

Innovative Social Investment: Strengthening communities in Europe

InnoSI Working Papers

## **Social Innovation Policies with the Involvement of Social Economy Organizations**

### **Survey Evidence from European Countries**

Andrea Bassi<sup>a</sup>, Giulio Ecchia<sup>b</sup>, Alice Guerra<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Department of Sociology and Business Law, University of Bologna

<sup>b</sup> Department of Economics, University of Bologna

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### Authors:

Andrea Bassi: andrea.bassi7@unibo.it  
Giulio Ecchia: giulio.ecchia@unibo.it  
Alice Guerra: alice.guerra3@unibo.it  
University of Bologna

## Table of Contents

|                                                                                |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                                                            | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1. Social Innovation framework in the ten EU countries</b>                  | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 Definition of Social Innovation (EU)                                       | 5         |
| 1.2 Level of recognition of the term "Social Innovation" in the country sample | 7         |
| Finland                                                                        | 8         |
| Germany                                                                        | 8         |
| Greece                                                                         | 8         |
| Hungary                                                                        | 8         |
| Italy                                                                          | 9         |
| Netherlands                                                                    | 9         |
| Poland                                                                         | 10        |
| Spain                                                                          | 11        |
| Sweden                                                                         | 11        |
| UK                                                                             | 12        |
| <b>2. Social Innovation Experiences in ten EU countries</b>                    | <b>13</b> |
| 2.1 Finland                                                                    | 13        |
| 2.1.1 Case Study 1: Vocational rehabilitation                                  | 13        |
| 2.1.2 Case Study 2: Innovillage                                                | 14        |
| 2.2 Germany                                                                    | 15        |
| 2.2.1 Case Study 1: Innovation Fund                                            | 15        |
| 2.2.2 Case Study 2: Chancenwerk                                                | 15        |
| 2.3 Greece                                                                     | 16        |
| 2.4 Hungary                                                                    | 17        |
| 2.4.1 Case Study: Sure Start Children Houses                                   | 17        |
| 2.4.2 Job Protection Action Plan                                               | 18        |
| 2.5 Italy                                                                      | 19        |
| 2.5.1 Case Study 1: Fondazione CON IL SUD                                      | 19        |
| 2.5.2 Case Study 2: Bollenti Spiriti                                           | 19        |
| 2.6 The Netherlands                                                            | 20        |
| 2.6.1 Case Study: Basic Income Experiments                                     | 20        |
| 2.7 Poland                                                                     | 22        |
| 2.7.1 "Senior – Wigor" program                                                 | 22        |
| 2.8 Spain                                                                      | 22        |
| 2.8.1 "Microvoluntarios" project and other volunteering organizations          | 22        |
| 2.9 Sweden                                                                     | 23        |
| 2.10 United Kingdom                                                            | 24        |
| 2.10.1 Case Study: In Control                                                  | 24        |
| <b>3 Concluding Remarks</b>                                                    | <b>25</b> |
| <b>References</b>                                                              | <b>26</b> |
| <b>Annex 1</b>                                                                 | <b>31</b> |

## Introduction

In this paper, we investigate significant social innovation policies (related to the concept of social investment) involving the role of Social Economy organizations, and we discuss some relevant national and regional social innovation experiences by relying upon the current national and international literature, reports and website information.

During the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s, the concept of “social economy” has evolved from one where the emphasis was on the *social* (social outcomes and collective action) to a neo-liberal one with more emphasis on the *economic* and individual actors (social entrepreneurs). Nowadays we are facing a transition period nevertheless in the recent developments of the policy orientation at European level, there are some slight but significant clues of a move back towards a more ‘social’ concept. We will assume as operating definition of Social Economy the one elaborated by CIRIEC and adopted as reference by the European Economic and Social Committee.<sup>1</sup>

*The set of private, formally-organised enterprises, with autonomy of decision and freedom of membership, created to meet their members’ needs through the market by producing goods and providing services, insurance and finance, where decision-making and any distribution of profits or surpluses among the members are not directly linked to the capital or fees contributed by each member, each of whom has one vote, or at all events take place through democratic and participative decision-making processes.*

*The social economy also includes private, formally organised organisations with autonomy of decision and freedom of membership that produce non-market services for households and whose surpluses, if any, cannot be appropriated by the economic agents that create, control or finance them (CIRIEC, 2012, p. 22).*

*they are organisations of people who conduct an activity with the main purpose of meeting the needs of people rather than remunerating capitalist investors. (CIRIEC, 2012, p. 23)*

This paper is organized as follows.

Section 1 is dedicated to briefly analyze the term “Social Innovation”.

In Section 2, we investigate significant social innovation experiences involving the role of Social Economy organizations.

We will carry out this analysis by reporting and rephrasing the answers to Question Q6 of the Template (see Annex 1) as given by the Academic Partners of the Innosi Project and to some email correspondence; and, whenever possible, by further analyzing in greater details some national social innovation experiences by relying upon the current national and international literature, reports and website information.

In Section 3 we advance some concluding remarks.

**Q6. Describe any significant social innovation experiences (see attachment n.1) involving the role of Social Economy organizations (networks, partnership, collaborations, agreements)**

The social innovation experiences we selected as more relevant are listed in the following table by country and policy area:

<sup>1</sup> For a complete analysis of the “level of recognition” that the term/concept of Social Economy has in the ten European Countries under study, see Bassi, A., Ecchia, G., Guerra, A. (2016).

| Member State    | Early Childhood Development     | Parents' Labour Market Participation       | Social and Labour Market Exclusion                                        |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Finland         |                                 | Vocational rehabilitation and Innovillage  |                                                                           |
| Germany         | Innovation Fund and Chancenwerk | Living in Old Age                          |                                                                           |
| Greece          | Informal Citizen Networks       |                                            |                                                                           |
| Hungary         | Sure Start Children Houses      | Women's reintegration to the labour market | Job protection action plan                                                |
| Italy           |                                 |                                            | "Fondazione CON IL SUD" and "Bollenti spiriti"                            |
| The Netherlands |                                 | Basic Income Experiments                   |                                                                           |
| Poland          |                                 |                                            | Programs for Elderly People Social Activity (e.g. Senior - Wigor program) |
| Spain           |                                 |                                            | Microvoluntarios project and other forms of volunteering organizations    |
| Sweden          | Childcare social innovation     | Social Forum                               |                                                                           |
| UK              | In Control                      |                                            |                                                                           |

## 1. Social Innovation framework in the ten EU countries

### 1.1 Definition of Social Innovation (EU)

“Social innovations are innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. Specifically, we define social innovations as new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. They are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance society’s capacity to act.” (BEPA 2011, p. 9)

“The *process of social interactions* between individuals undertaken to reach certain outcomes is participative, involves a number of actors and stakeholders who have a vested interest in solving a social problem, and empowers the beneficiaries. It is in itself an outcome as it produces social capital.” (BEPA 2011, p. 10)

“Given this process, social innovations can be schematically classified into **three broad categories**.

1. Firstly, the (generally) grassroots social innovations that respond to pressing **social demands** not addressed by the market and are directed towards vulnerable groups in society. The example of Projecto Geracao (the generation project) in Portugal or the second-chance schools in France fall into this category.

2. Second, a broader level that addresses **societal challenges** in which the boundary between ‘social’ and ‘economic’ blurs and which are directed towards society as a whole. The Red Cross or the Open University fall into this second category.

3. Third, the **systemic type** that relates to fundamental changes in attitudes and values, strategies and policies, organizational structures and processes, delivery systems and services. Initiatives relating to actions to make citizens more aware of climate change and recycling are examples of this last category. These social innovations, which are often initiated by institutions, play a part in reshaping society as a more participative arena where people are empowered and learning is central.” (BEPA 2011, p. 10).

The analysis by Howaldt et al. (2014) states that "Social Innovation has many different (and sometimes conflicting) meanings, spanning a variety of areas such as innovation studies, management and organisational research, the field of workplace and quality of working life, as part of the social economy, in sustainable development, or as an aspect of local competitiveness and territorial development." Social innovation is described ‘...as a new combination or figuration of practices in areas of social action, prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors with the goal of better coping with needs and problems than is possible by use of existing practices. An innovation is therefore social to the extent that it varies social action, and is socially accepted and diffused in society (be it throughout society, larger parts, or only in certain societal sub-areas affected).’ "According to social practise theories (SPT), the social world is composed of very specifically nameable, individual, although interdependent practices: practices of governance, of organizing, partnership, negotiations (Reckwitz, 2003); practices of comfort, cleanliness and convenience (Shove, 2003), practices of working and nurturing, practices of consumption (Brand, 2010)."

