9

Empowering knowledge and training in higher education to leverage social economy action on societal challenges

Rocío Nogales-Muriel and Marthe Nyssens

Introduction

In the public debate in general, and in the scientific debate in particular, various umbrella concepts are used to cover those initiatives different from the for-profit private sector and the public sector—social economy, solidarity economy, social enterprise—which we will here refer to as the 'SE field'. Around the 2000s, social innovation also began to appear as a novel area of scientific inquiry, which can be considered as complementary to SE-related areas. The SE field is regaining momentum at the EU policy level, with the approval of a European Plan for the Social Economy in December 2021 (European Commission, 2021).

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the role of research and training in higher education to leverage social economy action on societal challenges. How is research on these topics generated and circulated? Who and what are the main actors, sources of funding, and dynamics that support research and education in the SE field? And most importantly, how does this knowledge contribute to the strengthening of social economy ecosystems? The core of our contribution is to analyse how the various SE concepts and recent SE research developed within the various research networks as well as how higher education training initiatives can contribute to the public debate and the development of the SE ecosystem.

We first cast light on the various 'SE notions' and propose to analyse them as relevant analytical resources to enrich the scientific and the public debate. Rather than opposing these concepts to one another, we advocate for a research stance that considers each one of them as a particular 'spotlight' offering a specific analytical potential to shed light on the dynamics of the third sector (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). We follow by briefly describing the landscape of SE research in the past decades and reflecting on the role of research networks to support SE ecosystems. The next section delves into formal training on SE. By looking at the consolidation paths and lessons learned from some pioneering training initiatives, some reflections emerge on the possible contributions that formal training programmes can

Rocío Nogales-Muriel and Marthe Nyssens, *Empowering knowledge and training in higher education to leverage social economy action on societal challenges.* In: *Social Economy Science.* Edited by: Gorgi Krlev, Dominika Wruk, Giulio Pasi, and Marika Bernhard, Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780192868343.003.0009

make to SE ecosystems and society in general. The final section gathers some policy recommendations based on the previous sections.

An increasing interest in third sector research, crystallized around different SE concepts

Since the 1970s, various approaches have shown the existence of a third sector—distinct from the for-profit private sector and the public sector—in our economy: what we call the 'SE field', covering social economy, solidarity economy, and social enterprise. Indeed, although each of these concepts is the subject of specific conceptual debates, they are largely interconnected. The level of acceptance of these approaches has been discussed in different circles. They followed different paths until several circumstances gathered them under similar radars for policy-makers, practitioners and, increasingly, researchers.

Monzón Campos (2016) addresses the question of the evolution of the social economy concept as an object of scientific research at the university level through tracing the genealogy of the term, from its initial appearance in 1830 up until the end of the nineteenth century—when it dies away—and to its subsequent 'revival' in the 1970s. This umbrella concept is still at the heart of the European debate, with the recent approval of the European Social Economy Action Plan. A growing trend of research on social enterprise is observed (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Alegre et al., 2017) and is characterized by efforts to set up a common research agenda (Doherty et al., 2014; Persaud & Bayon, 2019). Other initiatives aim to set up research agendas in connected areas, such as the solidarity economy (Laville, 2016) or social innovation (Moulaert & MacCallum, 2019). These concepts did not appear in a chronological way but have all their own history and roots and remain in usage over the years.

The social economy: values, status, and rules

Although there is no single definition of the social economy, it is almost always presented as encompassing two key aspects. On the one hand, the term is used to describe private, non-capitalist categories of organization, with special status and rules: cooperatives, associations, and mutuals—and, with increasing frequency, foundations. On the other hand, the social economy refers to the principles and values which are supposed to inspire certain modes of operation: independent management, aim of serving the organization's members or the community rather than maximizing profit (hence a low return on capital or/and a pre-distribution of surpluses to suppliers or workers and redistribution to customers, plus joint reserves that cannot be shared), member equality, and a democratic decision-making process. When the social economy was first officially recognized in France, it was defined as being composed of cooperatives, mutuals and those associations whose production activities make it possible to assimilate them to these previous types. So, at the

time, only the associations that were managing 'infrastructures and related services' were included. Subsequently, however, many more associations were included in the social economy, and they became by far the largest component of the social economy in terms of jobs and number of organizations.

The European Commission (EC) began to show an interest in the social economy in the late 1980s. Prior to the 2000s, a unit was dedicated to the social economy within the Directorate General XXIII, that is, the Enterprise Policy, Trade, Tourism and Social Economy Directorate. Today, the privileged interlocutors of social economy actors within the EC remain DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL) and DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW), although other DGs and units also work on this theme. Since the end of the 1980s, European social economy conferences have been organized in various EU member states. Since the one held in Paris in 1989, about twenty major conferences on this subject have been held throughout the EU, with an opening to social enterprise during the most recent years. In December 2015, all member states agreed through the conclusions of the EU Council to promote the social economy as a key driver of economic and social development in Europe. This agreement was a crucial milestone as it recognized the unique role of social economy actors in attaining smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth; creating high-quality employment; and promoting social cohesion, social innovation, local and regional development, and environmental protection.[1] The European Social Economy Action Plan, launched in December 2021, aims to support social economy organizations and social enterprises in scaling up their activities and social impact, innovating, and creating jobs. The plan draws on the unique characteristics of social economy organizations to ensure that the green and digital transitions and strengthening communities and improving social resilience. The plan taps into the social economy's economic and job-creation potential, as well as its contribution to a fair and inclusive recovery and the green and digital transitions.

The solidarity economy: re-embedding economics in society

In very concise terms, the solidarity economy may be defined as referring to 'all economic activities subject to a will to act democratically, in which social relations of solidarity have priority over individual interest or material profit' (Laville, 2006: 253). More precisely, the solidarity economy is not defined in terms of legal status; what characterizes solidarity economy activities is rather their twofold—economic and political—dimension.

At the economic level, the solidarity economy stresses reciprocity and mutual commitment among the people who give birth to the initiative (what French authors refer to as the '*impulsion réciprocitaire*'). Activities are then consolidated through mixing different types of resources: the initial reciprocal resources (e.g. the giving

[1] https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15071-2015-INIT/en/pdf

of voluntary labour) are subsequently replaced by public contributions, linked to redistribution, and by market resources. Due to its insistence on a combination of various economic resources and principles, the solidarity economy approach invites resistance of the growing hegemony of approaches driven by sole market forces.

The political dimension of the solidarity economy, on the other hand, is expressed 'in the construction of public spaces that allow a debate among the stakeholders on the social demands and the purposes being pursued' (Laville, 2006: 253, our translation). Whether this takes the form of protest against or cooperation with the public authorities, the key aspect is that major societal challenges are taken up explicitly by revitalizing democratic debate from within. One major issue, therefore, lies in maintaining autonomous public spaces that are distinct from but complementary to the public spaces instituted and regulated by the public authorities.

On the basis of the complementarities between the 'social economy' and 'solidarity economy' approaches, and since both movements share common roots in the pioneering associationism of the nineteenth century, it appears logical that, more and more frequently, reference should be made to the 'social and solidarity economy' (SSE) and that both notions should be combined rather than opposed. Thus, since the early 2000s, various federations, support structures, educational programmes, and other consultative bodies have deliberately chosen to refer to the 'SSE' field. To name just a few examples, this is the case with the French State Secretariat for the Social and Solidarity Economy, which adopted the term in 2001; with the Regional Chambers of the Social and Solidarity Economy (CRESS—previously Regional Chambers of the Social Economy, or CRES); with the Inter-University Network for the Social and Solidarity Economy (RIUESS); and with the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTFSSE).

Social enterprise

In Europe, the emergence and rise of the concept of social enterprise owes much to the success of social cooperatives, which appeared in Italy in 1991, and to the British government's policy of promoting social enterprise, implemented from 2002 onwards. The social enterprise approach and its analytical potential shed light on certain specific dynamics within social and solidarity economy organizations, as well as beyond the boundaries of the SSE field. The EC adopted such a perspective, to a large extent, with the launch of its 'Social Business Initiative', in October 2011; this initiative aimed at 'building an ecosystem to promote social enterprises at the heart of the social economy and social innovation' (EC, 2011). In the United States, the idea of social enterprise/entrepreneurship covers a wide variety of meanings, associated to different 'schools of thought'. Generally speaking, Anglo-Saxon approaches are divided around two focal points (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010): on the one hand, many insist on commercial activities that serve a social mission ('the earned income school'); on the other hand, others focus on the innovative nature

of initiatives launched by multi-talented social entrepreneurs ('the social innovation school').

