

KEY CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION AND INCLUSION IN THE CASE OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES ACROSS EU COUNTRIES

Delia ȘTEFENEL¹
Fiori A. ZAFIROPOULOU²

ABSTRACT:

THE AIM OF THE PRESENT PAPER WAS TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE LATEST INNOVATION STRATEGIES STAKEHOLDERS PERFORM TO SUCCEED IN THEIR WORK WITH IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES AND VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING, IN ORDER TO ENABLE PROPER SOCIAL INCLUSION. MOREOVER, WE AIMED TO INVESTIGATE THE SOCIAL INNOVATION MODEL, THE VALUE CO-CREATION AND THE TYPOLOGY OF THE OFFERING, IN ORDER TO GENERATE CHANGE IN ADDRESSING THE PRESSING ISSUES OF MIGRATION AND FLIGHT. THE METHODOLOGY USED FOR THIS PAPER IS BASED ON FIRST HAND QUANTITATIVE DATA PROVIDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS, ACTIVISTS, MANAGERS, CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERS INVOLVED IN MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING RELATED ISSUES IN SIX SOG-TIM PARTNER COUNTRIES (N= 451). DATA COLLECTION WAS PERFORMED IN ITALY, GREECE, POLAND, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA AND SPAIN, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF AN INTER-EUROPEAN ACADEMIC SURVEY FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, "SOCIAL GROWTH ON TRAFFICKING AND IMMIGRATION" (SOG-TIM) PROJECT³. THE MAIN FINDINGS OF OUR PAPER INSIST ON FOSTERING THE KNOWLEDGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SOCIAL INNOVATION MODEL FEATURES DEVELOPED BY INTERVIEWEE ORGANISATIONS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE BUSINESS MODEL VENTURES AND TO PROVIDE VIABLE SOLUTIONS FOR BETTER EMPOWERING COMPETITIVE BUSINESS FOR RESCUED VICTIMS OF REFUGEE CRISIS, MIGRATION AND HUMAN SLAVERY.

KEY WORDS: MIGRATION, REGUGEES, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, SOCIAL INNOVATION, NOGS, SOG-TIM

INTRODUCTION

The last years have witnessed a considerable rise in social innovation initiatives among public and private organizations dealing with vulnerable populations, including the integration of victims of migration, flight and human trafficking. Moreover, seminal contributions have been made by the EU in the attempt to address, implement and support social innovative ideas,

¹ PhD, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania, email: deliastefenel@gmail.com

² PhD, The Nest, Greece, email: f.zafeiropoulou@thenest.org.gr

³ This research was funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union, within the project "Social Growth on Trafficking and Immigration (SOG-TIM)", no. 2016-1-SK01-KA204-022541

in order to meet the needs for future-readiness, the impact creation among such communities in need. In this direction, "Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth"⁴ states, among the seven Flagship Initiatives, two priorities aiming innovation and acquisition for new skills and jobs, respectively. In the later one, the EU agenda mentions the imperative "to design and implement programmes to promote social innovation for the most vulnerable, in particular by providing innovative education, training, and employment opportunities for deprived communities, to fight discrimination (e.g. disabled), and to develop a new agenda for migrants' integration to enable them to take full advantage of their potential" (p.18). Within the framework of these EU priorities this paper seeks to put forward a brief presentation of social innovation concept, followed by a cross-national study which shed new light on field applications of social innovation model.