If we want to focus on the relevance of SI for welfare system we can follow a recent analysis by Evers et. al. 2014 . They have listed five dimensions of social innovation in welfare systems (Evers et. al. 2014, p. 16):

1. Innovations in services and their ways to address users;
2. Innovations in regulations and rights;
3. Innovations in governance;
4. Innovations in modes of working and financing;
5. Innovations concerning the entity of (local) welfare systems.

| DIMENSIONS                                                 | SUB-DIMENSIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Innovations in services and their ways to address users | a) Investing in capabilities rather than spotting deficits;<br>b) Preference for open approaches, avoiding targeting with stigmatizing effects;<br>c) Concern for bridging the gaps between professional services and people’s life worlds;<br>d) Service offers that connect otherwise often separated forms of support and access, allowing for personalized bundles of support. |
| 2. Innovations in regulations and rights                   | a) Creating flexible forms of ad hoc Support<br>b) Developing offers that meet newly emerging risks, beyond fixed social and participation rights and entitlements<br>c) Working by kind of “social contracts” with individuals and groups                                                                                                                                         |

|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. Innovations in governance                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Fostering units and types of organization that operate in more embedded and networked ways</li> <li>b) Giving new concerns and groups a voice in the public domain</li> <li>c) Organizing more intense forms of public debate and opinion-building around existing challenges in cohesion policies</li> <li>d) Building issue-related coalitions and partnerships</li> </ul>                                                                                 |
| 4. Innovations in modes of working and financing                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Flexicurity in working contracts; levels of institutionalization and security below traditional standards</li> <li>b) Different working collectives – professional teams and voluntary commitments as part of the projects and approaches</li> <li>c) A strong mission profile and a professionalism that combines formerly fragmented knowledge</li> <li>d) Short-term and time-limited funding, combining resources from different stakeholders</li> </ul> |
| 5. Innovations concerning the entity of (local) welfare systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reaching out to all sectors of local welfare systems; a lesser state focus</li> <li>b) Aiming at less standardized, more diverse and localized welfare arrangements</li> <li>c) Upgrading the community component in mixed welfare systems (families, support networks, etc.)</li> <li>d) Integrating economic and social logics (entrepreneurial action, developmental welfare)</li> <li>e) Integrating welfare and urban politics</li> </ul>               |

Source: Elaboration of Andrea Bassi from Evers et. al., 2014.

## 1.2 Level of recognition of the term "Social Innovation" in the country sample

In this paragraph we will investigate the “level of recognition” that the term/concept of Social Innovation has in the ten European Countries under study. We will do this analysis through the examination of what emerged from the answer to Question A3 of the Template (see Introduction of this Deliverable) given by the Academic Partners of the InnoSi Project.

A3) What is the working definition of social innovation within national context?

## Finland

The concept of social innovation is used more than the concept of social investment, but there is no clear definition for social innovation. The concept is used to refer to many kinds of phenomena (from sauna to public child care). The concept has been used since the 1990s, but randomly. The concept entered "official discussion" at the latest in 2003 when the Research and Innovation Council used it in its report. The aim was to broaden the view from technical innovations to other kind of innovations. This boosted the public debate on the concept, but the definition of the concept was left to the actors in the field. SITRA (the Finnish Innovation Fund) sees social innovations as structural changes and new models which improve the quality of life and functioning of the society. In Government Programmes of the 2000s the concept is used in two of eight Programmes. In Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Programme in 2011 it is stated that the Government will boost the integrated development and commercialization of technological and social innovations and in Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen's Programme in 1999 it is stated that the Government will promote social and technological innovations in order to modernize the service culture in public sector.

## Germany

Similar to the concept of social investments there is no generally accepted working definition of social innovation in Germany and the term is widely used in various contexts. Nevertheless, many authors refer to a definition provided by Wolfgang Zapf in 1989<sup>2</sup> who was one of the first social scientists who used the term in the German debate by referring to Joseph Schumpeter's theory of economic development. Basing on his definition and taking account the development of the social innovation debate of recent years Münster University suggests the following working definition of social innovation for the German national context: Social innovation can be defined as new or newly configured institutions, regulations, and networks that have been implemented (1) consciously and (2) in a goal-oriented manner for (3) improving the functioning and the quality of social practices (4) under involvement of different actors from state, economy and civil society, (5) no matter if similar institutions, regulations, and networks were introduced already in another context (e.g. another country or area of life). Currently, social innovations are predominantly discussed in Germany in the context of social service provision (particularly health care, child care, nursing care, and other social services), in the context of so called corporate social innovations (e.g. restructuring of the world of work and the role of companies in society), and in the context of sustainability. Outside (and sometime also inside) the scientific discourse, the concept of social innovation is extremely normatively charged and connected with the search for the better life.

## Greece

Similarly to the definition of social investment there is no official definition of social innovation. The EU definition works as a pattern for the Greek context as well. "Social innovation means developing new ideas, services and models to better address social issues. It invites input from public and private actors, including civil society, to improve social services".<sup>3</sup>

## Hungary

Social innovation has no consensual definition, but most of the sources agree that social innovation offers (or claims to offer) a better solution than the previous ones and aims at solving social problems. The problem lies in the question where the innovation is coming from. Grassroots initiative has less strong culture in Hungary, the NGOs are financially dependent on state support and transfers coming from state or EU Funds (distributed by national agencies), and the civil sphere has very limited other resources due to the lack of charity culture and the limited investments of private companies motivated by social responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Zapf, Wolfgang (1989): Über soziale Innovationen. In *Soziale Welt* 40(1), 170-183.

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1022&langId=en>.



Paternalism has strong positions and clients and other actors expect that the state solve social problems. Service providing for-profit organizations are rarely present, because there is a lack of purchasing power for them - especially in the disadvantaged regions and among those target group members, who would indeed need them. Nevertheless, there are also initiatives to advise private companies how to invest into social innovation projects.<sup>4</sup> In Hungary, social innovations are frequently used for financing basic services (such as the Child Chance program). However, they remain sporadic, and cannot replace basic, universal services. Exceptionally, there are also grassroots initiatives, such as the Szuno Social Webshop of the Igazgyöngy Foundation.<sup>5</sup>

## Italy

It should be stated that the concept of “social innovation” per se does not as yet seem to have found a place in public and political discourse in Italy. As a consequence, it is hardly possible to identify a social investment approach in the various social policy-related measures taken over recent years in Italy. The EU definition can be considered a reference also for the Italian context (the definition used in the 2015 National research plan is an example of this pattern).

Recently the *Ministry of Work and Social Policy* has launched the Operational Program “Inclusione” financed partly through the European Social Fund (ESF) for the period 2014-2020. It will contribute substantially to meeting EU and national targets on poverty reduction. Planned investment includes an experimental minimum income support scheme, better quality and standards in the provision of social services, and specific measures aimed at Roma and the homeless to put them on pathways to autonomous lives. The OP has a budget of EUR 1.238 million.

Among the priority areas there is the following one, which is explicitly devoted to: Implementing new systems and models for social intervention. This includes defining quality standards for public services geared towards disadvantaged groups, such as Roma. It will also support social economy initiatives and help overcome the current fragmentation in the provision of health and social services.

The OP should substantially improve social inclusion and the quality of social services in Italy. Its objective is to reduce fragmentation in delivery and create a new, nationwide database for social service provision. Its support for innovative projects in the social economy is expected to provide models for improving services at national and regional levels. As it is stated on pag. 10-11:

"Following this logic, the Axis" Systems and models of social intervention "offers systemic actions and social innovation actions along three lines:

1. actions aimed at strengthening the non-institutional players of social innovation processes, such as socially responsible companies, social enterprises, third sector and civil society;
2. pilot projects aimed at specific targets, identified by the Italian government on the basis of indications from the European Union, as priority (...);
3. systemic actions aimed at promoting greater effectiveness of the administration in terms of social interventions, such as: supporting the implementation of an information system of services (...). "

## Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the policy and the debate on social innovation in the past years has been largely focused on social innovation in a more limited sense, namely innovations of processes in organizations (in Europe often referred to as workplace innovation, in the Netherlands as 'working smarter'). Within the top sectors of the economy twelve companies have participated in the 2013 Expedition Social Innovation, funded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. This learning program aimed at encouraging workplace innovation. Also the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has paid attention to workplace innovation as part of the project 'Sustainable Employability'. Workplace Innovation is very important for promoting innovation and competitiveness of the Netherlands and is therefore an important manifestation of social innovation.

<sup>4</sup> [www.tarsadalmibefektetes.hu](http://www.tarsadalmibefektetes.hu)

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://shop.igazgyongy-alapitvany.hu>. Where with the help of volunteers, Roma parents prepare handcrafted artefacts and sell them in a webshop,

In early 2014, the Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy (AWT) issued, at the request of the Ministries of Education and Economic Affairs, a recommendation on social innovation. The AWT looked at the definition of social innovation, what it can trigger, and to the role of government. The most recent political debate in the Netherlands about the participatory society is based on assumptions about the societal importance of social innovation. The AWT takes the innovative side of the social initiative as a basis for this recommendation and focuses on the place of social innovation in the knowledge and innovation policy. How could the power of social innovation be better used and what could be the role of government?