In Europe, the very first academic study of social enterprise covering several countries and comparing different types of social enterprise dates back to the late 1990s (Borzaga & Defourny, 2001); it was carried out by the EMES network.[2] The EMES approach derives from extensive dialogue among several disciplines (economics, sociology, political science, and management) as well as among the various national traditions and sensitivities present in the European Union. Moreover, guided by a project that was both theoretical and empirical, it preferred from the outset the identification of various indicators over a concise and elegant definition. These indicators have since 2010 been grouped in three subsets, referring respectively to the economic and entrepreneurial dimension, the social dimension, and the governance-related dimension of social enterprise. Particularly worth underlining is the fact that these indicators were never intended to represent a set of conditions that an organization should meet to qualify as a social enterprise; rather than constituting prescriptive criteria, they describe an 'ideal-typical' social enterprise in Weber's terms, that is, an abstract construction or an analytical tool, analogous to a compass, which helps to locate social enterprises ('stars') or groups of social enterprises ('constellations') relative to one another in the 'galaxy' of social enterprises.

However, the comparative analysis of social enterprise types or models still lacked strongly integrated theoretical foundations and, even more, empirical surveys that would enable researchers to statistically test typologies of social enterprise models. The International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) project (2013–2020), carried out within the EMES network, was designed with a view to bridging these gaps. It aimed to document the diversity of social enterprise models as a way (1) to overcome most problems related to the quest for a unifying and encompassing conceptualization of social enterprise; (2) to try to theoretically and empirically build an international typology of social enterprise models; and, consequently, (3) to pave the way for a better understanding of social enterprise dynamics and ecosystems. Some 230 research partners from 55 countries and all regions of the world were involved the ICSEM research community.

In a first, theoretical stage, four social enterprise models, generated by specific institutional trajectories, were identified: a social-business model, a social-cooperative model, an entrepreneurial nonprofit model and a para-public social enterprise model (Defourny & Nyssens, 2017). The existence of three of these four theoretical models (namely the social-business model, the social-cooperative model, and the entrepreneurial nonprofit model) was strongly supported by empirical evidence: indeed, these three models were found in thirty-nine of the forty-three countries covered by the ICSEM survey. Therefore, the collected data showed that, while social enterprises are influenced by institutional factors at the macro level, they

[2] This EU-funded research project was carried out from 1996 to 1999. It focused on 'the Emergence of Social Enterprise in Europe'—hence the acronym of the French title, 'EMES', which was subsequently retained by the research network that had carried out the project.

stem from all parts of the economy and can be related to different organizational backgrounds—namely, the nonprofit, the cooperative, and the business sectors—which exist in almost all countries (Defourny & Nyssens, 2021). The existence of the parastatal SE model is not confirmed by the identification of a distinct group of enterprises. However, one should not conclude too quickly that the public sector is absent from the field of social enterprise. In fact, it is found within some clearly identified groups, often involved as a partner in the creation of social enterprises—in particular social-integration enterprises. It is also possible that local researchers, considering a priori social enterprises as inherently private initiatives, did not consider public sector initiatives as potential social enterprises.

Social innovation

Historically, social innovation (see *inter alia* the pioneering work of Chambon et al., 1982) emerged as a specific field before the social economy and social enterprise concepts did. At EU political level, the report from the Bureau of European Policy Advisors (BEPA, 2010) constituted a major milestone in the reflection on social innovation. According to BEPA (2010), social innovations are new ideas (products, services, and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other words, they are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance society's capacity to act. The EC subsequently launched several initiatives on this subject: the Social Innovation Europe initiative, which aimed at the development of networks and the exchange of good practices; the publication of a *Guide to Social Innovation* (EC, 2013); and the financing of social innovation through structural funds and research programmes.

Although, within these initiatives, social innovation is far from being limited to the SE field, this type of enterprise is nonetheless highlighted as a central actor in social innovation. For example, the above-mentioned Social Business Initiative aims at 'creating a favorable climate for social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and innovation'.[3] In the field of social enterprise, the 'social innovation' school of thought (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010) specifically puts the emphasis on the profile and behaviour of innovative social entrepreneurs.

The SSE is also increasingly explicitly associated with the dynamics of social innovation, which is a novelty (Bouchard & Levesque, 2017). Indeed, while the social economy has been innovative since the nineteenth century, both organizationally and institutionally and in terms of the purposes it serves, the adoption of social innovation as an unavoidable reference in this field is relatively recent (Klein et al., 2014; Lévesque 2007, 2013; Moulaert et al., 2013; Nogales-Muriel, 2023).

Analysing these debates, several authors (Laville, 2014; Nyssens, 2015; Bouchard & Levesque, 2017) propose to distinguish between a 'weak' and a 'strong' conception

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/social_business/index_en.htm

of social innovation. In the weak conception of social innovation, market actors seem to define the landscape; social enterprises are characterized by the pursuit of measurable social impacts and the use of managerial methods. For some authors, the social dimension takes its place alongside financial return and risk without challenging the rules of the capitalist system. In this weak conception, the present wave of social entrepreneurship and social innovation might partly act as a process of hierarchization and selection of social challenges according to their amenability to being treated in an entrepreneurial and commercial mode as well as that of a public–private social finance scheme.

Adopting a strong conception of social innovation means not only recognizing that social innovation and SE initiatives produce social impacts by providing goods and services to meet unsatisfied needs, but also acknowledging their institutional dimension, that is, their role in the development and implementation of norms and regulations, both at the level of the organization and beyond. These norms and regulations shape the fundamental equilibrium within our societies, in particular the respective places of the market, the state, and civil society.

Facing these conceptual debates, different positions can be adopted. Some could argue that one concept, with a precise definition and clear boundaries, should emerge. Various tentative definitions have been put forward, but they have often increased the feeling of confusion among researchers, observers, or newcomers in the 'SE field'. Indeed, the lack of a shared understanding and definition of SE is today acknowledged by most researchers, and it even seems reasonable to speak of the 'impossibility of reaching a unified SE definition'. Therefore, there is a fine line between allowing room for diversity and complete fragmentation. This plurality in the body of knowledge reflects the inherent diversity of the SE field itself. This diversity makes academic systematization challenging but necessary. It calls for a more conscious and engaged epistemological stance on the part of researchers after years of research have opened the door to an improved understanding of increasingly complex dynamics and phenomena. Rather than choosing the best concept and the best definition, past and current research allows the development of strong analytical foundations to each of these concepts, allowing space for debate and providing analytical tools to shed light on the complex and multidimensional dynamics of the third sector.

The strong development of SE research: actors and funding

A plurality of actors for a variety of complementary research

A large array of institutional and individual agents are involved in different types of SE research as we show in Figure 9.1.

