtual to real” contacts. Territoriality, is the crucial factor of this approach because each group is linked to a predetermined territory of a small size. This particular territory, once defined, is used as a unifying element in order to dismantle other categories in which people recognize and divide themselves (like social classes, interests, age, political affiliation, country of origin). Meetings, new relations, common projects for taking care of the streets, local events are examples of the positive outcomes of this projects, producing innovative solutions to the lack of social linkages.

This innovative link between a small territory and social media has been very effective and more than 400 groups were born in Italy and abroad following this “model” of social innovation and inclusion linked to a territory.

It is possible to argue that social streets are an innovative example of renewed interest in common spaces in urban areas. Whereas the weak linkages bring to a lack of responsibility in terms of organization, usage and care of the public spaces of neighborhood, social media are in this case used for their ability to exchange effectively information for free in order to share opinions and to take common actions.

The social innovation of social streets is also focused on the possibility of a new approach to the urban commons, using a specific territory as the space in which is possible to rebuild social links. A common

⁹ Via Fondazza is a street in the historic center of Bologna.



space for whom it is possible a common effort able to modify the perspective and the proximity to spaces previously perceived as far and neutral.

3. THE LEARNING PROCESS

The previous cases from Emilia Romagna present a territory that is reach of different and positive cases of social innovation with a specific learning process.

The early childhood services present a consolidated system of learning based on almost fifty years of experience. The public sector, State, Region and Municipalities played an important role since the birth of the services. The dissemination of knowledge, linked also to the educational characteristics of the services, was a specific target of the investment and of the project. The pedagogical dimension was disseminated through specific moments of reflection, training and exchanges that were organized at municipal level. The regional coordination played also an important role in the dissemination at regional level of the best experiences of Reggio Emilia and Bologna. Nowadays the frontier of the social innovation is more linked to the way in which a positive partnership between public and private suppliers is built on. Under this new perspective an important part of the learning process is created inside the different organizations whereas the pedagogic coordination helps the transmission of knowledge between organizations. The entrance of private non profit, above all, social cooperatives, in the management of nurseries introduced elements of differentiation and innovation that give a positive contribution to the general process of innovation. Similar considerations can be applied to the experience of company nurseries and other early childhood services. In general terms, the public pedagogic coordination is a crucial factor in supporting the real integration of different institutional suppliers and typologies of services in a high quality and coverage service.

The case of San Patrignano illustrated a different context with a different contribution of the different institutional actors. The social innovation of the community of San Patrignano can be considered based as well on a consolidated learning process during the almost forty years of life of that community. The role of the State in this case is weaker and also it is important to remember that San Patrignano as other recovery community started their activities because the Sate was unable to take care to this problem. The learning process linked to the founder Vincenzo Muccioli was in the first phase based on a learning by doing approach seen that it was the first time that this problem was tackled. San Patrignano tried to develop a strong learning process inside the community also because a relevant part of the job was to learn a new life for the residents. The learning was passed through the quality standards of the social enterprises in which the residents were involved for their recovery programs. A strong focus on the market orientation, on the positive economy and on the quality of the products are elements of the reeducation strategy of the Community.



A good and important support has been brought not only by the qualified social and medical collaborators but also by all the professional figures of people supporting the activities of the community. Learning to participate in the market via competitive and sustainable social enterprises could be recognized as another specific attitude of San Patrignano.

The case of the reuse of confiscated asset in Forlì is a more recent experience with a learning process under way. The challenge of the management of a confiscated asset in Forlì was new for all the actors, from the Municipality to the social cooperatives. Focusing on the two social cooperatives they were characterized by a previous strong experience in other fields. The mix of the two gave to both cooperatives the possibility to find internal and innovative solution for finding the right and new answers to the new problem and opportunity. In order to augment the effectiveness of the job and the impact on the collectiveness of Forlì they started different steps of engagement of other non profit actors in the management of the good and in the elaboration of the projects. Under this perceptive we analyzed also the partnership with Slow food strongly based on an idea of learning of agriculture practices related to the seasonality. The creation of the social gardens, with the collaboration of Caritas and Slow food and at the same time the development of the organic production on the land are all images of a quick and innovative learning process inside the cooperative and with the other social economy and third actors involved in the project. A further step will be the reuse of the near building for activities of education to legality, active citizenship and education to the use of the land that will be a further and important step for the activities offered at the “ex Limonetti, for their learning process and for the relevance of the project.

Social streets are the most recent example with a learning process internal to the territory and another one that is external. The internal one is mainly based on the ability to use social media as tools of communication and of creation of real contacts. The new discovery of the territory is another part of the learning process leading to a changing attitude towards the goods previously perceived as far and now lived as commons, as well as the space previously seen as empty and neutral and now seen as a common space.

The success of this interaction of new technology and new vision of the territory was fast and based also on the simplicity and on the replicability of the learning process about the use of social media inside a territory and a community. This process has encouraged the public awareness of the issue that resulted in the introduction of a regulation of the City of Bologna (the first at national level). Its aim is to propose a framework for recognizing and supporting the spontaneous organizations of active citizens who take care of the commons of their town. The social innovation of this process is the ability to learn to see and to live a territory as a community and non as a land without relationships. Also in this case the dimensions of learning process are many and crucial for the innovation process linked to this case.



This process of learning can be recognized also in other cases of social innovation that can be briefly discussed.

For example, the “Future Food Institute¹⁰” is an Italian-based non-profit that “aims to build a more equitable world through enlightening a world-class of innovators, boosting entrepreneurial potential and improving agri-food expertise and tradition”. Future Food Institute has its headquarters in Bologna, Italian capital of the quality food industry. Ranging from the support to innovative start up in the social agriculture field to the organisations of master and post graduate programs, Future Food Institute is a new and innovative experience of social innovation creation through the education of social entrepreneurs in the field of social agriculture. Moreover, Future Food Institute represents an bridging experience between the for profit sector with a social vision and the cultural heritage of the territory represented by the food supply chain.

Another example are the “Case Zanardi” a positive case of partnership between local municipality and third sector organizations for implementing projects against social exclusion and poverty. More the one hundred associations, social cooperatives and volunteers groups collaborated indeed with the Municipality of Bologna for offering eleven real social spaces around the town for people with problems of poverty and exclusion. Innovative projects, courses and social shops are the main outcomes of this project that started in 2013. The learning process is young even if is based on the strong experiences of the different associations and institutions involved in the project. The ability to pool resources, to develop common project are crucial for reaching a better scale of intervention that would not possible for single players. The growing awareness of the Municipality about the need to be open to the partnerships with other institutions and agents are part of the learning process of the project.

Moreover, another example is offered by the Foundation MAST, an international cultural and philanthropic institution that focuses on art, technology and innovation. MAST wants to build a bridge between the funding Company, Coesia Group, and the Community. MAST Foundation supports the development of creativity and entrepreneurship also cooperating with other institutions, in order to support economic and social growth. Mast foundation can be considered as an innovative case of philanthropic activity based in Bologna offered by the Coesia. The beneficiaries are members of the local community and employees who are entitled to have access to some services as a firm innovative nursery open to the territory and integrated with public pedagogic supervision. Mast is one of the recent examples of company foundations born in the last years in Bologna, actors who can contribute to develop social innovation in their specific fields of activity. The learning process is highly

¹⁰ <http://futurefoodecosystem.org/institute/>.



professionalized and at the same time this activity produces positive externalities and of spill overs on the territory and the local community.