The AWT considers social innovation as an umbrella term, which targets initiatives for contemporary people and organizations on innovative solutions to social issues. Social innovation starts with individuals and organizations that see a social problem and plan to do something about it. This could develop into a broad effort by various parties and individuals, such as citizens, entrepreneurs and scientists. This could include local initiatives, but also complex partnerships at national or international level. Minister Ab Klink reacted in July 2015 and recognised that social innovation and 'workplace innovation' are closely linked to topics such as Smart industry, intrapreneurship, entrepreneurship and human capital agenda's. Therefore, he intends to develop a "policy experiment" together with networks of entrepreneurs in order to develop broader consciousness of the possibilities of innovation in "non-technological sectors", in the so-called Top-sectors and service sectors.

## **Poland**

In Poland, the definition of social innovation emerged with the implementation of the "Social Innovation" programme, proposed by the National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) / National Science Centre (NCN). The programme is meant to provide national-level support for the realization of the "Europe 2020" strategy and facilitate public-private partnership for the development of solutions towards improving quality of life and social services standards (at national, regional and local level). The programme defines social innovation as "solutions that respond to social needs and simultaneously result in a permanent change in a given social group. Such solutions may be related to innovative products, services or processes that enable finding unusual remedies to typical social issues".

## Spain

Prior to the Europe 2020 strategy and reference in European Commission Directives on social investment in 2012, there is little or no reference to social innovation as such in Spain. Many social actions, and within them social innovations, were taken on by religious (mostly Catholic) institutions, who for example provided (and still do provide) places for people to donate food, clothes or toys to be redistributed to the poor. The fear of further debt due to an overly burdened welfare state due to the economic crisis was, in the case of social innovation, the major trigger for the reaction of the civil society, which has provoked more interest in social innovation and activity. At official levels, social innovation has really been more of a murmur than a reality and one that has barely been touched upon in the political arena, overshadowed by constant austerity measures and other political debates that are higher on the agenda (e.g. regional independent movements).

At a national level, the State Innovation Strategy (e2i) makes up the action framework for government policy in the area of innovation, which seeks to contribute to the productive model by fostering and creating structures that enable a better use of scientific knowledge and technological development nationally. Although it has a broad approach, it has the following main pillars: (1) territorial cooperation, (2) international projection, (3) public demand, (4) financial environment (5) human capital., and thus focuses principally on technological innovation. It is only in the more advanced regions around Spain that other forms of innovation have taken on greater significance within the political debate. In this sense, the Basque Country is a pioneer with regard to adopting the term “social innovation” and have included in their strategic plan important initiatives, such as Innobasque, the Basque Innovation Agency (which recently presented the Strategic Plan for Social Innovation in Euskadi), commitment on the aprt of the city of Bilbao to establish a Centre for Social innovation (EUTOKIA) and a Social Innovation park in Bilbao DENOKINN. In Cataluña the emphasis is more on social entrepreneurship via public/private association (Citilab), while this initiative also exists in Madrid. However, the most important examples exist in civil society where there is an enormous variety of social innovation projects, which have arisen in the wake of acute problems derived from unemployment, school failure, integration, an aging population and their impact on social security, housing, transport and access to energy sources.

## Sweden

In the *National Innovation Strategy* from 2012 social innovation (SI) is seen as an important tool – among other types of innovation – to provide new solutions or innovative ideas and methods to deal with societal challenges.<sup>6</sup> SI is here tightly linked to social entrepreneurship (SE) but the strategy also states that Sweden still lacks knowledge of the favourable conditions for SI and SE. It recognises that SI and SE often takes places at the interphase between the three sectors and that its driving force are individual actors. Indeed, the government notes in the strategy the need for a variety of innovative service providers including private, civil society organisations as well as innovative and open to collaboration public sector organisations. The strategy recognises as a major group of actors with SI potential the so-called idea-based (“idéburna”) – a concept that includes all non-state organisations with primarily social goals (non-profit organisations and co-operatives).

Nevertheless, public sector is seen in the National Innovation Strategy as a major actor group in the context of *social innovations* aiming at investing in people of young or older age. One of the explanations to this is the fact that, contrary to many other European states, welfare services and social investment is still financed by municipal income taxes charged by self-governing municipalities and implemented locally with some freedom of variation. The political debate on social innovation is however still largely overshadowed by concerns for market-based innovation and entrepreneurship.

<sup>6</sup> Näringsdepartementet, 2012. *Nationell innovationsstrategi* p. 40

**UK**

From the 2015 CRESSI report by Edmiston, we know that "without doubt, there is a strong social innovation public policy agenda in the UK. Since 2010, political and policy rhetoric has, towards different ends, advanced the case for social innovation. In policy terms, horizontal policy interventions have attempted to scale social innovation as a holistic concept. This approach advances a socially sensitive and community orientated way of working that has the capacity to be efficient, accountable, dynamic and cost-effective. By contrast, vertical policy interventions have attempted to embed specific aspects of social innovation in service design and delivery to address common (but rarely specified) economic and societal challenges in a pre-emptive manner. These interventions have been more prevalent in certain service areas than others. Central to the coalition government's approach was the development of support mechanisms (financial or otherwise) for actors and organisations engaged in social innovation. Importantly, this measure was largely driven by an ambition for incorporation: to enable social innovators to deliver public services in a way that corresponded with the coalition government's overall policy programme." The 2015 CRESSI report provides a lot of examples of social innovations in UK (see more specifically the Section on "Social Innovation Funding and Finance").

From the answer provided by the UK partner, we gathered the following information:

As with the above, 'social innovation' seems to mean start-ups in the social enterprise sector. The Young Foundation describe it as 'new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other words, they are innovations that are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act' (<http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf>). The term is also used by Nesta (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts).

More broadly, we can see innovation in a variety of re-engineerings of the state, especially the 'payment by results' which is across all areas of the state. National Audit Office report is useful here (<http://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Outcome-based-payment-schemes-governments-use-of-payment-by-results.pdf>) for pointing to the 2011 White Paper and 'open commissioning', by which private and community/voluntary sector organisations can get involved in delivery of state aims. NESTA critique the Work Programme as not being that innovative, and suggest a) specialising, b) smaller and local new entrants for provision, c) risk, d) research.

At the end of this section it is possible to collocate each Country under scrutiny according to the level/degree of recognition/institutionalization of the term/concept of Social Innovation.

| LEVEL OF RECOGNITION<br>of Social Innovation | COUNTRIES                               |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| LOW                                          | Poland, Greece, Hungary, Spain          |
| MEDIUM                                       | Italy, Germany, Finland, Sweden, France |
| HIGH                                         | Netherlands, United Kingdom             |

Tab. 2.1 – EU Countries by level of recognition of the Social Innovation concept

## 2. Social Innovation Experiences in ten EU countries

### 2.1 Finland

Finland is not a pioneer for that kind of social innovations which requires close and equal collaboration between organizations from public, private and third sector. Due to the adoption of Nordic welfare regime, many, social innovations have been initiated and implemented with strong support from public sector. As regards early childhood education and care, pre-primary education lays emphasis on the preparation for school. The national core curriculum was prepared in extensive co-operation between all relevant stakeholders, including local authorities and their day-care centers and schools. Each education provider is obliged to draft a local curriculum based on the national core curriculum. The general principles in the core curriculum emphasize the child's individuality and the significance of active learning and the importance of acting as a group member. Pre-primary education is based on the child's own knowledge, skills and experiences. Its focus is on play and a positive outlook on life. Another central consideration is to promote the child's own initiative and to emphasize its significance as the foundation for all activities. Furthermore, in child health clinics the physical, mental and social condition of children under school-age is assessed by a special nurse or a medical doctor. *Save the Children Finland* is a national organization which fights for children's rights in order to immediately and permanently improve children's lives in Finland (and all over the world). The advocacy work of *Save the Children Finland* and its partners aims at promoting changes that serve to increase awareness of the content and obligations of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child including among other things that the assessment of impacts on children gains due attention in legislation.<sup>7</sup> As regards family benefits, the maternity package is provided by the Social Insurance Institution (Kela) to every new mother in the country and contains children's clothes and other necessary items. The maternity packages creates an incentive to participate in prenatal health screening. Moreover, *save the Children* has launched "Eväitä elämälle" aid programme which aims to support children's schooling and hobbies in for example single-parent families and families affected by long-term illness or unemployment. The aim of the programme is to ensure that the financial difficulties of a family do not compromise the child's right to positive development and social inclusion.