In the literature, social innovation usually refers to "new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations" being "both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act"⁵ (Mulgan et al. 2007, p.3). Therefore, social innovation emerges as a novel solution to a societal problem, based on pragmatic philosophy and not a perfectionist one, advisable to be undertaken under experimentation (Leadbeater, C., 2006⁶). Various approaches have been put forward to design different models of innovation within social ventures, but we found Alvord et al (2004)⁷ assumptions well-grounded, being already researched in Zafiropoulou F. (2013)⁸. We choose this particular apparatus as it empirically highlights the main specific systems of innovation emerging around: capacity building initiatives, mobilizing existing assets of marginalized groups, running package dissemination and building local movements, scaling up the strategy and the transformational impact, managing the offering and strengthening the alliances, along with systematic learning both at individual and organisational level. Battilana, Leca and Boxenbaum (2009) point out three key elements of social innovation: a) creation of a vision for divergent change, this means defining an issue, conceptualizing it and justifying it; b) the mobilization of people of allies and c) the act of motivating those people to actually engage in actions to achieve the vision⁹. In the same line, Zahra et al (2009) trace three advances concerning the following social innovation composites: the process to discovering a problem, the target impact and the resources to be mobilized¹⁰. In order to become successful, in

⁴Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, accessed July, 17, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC2020&from=en>.

⁵ Mulgan, Geoff; Tucker, Simon; Ali, Rushanara; Sanders, Ben. Social Innovation: What it is, why it matters and how it can be accelerated, Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship 2007, accessed June, 15, 2019, http://eureka.sbs.ox.ac.uk/761/1/Social_Innovation.pdf.

⁶ Leadbeater, Charlie. The user innovation revolution: how business can unlock the value of customers' ideas. London: National Consumer Council, 2006.

⁷ Alvord, Sahah; Brown, David L; Letts Christine W. "Social entrepreneurship and societal transformation: An exploratory study". Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 40(2004): 260-283.

⁸ Zafiropoulou, Fiori. The process of the new inter-organizational format of social franchising from a social network theory approach: Institutions, social entrepreneurship profile, innovation and the argument of embeddedness, PhD Thesis. London: Brunel University, 2013, <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/8970>.

⁹ Battilana, Julie; Leca, Bernard; Boxenbaum, Eva. "How actors change institutions: Towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship". Academy of Management Annals 3(2009): 65-107.

¹⁰ Zahra, Shaker A., Gedajlovic, Eric; Neubaum, Donald, O., Shulman, Joel. M. "A typology of social entrepreneurs: Motives, search processes and ethical challenges". Journal of Business Venturing, 24(2009): 519-532.

accordance with the framework of the Social Innovation Spiral¹¹, any social innovation process goes through six evolutionary stages: 1) prompts (need for the change and the inspiration); 2) proposals (inception generating step); 3) prototyping (the idea is tested); 4) sustaining (long-term practice); 5) scaling (growing and scaling-up); 6) systemic change (visible impact over time) (Murray, R., Caulier-Grice, J., Mulgan, G. 2010, pp. 11-12). Based on literature review, it was decided that the best procedure for the study of social innovation among social ventures dealing with 'Bottom of the Pyramid' populations was to investigate target organisations in several European countries that are actively engaged in the integration and of fringe populations, victims of different forms of modern slavery.

The aim of the study was to investigate the social innovation model of those organisations addressing the pressing issues of refugee and human trafficking crisis. The main findings were used to create a training platform for the incubation of non-profits and social entrepreneurs active in these fields, across Europe¹².

Research question: What are the social innovation features of the organisations dealing with migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking?

METHODS

Participants.

Data were collected from a total of 451 participants, 66 % females and 34% males, mean age between 30 and 49 years old, the most being Bachelor (26,7%), or Master degree holders (40,6%), whose main occupational activities are either employees, activists, start-uppers or managers in the interviewee organisations. The cultural composition of the samples is represented in the table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Sample composition in accordance with the country belonging

Country	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Romania	166	36,8	36,8	36,8
Poland	76	16,9	16,9	53,7
Slovakia	71	15,7	15,7	69,4
Greece	68	15,1	15,1	84,5
Italy	44	9,8	9,8	94,2
Other	26	5,8	5,8	100,0
Total	451	100,0	100,0	

The sampling selection criteria were country belonging; being enrolled in non-for-profit, public and private structures targeting human trafficking, migration and refugees, social enterprises, start-uppers, people involved or interested in social entrepreneurship.