Finally, a positive example of innovation in the field of the provision of health services is offered by Cup 2000. It is a public owned society, founded in 1996, as a local spin-off, for the management of the Joint Booking Center (Centro Unificato Prenotazioni – CUP) of the city of Bologna in order to make easier to book a visit, to reduce the waiting time to improve the allocation of the available resources. Cup 2000 grew fast to the other regional towns and in 2015 has a production value of thirty million, almost 530 employees and it is managing and developing the electronic folder for its stakeholders. An enterprise very innovative for the organization of the service they introduced and for the social innovation that this kind of service introduced in the relationship between citizens/customers and the regional health system.

4. DISCUSSION

The previous cases represent some examples of social innovation that can be found in Emilia Romagna. In our opinion, the main features which have emerged, such as the replicability, the learning processes, the hybridization, and the different kinds of partnerships between the State, the private for profit and non profit organisations make this region a useful case to discuss.

The nurseries' experience shows that a level of early childhood services adequate to the European targets has been achieved by social innovation thanks to an initial strong role of public institutions. In this respect, a given policy has been implemented and it has been effective in producing social innovation for a specific need. Nowadays, the crucial dimension of social innovation is the creation of public private partnerships, typically with social economy organisations, for the management and the realization of new nurseries and services. The possibility of a continuous innovation is related to the ability of new actors to organize the services and to respond to families' needs to match a fast changing work-life balance (Bassi and Lazzari, 2016).

The San Patrignano Community is an interesting example of how a social enterprise involved in social agriculture, producing goods and services of high quality is a tool for supporting a new life chance for the residents in the Community. In short, a leading experience with a strong orientation to the market and the building of a "positive economy". Social innovation is the result of a strong commitment of a non profit institution in order to develop an effective and sustainable social enterprise as the instrument to educate residents to a new opportunity for their lives.



The reuse of confiscated land in Forlì is a case of social innovation based on the ability to find an innovative solution for the management of a confiscated asset. Civicness, the role of social economy, heritage and reuse of the land, are the main elements transforming a social problem in a positive opportunity for the local economy and community, a process that can be replicated also in other regional and national contexts. Social innovation is related to a strong and innovative collaboration between the Municipality and two social cooperatives, implementing a national law but also introducing local original solutions. Moreover, a new direction for innovation is represented by the interactions with other third sector actors and the university, with a strong emphasis on the educational dimension of this experience.

The model of social street is a small but relevant case of success for the efforts of a community that wanted to recreate a link with its space/territory thanks to the support of social media. This represents an example of new technologies strengthening personal relationships and vice versa. An example easily replicable all around the world thanks to its simple logic and framework of implementation. This social innovation produced by spontaneous interaction of people living the same street also spurred the recognition by the Municipality of Bologna that has been the first in Italy to introduce a possible guideline for the management of the city commons, like social streets.

It would be possible to add to this discussion some features of other cases of social innovation in Emilia Romagna but the point is whether we are facing simply a selection of positive examples or we can refer to a real regional system of social innovation. Emilia Romagna is a region with a strong presence and role of social economy organisations, with a culture of cooperation and a high level of innovation that could constitute the drivers for innovative answers and solutions to the changing needs and opportunities of the society. The level of social innovation reached in Emilia Romagna is relatively high for the Italian standard but what emerges from the case studies is the lack of a comprehensive framework which favours social innovation despite the presence of assets that can be potentially very useful for this result.

In fact, the positive outcomes of the cases analysed are typically related to specific ideas or policies targeting a particular issue or need. The evolution and the learning process of the social innovation is the result of sectoral investments or innovative ideas but this has not been sufficient to create an ecosystem of innovation. In order to achieve this result it would be important to foster a higher level of awareness about the relevance of this goal. A first step in this direction would be the change in culture and practice of public policy institutions towards a more participatory system of governance. Secondly, one could stress the relevance of the role of intermediaries between the various actors in order to favour the creation of a bridge between beneficiaries and social innovative solutions (see the contributions in Terstriepe (2015) for more analysis of these two points).



Finally, it is clear that willingness and the ability to build a real ecosystem of social innovation is a complex process in which many actors are involved. Public institutions, for profit enterprises, social economy organisations and civil society are all protagonists of this challenge. A strategic approach and a comprehensive policy would help to produce positive externalities in the economic and social system as a result of the growing level of social innovation in this territory.



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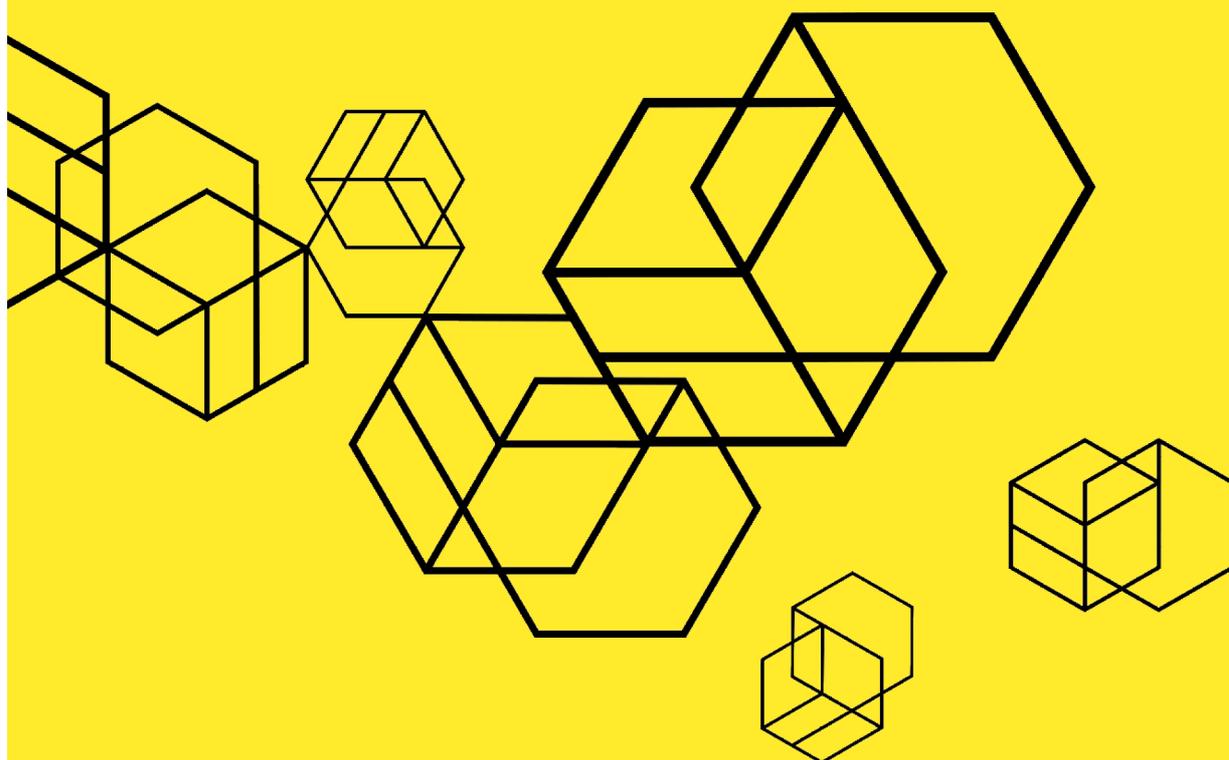
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**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
COMMUNITY**

Dynaklim

TU Dortmund University (TUDO)





Dynaklim - Dynamic adaptation of regional planning and development processes to the consequences of climate change in the Emscher-Lippe region¹

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

Dynaklim (Dynamic adaptation of regional planning and development processes to the consequences of climate change in the Emscher-Lippe region) was a project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) running from 2009-2014. It aimed at enhancing the knowledge about the effects on climate change for the geographic region of Emscher-Lippe (located in the German Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia) and setting up an inclusive strategy for dealing with them. The project was rather complex, as it tackled many (also technical) aspects related to water management, including the development of future climate scenarios, used different activities to increase outreach and tangibility of such an abstract topic, including the creation and implementation of pilot projects, whereby the single activities and tasks were interdependent.