There are several initiatives also regarding parental services. Child health clinics provide advice and medical counseling sessions for the expectant mother. Prenatal small group classes and childbirth coaching sessions for the first time mothers and fathers are organized to prepare the future parents for the delivery and parenthood. It is worth remarking the presence of The Mannerheim League, that is an NGO and membership open to everyone. The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare works to give every child a good and happy childhood. It works together with many other organizations, both public and private. The league aims among other things to ensure that parenting and education are respected and supported.<sup>8</sup>

Two social innovation experiences involving the role of social economy deserve a specific attention: Vocational rehabilitation of working-age people (Kuntoutus in Finnish) and Innovillage (Innokylä in Finnish).

#### 2.1.1 Case Study 1: Vocational rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Foundation is an independent non-profit organisation that specialises in developing rehabilitation in Finland. As it can be read from the website (<http://www.kuntoutussaatio.fi/foundation>), "the operations of the Rehabilitation Foundation are partially funded by Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY), and its partners and customers comprise a large and diverse group of organisations."

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on this topic, see <http://www.pelastakalapset.fi/en/>.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on this topic, please refer to <http://www.mll.fi/en/>.

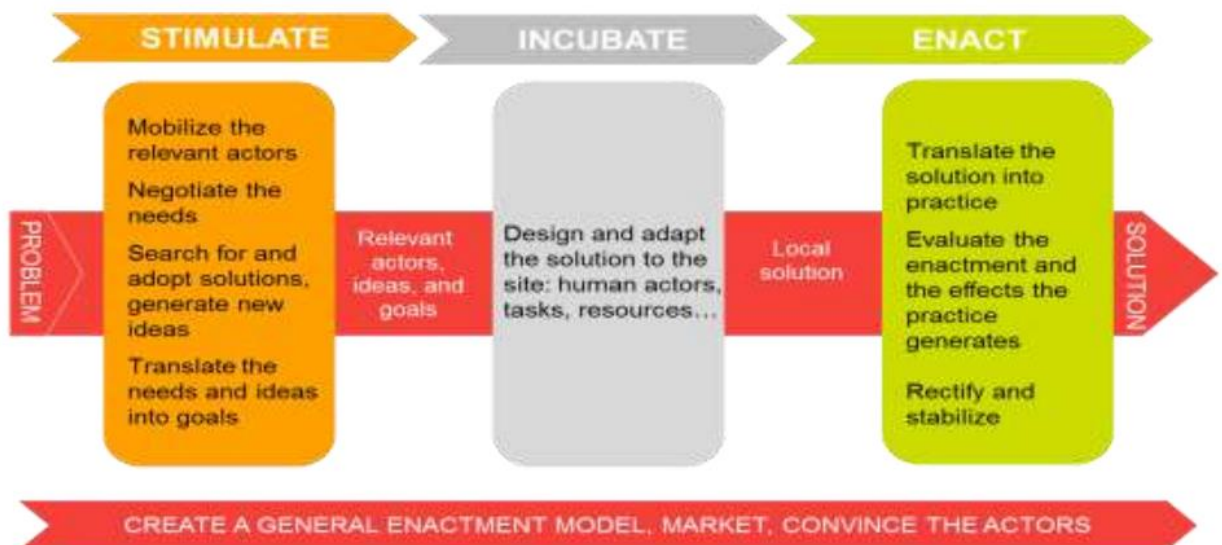
Vocational rehabilitation is aimed at people entering or already in working life whose work capacity has deteriorated or is at risk of deteriorating over the next few years. The purpose of vocational rehabilitation may be 1) to improve individual's capacity for work so as to help she/he cope with work demands, 2) to help individual overcome an impairment and enter working life or 3) to help individual return to work after a lengthy absence. The rehabilitation activities are designed collaboratively by Kela, individual's workplace occupational health unit and the rehabilitation provider.

### 2.1.2 Case Study 2: Innovillage

Innovillage is an innovation community in the health and welfare sector that is open to everyone. Innovillage offers development tools, both online tools and tools based on face-to-face meetings. Innovillage brings together the development efforts in the sector and offers an excellent channel for sharing models, information and examples of implemented innovations. The purpose of Innovillage is to support sustainable renewal in the health and welfare sector. Innovillage is co-produced by The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, National Institute for Health and Welfare and SOSTE Finnish Society for Social and Health. Innovillage is funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, TEKES - Finnish Technology Agency for Technology and Innovation and Finland's Slot Machine Association.<sup>9</sup>

A detailed presentation and description of Innovillage is provided by Koivisto et al. (2014), that describe the short development history of Innovillage and its innovation model. Also Koivisto et al. (2015) analyzes in great details the systemic innovation model developed in the Innovillage project -- based on a practice-based approach on innovation -- and its translation into public sector innovation practice in the welfare and health field. Following Koivisto et al. (2014), Innovillage began in 2007, at a time when the ageing population, the threatened availability of skilful professionals, and a recession within the public sector were challenging the existing modes of service production (characterized by very little development activities working across the sectors). It became necessary to define a unified and interactive platform enabling and supporting real time co-development processes in the sector. Koivisto et al. (2014) describe the Innovillage innovation model as "an open, transparent, and collaborative activity that adopts and adapts models already developed by someone else or develops totally new solutions and models."

The innovation model consists of three iterative and mutually constitutive sections: Stimulate, Incubate, and Enact. A short description of these phases is provided in the Figure below.<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that these sections "are not phases that should be performed in a linear order, they rather include different development tasks that are performed simultaneously and interactively. (Koivisto et al., 2015)".



<sup>9</sup> For more details, please refer to <https://www.innokyla.fi/en/tietoa-innokylasta>.

<sup>10</sup> See also the Innovation Unit's Disciplined innovation model; <http://www.innovationunit.org/>.

*Figure: Innovillage's Systemic Innovation Model*

*Source: Koivisto et al. (2015)*

The tools for co-development within Innovillage consist of both web-based tools and face-to-face tools, where actors meet in person. Networks Tool for the different networks to collaborate; a Project Database to design and report on development projects; a Development Environment to carry out development activities; Innworkshops to co-develop face-to-face; Events, to offer a meeting point for the developers (peers); and the Innotutor training for developers to practice the innovation culture and learn how to use the Innovillage tools are the network tools for the collaboration between networks. Koivisto et al. (2014) concludes by stating further steps for Innovillage, and arguing that "[o]ne of the key tasks of Innovillage is to scale-up the Innovillage-like development culture to other sectors. Different sectors typically develop their solutions and models in silos, though often a good solution would entail co-development and collaboration between different actors and practitioners across sectors and organizations."

## **2.2 Germany**

### **2.2.1 Case Study 1: Innovation Fund**

In Germany, the FMFSWY (Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth) installed an "Innovation Fund" to develop an autonomous youth policy, especially in the fields of cultural education, political education, association work, international youth work and social youth work. This is one of the most relevant social innovation experiences in the policy area to support early childhood development (more specifically, family benefits and parenting services). The project began in 2014, runs until 2016 and builds up on a former innovation fund. In the recent period, 42 projects dealing about demographic change, generational change, participation, integration and intercultural exchange, were financed. From the Blog related to this project,<sup>11</sup> it can be read that "the German Innovation Fund is working through a systematic "open innovation" approach via start-ups bringing together a complementary network of varied experiences (entrepreneurs, investors, consultants) to invest into extraordinary ideas and innovations (start-ups). The main focus is on the German speaking markets. The Innovation Fund team has managed to gain access to the most brilliant ideas through a success-critical network of leading entrepreneurs and business angels in the German start-up scene. Beyond that, the Innovation Fund systematically sources ideas and innovations from the worldwide leading entrepreneurship clusters and innovation hot-beds such as Silicon valley and Cambridge.". The Innovation Fund "is seeking to unite leading family businesses across industries and sectors that are dedicated to innovation as a major source of growth in order to secure a sustainable future. The individual businesses are actively integrated into the value-added process, which allows them to use the platform as a strategic tool to broaden their individual potential for innovation."

### **2.2.2 Case Study 2: Chancenwerk**

In 2004, the association "Chancenwerk" has developed a unique concept for educational support in the schools namely "Learning cascades": University students tutor older high school students for 90 minute a week. In return these older students offer twice a week 90 minutes tutoring sessions for younger students. The aim is to reach especially those students, who have been denied the possibility to develop their full potential so far, due to economic conditions, their immigrant background or growing up in a less educated family. The initiative works presently in 20 cities with 40 institutions and is financed through the education and participation benefit, donors from foundations and companies.<sup>12</sup> To ensure continued funding, Chancenwerk works with foundations, private donors and businesses. To secure high-quality support, Chancenwerk cooperates with universities when selecting students for the learning cascades and with the

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<sup>11</sup> See <http://dif.vc/en/german-innovation-fund-dif-introduction/>.

<sup>12</sup> Chancenwerk, URL: <http://chancenwerk.de/>

Zentralverband Sanitär, Heizung, Klima (German association for plumbing, heating, and air conditioning) in St. Augustin and WILO to choose “job tutors”.