Universities (and associated centres) are usually involved in research that can be considered as fundamental. Their researchers are concerned with core questions that

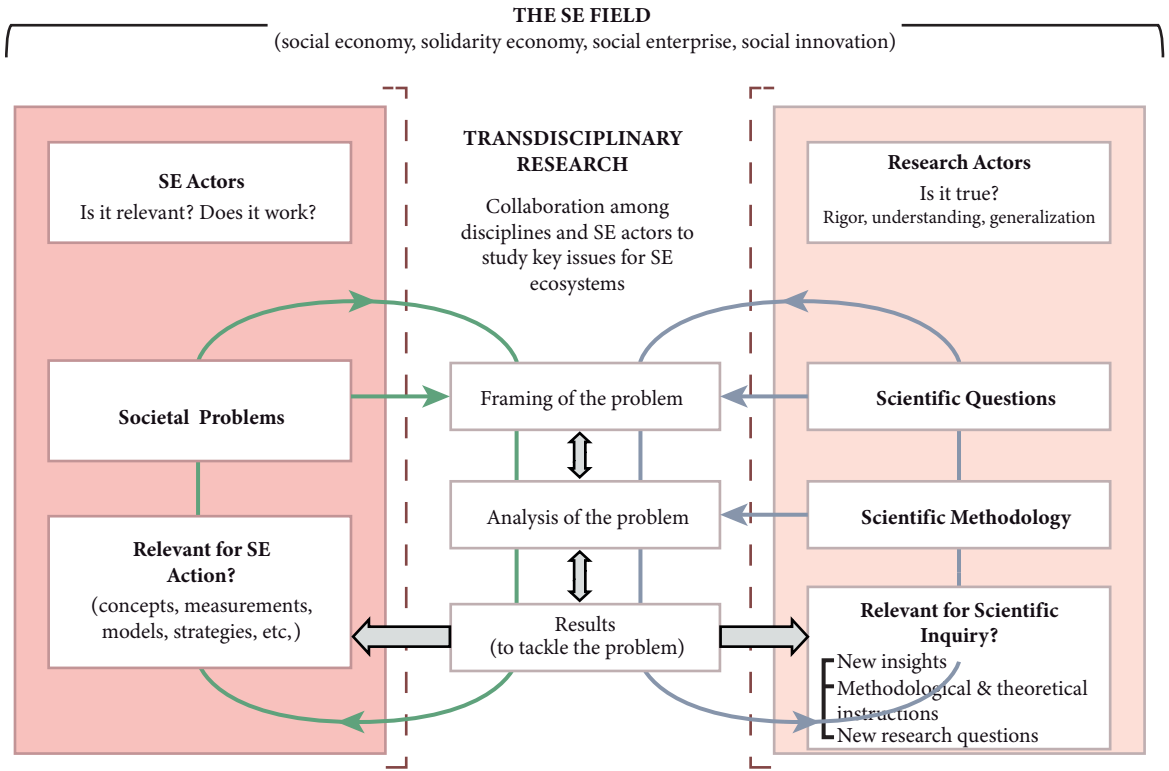

Figure 9.1 Researching the SE field to leverage social economy action on societal challenges

Source: Based on Lang et al. (2012)

point to mechanisms at play within the various fields and models explaining these mechanisms. Indeed, they undertake research primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundation of phenomena and observable facts. They attempt to explain the mechanisms underlying the dynamics of the SE fields over time. They can also conduct more applied research involving undertaking original investigation in order to acquire new knowledge, although it is directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective. The focus is, in this case, on meeting societal demands through the practical use of research and problem solving.

Transdisciplinary research is increasingly considered as a useful approach for codifying weakly theorized concepts, such as has been the case with social economy and related notions mentioned here. There is a growing trend of this kind of research, not only directed at practical issues but also at building new knowledge jointly with social actors. It includes not only academics from different disciplines, but also practitioners and their knowledge and expertise from real-life practice. Knowledge is co-produced through the participation of both scientific and practice-based actors in the research process, promoting both scientific rigour and the practical usability of the results.

In this context, traditional top-down views about knowledge production are being complemented by new trends in horizontal knowledge construction between academia and practitioners' worlds.

The DNA of research led by universities is the systematization of work around central research questions and the mobilization of analytical frameworks to tackle said questions and the scrutiny and criticism that these processes and results may undergo on the part of the whole scientific community, including formal peer review processes at play within the system.

Knowledge mobilization (considered as 'collaborative entanglement': Bennet & Bennett, 2008) between different agents of the ecosystem has paved the way for formal trainings but also for other forms of activities, such as collaborative research, service-learning opportunities, joint problem solving, collective advocacy, resource-sharing structures, seminars and colloquia, and so on. Traditionally, four broad categories of community–campus collaboration can be identified (Nichols et al., 2013: 27):

1. relationships between individual faculty members and community organizations which are not supported by institutional structures;
2. community–campus collaboration supported by centres or institutes;
3. institutional structures organized within and across academic settings to systematically engage community partners in research; and
4. multi-institutional community-based research partnerships operating regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Professional consultants, ranging from specialized individuals to large consulting firms, constitute another category of agents conducting research. They have been increasingly involved in the SE field and the type of investigation they conduct is

mostly of an applied nature. However, some of their interventions would not strictly qualify as research. A good guide to what does and what does not constitute a research and experimental development (R&D) activity determines whether the activity is novel, creative, uncertain in its outcome, systematic, and transferable and/or reproducible. These five elements distinguish between what is referred to as contract research or consultancy activity (OECD, 2015).

Think tanks are a specific label of consultancy organization connected to the idea of advocacy based on research. They tend to be active in various fields of SE activity (care, climate change, labour, and so on) and nurture valuable connections with agents from the SE ecosystem.

In the past decades university consulting has also been consolidated in the social sciences, creating an interesting hybrid model for research, with repercussions that are worth taking into account (Perkmann & Walsh, 2008). For instance, Jensen et al. (2010) show how, while consultancy organizations benefit from government-sponsored research through the faculty they hire as consultants, university research projects may indirectly benefit from the consultants' diverse experience and approaches to problem solving. It could be argued that, as Rentocchini et al. (2014) have pointed out, in the SE research field academic consulting is well aligned with academic research agendas, which increases the complementarity between academic research and academic consulting. This could also explain the difficulty to conceive of research on SE that would not have implications (even in the long term) for policy or practice. For instance, researchers are exposed to new contexts of research application and to areas of inquiry relevant for policy and practice 'that can spur insightful ideas for research' (Rentocchini et al., 2014: 72).

Well-established SE organizations, representative bodies, and advocacy organizations also provide valuable sources of data and analysis, albeit usually with sectorial and/or geographic limitations. Some groups of cooperatives, mutuals, and other legal forms have enough capacity to include R&D departments or at least to undertake research systematization efforts. A well-known illustration would be the case of Mondragon, whose industrial group supports research and training through the Mondragon University. Federations and international sectorial bodies also contribute relevant data, analysis, and networking opportunities. An example is provided by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), which through its Committee on Cooperative Research aims to bridge academic research and the cooperative world.

Regarding the nature of the issue to be studied, understanding what kind of research is being conducted by each type of actor and what kind of knowledge they produce will help us appreciate to which area of the SE ecosystem the research effort will eventually contribute. They constitute diverse and complementary sources of knowledge to be tapped but their goals, processes, and timeframes need to be clarified *ex ante*. Of course, frontiers between these different types or research are sometimes blurred and these categories proposed here should be considered as ideal-types in the Weberian sense.

In addition to the variety of actors, it is worth noting the wealth of knowledge on SE that exists at different geographic levels: indeed, research initiatives with national

and local research scopes co-exist with international research. Research developed by international consortiums has the advantage of gathering researchers from different traditions and with various backgrounds, thus strengthening the comparative perspective, while research focused on particular geographical contexts offers insights on specific developmental trends and factors.

The role of research networks

Research networks and communities have always been a key channel to nurture knowledge. The objectives of sustained collaboration articulation through scientific networks are multiple:

1. To empower the SE research community through the integration of established and emerging researchers and scholars in likeminded and horizontal communities.
2. To ensure the access to a national (if available) and/or international network to early-career researchers, including PhD candidates. In particular, the doctoral path has been recognized as a particularly harsh, lonely, and competitive journey, referred to as a 'valley of sh!t'.[4] Joining the networks provides a unique opportunity to early-stage researchers to improve their academic and social skills while acting as nurturing environments for joint initiatives (seminars and conferences, training schools, publication outlets, opportunities for study visits and co-writing, and so on). Through these support networks future generations of researchers build a sense of community, find inspiring role models, and come up with coping strategies to support the endeavour of pursuing an academic career.
3. To connect different research traditions, epistemologies, and practices, creating a supportive environment for innovative research collaborations, in many cases incorporating multi-disciplinary approaches. Indeed, many SE researchers are aware of the fragmentation in SE research and they engage in networking as a way to overcome such fragmentation as well as isolation. While doing so, they are helping not only to connect scientific communities and traditions but ultimately to consolidate SE as a research field via research communities.
4. To contribute to research agendas at various geographical levels. Indeed, networks function as mutual learning environments where concrete research agendas may emerge from researchers themselves. They could also be channels to foster dialogue with practice and policy stakeholders (Barco Serrano and Nogales-Muriel, 2020). In this sense, it could be argued that international research projects constitute a unique way of networking and nurturing the

[4] Beth Patmore, lecture delivered at the 7th EMES International Training School building on the work of The Thesis Whisperer (https://thesiswhisperer.com).

potential of future collaborations, leading to more solid input into research agendas as well as into policy and practice domains.