The core idea of Dynaklim was initially to develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the project region. During the course of the project, the Roadmap process gained more importance, as it was used to develop a common strategy for the region using a participatory format involving actors from different institutional and disciplinary backgrounds. Therefore, the core idea was still the same, but realized in a broader sense.

This increasing importance manifested itself at two stages of the project. First, when writing the project proposal and secondly, when it became the steering mechanism coordinating the consortium during the second half of the project.

Later on, the elaboration of a Roadmap 2020 became the central objective of the Dynaklim network. This required a coordinated and cross-sectoral adaptation strategy to be provided by the year 2014.

¹This case study includes research results from a case study within the project SI-DRIVE: Social Innovation Driving Force of Social Change (Work Package 6 Environment and Climate Change) by Antonius Schröder and Marthe Zirngiebl (TU Dortmund University).



This roadmap fleshed out important fields of action such as water resource management, economic development, or urban and regional planning, as well as detailing what adaptation measures were to be provided by what actors from politics, the economy, education or society, and when as well as what resources were required to achieve this. Dynaklim initiated and moderated this regional strategic process, mobilized the relevant local players and made established know-how available. At the same time, the results and experiences gained from the project work and pilot areas were continually absorbed into the roadmap effort.

The context

The German conurbation of Dortmund, Bochum, Essen and Duisburg forms the core of the Ruhr region and one of Europe's most densely populated areas of economic activity. 3.8 million people live here within the area drained by the rivers Emscher and Lippe. This region contains strong contrasts: the Emscher area is industrial in character, adjoined by the more rural Lippe region to the north. The future climate here will be characterized by wet, less cold winters and hotter, dry summers with frequent heavy rains. The average annual temperature will rise by between 2 and 3.5 degrees Celsius in the area drained by the Emscher and Lippe rivers by the year 2100. The annual rainfall will only increase by 5 percent, but will increasingly shift from summer to winter. This change will entail tangible consequences for the regional water balance in western Germany within only a few decades, and hence also for the population's living and economic conditions. The dynaklim network therefore primarily concentrated on the future availability and usage of water in the region.

The problems described in the Roadmap 2020 addressed on the one hand, the arising difficulties in developing a climate change adaptation strategy and, on the other hand, the future impacts of climate change. The former problem package held that the impacts of climate change realized themselves over a long period of time; the related interdependencies were complex, as climate change and other future developments, such as changes in demography and urban sprawl, were surrounded by uncertainties. Moreover, the problems' causes and effects spanned over generations. One of the consequences of this complex interdependency was that conventional administrative processes were not adequate in solving the problem, as different administrative organizations and departments rarely neither cooperated with one another nor involve other relevant stakeholders. The problem at hand from a policy and administration point of view could be summarized in five key challenges:

- 01** Effects of climate change were often under-estimated.
- 02** Cities and its habitants did not know about their vulnerable spots.
- 03** There was a lack of connecting points between the stakeholders (consequently, knowledge about problems and solutions is fragmented).
- 04** People tended to see the responsibility with others, since everyone was only partially responsible.



- 05** There was a lack of financial and human resources to address the issue at hand adequately.

Since the specific effects of climate change depended on other future developments and were highly context-dependent (influential factors are e.g. the design of the built environment, demographic specifics or consumption patterns), Dynaklim first developed socio-economic and climatic scenarios independently.

The case

The Emscher-Lippe region is naturally rich in water – which one would think an advantage in a time of climate change. But just like everywhere else in the Ruhr region, in the next 50 to 100 years people living in this region will also need to prepare for climate changes that are already noticeable. This particularly applies to water supply and sewage disposal systems, as well as to ground and surface waters.

Essential questions for dynaklim in this regard were: how was the urban infrastructure prepared for the future higher frequency of floods entailed by heavy rains? How could people living in the region deal with dry periods? How would the availability of water be affected? How would severe rains and heat waves affect the water quality of rivers and lakes, or of ground water? How could competing interests be coordinated when water is scarce? And how could the sensitive ecosystems of the regional green belts and forested areas be adapted to climatic extremes?

To answer these questions, dynaklim developed those socio-economic and climatic scenarios. These were later combined resulting in five different dynaklim scenarios. The first one depicted a development according to the prevailing trends; the second one drew an optimistic picture in which the project area was a competitive and attractive region. The third one showed that even though heavy rains occur, the region would be prepared to cope with them. The fourth scenario was more pessimistic in stating that the project region was experiencing hot and unbearable summers. The fifth one was not more optimistic in projecting severe floods. Despite of being more or less pessimistic, all of the developed scenarios predicted more dry days during summer, more and longer dry periods (i.e. at least 10 days with an average temperature > 30°C), more wet days and floods during winter, and a more frequent occurrence of heavy rainfalls. While these scenarios focused on the near future (i.e. 2021-2025), projections for the distant future (i.e. 2071-2100) were included, as well. Even though the problems depicted in the scenarios manifested themselves, a strategy including counter-measures had to be designed and realized. Again from this perspective, the contemporary problem dynaklim mainly addressed was the above-mentioned lack of cooperation between relevant stakeholders. With the roadmapping process, dynaklim was able to get them closer.

In the Emscher-Lippe region, the dynaklim projects elaborated new concepts for a sustainable and



adaptive management of the water balance. Technical solutions enabling more precise predictions of, and more flexible responses to, the consequences of climate change for the water balance, water infrastructure and urban climate were being developed. Comprehensive hydro-meteorological data were being gathered and more exact precipitation data extracted from them to provide a basis for this work. Initial draft concepts for sustainable ground water management and ground water use in the cities have already been delivered. Considerations on adaptive rain water management have already been drawn up. In addition to this, new approaches were being elaborated for the future coordination of competing users of ground and surface water in the central Lippe region. This pilot project for the Lippe area was providing an important part of the basis for the entire regional climate adaptation strategy in the Emscher-Lippe region. Solutions to the problem of securing a reliable supply of drinking water for an adaptive approach to urban water management were also being designed. And the results of an urban quantitative climatological network were set to be included in a guideline to improving the urban climate.

To find out, in which way and when all this could have been implemented, dynaklim cooperated with experts in water management, public administration and the economy of the region in studies to identify the regional costs to be expected in the future for climate adaptation, and what a future climate-proof, cost-efficient organization and finance model was likely to look like in relation to water management.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

The Roadmap 2020 process, which was used to develop a common strategy for the region using a participatory format involving actors from different institutional and disciplinary backgrounds, was of primary interest.

Due to this, dynaklim, developing different projects with different partners, was such a broad project, that the Roadmap 2020 was necessary to use the projects as a governance-innovation.