In the policy field of support for parents' labour market participation (more specifically, enabling parents, labour market participation through care provision; Maternal/paternal/parental leave schemes; Long-term care), several patterns of social innovations under involvement of Social Economy organizations can be observed.<sup>13</sup> “Living in old age” (Wohnen im Alter) is Germany's largest internet portal for age-related services. It has been developed by the Federal Ministry for Families, Youth, the Elderly and Women and Bertelsmann Foundation, and it aims at identifying possibilities of self-determined living for elderly people in various living conditions. In general, Think Tanks like the Bertelsmann Foundation cooperate with Federal and/or State Ministries and test forms of innovative service provision. The free welfare associations are developing new or improved services in their municipal headquarters, test them and negotiate then with the state government to introduce the service state wide. An example is the program “Food on Wheels”, a service that has been developed in the 1980s by the Red Cross. Temporally immobilized people who are living at home do not have to move in an expensive home but get a daily meal by a courier service.

### 2.3 Greece

Social innovation and social investment are concepts rather under-developed in Greece and poorly introduced into the social policy debate and practices, while the concept of social economy has only recently been implemented through the Law 4019/2011 on “Social Economy and Social Entrepreneurship”. Since the introduction of this law, there has been quite many initiatives, but they were not part of a larger strategic and developmental plan. This is largely due to two reasons: first, the severe financial crisis our country is facing since 2010 - although substantial budget cuts in social services seem to make the necessity of social innovation from civil society organizations more apparent than ever before; and second, the inability of the Greek state, as well as of the Greek society in general, to design and implement a mutually agreed policy plan on how social economy could be successfully deployed. For these main reasons, the situation in Greece is on a comparatively embryonic level and quite difficult to outline the prospective of social economy in the Greek context.<sup>14</sup>

The material on social innovation experiences in Greece is almost absent. Garefi (2011) presents the emergence of informal citizen networks and the social needs these networks are supposed to meet within the framework of social economy. Garefi (2011) categorized the various existing citizen networks based on the following typology: exchange and virtual currencies networks; cost cutting networks - “Without intermediaries”; social kitchens; social clinics- social pharmacies; social education networks; social /Cultural activism; self-management and self control networks; networks for change. The report proceeds by providing several examples of the different networks identified, primarily concerned with promoting fair and equitable sharing, solidarity and self-sufficiency.

As regards to social education networks, following the report at page 14, the “Greek public education system has been structured on a dysfunctional way. The existence of private tuition centres which provide extra out of school tuition is a common phenomenon which leads to a parallel education system, adopted by almost all Greek citizens. However, now the salaries have been cut parents can no longer afford this extra expense. In response to this situation, several social education networks have emerged. They are organized by educators who provide their services to students on a voluntary basis.”. One example of these social education networks is Tutorpool, an online solidarity and volunteerism network for Education established by citizens using the Internet (<http://tutorpool.gr/>). This network puts 500 volunteer tutors in contact with pupils who need their help, with the aim to achieve equal opportunities for every student.

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<sup>13</sup> Apart from “Living in old age” and “Food on wheels”, other projects to be mentioned are the KISS project and Pay for Success Bonds (also known as a Social Impact Bonds). The KISS project, that has been introduced by Ashoka Fellow Joachim Körkel in Hamburg, is a behavioral self-control program with the goal of enabling people with multiple uses of illegal and legal drugs to reduce their drug intake step by step. The “Success Bonds” is a contract between government and one or more non-government entities that shifts responsibility for a social service program from government to the private entity(ies) in hopes of achieving better results and reduced taxpayer expense.

<sup>14</sup> For a more complete analysis, see Nasioulas (2011).



## 2.4 Hungary

In Hungary there are at least three relevant social innovation experiences involving the role of Social Economy organizations: "Sure Start Children Houses" within the policy area to support early childhood development, integration of women within the policy field of support parents' labour market participation and the "Job Protection Action Plan" within the policy area to support social and labour market exclusion.

As regards to early childhood education, the government aimed at increasing the number of available places in nurseries. To cover these costs, starting from January 15, 2012, the government allowed nurseries to collect childcare fees. This action had controversial effects: the rate of children enrolled in nurseries increased between 2005 and 2011, but then stopped to increase. In 2013, 13,7% of the age group attended nurseries.<sup>15</sup> Another form of nursery has dynamically spread, namely the "Family Day Care Home". This provides a more flexible framework to establish smaller nurseries: it offers more limited and less professional services and receives less normative support, therefore almost all of these institutes collect fees. The number of places in "family day cares" increased 12 times between 2007 and 2013, reaching 20% at the national level.<sup>16</sup> These forms of nurseries are popular in the regions where the settlement system is fragmented (and local municipalities cannot finance a traditional nurseries) and also in the most developed regions, where the labour market creates demand for these services.

### 2.4.1 Case Study: Sure Start Children Houses

In 2009, "Sure Start Children Houses" were launched within the framework of the "Let it be better for Children" strategy and Social Renewal Operative Program to fight child poverty in the most disadvantaged micro-regions. Services including parenting support, early age skill development services and job-searching services are offered in 110 localities to support future school integration and labor market participation of the most disadvantaged children and their parents. The 2014 CEPS/INSTEAD report by Fruzsina Albert and Karoli Gaspar at page 25 on Sure Start Children Houses states that "in the framework of the measure Integrated Regional Programmes to fight child poverty, at least two Sure Start Children's Houses must be established in every region. After the end of EU financing, they automatically receive further state financing for 3 years, which is a significant achievement and good practice. Sure Start Children's Houses are listed now even in the child protection law among basic services for child welfare." Sure Start Children's Houses represents a successful model in the field of early childhood education, with 43 of them operating in the sector, and with 100-110 of them expected to operate by the end of the present programming period, aiming at providing integrated services for children and parents in a disadvantaged situation.

Other initiatives have been undertaken in Hungary in the field of early childhood education and development. Indeed, Hungary has a developed and wide system of district nurses and child and family protection institutions (even if the access to these services is unequal on a regional base -- see the 2015 ESPN country report by Albert and Gal). In 2011, a new family tax allowance was introduced. This system supports the purpose of the FIDESZ-KDNP coalition, that of supporting the working families. This allowance cannot be used in families with low income.

In the field of supporting parents' labour market participation, there are several initiatives in Hungary to foster women's reintegration to the labour market. In settlements with more than 10000 population, it is compulsory to operate infant nurseries. Legal regulations allow other service types to cover child day care duties, and, among these, family day care is the most widespread. Indeed, the number of family day cares is constantly rising: in 2014, there were 1137 of such institutions taking care for about 13702 children (see the statistics published by Hungarian Central Statistical Office). The primary aim of family day cares is to assist women's reintegration to the labour market, as well as to improve children's welfare and decrease child poverty. It involves small groups that substitutes parental care and nurture. The Hungarian pilot action in three settlements (Jánoshida, Jászfényszaru, Jászárokszállás) of the Jászság microregion of Észak-Alföld region, "Promoting the return of women to the labour market by launching integral nursing services for

<sup>15</sup> See Helyzetkép a kisgyermek napközbeni ellátásáról 2013. *Statistikai tükkör* 2014/82.

<sup>16</sup> See *Kisgyermek napközbeni ellátása, 2012 – Bölcsődei gondozási díjak. Statistikai tükkör*, 2013/58.

children", developed by the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Debrecen, specifically aimed at promoting the return of women to the labour market "by launching integral nursing services for children".<sup>17</sup>

#### **2.4.2 Job Protection Action Plan**

As regards to the policy field of supporting social and labour market exclusion, in Hungary gender inequality is a great issue. The "Job Protection Action Plan" helps prospective employees who are at a disadvantage on the job market in view of their circumstances and/or age, including first time job-seekers under the age of 25, mothers with young children, the long-term unemployed, people with low education and people over 55 who are approaching retirement. Hungary's unemployment rate is improving markedly in view of the fact that some 150,000 young people have successfully found jobs as a result of the Job Protection Action plan. Indeed, according to recent data, it contributes to the employment of nearly 900 thousand disadvantaged workers. Among other things, the "Job Protection Action Plan" aim at lowering the labour market gender inequality not only by providing tax incentives to employers, but also by promoting part-time employment (with the target group of part-time employment mainly consisting of women). Families raising 3 or more children may benefit from the availability of part-time employment for a longer period, until the age of 5 of their children (contrary to previous limit of age 3).<sup>18</sup> It is worth noting that there are also other measures that help the integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market. For example, the programme on the reconciliation of work and private life aims at promoting the reintegration of parents with young children to the labour market through the provision of childcare places and the spread of flexible employment. Moreover, the Government offers public work programmes in order to provide employment opportunities to those who have fewer chances to get a job on the primer labour market, in territories where employment opportunities are very poor.

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<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.adapt2dc.eu/adapt2dc/Hungary.htm>

<sup>18</sup> See the National Social Report 2015, Hungary.