5. Networks in general tend to play an institutionalization role within the SE field, which includes increasing the field-level receptivity of organizational practices that are less well known among citizens; they also help consolidate the legitimization of plural field-level audiences (Huybrecths & Haugh, 2018).

Without aiming to be exhaustive, Table 9.1 summarizes some of the main networks and communities devoted to SE research.

As we have seen, the emergence and strengthening of research communities both through stable networks at all geographic levels and through scientific events and working and affinity groups constitutes a driver for SE ecosystems. The latter gather semi-stable and informal communities of SE researchers and scholars with a lot of potential for impacting the field around them. The large number of emerging and consolidated networks included in Table 9.1 represents a positive trend for the field even if additional challenges may arise from such evolution.

Table 9.1 Examples of research networks and communities around SE

	International	World regions	National
Scientific networks	• Arnova • EMES International Research Network • ISTR, International Society for Third Sector Research	• ANSES, African Network of Social Entrepreneurship Scholars (South Africa) • RILESS, Network of Latin American Researchers on Social and Solidarity Economy (Latin America)	• CIRIEC national chapters in Austria, Belgium, France, Portugal, and Spain • FinSERN(Finland) • IRIS (Italy) • KASES, Korean Association for Social Economy Studies (Korea) • RIUESS, Réseau Inter-universitaire de l'Economie Sociale et Solidaire (France) • SERNOC, Social Entrepreneurship Research Network for the Nordic Countries (Baltic countries)
Networks linking scientific and practice communities	• CIRIEC International • ICA Network	• ICA regional research committees (e.g. the European Board for Cooperative Research)	
Around scientific conferences	• EGOS • ISIRC		

The relevance of research for SE ecosystems

The contribution of research to the recognition and visibility of SE

Some thirty years after the first wave of research on SE in Europe, research on social enterprise and the SSE has recently been recognized as crucial for recognition and visibility by agents of the ecosystem at all levels (EC, 2020a; EESC, 2016). Moreover, research has been explicitly identified in strategic policy documents, such as the Social Business Initiative (EC, 2011) or the recent Social Economy Plan (EC, 2021), and its relevance for practice and policy-making has been confirmed repeatedly.[5]

SE mappings carried out at the EU level contributed to increasing the visibility of the SE ecosystem in this region. The study entitled 'The Social Economy in the European Union' that has been carried out by the EESC since 2008, updated in 2012 and 2016, recognizes the importance of research and training (among other actions) to structure SE in Europe (EESC, 2016). In addition to the first mapping on social enterprise, which had been published in 2014, in January 2020 the EC issued a completely updated version of the Mapping of Social Enterprise Ecosystems, covering twenty-eight member states and seven neighbour countries. The Synthesis Report of this updated mapping explicitly states that, notwithstanding its limitations, 'research has contributed to enhancing the visibility of social enterprises and related phenomena as well as to raising the awareness of citizens and policy-makers about the relevance of such themes for society' (EC, 2020a: 95).

In the context of measuring the contribution of SE to the economies of the EU Member States, national statistical offices could become key allies of academic researchers and representative umbrella organizations in estimating not only the weight of SE but also their evolution over time and in predicting trends for such evolution. Statistical knowledge of SSE was non-existent in most countries in the early 1990s. The publication, in the final years of the twentieth century, of the first data from the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project initiated by the Johns Hopkins University in the United States was the first milestone. Some countries have a satellite account focused on associations as in Belgium and Portugal, more recently. Despite their recent improvement, statistical data on the social economy often remain poor, scattered, and inconsistent, without temporal follow-up and mostly without international comparability. We are therefore still at the experimentation or prototype stage in this field and not at the stage of producing series under the responsibility of national statistical institutes, even if debates around SE satellites accounts and more generally regarding statistics on SE organizations remain important (Enjolras et al., 2018; UNRISD, 2019).

The contribution of research to the analysis of SE diversity

If we want to advance knowledge and to develop evidence-based policies able to foster the development of a sustainable SE ecosystem, there is a need to acknowledge

[5] In addition to the policy documents mentioned in the text, the Experts' Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES) issued a Call for Action in 2016 entitled 'Social Enterprises and the Social Economy Going Forward' that also mentioned this aspect. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/24501/attachments/2/translations/en/renditions/native

the huge diversity of SE models in different industries which are key for the development of sustainable societies; and in order to achieve such a goal, it is imperative to link research efforts to the vast diversity of empirical developments in the SE field. This is not to say that field realities have not been carefully observed or analysed to date. On the contrary, a great deal of existing empirical work is extensively used in case study-based teaching. But case studies do not bring much evidence about the wide spectrum of SE families, categories, and models: they are precisely selected to illustrate a specific model or issue in a given context and they do not capture the extensive reality of the field.

There is, therefore, a challenge in achieving a full understanding of the diversity of SE models emerging across Europe and globally, their conditions of emergence and development, and their contribution to the general interest—all of which is necessary to improve our understanding of their contribution to society and of their potential to address major contemporary societal challenges. In this quest for knowledge that would be relevant at the academic, practice, and policy levels, four central questions emerge:

- What are the SE conceptions and models in which SE practices and policies are embedded in each national/regional context?
- What are the innovative contributions of SE conceptions and models in answering new social and ecological needs (health and social care, energy and transport, food supply chains, finance, circular economy, culture, and so on) that are central to the development of more sustainable societies?
- What institutional development (public policies, norms, legal forms, intersectoral partnerships, and so on) can support the scaling up and sustainability of these different SE models?
- What is the potential role of social enterprise in the development of norms and regulations at the level of the system, through their 'institutional work'?

An in-depth understanding of the different models of social enterprise makes it possible to identify future challenges that are anything but trivial. One can understand that the trajectories observed across Western and Eastern Europe can prove quite different, depending on whether the historical contexts have been marked by shrinking or resisting welfare states in the past four or five decades. This diversity is largely highlighted by the results of the ICSEM project and by the rich national contributions collected in two collective works dedicated respectively to Central and Eastern Europe (Defourny & Nyssens, 2021a) and to Western Europe (Defourny & Nyssens, 2021b).

The contribution of research to the policy debate

SE research has shown its capacity to documenting and explaining the functioning of viable collective alternatives aimed at tackling complex social challenges, thus opening the door to designing policy (and other) measures to support them. The urgency of these challenges together with the personal commitment of new

generations of researchers to undertake fair and sustainable transitions may explain the intensively applied nature of some of the SE research conducted.

Identifying the synergies between policy-making and research implies both looking at what has been done in the past, and assessing present conditions for collaboration. Two decades of intensive exchanges and collaborations between SE representatives, public servants and policy-makers, and researchers and scholars has paved the way for focused action. If 'research is identified as a key factor for the institutionalization (recognition) of social enterprises, particularly in CEE countries' (EC, 2020a: 95), the focus should now be on learning how this policy–research interaction works (from a critical perspective) and developing actions to support it. The challenge is to better connect researchers and SE stakeholders to enhance shared understanding, with a view to influencing and informing in turn the development of new social, labour, and economic policies and practice interventions that have a proven capacity to foster SE development and thereby contribute to the development of sustainable societies.

The dichotomy between fundamental and applied research could be overcome by adopting the epistemological stance of 'transdisciplinary research' by redefining the contribution of different stakeholders as sources of knowledge. In such perspective, the various agents of SE ecosystems can consider research as an empowering asset, inherent in the ecosystem, sharing the goal of developing methods, tools, and processes to systematize and make that knowledge as available as possible. Notwithstanding power issues inherent in information creation and management, the familiarization of non-academic actors to processes that enhance and support the creation of knowledge about their ecosystem could contribute to rendering created sectorial borders less strict. In such a perspective, different actors belonging to the SE ecosystems could have a role in the production of knowledge strategies such as the incorporation of practice systematization, and documentation in social enterprises could be an example of this empowerment process towards transformative research.

Europe has a proven track record of putting research to the service of consolidation of the SE ecosystem.