Initially, the method of roadmapping was developed in the 1980s to enable planning for the far future and developing technology forecasts. In the Roadmap 2020 which described the strategy and measures developed in dynaklim it is summarized as follows:

“The Roadmap 2020 is comparable to a timetable including a set itinerary which takes up processes of change within population, economy, and society and describes a possible way leading to a climate-robust, attractive, learning future agglomeration following integrated and adaptive development processes. The Roadmap is supposed to ensure that we, the region, decide upon a common goal, take off in time, pack the right equipment for the journey, have all those who are responsible, affected, and interested on board and are able to identify together the right paths and short cuts, avoid dead ends and react to unforeseen changes quickly” (Schultze et al., 2014, p. 5).

Consequently, due to Roadmap 2020, strategic development trends could be analysed and compared



to the proposed development and future trends; new action plans could have been made and translated to measures and responsibilities. These processes only were possible through the roadmapping, with dynaklim as showpiece and forerunning project.

Moreover, dynaklim built on prior projects and initiatives that dealt with the interface between research and policy in regard to issues related to climate change and water management. Yet, dynaklim was one of the forerunner projects in designing a common strategy for water management and climate change adaptation which managed to involve a large variety of actors.

As said before, the core idea was to initiate a climate change adoption strategy; focusing on Roadmap 2020 included the possibility to get an overview and use all information to reach the project's aim.

The problem was the main theme of climate change – climate governance was characterized by insecurity and conflicts between preventive government actions on the one hand and adjustment processes on the other hand. At the same time, dynaklim's actors had to handle different conflicts of interest, constellations of heterogenic actors with different aims and motivation and at least unclear areas of responsibility. During recognizing this, dynaklim developed an interdisciplinary investment program about regional climatic problems and changing potential in the Emscher-Lippe region.

Because dynaklim worked regional, regional governance in the Emscher-Lippe region was constitutive for its research and network programs.

Networks: The dynaklim group included more than 50 network partners; companies involved in the regional economy, water boards, municipalities, universities and research facilities, as well as regional and civil society initiatives.

Although the Roadmap process could build upon these local conditions, bringing the desired participants together was not an easy task. The project coordinators were of key importance in bringing about the measures formulated within the Roadmap process, as they continued to enhance and focus on the Roadmap process, despite all difficulties. Taking conflicts into account, they pushed partners to get involved into the Roadmap process instead of simply delivering report after report.

Dynaklim proved to be a key project for more technical-oriented project partners who turned back to the social innovation and made use of it in other projects and processes. In the course of dynaklim, the project leader, as a natural-science oriented institution, learned to work more with social science-oriented partners and to organize networks from scratch. The method of roadmapping helped to organize the inter- and trans-disciplinary network. The role of Roadmap changed during the project course.

Due to the project logic dynaklim had to follow it was not possible to implement significant changes during the project's lifetime (Cormont & Frank, 2015). One of the things the project coordinators



acknowledge to be changed in future roadmapping processes for climate change adaptation was the participation of citizens. The possibilities that exist in terms of involving citizens were by no means fully utilized.

Since the rollout process in the more rural area and the dynaklim process in the Ruhr region overlapped, certain things learned in the course of the main process could have been implemented differently in the rural area. For example, political actors were more directly involved in the follow-up process in order to ensure that the strategy would become a political decision adopted by the city council and as such more binding.

Therefore, during the process, improved cooperation methods and more effective approaches to adaptation management were jointly developed and put into practice. Close networking and an approach to knowledge management focused on disseminators within the region, fostered trust between the protagonists and created efficient working, coordination and decision-making structures. This in turn paved the way for continued development and the successful implementation of the regional adaptation strategy. Related to the partners, through participative changes and informative exchanges, dynaklim learned a lot during the practical implementation. This was quite an important learning process; the project partners with their different specializations were able to benefit from.

Drivers/ barriers: The project coordinators regarded dynaklim as a very complex project. In 2010, when the coordinator of the Roadmap process joined, there were still 142 tasks to be accomplished. Those were all interlinked and interdependent. The good cooperation of the project coordination team was a precondition for working effectively in the dynaklim network, as well.

The Roadmap process started with envisioning a common future. Three scenarios were developed, that were helpful in building this network. Having this common goal especially proved useful in progressing with the Roadmap, i.e. all actors regarded it as a necessary process and were eager to achieve results.

The main challenge was to motivate actors to participate and form a network. The project ran over a course of five years, which was a rather long timeframe. In order to take up this challenge identifying and involving suitable multipliers was crucial. Yet, to maintain a dynamic interaction and perpetuate the process - in a sense of pursuing the same spirit of cooperation within the actors' own organization - proved to be demanding for the project coordinators.

One of the things the coordinators would have changed in future roadmapping processes for climate change adaptation was the participation of citizens. The possibilities that existed in terms of involving citizens were not fully utilized; reflecting the communication with citizens, they would have made more use of methods such as storytelling, they would have produced more short films and complemented the whole process with dialogue sessions with citizens. The actors experienced and learned that the involvement of citizens had more importance than it was originally assumed.



All in all, the conclusion can be separated in three parts:

- 01** The project treated possible governance actions related to climate protection and adaption.
- 02** The most important issues were reached by the roadmapping process.
- 03** Afterwards these issues were discussed and reflected in relation to regional governance demands.

Governance actions related to climate protection and adaption had primarily a technical and organizational nature. They needed a regional coordination and cooperation, where aims could be developed in bottom-up and top-down processes. During the dynaklim project, the region was made aware of climate adaption; knowledge was implemented to begin climate change projects, which could be seen as extensive preventive climate policies. All this just could be developed during the realization and carrying out of dynaklim, resulting in one of the important parts of the learning process.

3. DISCUSSION

To understand the novelty of dynaklim it has to be taken into consideration that knowledge about the particular impact of climate change on the region was still missing before starting the project. In addition, the knowledge about concrete measures that can be taken did not exist, yet. Due to this, it was quite an important project.

As dynaklim was such a big project, the networking factor has to be discussed quite well and has to be examined in different parts.

Climate change adaptation is a cross-cutting issue affecting a variety of public institutions and actors. Hence, addressing it adequately, it required cooperation between actors who normally did not work together. Moreover, especially practitioners did not understand the potential climate change impacts and did not see the relation to their (institution's) work. Actors who had to work together to implement measures, did not know each other in person. In addition, practitioners did neither have the time nor the financial resources to organize such a forward-looking planning process as established in dynaklim.

Hence, having a look at this part of the networking factor, dynaklim could have been a more cooperative project in sense of a broader overview.

The project's internal personal relationships between people steering dynaklim was a critical factor in determining a temporary promotor or "caretaker" who proceeded the process and successfully involved people over and over again. According to the project coordinators, a project organized in a more segregated manner would not have been that successful, because it would not have increased the level of engagement of a few motivated individuals working closely together. The cooperation was centrally coordinated by the project leader, but the different actual actors also networked among themselves.



This group consisted mainly of experienced practitioners and researchers who were not involved in their organizations' board or coordination of working groups which gave them the freedom to act relatively independent.

The project coordinator's ability to jump back and forth between different types of partners (partners from technical sciences and from social sciences as well as practitioners) and keep them on the same track was also quite important. This ability made it possible to serve the needs of science and research as well as those of the practical application and political framework. So, this part of networking did work quite well, thanks to the project coordinator.