## 2.5 Italy

The Italian Welfare System is articulated in a highly decentralised institutional structure. The roles and responsibilities of the different government levels (national, regional and local authorities) -concerning regulation, financing and implementation of the policies – varies greatly by the different sectors of intervention. In the field of welfare services (policies) a very crucial role is played by the Regional level through the Social and Health Plan (Piano Socio-Sanitario), a three year program which states the levels of assistance to be guaranteed and the criteria for the resources allocation. For example, the Emilia-Romagna Region has activated a Social and Health Agency (Agenzia sanitaria e sociale regionale) in order to offer a technical support to the “Regional Health System” and to the “Integrated System of social services”. The Agency is organized in ten offices called “area of activity”, one of those is dedicated to social innovation (*Innovazione Sociale*).<sup>19</sup> Another example could be a complex social policy implemented in Italy by Lombardia Region: the so called “Sistema Dote” (Endowment System) or “Dote Regione Lombardia” (Regional Law n. 22/2006; Regional Law n. 19/2007; and Deliberation Regional Board n. 8864/2009. It is a complex social policy implemented in specific sectors and fields of application (school, work, long life learning, work-family balance and social care) and driven by the culture of choice. Services are realized by a form of plural governance based on partnerships between public and private, with the contribution of third sector organizations. The strength of this program is on the culture of individual choice, which allows the realization of a complex governance (in the form of a quasi/market) and consent the inclusion of the final user in the role of a stakeholder through the implementation of a personal service plan. In other words, the system is focused on implementing the personalization of the local welfare and capability. There are also several critical points. The recent reform of the program requires a transformation of the device for the deliverance of fees and vouchers and a general revision of the service plan. This represents a risk of re-centralization of the endowment system.

### 2.5.1 Case Study 1: Fondazione CON IL SUD

Fondazione CON IL SUD is a private (non profit) foundation created in 2006 by the alliance between the Italian association of foundations of banking origin and third sector organisations in order to improve the social infrastructure of southern Italian regions and favour social cohesion and development. It supports pilot projects regarding education to legality against mafias, reduction of school dispersion, attraction of qualified young people, valorization of cultural heritage, qualification of social services, migrants’ integration among others. Fondazione CON IL SUD has supported more than 700 projects, among which is the creation of the first 5 community foundations in the South of Italy. These projects have reached about 4,500 organisations reaching more than 250 thousands citizens, mainly young people, and distributing about 134 million euros.<sup>20</sup> More specifically, Fondazione CON IL SUD operates through three main tools, in the six regions of Southern Italy (Abruzzo, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise e Puglia.): “Exemplary” projects, that are initiatives whose innovative content, organisations involved, impact and territorial significance can turn them into benchmarks for social infrastructure; community foundations, that are non-profit entities whose capacity to raise funds to be invested for social purposes in the local territory represents an opportunity for developing the subsidiarity principle; and volunteer programmes and networks initiatives meant to strengthen the impact of the volunteer networks already operating in the territory.

### 2.5.2 Case Study 2: Bollenti Spiriti

In 2005, the Puglia Region launched the program “Bollenti spiriti” in order to promote young people’s participation in all areas of society. In the following years (decisions 175/2008, 778/2011, 2788/2012) the Regione Puglia has approved annual guidelines to create a coherent system of policy interventions for the young. In 2013, the bi-annual plan 2014/15 containing the strategic objectives of the program “Bollenti spiriti” has been approved. *Bollenti spiriti* is a program which starts from the assumption that young people

<sup>19</sup> See [http://assr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/it/aree\\_attivita/partecipazione-innovazione-sociale/innovazionesociale/area\\_innovazione-sociale](http://assr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/it/aree_attivita/partecipazione-innovazione-sociale/innovazionesociale/area_innovazione-sociale).

<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.fondazioneconilsud.it/about-us/with-the-south/>.

represent a crucial resource for society, capable of generating social, economic and cultural change. The logic of the program is to address, following a comprehensive approach, all traditional areas of policies for the young: school, university, training, culture, innovation etc., in order to focus on the ability of young people to be direct actors of the process of innovation and economic development of the region, instead of passive beneficiaries. For this reason, the program is based on the experimentation of pilot projects, their ongoing evaluation and the scaling up of their results. Currently, the program is structured in three main areas: a) the re-use of public buildings as innovative spaces for young people (Urban labs); b) the support for innovative (and entrepreneurial) projects by young people; c) the promotion of the culture of legality against mafias (see [bollentispiriti.regione.puglia.it](http://bollentispiriti.regione.puglia.it)). The thematic areas dealt within this project range from technological innovation, to tourism, solidarity, the protection of cultural heritage and environment, the web new media, art and culture, scientific research, to the professions creative, to the creation of social spaces. Among the 420 projects financed in the first edition, 505 services, 597 products, 827 events were actually realized (see the report " Caso di studio Bollenti Spiriti. Principi attivi " by Marta Consolini, written in Italian language). Bollenti Spiriti presents the works in progress not as a transferable model of intervention, but as experiments of public policies to be tested through progressive adjustments and dynamic adaptations, both with young people and also with other social actors involved. This is possible also because Bollenti Spiriti is characterized by a strong territorial dimension, bureaucratic simplification and transparency, strong engagement and encouragement for participation, vivid promotion of networking and partnership.

The main actions of the "Bollenti Spiriti" program are the following: "Laboratori Urbani" (urban labs) that aims at turning abandoned buildings (owned by the municipalities of Puglia) into spaces for young people; "Cantiere della Legalità" (construction of legality), that aims at spreading a culture of legality among young people and fighting against organized criminality through the recovery, conversion and re-use of confiscated property in Puglia. Bollenti Spiriti also promotes studies and research to analyze several contexts and evaluate possible interventions. It also organizes network spaces, associations and youth enterprises in Puglia ("Comunità BS"), as well as events open to everyone (Camp of Bollenti Spiriti) to create opportunities to meet young people.

Within the program Bollenti Spiriti, the "Principi Attivi" initiative funds ideas of young people with grants of up to 25,000 Euro. The opportunity is open to all young people that live in Puglia, aged between 18 to 32, in informal groups of minimum 2 persons. The first edition of Principi Attivi has been realized in 2008/09 with the support of the Ministry of Youth; the second edition was made in 2010, only with regional resources, and the third in 2012. The formula is simple: at least two people, a good idea, a year in which to achieve it and a forgivable loan for a project on one of three main areas: protection and enhancement of the territory; knowledge economy and innovation; social inclusion and active citizenship. Just to give an idea of the relevance of this project, let us consider some statistical information. In the period March 2009 - December 2010 (first edition of the project), 420 informal groups of young people from Puglia have created 114 companies, 20 cooperatives and 287 associations out of 1,563 candidate projects. In the second edition there were 190 winning projects of 5,721 young participants (+ 37.3% compared to the previous edition) that had submitted 2,231 requests for application (+ 36.5%). The project proposals were evaluated by a panel of independent experts, identified in collaboration with the Regional Agency for Technology and Innovation.

## **2.6 The Netherlands**

### **2.6.1 Case Study: Basic Income Experiments**

Several municipalities in the Netherlands (as, among others, Utrecht, Groningen, Tilburg, Nijmegen, Wageningen) have announced experiments with Basic Income, a regular and unconditional stipend to cover living costs (<http://qz.com/473779/several-dutch-cities-want-to-give-residents-a-no-strings-attached-basic-income/>), that is a good mechanism to alleviate poverty and social exclusion. The Dutch experiments focus only on residents who are already recipients of social assistance - even if the classic basic income theory proposes universal payments across the population, and those in the program will be exempt from the severe job-seeking requirements and penalties in Dutch law.

The director of the Social Development Association of Tilburg and one of the promoters of the program, Ralf Embrechts, in an interview to Quartz, explained that “We want to discover, if you trust people and give them a basic income without any rules or obligations—so, unconditionally—that they will do the right thing.” The question is “Will the money encourage them to find a job or will they sit in their couches comfortably?”.

The municipality of Utrecht has announced to start an experiment with a basic income with 250 of their welfare claimants by January 2016. The recipients will receive a basic income, set to be €900 for an adult per month, and €1,300 for a couple or family. An exact design for the experiment must still be worked out, but it is clear that the experiment will involve the same number of people split into five groups: a control group operating under the current laws, three groups with fewer rules, and an unconditional income group that receives money no matter what. There will be different levels of rules and freedoms for these five groups. Participation is voluntary and the selection random. The experiment will be co-organized by the Utrecht council and the University of Utrecht, who will conduct research on those asked to participate in the study. The municipality of Utrecht has started the pilot because inhabitants are not satisfied with the current regulatory approach in social assistance, that is a complex system of obligations and penalties.<sup>21</sup> There is a need for less bureaucratic and simpler regulation, with people becoming the main predominant actors of the social assistance system.

