Social Innovation: Mapping

The state of research practice

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L&R Sozialforschung

Definition of Social Innovation according to ESF+ Regulation

"….Social innovation means an activity, that is social both as to its ends and its means and in particular an activity which relates to the development and implementation of new ideas concerning products, services, practices and models, that simultaneously meets social needs and creates new social relationships or collaborations between public, civil society or private organisations, thereby benefiting society and boosting its capacity to act." (Article 2.1. (8) of the ESF+ regulation).

Draft for the Operationalisation of Social Innovation (I)

Dimensions	Characteristics
Initial situation / challenges	Challenges that mainly affect **disadvantaged groups**
	Problems/challenges affecting **broader groups of society**
	Inequalities/inequal distributions between groups
	New challenges/problems (currently new needs, especially due to the covid pandemic)
	Existing challenges/problems for which solutions are not yet available or are inadequate
Goals / Intentionality	Solving social challenges to **sustainably improve social coexistence and strengthen social cohesion**
	Empowerment of civil society actors / individual target groups, stimulation of **capacities for social action**
	Solutions to sustainably **reduce social inequalities** and unequally distributed material resources and opportunities.
	Restructuring of social power relations in favor of those who have so far had fewer opportunities to exert influence
Impact level / target groups	**Societal challenges/problems**: solutions for challenges/problems of specific groups (vulnerable groups, local groups, etc.) or for overall societal challenges/problems that affect multiple areas of life.
	Cooperation and collaboration: Creation of new forms of cooperation, networking and knowledge exchange between different actors and groups.
	Resource use and distribution: solutions for better and more sustainable use and fairer distribution of existing social and environmental resources and capacities.
	Empowerment: solutions for stimulating/strengthening scope for action and opportunities for participation.
	Scope and focus: impact limited to local framework or extending beyond it, supraregional significance through mainstreaming

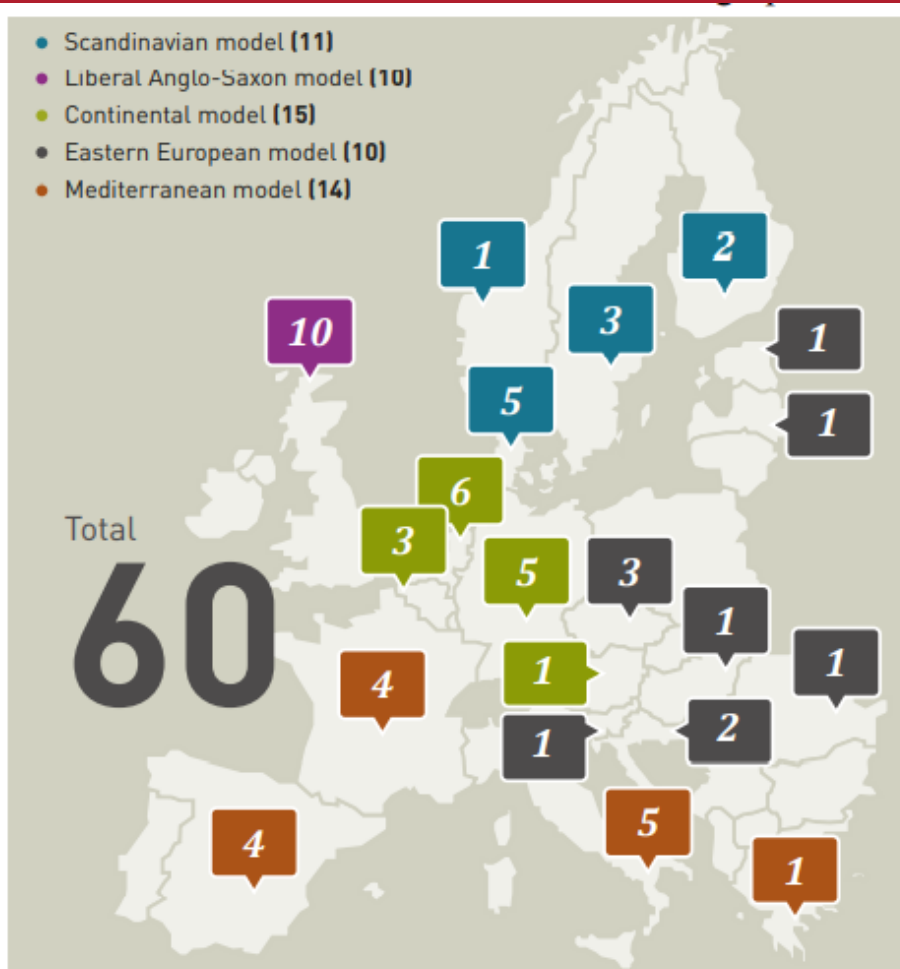# Draft for the Operationalisation of Social Innovation (II)