The methods were employed to enhance cooperation and design participative processes in a way that it would become a task-assigning procedure which worked in a solution-oriented manner. Especially the roadmapping brought many aspects together which otherwise would have been addressed separately in research and science, on the one hand, and in practice, on the other hand. Dynaklim helped to inform the different actors and offered a lot of theoretical information, which were afterwards framed by dynaklim on practical issues to guarantee an adaption to climate-related changes. Examples for this were the nine networking workshops, concentrating on different specialisations, connecting scientist and practitioners.

Working according to the motto "networking for the sake of networking is nonsense", the dynaklim network, as well as the platforms and workshops had a task and a goal. This common willingness and collective capacity were seen as major success factors which again is interlinked with the core group's high level of commitment which dripped down to other network partners.

While the level of participation and discussions in dynaklim was remarkable, the region's experience in inter-communal cooperation and exchange dates way back had been pursued in an array of thematic areas: They had this huge conglomeration with thousands of actors in 50 cities including a number of researchers at universities which used the area constantly for cooperation and as a laboratory. Thus, the overall experience with this kind of cooperative approach was positive, i.e. overall actors had been benefitting from the participation. In addition, there was collective knowledge how to behave cooperatively in group processes.

Another success factor was the distribution and assignment of tasks and work packages to different individuals who could create and lead them in a more independent manner.

Related to the involvement of citizens, the actors planned to include them. Activities such as citizen panels should have been organized to involve citizens. These participatory formats should have been organized in a way that they related to the citizens' way of life and were interesting to them. But this did not work; ultimately, the proposal did not address the inclusion of citizens, they were just involved occasionally. While actors thought about measures which demanded civil engagement, such as the protection of basements during floods, they did not initiate any kind of participation process focusing on



citizens. If the general public demanded that action has been taken, there would have been a greater pressure to do so. This general awareness for climate change adaptation ideally had to be an awareness that everyone from administration over business to citizens had to become active. So far action was only required from administration which was far from being the integrated process which was envisioned in dynaklim.

Generally, there was a high exchange of knowledge and important interaction. This also was influenced by the actors' background and high level of competences. As every actor brought a specific knowledge, the project benefited from these extensive facilities.

Related to governance, the importance of regional policy should be mentioned. As dynaklim worked hand in hand with regional policies, there existed a one-way-dependence. On the other hand, being embedded in governance processes was also a benefit for dynaklim.

Unfortunately, a general connection between all regional activities in the German Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia was not possible. Dynaklim was able to influence regional aims and offered successful structures, but the initiatives, hit by dynaklim, continued being separated projects, different in terms of planning, financing and representation. Therefore, the most important difficulties, which could have been solved through regional climate governance, have not been reached.



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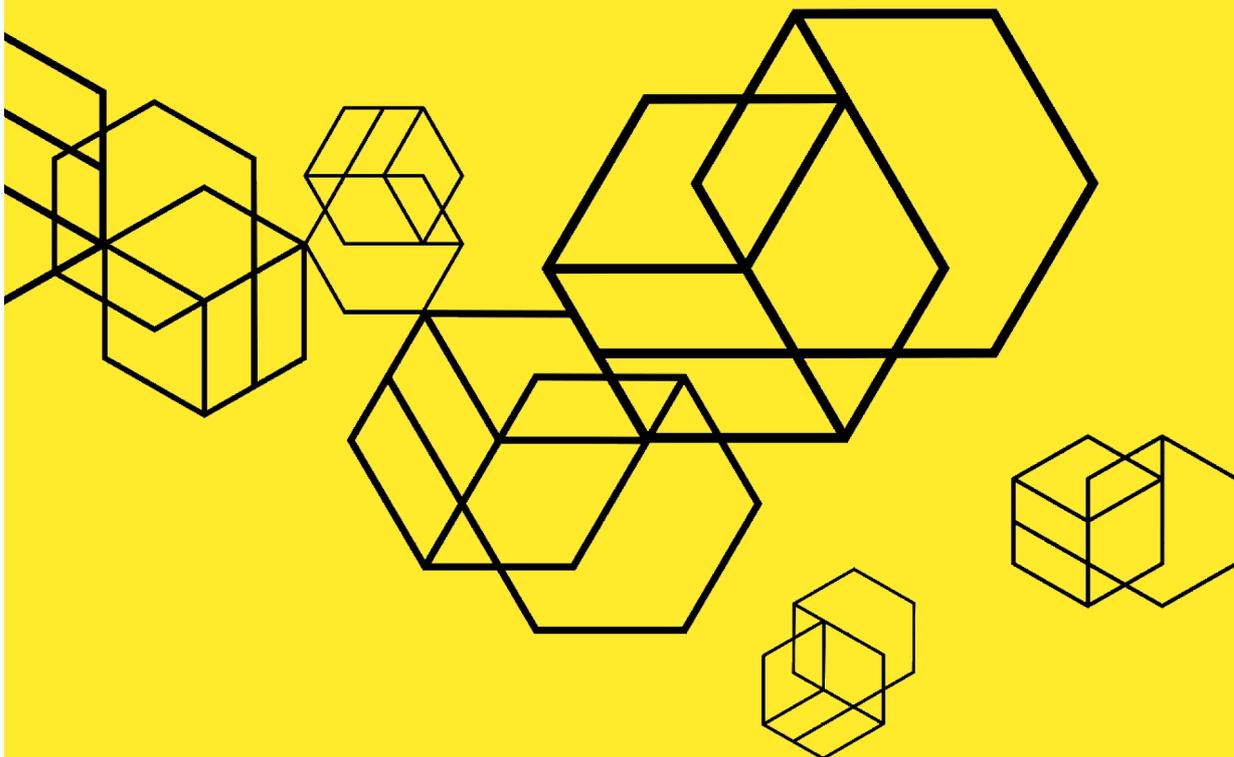
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**SOCIAL
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Greening Technical VET - Sustainable Training Modules for the European Steel Industry

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ABSTRACT



In the project “Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training” (GT VET) a pilot training module on green skills has been developed which is supposed to accelerate the implementation of industry-relevant qualifications in company related training and national VET systems continuously. It contains four elaborated sub-modules on topics directly relevant for green skills and ecological awareness: Energy, Waste, Noise, and Raw Materials. This European training module helps to obtain comparable European learning outcomes in the field of green skills and sustainable awareness within technical VET (focusing on preventing pollution and securing occupational health and safety). The module was adapted and tested by four steel companies (ThyssenKruppSteel, TataSteel, ArcelorMittal Poland and Acciai Speciali Terni) in four member states (Germany, United Kingdom, Poland, and Italy). All steel companies were GT-VET project partners, along with research institutes in the respective countries (“tandem approach”).

In GT-VET, a **sectoral learning ecosystem** has been initiated. While the implementation of learning in this case takes place on the regional and local level in the four participating steel companies’ countries, GT-VET has implemented a cascading learning approach for promoting green skills:

- On the European level, the relevance of green skills was discussed and the concept of local partnerships was agreed with European employers and employees associations. Associated regulatory frameworks were analyzed and provided to the actors on the local level. These frameworks comprise the general European framework for greening technical skills, the EU VET strategy and green skills policy, and current sectoral strategies for the European Steel Industry.
- On the national level, company related legislation and directives were analysed. Furthermore, in interviews and workshops with company and VET system representatives the national industry demands for green skills were discussed in correspondence with the existing vocational education and training systems of the involved countries.
- On the sectoral level, the green skills strategies, policies and practices of central sectoral bodies were reviewed. These bodies were the European Metalworkers’ Federation (now industriALL), the European Steel Association (EUROFER) and the European Steel Technology Platform (ESTEP), aimed at maintaining the global competitiveness and sustainable future of the European steel industry.
- On a regional and local level, all results obtained before were used to develop and implement the four training modules and develop cross-sectoral partnerships which are highly sensitive towards changing training needs regarding green skills.