Instruments and procedure.

Data collection was undertaken using a survey with open and closed questions. The completion of the questionnaire was initiated as a web based questionnaire using Survey Monkey tool¹³. The questionnaires adapted from English were translated to each of the target

¹¹ Murray, Robin; Caulier-Grice, Julie; Mulgan, Geoff. The Open Book of Social Innovation London: NESTA, Young Foundation, 2010, accessed June, 19, 2019, <https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf>.

¹² In this direction see SOG-TIM the training documentation available at <https://sogtim.socialgrowthhub.com/> ; <http://ngo.socialgrowthhub.com/>.

¹³ SOG-TIM Survey available on https://www.surveymonkey.net/home/?ut_source=header.

languages and also pretested, in order to ensure equivalence in all languages. The questionnaires were filled in participants' native languages, respectively in the Greek, Italian, Polish, Romanian, and Slovak. The survey comprised a block of questions, based on theoretical documentation and prior qualitative research approach, aiming to depict pertinent empiric answers to general, but less examined research questions, such as: Who are the social organisations in the five respondent countries? What do they offer? By which means the offer is delivered? How to they learn? Do they create any social impact?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The social innovation prevalence among investigated social ventures in Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and even in related additional countries, was descriptively measured in terms of the following features, as proposed by Alvord, S., Brown, L., Letts, C. (2004)¹⁴: 1) innovative characteristics of the organisations; 2) strategies to mobilize assets and resources of disadvantaged groups; 3) regular learning and training staff provision; 4) prerequisite networking skills from venture holders; 5) sustainable development and social transformational impact, and 6) innovative nature features registered at the investigated social ventures.

1) Innovative typology of social ventures. Respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements related to the main offering (activity) of the organisation.

Table 1.2. Distribution of the organizational offering

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1. Disseminating a content package to solve common problems (e.g. create an offering to help resolve a social issue)	208	46,1	49,8	49,8
	2. Building local capacity to solve a problem	134	29,7	32,1	81,8
	3. Building local movements to deal with other powerful actors (build networks of support).	76	16,9	18,2	100,0
	Total	418	92,7	100,0	
NR		33	7,3		
Total		451	100,0		

Most of the participating organisations declare to activate on the social market in order to disseminate or create an offering to help resolve social issues (49,76%) being based in Romania, Slovakia and Greece, followed by respondents focused on building local capacity (Poland and Italy) while few of them being focused more on creating local networks and movements. Additionally, there were several participants and organizations that either did not fit in the given dimensions of the offering provision, either desired to provide further explanation for the activity they run. Most of them make reference to belonging to social and economic entities that are active in the following fields: a) education and research organizations, offering high level of education and training activities (Romania); b) psychosocial services designed to provide support to vulnerable and juvenile groups, where specialized services are given to people in risk, either children and adults (Romania, Greece, Italy); where vulnerable families receive material and emotional support (Romania); where integration is offered to interethnic and social instable communities; where is provided

¹⁴ Alvord, Sahah; Brown, David L; Letts Christine W. "Social entrepreneurship and societal transformation: An exploratory study". Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 40(2004): 260-283.

“support for people in need in order to build together pathways towards autonomy” (Italy); where work is done for the village and the local community (Poland); c) workforce development and encouragement, where foundations and NGOs receive support at local level, in order to create more jobs (Romania); support for small and middle sized enterprises (Poland); d) cultural heritage preservation, with emphasis on traditions and heritage preservation (Romania), where cultural socio-cultural events are supported in Transylvania (Romania).

2) Resource management of disadvantage groups Asked whether their organisation mobilises existing resources of disadvantaged groups for the delivery of their offering, the majority of the respondents provided positive answers. Furthermore, when country differences were called into question, it was easily noticeable that Romania was the top country not mobilizing the resources of the beneficiaries, whereas all the others use this strategy in order to deliver their offering (Poland 73,33%; Greece 72,1%; Italy 65,9%; Slovakia 54,9%).