Dimensions	Characteristics
Approach and methods	**Participatory approach**: Active involvement of the project's target group Extent / stages of participation (project development, implementation, testing)
	Development of solutions **involving/ncross-linking** all relevant stakeholders
	Multidisciplinarity: inclusion and use of diverse perspectives, resources, experiences and competencies
	Openness: Consideration of **local and cultural conditions** and use of these as resources for the joint development of solutions.
Novelty	**New processes, products, methods**, etc. (differentiation/cross-linking with technical innovation)
	Reconfiguring social practices to better meet social or societal needs: Forging new relationships or establishing **new forms of cooperation/communication.**
	New use of existing resources or exploitation of existing resources through new strategies, processes, services
	Solutions/methods/processes that are not new per se, but function better than existing solutions in the respective context and **represent an improvement for the target group**
	Successful projects that have **not yet managed to receive (sufficient) recognition or funding**

Variety of Mapping Approaches

- Mapping has become a common and widely applied method for gaining insights into social innovation practices
- Mapping refers to a variety of understandings of visualisation

Source: Pelka, Bastian and Terstriep, Judith (2016). MAPPING SOCIAL INNOVATION MAPS The State of Research Practice across Europe. In: European Public & Social Innovation Review, Volume 1, Issue 1, 2016, Creative Commons Attribution 4.0

Legend:
- Scandinavian model (11)
- Liberal Anglo-Saxon model (10)
- Continental model (15)
- Eastern European model (10)
- Mediterranean model (14)

Total **60**

- Broad meta-analysis of existing cases, captures multifaceted aspects of social innovation
- in-depth analysis of specific economic factors.
- According to the project's rational, in an initial step two filters were applied to scan existing databases for relevant cases:
  - Welfare regimes across Europe
  - Fields of action, namely employment, migration and demographic change, as well as gender, education and poverty as transversal themes.

- Meta-analysis in the form of a «qualitative comparative analysis» (QCA) was conducted for all cases to identify metacomponents, –objectives and– principles across the defined fields of action (horizontal analysis).
- Patterns of social innovation were derived for **each field of action** (vertical analysis). These were compared **across the distinct welfare regimes.**

Source: Terstriep et al. (2015), from Pelka/Terstriep 2016

«Creating Economic Space for Social Innovation» (CrESSI)

- CrESSI explores the economic underpinnings of social innovation with a particular focus on how policy and practice enhance the lives of the most marginalised and disempowered citizens in society

- Mapping approach: CrESSI takes stock of examples of social innovations, including both historic and recent, as well as both successful and less successful ones.

  Building on the project's 'Extended Social Grid Model' (Nichols & Ziegler, 2015), which combines Beckert's (2010) 'Social Grid Model' with the 'Capabilities Approach' of human development and empowerment (Sen & Nussbaum, 2009) and Mann's (2013) 'Power' approach, social innovations across Europe are examined in longitudinal and historical studies.

Social Innovation – Driving Change (SI-DRIVE)

SI-DRIVE - mapping in two steps:

- An initial mapping («baseline mapping») by means of desk research captures basic information about 1000 actual social innovations in seven policy fields (education, employment, environment, energy, mobility / transport, health and social care, poverty and sustainable development), from secondary data sources, leading to a typology of SI.

- Based on the project's five key dimensions of social innovation from the 1000 cases the 300 most important («prototypical») cases are chosen as basis for selection of 70 cases for in-depth analysis.