As a result, different nationally adapted training modules for strengthening green skills during apprenticeship and beyond are now implemented in local and regional learning ecosystems in which the companies, VET institutions and social partners are playing key roles.



TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Description of the case	4
2. Description of the learning process	8
3. Discussion	11
References	15



1. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

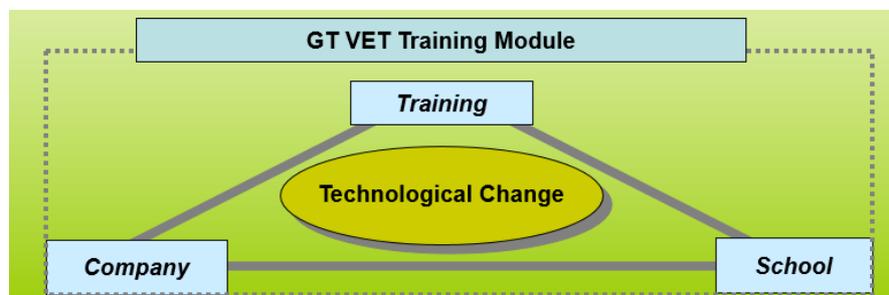
The context

For global competitiveness of European industries, a short term implementation of new mandatory skills within VET systems (national and industry related) is crucial. The training module “Greening Technical VET (GT VET)” has been developed within a two-year project funded within the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the European Union. It has helped to accelerate the implementation of industry-relevant qualifications in national VET systems and continues to do so. This European training module helps to obtain identical European learning outcomes in the field of green skills and sustainable awareness within technical VET (focusing on preventing pollution and securing occupational health and safety). It was adapted and tested within four steel companies in four EU member states (United Kingdom, Poland, Italy and Germany). All steel companies were active GT VET project partners, along with research institutes in the respective countries (“tandem approach”). GT-VET has helped to investigate systematic ongoing and short termed training pathways by focusing on skills for ecological sustainability, which are a key for the global competitiveness of all European industries.

The case

Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training is a short-termed demand of the industry related to quickly changing (production) technology. Therefore, an industry driven European sustainable training module was developed within the European Steel Technology Platform ESTEP: Greening Technical Vocational Education and Training GT VET. The main objective of the project was to develop a sustainable industry-driven European VET module for an ongoing and short termed introduction of environmental or “green” skills. The goal was to create a flexible module which could be adapted every time new technological developments emerged and affected environmental regulations. These changes would then have an effect on (1) company directives and strategies, (2) on-site training and (3) learning content in schools.

Figure 1: The training module responding to technological change.





First, the consortium has analysed how environmental legislation determines the everyday work of skilled workers (the main target users of the GT VET product) today and in the future using the example of the steel industry (as the community with primary interest in the success and outcomes of the project).

Research and reporting on the impact of European directives and the reflection of green issues within four European Steel companies and national VET Systems was also realised. After developing a European Training Module of greening technical VET, an adaption and pilot testing process has taken place in the four steel companies involved and embedded in four different national VET systems, but in each case with respect to the defined European learning outcomes. The activity oriented training module was structured in such a way that it can be integrated into each national system of VET or used in addition to the existing system of VET (by matching the demands of industry with the VET system).

A secondary objective of the project was to inform and motivate neighbouring industries to make use of the GT VET outcomes (the module itself as well as the supporting products and process recommendations) to develop the green skills of their respective skilled workers staff. In order to achieve this, representatives of neighbouring process industries like the automotive, cement, glass, or chemical industry were invited to GT-VET conferences and workshops and asked to participate in discussion fora. What the stakeholders had to keep in mind is that a mere copying of the GT-VET approach would not be sufficient, but a reflective adaptation of the GT-VET approach was needed for transfer. This has successfully been implemented: The training module for electrical and mechanical technicians as a blueprint for other industries and technical professions has been developed further continuously. At the moment, the adaptation and modification to the small and medium sized enterprises of the automotive sector is tested in the automotive suppliers Cluster.

GT-VET was carried out by research institutions and with a strong involvement of steel companies, accompanied by the European social partners and the involvement of VET system relevant associated partners. The tasks were organised on a decentralised and work sharing basis, with main responsibilities attributed to organisations best suitable and with the expertise to undertake specific pieces of work. Research institutions were responsible for the research driven tasks, assisted and supported by the practical knowledge of the steel companies. The training departments of the steel companies developed and tested the training modules, assisted by the research institutions. The social partners were sharing the responsibility of valorisation (dissemination and exploitation), supported by the steel companies and research institutions.

Surveys have played an essential role especially during the early phases of GT-VET: The research institutes and training departments of the steel partners have conducted interviews and workshops with the environmental and health and safety departments of the steel companies. Objectives were the identification of current and future job requirements for skilled workers, respectively working conditions, critical situations and appropriated acting and behaviour on the one hand and - based on these results -



the definition of qualification requirements for skilled workers concerning green awareness and skills (including health and safety). The research has been a coordinated effort of the whole consortium, including research questions definition, methodological discussions, analysis and reporting.

Additionally, each national VET system of the participating member states has been analysed, asking how it meets the previously identified future industry needs. Each involved VET system has different regulations and institutional frameworks (e.g. Germany: dual system, Italy: regional authority responsibility of vocational training, UK: “voluntary” system and regulation through different laws and responsibilities, Poland: national responsibility by the ministry of national education).

Using the example of two main apprenticeships and regulated professions (industrial mechanics and electrical technicians) in every represented member state, an analysis of the existing curricula and its implementation possibilities for the identified skills was done. As green issues are usually a minor topic of VET practice, the concrete realization of VET in the different training venues was evaluated (company, vocational school) through interviews and workshops at regional level, with support of the training departments of steel companies, environment and other technical departments (primarily health and safety), recently graduated apprentices, vocational schools (target group: teachers), and the chambers of industry.

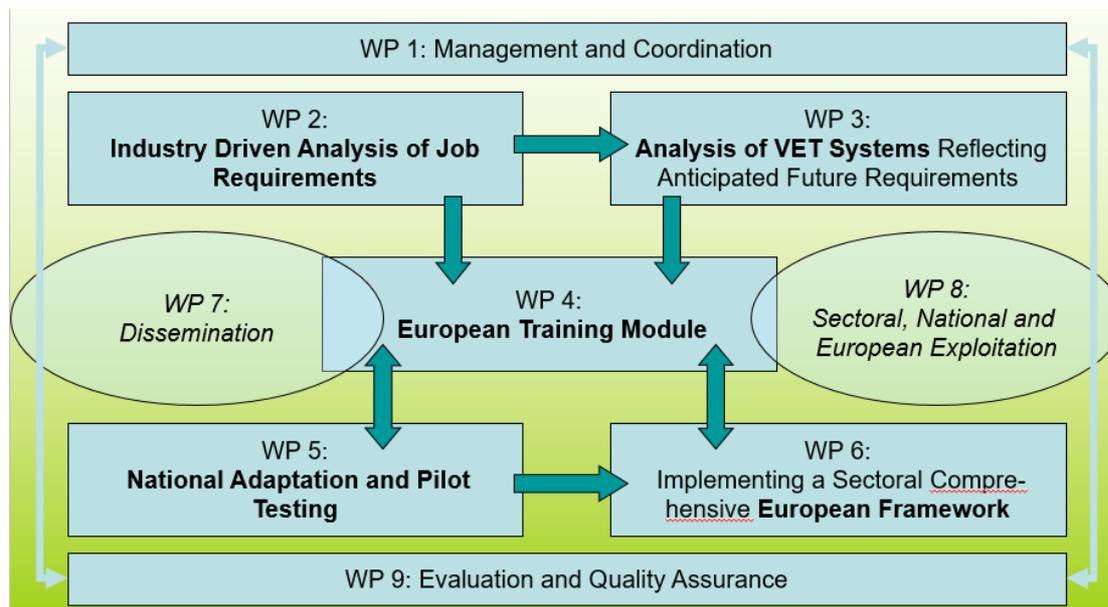
The objective was to learn about concrete training practice in the member states concerning green awareness and green skills development in relation to the identified future job requirements and to propose or identify first outlines of a training module to bridge the identified gap between future job requirements and current education and training practice.