3) Learning and training provision. One set of analyses highlighted the existence of systematic training provided to the individuals that deliver the offering or to the entire personnel of your organisation. The overall response to this question was surprisingly positive in almost all countries (63,4% in total) (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Cross-country distribution following regular learning and training staff provision

Country	Do you offer systematic training to the individuals that deliver the offering or to the entire personnel of your organisation?		Total
	yes	no	
Slovakia	69,1%	30,9%	100,0%
Romania	61,2%	38,8%	100,0%
Poland	55,3%	44,7%	100,0%
Italy	79,5%	20,5%	100,0%
Greece	74,2%	25,8%	100,0%
Other countries	48,0%	52,0%	100,0%
Total	64,4%	35,6%	100,0%

4) Interpersonal skills and attributes. The vast majority of participants 69,5% (54,67%-agreed and 22,84%- strongly agreed) considered extremely vital their relationship with the specific partners from their network for the overall success of their business. Asked whether the offering (its creation or delivery) has been influenced by the relationship and networking skills of the board members/founders of the organisation, a high percentage indicated that a strong relationship and networking abilities certainly lead to a productive working environment.

5) Social transformation impact. From the total number of participants at the present study, a significant percentage (94%) of the respondents believes their organization offers a transformational impact at the social level. Also, 73, 50 % consider that their offering impacts at the cultural level. In addition to this, in this hierarchy, an impact at the economic level follows, with still a high percentage representation as far as effect outcome is concerned (64,8%). Moreover, there was depicted a mistrust towards the political impact that such social ventures might empower , given that only a marginal preference was registered by the organizations which consider their offering impactful on political level (39,10%).

The exception comes from Greece, where more than half of the interviewed organizations admit that their offering achieves a transformational impact at the political level.

But, all things considered, the major tendency that almost all participants expect their offering to have a social transformational impact on the market and the community, in general. The mean score distribution of the answers following the impact level targeted and created in all investigated communities is stated in the next table (1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

Table 1.4. Means and standard deviations of the impact levels created by the investigated organisations , as reported by the all cultural groups

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our offering creates a transformational impact at the social level	434	1	5	4,38	,707
Our offering creates a transformational impact at the cultural level	435	1	5	3,84	1,001
Our offering creates a transformational impact at the economic level	431	1	5	3,53	1,103
Our offering creates a transformational impact at the political level	430	1	5	3,00	1,168
Valid N	423				

The odds that the results observed in all countries are not just a chance result. Therefore, taking all data comprised and analysed in detail, we can sum up that among the different impacts that the offering creates to the beneficiaries and to the society as a whole, the a social impact is main visible impact (M=4.38), followed by a cultural (M=3.84) and the economic one (M=3.53) and less by the political one (M=3.00).

Table 1.5. Correlations between impact levels outcome

Our offering creates a transformational impact at:	1	2	3	4
economic level	-			
political level	,344**	-		
social level	,231**	,035	-	
cultural level	,074	,120*	,354**	-
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Additionally, our presumption was that there might be some associations among the dimensions presumed to be of importance, as far as driven effects are to be realised. Therefore, we run a correlation analysis as provided in the table 1.5, which shows that there are significant relations between most of the generated impact levels introduced in the survey. What really confirms all suppositions in social economy theories, and also in our case, is the fact that there do exist a strong and statistically significant association between the social and economic levels among the probed organisations (r=.231, p<0.001). The economic level remains a decisive element in creating fruitful activities, that might be idiosyncratic and influential at political level (r=.344, <0.001).