Education and training on SE for the next generations

Developing specialized training on SE

As mentioned in the study 'Recent Evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union' (EESC, 2016), creating a European Higher Education Area specializing in SE constitutes a current challenge that is worth addressing.

SE education and training have existed for a long time in countries with a long tradition of SE practice, and are rapidly developing in countries where the phenomenon is rather new (EC, 2020a). The array of forms that the education and training offer may take is large; it includes initial and continuing training, undergraduate and graduate courses and modules, master's and PhD programmes, MOOCs from Higher

Education Institutions (HEI) as well as training organized by federations of SE enterprises, think tanks, and international organizations, such as the ILO Academy. A promising format, with a long-standing tradition in some Latin American and Mediterranean countries, is the popular university. A recently revamped concept, popular universities provide lifelong learning opportunities across professional (and personal) stages of citizens' lives, without limitations imposed by formal access requirements. These institutions are locally rooted; they collaborate closely with local authorities and receive funding through local bodies, SE organizations, and low participant fees; they target adults but also specific social groups, such as youngsters and women; and they rely on the volunteer work of instructors and administrators (Stromquist & Lozano, 2018).

The low level of inclusion of SE in research agendas until the 2000s, combined with the high relevance of the topic to policy-makers and practitioners, prompted the development of a practice that has become a common trait of pioneering SE programmes developed within HEI before the 2000s: the close contact and steady collaboration with actors of the SE ecosystems. This is confirmed in most of the secondary data sources consulted and corroborated by the synthetic ad hoc survey of MA programs carried out in the context of this chapter in September 2020.

Some illustrations of these categories include: including practitioners as trainers into modules or lectures of training programmes; devoting volunteer or pro-bono time in social enterprises; and having students complete in-placement assignments, final projects, or theses within the organizations and, more recently, through service learning programmes—a method which combines previous features. This is how programmes such as Euricse's Master's Degree in Management of Social Enterprises (Master GIS)[6] or Harvard Business School's Social Enterprise Initiative (SEI)[7] began, respectively in 1995 in Italy and in 1993 in the US.

This close connection with practitioners, which, as mentioned above, was a common traits of pioneering SE programmes, remains today an important feature of most training programmes.

Learning from experience: pioneering MA programmes in Europe

Master (MA) programmes on SE organized by HEI across Europe have been developing for the past two decades mainly led by economics and management faculties and participation of political studies and sociology. They slowly constitute an interesting addition for graduating students seeking a different career path. They also attract professionals already involved in the SE ecosystem. These programmes offer also a promising avenue to encourage early-career researchers to stay in academia as instructors and researchers.

[6] https://www.euricse.eu/training/master-programme-in-management-of-social-enterprises/
[7] https://www.hbs.edu/socialenterprise

Our exploratory and limited overview based on secondary data review and an ad hoc exploratory survey points to the emergence of critical tensions after decades of experience and to the need to reach trade-offs to balance different interests. For instance, some MA programmes thrive on attracting international audiences, adopting a comparative perspective and teaching some courses in English, while facing the rootedness of SE practice and experience. While some programmes may attract internal support from their departments and institutions, this support may change over time or become irrelevant if not enough students are attracted.

Given the institutional relevance of MA programmes and the positive impact they have on the potential of motivated citizens (who, after completing such programmes, become active in the field, contributing to the development of SE ecosystems), we conducted an exploratory exercise based on a limited and exploratory sample of fourteen official master's programs in Europe. Such survey was useful to identify some relevant issues; however, we must emphasize the non-representative nature of the selected sample. Moreover, it has to be stressed that the distribution of MA programmes on SE across Europe is highly uneven, with some countries offering dozens of them (France has more than forty) and others having only a very limited offer in this regard (Spain, for example, has only two official university master's programmes on SE). Based on a sample of fourteen programmes across Europe, we advance some reflections upon some characteristics that appear promising in terms of contributing to the future of SE (see Appendix for a listing of the programmes included in this chapter).

Initial sparks, key initiators, evolution, and sustainability over time

The historical evolution of the fourteen programmes reviewed point to a complex institutional journey, which required, for the programmes to be established, the mobilization of a critical mass of influential individuals and collectives, both within the university and outside it. Opportunity windows linked to internal and external factors may emerge when agendas to stimulate university-level education on SE studies converge. In some cases, the opportunity window emerged with the possibility to develop a specialization track within a broader entrepreneurship programme. A decisive factor is usually the participation of a high-ranked university administrator in an event linked to the SE field (conference, seminar, workshop, and so on), which led him to realize that SE was not just a 'fashionable topic'. This example bears testimony to the high impact potential of awareness-raising and networking initiatives in countries with emerging SE communities. Almost all of the cases reviewed began with the alignment of a critical vision, embedded in a first-hand experience, either with the local SE reality or with international research networks supporting this initial spark.

The story of these official programmes confirms the existence of an 'intrapreneurial process' involving the developmental stages described by Austin and Rangan (2019): giving birth, starting an experiment, gaining acceptability, being embraced, and achieving irreversibility. All the stages are characterized by a

collective dimension worth highlighting, usually under the leadership of a driven leader or small group of leaders. The leader(s) of the initiative tend(s) to be either an individual with a well-established position in the HEI (although there are exceptions) and s/he draws on the field network developed over years of research, or a group of promoters. In the latter case, the core group of initiators usually brings together academics and practitioners (including umbrella organization representatives) who have identified the need for such a training programme in their immediate context. As already mentioned, interaction with and support from practitioners is a common trait among the surveyed programmes.

Analysis of the development path of the reviewed programmes shows that the initial reluctance of departments and colleagues can be gradually overcome by demonstrating the quality of the programme, by securing the commitment of relevant faculty members, by recruiting a growing number of students, and by documenting connections with the ecosystem, including for the recruitment of students. The support from the field in the form of funding for chairs or jointly organized events is central for building the case for a teaching programme in this area.

As for threats and opportunities for the viability of the programmes, several elements are mentioned. Regarding threats, the issue of decreasing enrolment in some MA programmes poses a key issue for their sustainability. Poor communication and lack of promotional skills of the staff involved were identified as an internal weakness to be tackled as well. Some constructive insights proposed to address the shortage of students enrolled include, first, the possibility of accepting students with no first degree on the topic but who have extensive SE experience through the Validation of Professional Experience (VAE) programme. Second, the option of combining initial and continuing education (for recent bachelor's graduates and professionals) is proposed as a strength, as it allows the emergence of synergies between young and older people. However, despite the real-life context that the mixing of initial and continuing education offers, it is rarely done and it usually remains contested within universities. Third, increasing the marketing and communication capacity of the staff is considered as a positive strategy to attract new students. Lastly, the promotion of other learning formats, more accessible and with a horizontal governance, such as popular universities, was also mentioned. A trend also highlighted by respondents was the fact that traditional business schools at the international level have incorporated in their programmes courses and seminars on SE and sustainability, thus expanding the number of options available to students interested in SE topics.

Programme content

Most programmes reviewed see themselves as not being limited to a single discipline—or, in other words, as being interdisciplinary. In addition to the institutional barriers to the setting up of this kind of programme, the combination of disciplines included in the course curriculum requires to cut across disciplines and departments. Combining courses on economics, ethics, management, sociology, and

political science, for example, demands flexibility on the part of trainers so as to identify and develop common teaching areas around SE. Given the specialized nature of these programmes, there seems to be an underlining assumption that a trade-off between the 'core business' (SE) and openness to related themes (sustainability, social impact, social innovation, co-production, and partnerships, philanthropy, CSR, and so on) has to be stricken.

For a programme to be innovative in the European landscape of MA programmes, the connection to research is increasingly crucial. In this sense, a willingness, on the part of the core teaching staff, to translate research expertise into dedicated teaching has to be present from the beginning.

The understanding, among the initiators and trainers of these courses, is that people who enrol in these programmes have a certain awareness level of the challenges facing our societies and of some of the strategies that are emerging to build collective responses to such challenges. Through these programmes, they usually go through a personal journey that includes a reflective and a prospective dimension: they are invited to reflect and act upon the current economic system, its dead-ends, current experiments, and the conditions for a change of scale. This personal journey is supported through an emphasis on group work (in some cases including for the final thesis, which can be completed as a consultancy-based group exercise) combined with individual work. Case studies and study visits are also included in most programmes, allowing for a collective analysis of key challenges and the formulation of proposals for innovative solutions to respond to identified needs. Learning-by-doing methodologies are included as a way of facilitating the assimilation of theoretical contents and the application of hand-in, practical experience, aimed at finding solutions infused by collective intelligence.