Quality assurance and evaluation were key pillars of the GT-VET. There was a process evaluation as well as a product evaluation, related to the content and quality of GT- VET project outcomes. The evaluation was based on qualitative and quantitative data which acquired from monitoring data, questionnaires and interviews / group discussions. Results have shown a high level of satisfaction of the partners involved, strong points being a highly productive working atmosphere, an interesting and unusual consortium (collaboration of normally competing industry partners), the effectiveness of work done, a strong commitment of the partners and the openness of the product both for further refinement and transfer to neighbouring industries.

The following figure shows the work plan implemented by the consortium. Work packages (WP) 2 and 3 stand initial analyses conducted, WP5 and 6 show the piloting of the module and feedback received by sectoral bodies. These central work packages are framed by coordination, dissemination, and evaluation activities.



Figure 2: GT-VET work plan.



Short term target groups during project lifetime were the participating steel companies and their environmental, health and safety and training managers and the respective departments. The steel companies (and mainly their training departments) have been directly involved in the research, development and testing process of the project; being represented in the project partnership, participating on workshops and interviews, feedback and pilot testing of the module. They directly benefited from the research activities (by reflecting their recent activities and awareness on green skills) and the developed training module: managers and trainers of training departments, managers of technical, safety and health departments, apprentices and workers (industrial mechanics and electronic technicians). The participating steel companies became more aware of future requirements in green issues and the necessity of and possibility of short term implementation of new skills. This is why the participating steel companies do not only want to use the module continuously, they want to see it evolve and will contribute to its further development after the project lifetime.

Furthermore, European representatives of other steel companies and social partners were regularly informed about the project approach and its results / products through the regular meetings of ESTEP and SSDSC right from the beginning of the project. Representatives of European (e.g. CEDEFOP) and national (e.g. BIBB Germany) VET agencies as well as national steel industry associations have been informed about the project results through the European workshops and conferences. National VET stakeholders were involved in project workshops at regional and European level. The same goes for European stakeholders and social partners within the European Advisory Board (whereas ESTEP, EUROFER and EMF are responsible for an internal feedback and dissemination of the project results)



and the regional stakeholders of VET through regional interviews, workshops and networking (chambers of commerce, vocational schools, training department, public administration for VET etc.). National VET stakeholders have exchanged their practices with comparable institutions from other member states on the European level, working together on a definition of a common European standard of learning outcomes concerning green issues in technical VET.

On a regional level, stakeholders of VET (vocational schools, chambers of industry and training departments of steel companies) were involved in the VET system related research and dissemination activities as well. The regional VET partners (steel company and VET institutions) worked closely together. The VET stakeholders, e.g. the chamber of commerce or the vocational schools, obtained an evaluation about the existing training practices in VET concerning green issues.

All in all, the impact of the learning materials and all accompanying activities was stronger originally expected, especially because of the differentiation of the module in its four distinct sub-modules, which has proven to be a product all steel companies and VET actors can link to, apprentices can make use of and actors on the European level (especially ESTEP Working Group 5 “People”) consider important enough to develop it further in the future.

The developed module is being run and updated continuously by the European steel industry beyond the project. The intensive involvement of four international steel companies, the European (ESTEP, Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee Steel SSDCS) and national steel sector platforms and the social partners (EUROFER, EMF) has secured an orientation on industry requirements not only for the whole innovation process but for the sustainable exploitation of the produced European training module. Integrating also national legislative of VET in the member states, they played a proactive role to improve the development of innovation with their perspective, the implementation and exploitation of the new VET modules and the short term implementation process right from the beginning of GT-VET.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Four adapted national training modules with reference to cultural differences, including policy guidance to implement the training modules in the different VET systems of the member states, are the result of the cascading process described above. In order to fully understand the learning process, the following has to be taken into account: All steel companies are embedded and engaged in European environmental legislation activities via contact points and networking in Brussels. European directives are transferred and “translated” into company directives and strict corporate targets (often going beyond formal European directives and national legislation), ensuring a high influence of environmental related instructions on everyday work and every maintenance routine of the electrical and mechanical technicians (the chosen pilot training target group).

In order not to work against this sectoral logic but to make use of it in a productive way, the learning



process was conceptualized and can be described as follows:

The first stage was an **industry driven analysis of job requirements**, which researched relevant national laws as well as company-specific regulations of 'green' industry driven job requirements. Next, the **company guidelines and business needs** were further researched in workshops and interviews with business/industry professionals in the fields of climate and environmental protection, occupational safety and education and training. These workshops with the participating companies were also conducted in order to discuss and describe industry driven job requirements with regard to "green skills" referring to knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes of skilled workers (industrial mechanics and electrical technicians as the two main occupations, including varieties in the participating countries). **Concrete ideas and requirements for a training module** were formulated by all partners responding to prospective (vocational) training demands of the steel industry concerning environment, climate and occupational safety. The industry driven analysis shows the ambition to learn as much as possible about necessary green skills and the corresponding learning content for skilled workers from an industrial perspective.

In parallel, an **analysis of national VET systems** of the participating member states was done, with special emphasis on future industry needs identified before. With each VET system having different regulations and institutional frameworks, an **analysis of the existing curricula** of two main apprenticeships and regulated professions (industrial mechanics and electrical technicians) and its implementation possibilities for the identified skills was completed. The concrete realization of VET in the different training venues has also been investigated – interviews and workshops with the training department in steel companies (target group: trainers), environment and other technical departments, e.g. health and safety (target group: managers), recently graduated apprentices, vocational schools (target group: teachers), the chambers of industry (representatives of VET), other VET relevant institutions at regional level provided this information.

The main results of these initial steps showed a varied set of curricula, policies and practices, which is indicative of different levels of skills, competence and knowledge across the case study countries. Within the companies, varied practice was evident and, given the lack of centralised guidance and policy, it can be concluded that the significance according to environmental topics differs greatly, mainly based on the importance given to such issues by section managers. **A closer cooperation between VET institutions and the companies was recommended.**

The next key step of the project was the **development of the European training module for "greening" technical professions of the steel industry**. This European training module has been developed as a comprehensive "continuous progressing training module" of all participating and further interested steel companies. It helps to keep the qualification of the (future) technicians up-to-date and



up-to-future and to stimulate the short term implementation in the national VET systems. The module addressed four different levels of complexity the learners had to go through. Specific process knowledge needed for everyday work on the shop-floor was included as well as generic information on production cycles, raising awareness for the bigger picture of green skills needs.