6). Nature of social innovation development. Analysing the data listed at the question related to core elements specific to the organisations, it is noticeable that most of the investigated companies aim to the same extend to change attitudes, to create new relationships (M=4.10), to create new products and services (M=3.75), and to generate a new incentives of doing things (M=3,61) or using new technologies (M=2,97). In addition to this, the community has raised several concerns about the most distinctive feature of the offering of the questioned

organisations, which is in each country, the ability to create new relationships and the conviction this changes attitudes and mind-sets. One of the most striking observation to emerge from our data comparison was that, some social ventures were focused on being innovative chiefly in changing minds and attitudes, as is the case in Romania, Slovakia and Poland, others being a bit more concerned on building new relationships, as is the case of Greece, Italy and Poland. Certainly, given that our findings are based on a restraint number in some groups, the results from such analyses should thus be treated with utmost caution.

These findings add to a growing body of literature on understanding more what the offering of those in charge or integration victims of flight, migration and human trafficking is. In this regard, several participants provided additional notes mostly connected to the need of training, to the scarcity in providing support and public funding for vulnerable groups in their field of expertise. In this respect, some narrations coming from Romanian interviewees are briefly reported, underneath.

"I would be delighted to see that the mentality in Romania is changing towards a better open minded mentality, which might be more visible abroad. What we do for disadvantaged groups is not a "one man show", as perceived by those who expect permanent charity, who do not learn their beneficiaries "how to fish alone and don't wait all their life for fried fish", if not for the golden fish!"(NGO representative from Romania).

"I think it is necessary to raise more the awareness among women in Romania. We, the people working in different locations around the world for the centres in our native country (the diaspora in Canada, in my case), we notice that the civic sense and that "public awareness" is still asleep in Romania. That's why I suggest doing several campaigns among young people, active campaigns not just on the surface. Public policies on vulnerable groups are still missing in Romania, 38 years after the fall of communism".(Romania migrant activating in social field in Canada).

"I would like to make a statement that is based on my own experience. We have not been able to integrate the Roma people since prince Cuza period till now, and there are children who do not have a birth certificate, who do not go to school, who are leaving school, who have all the chances to suffer, because of the environment they grow, to suffer when they'll grow up, themselves, but also those around them. I wonder what a chance we have with refugees. The project that I am doing has no European funding. The parish can't access such funds, from the mayor's office until the present day, we have not received any money, although we have already made 7 requests and the county council has been allocated 10000 lei (around 2000 Euro). If for such a project, maybe unique in the country, the authorities can allocate just 10000 lei then, what we are talking about?!. I do not say categorically "no" to refugees, but we are still unable to do so. Even worse, we don't care to integrate the Roma people, who are only in my village around 1000 and in the nearby town they are a few thousand" (NGO representative from Romania).

"It is needed more training on business skills, on how to make money, on how to support the business, because ultimately it is a social business, given that the funds are limited and the donations / sponsorships are still unstable".(NGO for refugees integration in Romania).

Taken together, these partial reserch results would provide useful insights about who are those dealing with vulnerable groups and what are the demands of those aiming to work

with such communities. Trying to offer a brief map, in terms of *social innovative model* among the interviewed organisation, we can conclude, according to our data that, those active organisations in the social field are mainly: oriented around disseminating a content package to solve common problems (e.g. create an offering to help resolve a social issue) describes the main offering of their organisation), focused to provide training to the individuals that deliver the offering or to the entire personnel of your organisation, but not so focused on mobilising their resources in order to generate income.

Without any doubt, we are confident that our research results may improve knowledge and practice about social venture and updated social innovation models with worthwhile insights for nowadays social marketing. We hope that our research will be prized and useful as it shows first hand data related to the mapping of social ventures at cross-cultural level, as for who are they, what are they doing, what their offer is, what was done and what should be done in the next steps. At the same time we believe that the main findings could be an useful tool not only for new comers in the field of social ventures around Europe, but it can serve to policy makers at in Europe, that should encourage more stakeholders towards social visible support in the area of human trafficking, migration and refugees.