Career development prospects

A major advantage of programmes of this kind is that they nurture direct contacts and exchanges with SE agents from the beginning. Creating one's own network through mandatory internships, completing consultancy-type projects based on learn-by-doing methods and sometimes even acquiring hands-on experience in launching social enterprises through incubation programmes constitute unique eye-opening opportunities for the students. This is enriching not only in pedagogical terms but also, more pragmatically, in professional career terms. Students usually graduate from the programme with a thorough preparation to cover managerial positions in the SE ecosystem within SE federations and representative bodies and public and private programmes supporting SE; to collaborate with various agents as external consultants; and/or to launch new social enterprises. A pressing external challenge, however, has to do with the level of wages in SE organizations, and with the fact that only recently has SE begun to be considered as something else than a reduced niche.

International dimension

The participation of an international student body is considered a plus for all the programmes, although some hindering factors have been identified (part-time schedule for those who have limited financial means and cannot work in the host country; lack of funding; visa problems; and so on). Several attempts at creating cross-country master's exist, but their concrete implementation generally appears complex, due mostly to administrative reasons. Several strategies have been developed in response to this limitation: organizing a programme among several HEIs from the same country with an international dimension (e.g. Belgium); completing a double degree among countries (e.g. the University of Valencia allows a combination with certification from the University of Bologna, and vice versa, while others have double and triple certifications with universities in other countries); organizing in-depth hands-on immersion programmes in other countries, with different SE ecosystems (for example, the Danish Master in Social Enterprise Management organizes a study trip to the UK). A promising strategy was developed in Tallinn University through the Estonian 'e-residency system', which offers international participants in the SEMA the possibility to continue using the advanced digital environment available during their training even after completing the degree and returning to their home countries.

The issue of language is of paramount importance for this kind of training; it is also a difficult balance to strike. On the one hand, teaching in English allows for students to have a wider offer in terms of materials and even job placement and mobility globally. However, on the other hand, teaching in local languages enables closer connections with the local SE ecosystem, thus strengthening the impact of the programmes in their own context. A compromise can be found by teaching specific courses in English or encouraging students to participate in international exchanges, ideally organized by the programme itself (seminars, study visits, international examples, and so on).

The contribution of MA programmes to SE ecosystems

After decades of experience, the networking power of these programmes is not to be underestimated. Indeed, newcomers to the SE field through these programmes are integrated into international, national, and local networks that connect social enterprises, the institutions that support them, current students, alumni (many of whom occupy prominent positions within the social economy), and academic researchers. Ultimately, these programs are realizing what a virtuous circle supporting an engaged community around a specific training like this could be.

More specifically, one can distinguish three kinds of contribution that training programmes like the ones reviewed here make to SE ecosystems and their agents: field-related contributions, academia-related contributions, and contributions to the overall recognition of SE ecosystems.

Regarding field-related contributions, MA programmes have proven to enhance the competences of graduates as future SE professionals while allowing social enterprises to improve their self-reflectivity skills. Indeed, knowledge gaps have been recognized as one of the motivations behind the launching of SE training initiatives across Europe (EC, 2020a). Most MA programmes encourage a new entrepreneurial approach to social transformation that overcomes the divide between business competencies, on the one hand, and social competencies, on the other hand, and which focuses on essentially hybrid-model organizations, demanding new skills to succeed. Let us note that the role played by focused assignments and in-place internships that strengthen some of the entrepreneurial functions of the organization while simultaneously providing real-life learning settings to students.

The second way in which the training programmes can consolidate SE ecosystems relates to the possibilities for academic careers they open, through providing positions within the academia to early-career researchers willing to follow a professional path that combines teaching, research, and testing of theoretical findings on the ground.

The last—and possibly most elusive—area of contribution is related to the gaining of in-depth knowledge and recognition of the SE field as a relevant area of academic activity, due to its close relation to the sustainability of societies. SE training programmes point in many cases to questions lying at the core of the profound questioning that HEIs are undergoing in our societies. HEIs indeed became 'crystallized' as institutions with a specific notion of progress at a specific historical moment and with strong ties to their (local) communities, but they are now facing a society fraught with seemingly contradictory notions—globalization versus decarbonization; hyperconnectivity versus social isolation; and so on—or with emerging phenomena (such as the 'working poor') that question their very essence and contribution to societies. In this changing context, it is worth emphasizing the role of power internally and the resistance to change of institutions like universities. Indeed, some academic literature and policy documents dealing with the role of HEIs in studying, teaching, and sparking social transformation tend to overlook crucial issues of power within HEIs' wider institutional settings. The issue of what benefits HEIs may generate from interactions with non-academic stakeholders needs to be taken into account when recommending ways to support SE (Benneworth & Cunha, 2015).

Main lesson for the future: empowering knowledge as a lever for SE ecosystems

The role of HEIs—and particularly of universities—in our societies is currently undergoing a profound transformation (Santos, 2017; Vogt & Weber, 2020). As knowledge-based institutions, HEIs seem to be ideally placed in a context where information and knowledge (and their management) constitute the central asset for

societies (Benneworth & Cunha, 2015). HEIs, *qua* centres of knowledge, expertise, and learning, represent a wealth of possibilities for the development of territories and populations. However, traditional strategies for supporting the potential of HEIs to contribute to innovation 'do not maximize the social, environmental and economic impact of university research that is not aimed at commercial potential' (Nichols et al., 2013: 27). Recent proposals to help societies harness the full potential of HEIs include the application of the integrative framework of 'anchor models' or 'whole-institution approach' to this kind of institution (McNeill & Boorman, 2020; Mehling & Kolleck, 2019). As large organizations rooted in a given place, with a purpose tightly connected to that place and requiring a long-term commitment to it, HEIs are 'anchor institutions' that could play a crucial role in 'anchor collaboratives' (McNeill & Boorman, 2020). In this context, the infrastructure, relationships, and operational priorities of HEIs require, therefore, a long-term commitment to that place (Smallbone et al., 2015). As such, HEIs are called to play a unique role in the alignment of collective resources, the facilitation of knowledge, and the empowerment of the next generations of citizens. Through locally based social innovation, HEIs could contribute to tackling global challenges through diverse and locally rooted responses—including SE.

Climate change is most likely the most important challenge, directly affecting everything else; consequently, the 'regional transition paths towards sustainability' (RTPS) approach provides an interesting approach when applied to HEIs. However, HEIs' impact is dependent both on highly engaged 'frontrunners', holding key positions within the institutions, who support change and are able to engage wider university management leadership (Radinger-Peer & Pflitsch, 2017). An interesting question for future research emerges: what are the consequences of combining the anchor model and the RTPS approach in relation to HEIs? The development of a transdisciplinary research type is certainly a privileged way to foster the HEI contribution to the development of sustainable ecosystems.

From a SE ecosystem perspective, the key question of connecting what we *already* know about SE and how can knowledge be developed within SE ecosystems remains. In this perspective, we can formulate some concrete recommendations focused on supporting research activity and training to foster the SE ecosystem.

Regarding research, SE should consolidate as an academic field in itself, drawing from various disciplines and allowing for critical thinking and complementary epistemologies to emerge. The lack of scientific legitimacy of SE studies within academic institutions has resulted in the voices of SE scholars still remaining poorly heard in mainstream research settings such as scientific committees and private and public research funding agencies. In particular, there is an urgent need to empower the next generation of SE researchers. This new breed of scholars shows traits of 'engaged scholarship' (Campbell & Lassiter, 2010) and their lack of legitimacy are making their survival difficult, thus endangering an important part of the SE ecosystem.

Unfortunately, the presence of SE or even hybrid organizational models in research agendas remains insufficient. Therefore, reinforcing the presence of SE-related topics across EU and nationally funded research would contribute to increased fundamental knowledge of SE, improved evidence-based policy supporting SE, and, ultimately, strengthen the consolidation of SE as an academic field with vibrant research communities.