Figure 3: The steel production cycle (World Steel, 2016)



A training module (consisting of different work related cases or smaller modules and a handbook) has been developed as a **blueprint for each member state**. The training departments of the steel companies have developed the four sub-modules, assisted by the research institutions.

This **training module was piloted** in all participating steel companies and related VET institutions on regional level. In accordance with testing feedback, the product was adapted and modified to fit the requirements of both the companies and member states as well as possible.

A central methodological approach was to discuss the results of the respective steps on a common sectoral and European level, taking feedback from external experts for the project proceeding and product development into account. All in all, four such **sectoral and European workshops** have taken place.



The main result of all these efforts is a **European Framework Module on Green Skills** and its sectoral integration, which will be developed further by ESTEP (the European Steel Technology Platform), with an ECVET approach, as a basis for continuous adjusting of the existing module against the background of new skills demands.

While the primary target audience was and still is the European steel industry, **cross-industrial transfer** has always been part of the envisioned learning loop. So a secondary audience are neighbouring industries in which the introduction of green skills is also becoming more and more relevant. In the meantime, a transfer project has started which builds upon the GT-VET learning approach and develops green skills in the automotive industry.

3. DISCUSSION

The GT-VET learning process is an example of a **cross-sectoral collaboration** as the backbone in a complex and multi-layered innovation and learning process. Insofar, it is a typical case, taking into account what we know about social innovation, the growing variety of actors within innovation processes, and the growing awareness of the complexity of such processes alongside increasing demands as far as the management and governance of innovation are concerned. A recent analysis of more than 1.000 social innovation initiatives shows the following: “We can see that cross-sectoral cooperation can be called a default setting for social innovation initiatives, no matter which outcome on which societal level is targeted. Obviously, initiatives want to have broad access and reap the innovative potential of multiple sectors in almost all cases.” (Howaldt et al., 2016, p.51).

In the case of GT-VET, the sectoral contributions with regard to the further and continuous implementation of the learning modules can be summarized as follows:

- **Public sector:** Integrating company demands based training modules in the national education systems; increasing flexibility for the short-termed integration of industry demands in the existing Vocational Education and Training VET systems; Gradually opening national VET systems – which are hard to manage – for new curricula.
- **Business sector:** Ownership and main driver of training curricula; employer of the target group of the learning materials; further development and dissemination of the training modules within the European Steel Technology Platform ESTEP Working Group “People”.
- **Civil Society:** Regional dialogue partner on environmental issues (collaboration platform of government, business, education / research and civil society) to embed greening of skills into regional development plans.
- **Research:** Transfer of innovation of the modules to other production industries, modifying and adding content.



These cross-sectoral contributions have to be emphasized, since this is not about an unexpected cooperation between strangers. In the contrary, and specifically in such an industrial context, many actors know each other, but have a rather conflictual relation. This goes especially for the **social partners** involved, both unions and employers / employer associations. By initiating a learning process during the very early stages – regarding legal frameworks, national VET systems and qualification demands - and, furthermore, by making it a common learning process by discussing the results in mixed groups, it was possible both to draw the outline of a common agenda and to create an atmosphere of trust among the partners which helped to speed up decision-making and openly discuss critical points at later stages.

Additionally, four different and, by default, **competing industrial steel companies** were involved in GT-VET. Again, the interest in a joint learning process with regard to the crucial topic of green skills in a difficult European regulatory setting and the balancing element of research/company “tandems” outweighed the concerns.

The remarkable point here, and the underlying challenge of the GT-VET process, is that the solution to be developed in the end was always supposed to be **sustainable**. The promised outreach beyond the funding period was a main argument for the grant awarded to the consortium. So the learning materials produced were considered preliminary: They should rather function as monitoring instruments for an ongoing observatory by defining the key regulatory documents which change and evolve over time. Significant changes in regulation would then have an impact since the learning materials are supposed to be adapted and respond to such changes.

The need to have an observatory points at the challenge of **institutionalization**, which is both a common result of successful social innovation processes / initiatives, and a central need for maintaining learning ecosystems.

Taking a step back, and considering the diversity of supporting factors and multiple levels GT-VET has worked on, but also considering the high complexity of the process, it becomes clear that there is not one reason why a learning innovation such as this proves to be successful or not. We can better understand and structure supporting factors and impeding factors by drawing a line between different contexts they are working on. Pelka & Markmann (2015) propose four different contexts for such drivers and barriers:

1. The **context of roles**. For GT-VET, this includes individual motivations and competences of process agents such as company and VET institutions representatives, but also the learners themselves. Coming back to the institutionalization aspect, the European Steel Technology Platform (ESTEP) is playing another key actor role by taking responsibility for sustaining the GT-VET learning approach.



2. The **structural context**: Here, already existing services such as learning curricula, resources available (or not) for a further development of the learning modules, and infrastructures like digital media allowing for adequate pedagogic settings come into play. We can say that GT-VET itself operated heavily on the structural level by developing new learning materials.
3. The **functional context**: This is where the process governance approach can be scrutinized by which the new learning opportunities were put into practice. We have described how different actors and stakeholders are related to one another, including the tandems of research institutes and steel companies. These tandems, cooperating with social partners and European policy bodies, helped to create a level of trust which was also very conducive to making green skills training a reality. The transfer strategy of taking these new learning materials to additional countries and neighbouring industries was also a driver of GT-VET – partly because such transfers can help to improve the standing of the traditional steel industry, which was and still is under pressure, and partly because it helped the stakeholders in the steel industry to reflect upon themselves and their shortcomings.
4. And finally, the **normative context**: The volatile regulatory frameworks on emissions, energy consumption and pollution were a main driver for the diverse actors to become involved. The consortium agreed to continuously check and learn about changing requirements on the European level and reflect these in flexible and adaptive learning modules. The norms relevant here also include the different regulations of Vocational and Educational Training on the national and, in some cases, the regional level. On the other hand, rigid VET frameworks also posed significant barriers: While the consortium initially envisaged to integrate the new learning content in mandatory school-based and on-site training of apprentices, it became obvious that such a process would take at least 4-5 years, so the decision was made to analyse the leeway of existing curricula and rely on school/company partnerships to exploit those in order to integrate green skills development as ancillary content.

Finally, the involvement of the apprentices / learners throughout the whole process of GT-VET has to be highlighted. Participatory approaches and user involvement are important factors of many social innovation initiatives (see Howaldt et al., 2016). In this case the learners played an active role at three stages: (1) They were asked about the current state of green skills development in vocational training and expressed their expectations from the future learning module before the curricular development even started. (2) They piloted the module with its four learning levels as a whole. This included traditional learning about energy, noise and waste, but also concrete assignments and applied learning on the shop-floor. On the final level, the apprentices watched out for opportunities to save energy on site, for example in the hot and cold rolling mills. This, according to the industry partners, helped to save several 100.000 EUR of energy costs. (3) And of course, they also played an active role in the evaluation and improvement of the module after the pilot.

As is true for most socially innovative initiatives, this case of GT-VET is very **context-specific**. It cannot simply be copied, but it needs thorough adaptation, depending on the sector, the industry, the concrete target group, the resources available, and many other factors. This sectoral ecosystem is determined by



learning in two ways: The improvement of green skills is the main objective of the whole initiative. And to a large extent, this is made possible by collective learning processes – about sectoral, European, national, local, organisational and individual requirements and expectations. What this example impressively shows is that **ambitious learning goals can be met** in transparently organized and clearly structured settings.



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