REFERENCES

1. **Alvord, Sahah; Brown, David L; Letts Christine W.** "Social entrepreneurship and societal transformation: An exploratory study". *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 40(2004): 260-283.
2. **Battilana, Julie; Leca, Bernard; Boxenbaum, Eva.** "How actors change institutions: Towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship". *Academy of Management Annals* 3(2009): 65-107.
3. **Dimitrova, Radosveta; Musso Paquale; Polackova Iva Polackova; Stefenel, Delia; Uka Fitim; Zahaj Skerdi; Tavel Peter; Jordanov Venzislav.** "Understanding Factors Affecting Well-Being of Marginalized Populations in Different Cultural Contexts: Ethnic and National Identity of Roma Minority Youth in Europe". In *Developmental Science and Sustainable Development Goals for Children and Youth*, edited by Suman Verma and Petersen, Anne C. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 169-185.
4. **European Commission.** "Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", accessed July, 17, 2019, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC2020&from=en>.
5. **Leadbeater, Charlie.** *The user innovation revolution: how business can unlock the value of customers' ideas*. London: National Consumer Council, 2006.
6. **Mulgan, Geoff; Tucker, Simon; Ali, Rushanara; Sanders, Ben.** *Social Innovation: What it is, why it matters and how it can be accelerated*, Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship 2007, accessed June, 15, 2019, http://eureka.sbs.ox.ac.uk/761/1/Social_Innovation.pdf.
7. **Murray, Robin; Caulier-Grice, Julie; Mulgan, Geoff.** *The Open Book of Social Innovation* London: NESTA, Young Foundation, 2010, accessed June, 19, 2019, <https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf>.
8. **Social Growth on Trafficking and Immigration (SoG-TIM)** accessed June, 15, 2019, <https://sogtim.socialgrowthhub.com/>; <http://ngo.socialgrowthhub.com/>.
9. **Ştefenel Delia; Aicha Anca M.** "Away from my homeland": evaluating loneliness and discrimination among refugees in Germany". In *In Memoriam Gh Pavelescu*, edited by Pavelescu Amalia. (Sibiu : Techno Media, 2018), 390-402.
10. **Ştefenel Delia; Skerletopoulos, Leonidas; Corman, Sorina.** "Addressing Directions for Social Inclusion: a comparative approach of social entrepreneurship in Greece and Romania". In *Political Science, International Relations and Security Studies. International Conference Proceedings*, edited by Scăunaş Stelian, Tabără Vasile and Străuţiu Eugen (Sibiu: ULBS, 2016), 2343 – 7774.
11. **Zafeiropoulou, Fiori; Woods, Adrian.** "Can issues of poverty be addressed through the emergence of relationally embedded social franchises?" In *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability: Business Solution for Poverty Alleviation from around the World*, edited by Halkias Daphne; Thurman Paul (London: Gower Applied Research, 2012), 185-198.
12. **Zafeiropoulou, Fiori.** "Network Embeddedness in Interorganizational Relationships/Alliances: A Case for Domestic and International Franchise". In *Proceedings of the 2006 Doctoral Symposium of Brunel Business School*. London: Brunel University, 2006.
13. **Zafeiropoulou, Fiori.** *The process of the new inter-organizational format of social franchising from a social network theory approach: Institutions, social entrepreneurship profile, innovation and the argument of embeddedness*, PhD Thesis. London: Brunel University, 2013, <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk/handle/2438/8970>.
14. **Zafeiropoulou, Fiori; Koufopoulos, Dimitrios.** "The influence of relational embeddedness on the formation of Social Franchising: An explorative qualitative analyses of four Social Franchises active in the UK from a social network theory perspective". *Journal of Marketing Channels*, 20(2013): 73-89.
15. **Zahra, Shaker A., Gedajlovic, Eric; Neubaum, Donald, O., Shulman, Joel. M.** "A typology of social entrepreneurs: Motives, search processes and ethical challenges". *Journal of Business Venturing*, 24(2009): 519-532.