However, not only is an increase in the amount of research conducted required but a new 'outside-the-box' transdisciplinary research is also needed to address current societal, economic, and environmental challenges. Encouraging and funding the setup of new transdisciplinary research using novel methods and combining SE ecosystem agents is encouraged. Likewise, stimulating the creation of stakeholder platforms that enable the access and participation of communities in research processes would add to this innovation. In this context, TIESS (Innovative Territories in Social and Solidarity Economy; in French 'Territoires innovants en économie sociale et solidaire'), in Québec, Canada, provides a unique and interesting example. Conceived as a social economy transfer organization, TIESS fosters co-construction of knowledge by practitioners and researchers, mainly through research partnerships. The funding for this connection between stakeholders and university researchers comes primarily from public authorities, mainly the Canadian Science Policy Centre.[8]

Despite R&D's potentially significant benefit to the public good and contribution to innovation initiatives in general, it is undergoing intensive transformation due to globalization processes and a variety of funding and performance arrangements. R&D activity requires long-term, patient financing. In this context, in addition to sustaining public budgets for SE research, conducting a thorough study on the sources of finance for SE research, their evolution, and future trends, would unleash the power of varied funding sources that could support SE ecosystems. For instance, when it comes to philanthropic support, the example of the Research Forum of the European Foundation Centre (EFC) or the work conducted by the Expert Group on 'Foundations, Venture Philanthropy and Social Investments' of the EC DG for Research and Innovation could be used as relevant examples.

Regarding training, several ideas could be tackled within formal training environments (mostly HEIs) to support the development of SE ecosystems.

Mainstreaming strategies for including SE topics in traditional curricula could include the following ideas: first, to reduce the cognitive gap of trainers regarding SE in general in order to overcome their resistance to the sector; second, to widen the scope of traditional economics and management courses integrating alternative organizational models; third, to incorporate institutional pluralism in basic bachelor's courses across disciplines; fourth, to fine-tune MAs focused on SE and increase support to render them visible; fifth, to close the gap between the academic

[8] For more information on TIESS, visit https://tiess.ca/qui-sommes-nous/le-tiess-en-bref/

and entrepreneurial world in order to allow trainers to base their courses on cases from the real economy, including social enterprises; sixth, to enable other managerial voices to discuss their skills sought in the real economy; and, lastly, to promote pedagogical methodologies based on the potential of collective learning and action (Dekimpe, 2020).

Capacity-building both of researchers and of communities is fundamental (Franco & Tracey, 2019). To increase the potential of knowledge, it requires effective mechanisms or strategies to support knowledge mobilization (or learning). This may take the form of knowledge brokers and knowledge translators that account for different sets of cultures, rhythms, aims, and dynamics at play. These knowledge brokers are intermediary (as organization or person), aiming to develop relationships and networks with, among, and between producers and users of knowledge by providing linkages, knowledge sources, and in some cases knowledge itself. These opportunities for learning across professional, disciplinary, and organizational borders have to be institutionally supported if they are to set the stage for social innovation (Nichols et al., 2013; Franco & Tracey, 2019).

Research has been recognized as a lever for the recovery of Europe from COVID-19: 'Our response to the Covid-19 crisis can either amplify or mitigate the deeper and longer-term crises that our planet is facing. The fundamental systemic change towards sustainability needs to emerge from science-informed design' (EC, 2020b: 3). This must include research on SE as a way not only to support the initiatives that have emerged from citizens to respond to emergencies but also to reframe the way in which cross-sector collaboration occurs in post-disaster contexts. A concluding crucial question for research remains whether (and how) collaboration between HEIs and communities leads to social change and social innovation within territorial systems.

Appendix: Summary information of the MA programmes surveyed

Table 9.2 contains information on the fourteen MA programs included in this exploratory study. Some of them, however, were no longer offered by the time this publication was printed. The URLs and information provided were gathered during the desk review and expert interview process.

Table 9.2 Programmes included in the study

Full name (and acronym)	HEI	Country	Year of launch	URL
MA in Social Economy	Catholic University of Louvain (FOPES) and University of Liege (HEC)	Belgium	2019	https://uclouvain.be/prog-2020-ecso2mc http://www.hec.uliege.be/fr/masters/master-specialisation-en-economie-sociale
MA in Management of Social and Sustainable Enterprises (MESD)	Centre for Social Economy, HEC-University of Liege	Belgium	2011	http://www.hec.uliege.be/index.php/en/masters/master-in-management/management-of-socialy-responsible-sustainable-enterprises
MA in Social Enterprise Management (SEM)	Roskilde University	Denmark	2013	https://ruc.dk/en/master/social-entrepreneurship-and-management-int
Social Entrepreneurship MA study program (SEMA)	Tallinn University	Estonia	2018	https://sema.tlu.ee
MA 2 Human Resource Management, Social and Solidarity Economy track (Master 2 GRH ESS)	University of Aix-Marseille	France	2001	https://formations.univ-amu.fr/ME5BGH-PRBGH5AD.html
MA on Co-operative and Social Enterprise	University College Cork	Ireland	2005	https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckl10
MA in Management of Social Enterprises	University of Trento/Euricse	Italy	1995	www.mastergis.eu
MA in Management for Social Economy	Univ. Bologna/AICCON	Italy	2002 (1997)	https://corsi.unibo.it/2cycle/ManagementSocialEconomy
MA in Economics of Cooperative Firms (MUEC)	Univ Bologna/AICCON/Cooperative umbrella organizations			https://www.aiccon.it/en/formazione/master-universitario-economia-della-cooperazione/

MA in Social Work and Social Economy (SOWOSEC)	Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca	Romania	2009	https://www.ubbcluj.ro/en/programe_academice/masterat/
MA in the Social Economy (Cooperatives and Nonprofit Organizations)	University of Valencia	Spain	2009	https://www.uv.es/uvweb/universidad/es/estudios-postgrado/masteres-oficiales/oferta-masteres-oficiales/master-universitario-economia-social-cooperativas-entidades-no-lucrativas-1285848941532/Titulacio.html?id=1285850876704
MSc Charity Resource Management MSc Charity Resource Management MBA (Co-operative Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship)	Sheffield Hallam University	UK	2009 (*discontinued)	• https://www.shu.ac.uk/courses/business-and-management/pgcert-cooperative-leadership-and-social-entrepreneurship/part-time/2020 • Not available • https://www.shu.ac.uk/courses/business-and-management/pgcert-cooperative-leadership-and-social-entrepreneurship/part-time/2020

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the initiators and coordinators of the university master's programmes surveyed for their precious time and information. We would like to thank in particular Alessandro Caviola and Paolo Fontana (Italy), Benjamin Huybrechts (Belgium), Lars Hulgård and Luise Li Langergaard (CSE-RUC), Giorgia Perra (Italy), Francesca Petrella (France), Carol Power (Ireland), Adina Rebeleanu (Romania), Rory Ridley-Duff (United Kingdom), and Audrone Urmanaviciene and Zsolt Bugarszki (Estonia). In addition, we would like to thank Sophie Adam, and Sarah Waring for her language editing support. Our appreciation also goes to Marie Bouchard for her insightful comments on the manuscript.

References

Alegre, I., Kislenko, S., & Berbegal-Mirabent, J. (2017). Organized chaos: mapping the definitions of social entrepreneurship. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 8(2), 248–264.

Austin, J., & Rangan, V. K. (2019). Reflections on 25 years of building social enterprise education. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 15(1), 2–21.

Barco Serrano, S., & Nogales Muriel, R. (2020). Social enterprise research from an international perspective: key agents, challenges and opportunities ahead. *Ibero-American Journal of Solidarity Economy and Socio-ecologic Innovation, RIESISE*, 3, December 2020, 7-16.

Bennet, A., & Bennet, D. (2008). *Knowledge Mobilization in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Moving from Research to Action*. Frost, WV: MQI Press.

Benneworth, P., & Cunha, J. (2015). Universities' contributions to social innovation: reflections in theory & practice. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, 18(4), 508–527.