The Participation Act for Basic Income experiments includes a clause (art. 83 Innovation) that leaves room for municipalities to experiment with reintegration and its funding for a maximum duration of three years. The plans of the communities differ in focus, size and timeframe but also share some commonalities:

- The programmes are restricted to a selection of recipients of social assistance benefits;
- Points of departure: fewer (bureaucratic/administrative) rules, more confidence in clients’ behaviour, more room for personal preferences and development;
- Experiments include less restrictive regimes regarding obligations to work and enforcement. For instance, groups with no restrictions (unconditional ‘basic income’), groups that receive a bonus when they receive income out of work, or groups who can set up their own plan of action which may also focus on doing voluntary work;
- Research component: monitoring the effects.

Another interesting experiment in social economy in the Netherlands is the development of Bread Funds which arrange financial support for self employed people when they get ill or disabled. Bread Funds are based on trust: each fund has between twenty and fifty entrepreneurs who put money aside each month on their personal bread Fund account. When you become ill or disabled, you get monthly donations from the other participants in your living fund. Virtually all business owners return to work within a period of two years. In November 2015 161 groups were active with bread funds in the Netherlands with a total number of participants of 6385 persons.<sup>22</sup> From the 2014 ITSSOIN report by Anheier et al., it is possible to identify another relevant social innovation experience in this field: food banks for the poor, that are initiatives offering transportation services to the elderly and health cooperatives are commonly viewed as examples of successful social innovations in response to unmet social needs. “Food banks are the most altruistic of the three examples. Confronted with increasing numbers of poor citizens and households that have fallen between the cracks of the welfare state, churches and concerned citizens started to collect food and sometimes clothing or other material goods donated by local business owners in the 1990s. Since the economic crisis the food banks have become more visible, especially in urban areas.”

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<sup>21</sup> Jacqueline Hartogs, spokeswoman for Victor Everhardt, Utrecht alderman for work and income, says that “The current rules in welfare are bureaucratic and, in a way, based on mistrust” (see <http://www.techinsider.io/basic-income-is-spreading-in-netherlands-2015-8>). See also some other articles on the internet, such as at <http://qz.com/473779/several-dutch-cities-want-to-give-residents-a-no-strings-attached-basic-income>; <http://www.techinsider.io/basic-income-is-spreading-in-netherlands-2015-8>; <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/8/14/dutch-cities-to-experiment-with-universal-cash-benefits.html>; <http://www.equaltimes.org/dutch-divided-over-basic-income?lang=en#.Vl6ukczEAHo.email>

<sup>22</sup> More information on Bread Funds in the Netherlands in English can be found at <http://www.summer-foundation.org/en/Initiatives/BroodFondsMakers>; <http://www.summer-foundation.org/index.php?id=5237&searchstr=bread+funds>; <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/sep/15/payment-insurance-co-ops-netherlands-uk-bread-fund>.

## **2.7 Poland**

In Poland the most significant social innovation experiences involving the role of Social Economy organizations are related to the sphere of professional activation and support for the elderly people in Poland. Within this field there are networks, clusters, partnerships and other forms of cooperation between non-governmental organizations.

### **2.7.1 "Senior – Wigor" program**

The Senior – Wigor program has been started by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to address the aging of Polish society and growing needs of elderly people.<sup>23</sup> As written in the website, "the program will be carried out in years 2015-2020 and it will include every Voivodeship (province). Once the local government unit receives funds for the program it is obliged to carry out the program for at least 5 years. The program is designated to be a supplement to the governmental program for social activity of elderly people in years 2014-2020. "Senior – Wigor" program will be revised on a year-on-year basis in order to implement evaluation findings to improve the efficiency of the program. Under the programme, local governments will be obliged to organize day care/activation centers for the elderly thus needing products and services."

The program includes financial support for local governments in carrying out their tasks, improving senior citizens' lives, granting seniors with the help and support adequate to their needs, social integration of elderly community, including development of self-help, and increasing seniors' involvement in local communities' work and life. Day centers and clubs are meant to be a combination of university of the third age, rehabilitation place and a place of meetings where elderly people could socialize and integrate with each other.

## **2.8 Spain**

### **2.8.1 "Microvoluntarios" project and other volunteering organizations**

As regards the most relevant social innovation experiences in Spain, we gather some information from the 2014 ITSSOIN report "Impact of the Third Sector as Social Innovation" (Anheier et al., 2014). In the following, we will report some relevant experiences related to social innovation in the third sector from the abovementioned ITSSOIN report.

Some of the innovative schemes of organizing volunteering, that have been introduced in the last decades, may be regarded as examples of social innovation, as for example volunteer centres and corporate volunteering. Volunteer centres are agencies that operate at the national, regional and local level and together form an infrastructure for volunteering, with the purpose of promoting, supporting and revaluating volunteering in general. From the point of view of third sector organisations involved in social innovation, easy access to qualified volunteers is likely to be a strong advantage. The Danish Ministry of Social Affairs mentioned support to social innovation as one of the six core functions of such centres, implying tasks such as: (1) supporting and helping new projects and organisations with funding applications, (2) loan of premises and office facilities, creating networks among new initiatives, and (3) consultancy for organisation leaders. Corporate volunteering, also referred to as employee volunteering, denotes activities that encourage and support volunteering by employees in the community and/or through which companies make institutional commitment of their human as well as financial resources to address community problems. There are also form of student volunteerism, or service learning, oriented to pedagogical development, and to enhancing service delivery to local communities. For the student-participants, these forms of volunteerism are supposed to enhance their critical-thinking skills, be part of the citizenship education, prepare them for their professional future, facilitate skill-development and increase enthusiasm about their education (Gray et al., 2000). The ITSSOIN report mentioned also the relevance of online volunteering and crowdsourcing in

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<sup>23</sup> For greater details about the program, see the website at: <https://www.exportingisgreat.gov.uk/opportunities/poland-products-and-services-needed-for-elderly-activation/>.

changing the manner in which volunteers are matched to organisations and communities with particular needs. The Project Gutenberg is an example of social innovation with a long incubation period. The project had already existed from the early 1970s onward, but it was only in the mid-1990s that founder Michael Hart started to coordinate the work of dozens and then hundreds of volunteers throughout the world to digitise these books (Butgereit and Botha, 2013: 176).

Another Spanish example of the use of ICT to facilitate voluntary work is the Spanish “Microvoluntarios” project started by the Bip Bip Foundation ([www.fundacionbipbip.org](http://www.fundacionbipbip.org)). This initiative promote micro-volunteer work online to help organizations fight exclusion and poverty. Individuals contribute to a cause by investing their free time to help others with tasks ranging from 30 to 120 minutes. These platforms enable expertise outsourcing from different fields which helps the daily work of nonprofit organisations in tasks such as proofreading, translation of texts, e-mentoring small entrepreneurs, or, for example, data collection for a project aimed at recording tree populations in a region.”

## 2.9 Sweden

There is a long tradition in Sweden of actors from all three sectors involved in childcare provision and preschool activities. Besides non-profit actors such as parent cooperatives and foundations since 1991 also for-profit actors were allowed to enter implementation of childcare services through contracts with municipalities. Since 2006 national government has increased the role of private actors in childcare implementation by legally stipulating the right of free establishment (“fri etableringsrätt”).<sup>24</sup> The main reason has been to stimulate businesses in welfare services and to provide parents with the right of choice. However, it is still up to municipal councils to decide on whether the right of choice in welfare services such as childcare will be applied in their municipality. It is also municipalities that define the level of capped childcare fees (“maxtaxa”). Both the long waiting lines to childcare in some territories and dubious pedagogical quality of some non-publicly run care units have been targets of recent debates in Sweden.

Since 2009, municipalities pay a financial contribution (“barnomsorgsavgift”) to care providing actors, including non-public actors. In 2012 there were about 2500 non-municipal pre-school childcare providers including a variety of activity forms – associations, foundations and limited companies. Totally there were about 489,300 children in pre-school childcare autumn 2013. In 2013, 20% (that is about 97,400) of all children went to a so-called free pre-school barn.<sup>25</sup> According to the statistics from National Statistics Agency (SCB) the number of free preschool actors is much larger than that of municipal ones in 2013. 2035 free actors are running 2576 preschools while 290 municipalities over 7000 preschools. This means that every fourth preschool is non-municipal and the majority of non-municipal actors run only one preschool. However some 10 actors run more than 10 preschools (or 10% of all preschools).<sup>26</sup> All 290 municipalities offer municipal childcare, and 47 municipalities still offered exclusively municipal childcare in 2012. Only 7 or 2% of municipalities offered exclusively privately driven childcare as an alternative. 243 municipalities had at least some kind of non-municipal child care. Childcare by non-profit actors is available in 81% or 236 municipalities while private actors are found in 41% or 120 municipalities.<sup>27</sup> Approximately 480 000 children or 84% of those aged 1-5 attended preschool in 2012. Among children aged 3-5 the percentage was 95. In general, two out of ten children go to a non-municipal school and of these half attend non-for profit schools while the other half attend childcare driven by private market actors. In other words, the market share of civil society and for-profit sector in childcare is rather equal.