Figure 2. IESI Knowledge Map.
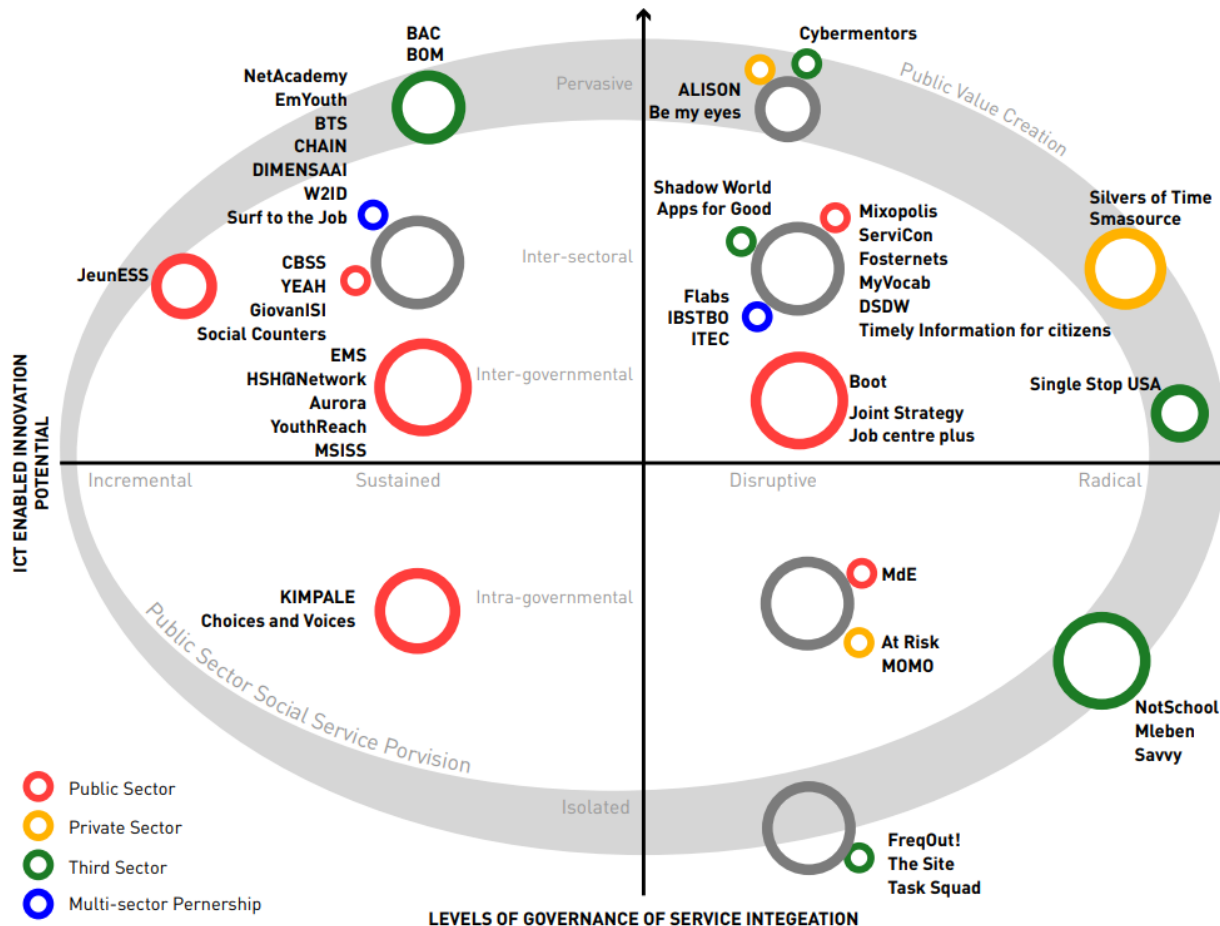
Source: Misuraca (2015).

BENISI - Building a European Network of Incubators for Social Innotion

- Acting as a «network of networks» BENISI aims to identify and highlight 300 of the most promising, impactful and employmentgenerating social innovations and create conditions for the transfer and scaling of social enterprises.

- BENISI's mapping comprises more than 300 cases from around 30 countries. The cases are categorised by six societal trends to which they are referring. As the opportunities for scaling is a leading question in BENISIS's approach, the scaling trajectory is another important criterion for the categorisation of the cases. The approac

Conclusions I

- Wide bandwidth of understandings of social innovation: some (e.g. SIMPACT) put the target group of vulnerable people at the heart of their definition, others (e.g. LIPSE) understand social innovation from a perspective of origin (in the case of LIPSE: public administration) or in the context of entrepreneurship.

- Prevailing instrument of collecting data for mapping: case studies, qualitative research is the dominant approach, study-based projects cases are retrieved from online databases.

- Only few projects apply quantitative data, whereas this data is usually complemented by qualitative data, mostly retrieved from case studies.

- Interviews are the second most frequently used scientific method to collect data for mappings.

- Only few projects apply other methods such as network analysis, or even tailored instruments such as «Social Innovation Biographies»

Conclusions II

- Most of the described mapping projects are applying the **addressed societal challenges** as one mapping dimension. **Unemployment, demographic change and education** are the most prominent topics that count as selection criteria.

- **Regional criteria**, **welfare regimes** or criteria referring to the **quality, lifecycle stage or spread of the social innovation**: Most common is the ambition to relate social innovations to a local or regional context. → strongly linked to the debate on the role of the local context to foster social innovations

- Rare orientation of the existing mappings towards the **dimension of target groups or users of social innovations**: mapping approaches do not actively involve these in the mapping activities

- Future mappings should to a larger extend apply approaches in which the target groups/users of social innovation are an integral part of research.

- Seldom the mapping activities include **reflections on social innovations' impact**.