BEPA (Bureau of European Policy Advisers) (2010). *Empowering People, Driving Change: Social Innovation in the European Union*. Luxembourg: European Commission. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/empowering-people-driving-change-social-innovation-in-the-european-union

Borzaga, C., & Defourny, J. (2001). *The Emergence of Social Enterprise*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bouchard, M. J. & Lévesque, B. (2017). Les innovations sociales et l'économie sociale: nouveaux enjeux de transformation sociale. In J. Defourny & M. Nyssens, *Économie sociale et solidaire. Socio-économie du 3e secteur* (pp. 397–442). Paris and Brussels: De Boeck.

Campbell, E., & Lassiter, L. (2010). From collaborative ethnography to collaborative pedagogy: reflections on the other side of Middletown Project and community-university research partnerships. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 41(4), 370–385.

Chambon, J.-L., & David, A. (1982). *Les Innovations Sociales*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2010). Conceptions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship in Europe and the United States: convergences and divergences, *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 32–53.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (2017). Fundamentals for an international typology of social enterprise models. *Voluntas*, 28(6), 2469–2497.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (Dir.). (2021a). *Social Enterprise in Central and Eastern Europe: Theory. Models and Practice*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Defourny, J., & Nyssens, M. (Dir.). (2021b). *Social Enterprise in Western Europe: Theory, Models and Practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Defourny, J., Nyssens, M., & Brolis, O. (2021). Testing social enterprise models across the world: evidence from the International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) Project. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 50(2), 420–440.

Dekimpe, Emilie (2020). *The legitimacy of the cooperative model: A consensus towards the factors that lead to the neglect of the cooperative model in educational institutions*. Louvain School of Management, Université Catholique de Louvain.

Doherty, B., Haugh, H., & Lyon, F. (2014). Social enterprises as hybrid organizations: a review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 16(4), 417–436.

EC (2013). *Guide to Social Innovation*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eip/ageing/file/759/download_en?token=mNGSe_T7

EC (2020a). *Social Enterprises and Their Ecosystems in Europe. Comparative Synthesis Report*. Authors: C. Borzaga, G. Galera, B. Franchini, S. Chiomento, R. Nogales, & C. Carini. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: https://europa.eu/!Qq64ny

EC (2020b). *The Role of Research and Innovation in Support of Europe's Recovery from the COVID19 Crisis*, Policy Brief. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research_and_innovation/strategy_on_research_and_innovation/documents/ec_rtd_covid19-recovery.pdf

Enjolras, B., Salamon, L. M., Sivesind, K. H., & Zimmer, A. (2018) *The Third Sector as a Renewable Resource for Europe: Concepts, Impacts, Challenges and Opportunities*. New York: Springer.

European Commission (2011). *Social Business Initiative: Creating a Favourable Climate for Social Enterprises, Key Stakeholders in the Social Economy and Innovation*, SEC(2011) 1278 final. European Commission. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2011/EN/1-2011-682-EN-F1-1.Pdf

European Commission (2021). *Social Economy Action Plan*. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1537&langId=en

European Economic and Social Committee (2016). *Recent Evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union*. Authors: J. L. Monzón & R. Chaves, CIRIEC-International. Brussels: EESC. Available at https://www.eesc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/files/qe-04-17-875-en-n.pdf

Franco, I. B., & Tracey, J. (2019). Community capacity-building for sustainable development. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 20(4), 695.

Jensen, R., Thursby, J., & Thursby, M. (2010). University–Industry Spillovers, Government Funding, and Industrial Consulting. NBER Working Papers n. 15732. Available at: https://www.nber.org/papers/w15732

Klein, J.-L., Laville, J.-L., & Moulaert, F. (Eds). (2014). *L'innovation sociale*. Paris: Érès.

Lang, D. J., Wiek, A., Bergmann, M., Stauffacher, M., Martens, P., Moll, P., Swilling, M., & Thomas, C. J. (2012). Transdisciplinary research in sustainability science: practice, principles, and challenges. *Sustainability Science*, 7, 25–43.

Laville, J.-L. (2006). *Economie solidaire*. In J.-L. Laville & A. D. Cattani, *Dictionnaire de l'autre économie* (pp. 23–37). Folio actuel, Paris: Gallimard.

Laville, J.-L. (2014). Innovation sociale, économie sociale et solidaire, entrepreneuriat social, une mise en perspective historique. In J. L. Klein, J. L. Laville, & F. Moulaert (Eds), *L'innovation sociale*. Eres, 45–80.

Laville, J.-L. (Ed.). (2016). *L'économie sociale et solidaire. Pratiques, théories, débats*. Paris, Le Seuil.

Lévesque, B. (2007). Le potentiel d'innovation sociale de l'économie sociale: quelques éléments de problématique. *Économie et Solidarités*, 37, 1, 13–48.

Lévesque, B. (2013). Social innovation in governance and public management systems: toward a new paradigm? In F. Moulaert, D. Maccallum, A. Mehmood, & A. Hamdouch (Eds), *The International Handbook on Social Innovation:* Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research (pp. 25–39). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

McNeill, J., & Boorman, C. (2020). Universities and place-based social innovation: anchor models as integrative frameworks. Delivered at the International Social Innovation Research Conference (ISIRC) 2020.

Mehling, S., & Kolleck, N. (2019). Cross-sector collaboration in higher education institutions (HEIs): a critical analysis of an urban sustainability development program. *Sustainability*, 11, 4982.

Monzón Campos, J. L. (2016). La economía social en la literatura económica y en los hechos. 30 años delCIRIEC-España, *Revista de Economía Pública, Social y Cooperativa*, No. 88/2016 (pp. 287–307). Valencia: CIRIEC-Spain.

Moulaert, F., & MacCallum, D. (2019). *Advanced Introduction to Social Innovation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Moulaert, F., Maccallum, D., Mehmood, A., & Hamdouch, A. (Eds). (2013). *The International Handbook on Social Innovation: Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Nichols, N., Phipps, D. J., Provençal, J., & Hewitt, A. (2013). Knowledge mobilization, collaboration, and social innovation: leveraging investments in higher education. *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research/Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale, ANSERJ*, 4(1), Spring/Printemps, 25–42.

Nogales-Muriel, R. (2023). *Social Innovation, Social Enterprises and the Cultural Economy. Cultural and Artistic Social Enterprises in Practice*. London and New York: Routledge.

Nyssens, M. (2015). Innovation sociale et entreprise sociale: quels dialogues possibles? Une perspective européenne. In J.-L. Klein (Ed.), *La transformation sociale pas l'innovation sociale (Innovation Sociale)* (pp. 335–348). Presses de l'Université du Québec.

OECD (2015). *Concepts and definitions for identifying R&D. In Frascati Manual 2015: Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264239012-4-en

Perkmann, M., & Walsh, K. (2008). Engaging the scholar: three types of academic consulting and their impact on universities and industry. *Research Policy*, 37, 1884–1891.

Persaud, A., & Bayon, M. (2019). A review and analysis of the thematic structure of social entrepreneurship research: 1990–2018, *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 17(4), 495–528.

Radinger-Peer, V., & Pflitsch, G. (2017). The role of higher education institutions in regional transition paths towards sustainability. *Review of Regional Research*, 37, 161–187. Available at: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10037-017-0116-9

Rentocchini, F., Manjarrés-Henrìquez, L., D'Este, P., & R. Grimaldi (2014). The relationship between academic consulting and research performance: evidence from five Spanish universities. *International Journal of Industrial Organization*, 32(1), 70–83.

Santos, B. de S. (2017). *Decolonising the University: The Challenge of Deep Cognitive Justice*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Smallbone, D., Kitching, J., & Blackburn, R. (2015). *Anchor Institutions and Small Firms in the UK: A Review of the Literature on Anchor Institutions and Their Role in Developing Management and Leadership Skills in Small Firms*. Technical Report, UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

Stromquist, N. P., & Lozano, G. (2018). Popular universities: their hidden functions and contributions. In M. Milana, S. Webb, J. Holford, R. Waller, & P. Jarvis (Eds), *International Handbook on Adult and Lifelong Education and Learning*, London: Palgrave.

UNSRID (2019). *Opportunities and Challenges of Statistics on SSE*. Available at: https://knowledgehub.unsse.org/project-opportunities-and-challenges-of-statistics-on-sse/

Vogt, M., & Weber, C. (2020). The role of universities in a sustainable society: why value-free research is neither possible nor desirable. *Sustainability*, 12, 2811; https://doi.org/10.3390/su12072811