A recent social innovation in the context of elderly care (and welfare services) is the possibility to collaborate between public and civil society actors as idea-based and public partnerships (IOP) developed by the Social Forum.<sup>28</sup> The guiding idea is a long-term collaboration, rather than temporal outsourcing. Such partnership agreements of collaborative welfare provision are already in place in some municipalities (e.g. Sigtuna) but their implementation is still experimental. The situation in elderly care – such as dramatic lack

<sup>24</sup> See Lorentzi, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> See Skolverket[National School Agency], 2014.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Data from Lorentzi, 2014.

<sup>28</sup> See more at: [www.socialforum.se](http://www.socialforum.se) (in Swedish).

of personnel, extremely decreased care time per individual and the resulting decreasing quality – has become hot debate issues in Sweden calling for additional public financing and control. This also opens for solutions more extensively involving third sector actors. While cooperatives for elderly care still are relatively few in Sweden there seems to be an increasing interest in those especially when previously municipally employed personnel takes over. Work integrating social enterprises (WISE) are also becoming engaged in long-term care.

## 2.10 United Kingdom

There are several examples of social innovation experiences in the UK.<sup>29</sup> One of the most discussed innovation foundation is Nesta, an independent charity that help people and organisations to develop and realize ideas by providing investments and grants and mobilising research, networks and skills (Gabriel, 2014). Another relevant innovation experience is related to the social impact bonds, that are designed to help reform public service delivery. Following the information provided in the website (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-impact-bonds>), SIBs are based on achieving social outcomes (as, for example, improved health), rather than focusing on inputs (as, for example, number of doctors) or outputs (as, for example, number of operations). The outcomes are predefined and measurable. Investors pay for the project at the beginning, and then receive payments based on the results achieved by the project. The payment is based on what the project or service has achieved, not the processes or work that has been done. For example, payments for the social impact bond at Peterborough prison are based on whether or not the project has lowered the rate at which prisoners reoffend, rather than the cost of the project or the number of people working on the project. In this way, social impact bonds improve the social outcomes of publicly funded services by making funding conditional on achieving results. Among other purposes, social impact bonds can help charities and social enterprises bid for and manage ‘payment by results’ (PbR) projects - projects where the government pays the provider of the service for the results achieved.

Fisac-Garcia et al. state (2013, p. 98) mentioned the relevance of the use of ICT to facilitate voluntary work (see also the related abovementioned Spanish “Microvoluntarios” project): the UK-based platform Help from Home ([www.helpfromhome.org](http://www.helpfromhome.org)) help organisations to fight exclusion and poverty. Help From Home was set up in December, 2008 to address the problem at the time that the global voluntary sector was not promoting such microvolunteering actions, and is now considered to have the largest known directory of current active non-skilled microvolunteering opportunities.<sup>30</sup>

### 2.10.1 Case Study: In Control

In Control is a UK based charity that helps local authorities to establish systems that give users financial autonomy over their own care. It was created as a joint venture between the Department of Health and the mental health charity Mencap. This charity became a pioneer of the concept of ‘self-directed’ support. In Control" is one of the social innovation experiences that turned the principles enacted in the Care Act 2014 into practice. The report "Promoting people’s right to choice and control under the Care Act 2014. How are local authorities performing?", directed by the Independent Living Strategy Group, and published by In Control provides an overview of the legal, economic and political context for choice and control in care and support. The Care Act 2014 "embodies principles and promotes practices regarding choice and control that have evolved over the past 40 years, driven by the disabled person’s independent living movement in the UK and internationally and by the wider trend towards personalised public services." The Act and statutory guidance place particular emphasis on the provision of information and advice: "Information and advice is fundamental to enabling people, carers and families to take control of, and make well-informed choices about, their care and support and how they fund it. Not only does information and advice help to promote people’s wellbeing by increasing their ability to exercise choice and control, it is also a vital component of preventing or delaying people’s need for care and support." (Para 3.1). At the core of the policy innovations that go towards more person-centred care and self-directed support are personal budgets. The Care Act

<sup>29</sup> See the report "Using Evidence to Improve Social Policy and Practice; Perspectives on how research and evidence can influence decision making, Edited by Ruth Puttick, with an introduction by Geoff Mulgan.

<sup>30</sup> See more at: <http://helpfromhome.org/about-us/about-us#sthash.RbMBVY9k.dpuf>.



statutory guidance states that a personal budget "is the mechanism that, in conjunction with the care and support plan, or support plan, enables the person, and their advocate if they have one, to exercise greater choice and take control over how their care and support needs are met." (Para 11.3).

In Control promotes innovative approaches to social care, allowing people with particular care needs to purchase products or services that might fall outside the competences of traditional care services. "For example, it might be that an individual most needs help getting out and socializing. A personalized budget would allow them to pay for someone to accompany them out to an activity on a regular basis. [...] In some cases the budget is held and spent by the individual user, and in others the public body (e.g. a council) administers the budget according to the user's specifications. Personal budgets have been rolled out in England since 2008, with a target of providing every service user with one by 2013."<sup>31</sup> There are several factors to be considered in making a decision about purchases through a personal health budget (and this requires a clinical judgment from people with appropriate skills and knowledge): there must be a clear link between the purchase and the identified need and agreed outcome stated in the care and support plan.

### 3 Concluding Remarks

In this paper we have presented some illustrative evidence of social innovation policies (related to social investment) with the involvement of social economy organisations in a sample of ten European countries. Given the limited number of experiences that are analysed, it is not possible to draw general conclusions about the diffusion and features of socially innovative policies at the European level. More research will be needed for this purpose.

However, some preliminary findings can be grouped around three main points:

- 1) It is generally difficult to identify a national (or even regional) policy framework to support social innovation since the concept of social innovation has rarely been explicitly defined as a driver of social investment policies; in this regard, the experiences discussed represent case studies which could be taken as useful references for the development of such framework;
- 2) Recent research at the European level has shown (see, for instance, FP7 WILCO project) that social innovation is more likely to be found at the local level (in cities and within cities). For this reason, in order to promote social investment policies which favour social innovation there is a need for an integration of different levels of governance (national, regional and local) in policy design and implementation;
- 3) the role of social economy organisations represents one of the main examples of the importance of the collaboration between different actors for the effectiveness of socially innovative policies. The term *co-production* is the standard reference concept to indicate the need to interpret the policy design and implementation as a participated process between policy designers, providers and beneficiaries. This logic is complementary to the basic tenet of social investment policy of empowering people to be actors in markets and society instead of passive recipients of public funds.

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<sup>31</sup> See <http://siresearch.eu/public-innovation/case-study/personalised-budgets-uk>.

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## Annex 1

In agreement with the other academic partners of the Innosi project we elaborated a “template” including several questions regarding Social Innovation and Social Economy in each country. The template was sent via mail to all the academic partners asking them to fulfill it in the period July-August 2015. We elaborated also a definition of Social Innovation and a definition of Social Economy, extracted from official EU documents, in order to establish a common conceptual ground for the collection of information and data in each country.

As far as this paper is concerned the main questions included in the template were:

### Section A

A3) What is the working definition of social innovation within national context?

A4) Is the concept of social economy developed by CIRIEC (see attachment of Uni Bo) generally recognized in your country, particularly in the context of the social investment debate? If it is not, please write down the concept or the definition that is most broadly used for the mix of actors.

A5) What are the principle differences and commonalities between Social Investment and Social Innovation in your national context?

### Section B

For each policy areas (B1, B2, B3, B4)

B4) List the predominant actors by differentiating between governmental, private-commercial and nonprofit-actors and give a short description of their interaction. Please use the categories regulation, financing and implementation for your description.

B5) Describe the quantitative relevance (when available from National Statistical Institute) and the role of the social economy organizations (as defined in the attachment n.1) and private (for profit) corporate organizations for: a) regulation, b) financing and c) implementation of social investments in the policy field by filling in the table below.

B6) Describe any significant social innovation experiences (see attachment n.1) involving the role of Social Economy organizations (networks, partnership, collaborations, agreements).

B9) Are you aware of any evaluations of social outcomes, social returns and effectiveness of interventions carried out (see attachment n.1)? Please describe and add links if available.

B10) Please complete the following SWOT Analysis charts. Indicate for each of the following themes [Social Investment, Social Innovation, Social Economy] the main Strengths / Weaknesses and Opportunities / Threats present in your Country as summary for the above mentioned policy areas.

During the month of September 2015 the great majority of the academic partners sent us back the template. Through a constant interexchange of e-mail or Skype colloquia we asked the partners to complete the sections of the template that were less detailed. The richness and the completeness of information requested varied greatly from country to country and in relation to the different topics.