Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change

# Mapping the World of Social Innovation

## Key Results of a Comparative Analysis of 1.005 Social Innovation Initiatives at a Glance

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# 1 RESULTS IN A NUTSHELL

The EU funded large scale project SI-DRIVE "Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change" conducted a worldwide Comparative Analysis of *more than 1.000 social innovation cases* in seven major policy fields. This first empirical research phase of SI-DRIVE was supplemented by policy field related state of the art reports, a trend study of social innovation in different world regions (beneath Europe including Australia/New Zealand, Western and South-East Asia, North and South Africa, North and South America, Russia) and policy and foresight workshops.

This Comparative Analysis is an *explorative* inventory of an empirically under-researched area. The analysis provides insight into types of social innovations in seven policy fields (education and lifelong learning, employment, environment and climate change, energy supply, transport and mobility, health and social care, and poverty reduction and sustainable development). It delivers new intelligence on the diversity of social innovation approaches in different parts of the world, the variety of actors and their interaction, thereby exploring the systemic character and different concepts of social innovation.

The conducted research demonstrates the need for social innovation to overcome (policy field related) societal challenges and social demands. In every policy field we find a high diversity of social needs and societal challenges, not limited to one but often working across several policy fields. *Social innovation has become a ubiquitous concept*.

The main results based on the first empirical phase of SI-DRIVE at a glance:

1. Social needs and societal challenges are the focus and driver of social Innovation
2. Social innovations in a sense of new practices appear in a variety of forms and concepts and high dynamics appear
3. Manifold actors and cross sector collaborations are the emerging backbone of the initiatives
4. Empowerment and user involvement are a core element
5. Complexity of the innovation processes needs different modes of governance
6. Social Innovation Ecosystems are emerging
7. Different levels of intervention are necessary
8. Practice Field approach helps to combine social innovations
9. Resources and barriers are manifold: Framework conditions and enabling factors still need to be developed
10. Social Innovation Initiatives - driven by problems and depending on individuals!

The results of the global mapping reveal the importance of social innovation addressing social, economic, political and environmental challenges of the 21st century on a global scale. At the same time there is an increased awareness about the dimension of the challenges modern societies are facing and the complexity of innovation processes needed. Like technological innovations, successful social innovations are based on a lot of presuppositions and require appropriate infrastructures and resources. Moreover, *social*

*innovations* are requiring specific conditions because they aim at activating, fostering, and utilizing the *innovation potential of the whole society*.

It is not only a matter of *appropriate funding* but also of *new participation and collaboration structures, co-creation and user involvement, empowerment and human resources development*. Attention has to be paid to the invention and its development as well as its diffusion and imitation. From this innovation process and development perspective, resources, capabilities and constraints, drivers and barriers are not only relevant for the invention and implementation, but also for scaling and diffusion of successful innovations.

The mapping demonstrates that social innovation processes and the underlying resources, capabilities and constraints are also very much related to the actors of the different sectors of the *social innovation ecosystem*. This includes a new role of public policy and government in creating suitable framework and support structures, the integration of resources of the economy and civil society, as well as supporting measures by science and universities (e.g. education for social innovation performance, know-how transfer).

Given the strong need for social innovation highlighted by the various policy field experts, one of the most important insights of the mapping is that *a social innovation friendly environment still has to be developed in Europe and on a global scale*.

# 2 SI-DRIVE: A UNIQUE APPROACH

SI-DRIVE is aiming at a *comprehensive and systematic analysis*, focusing on the *main societal challenges* reflected by *different policy fields* and is *mapping social innovations all over the world*. The developed methodology, which *combines qualitative and quantitative research, is* fulfilling the gaps and constraints of each methodology in a complementary and interrelated way: Beneath qualitative research (reviewing and reporting social innovation relevant theories and state-of-the art) SI-DRIVE is - for the first time - conducting a *quantitative mapping of more than 1.000 social innovation cases all over the world*.

SI-DRIVE uses a *cyclical approach* in the form of a double *iteration loop* continuously improving theory, methodology and policy after two empirical stages. Starting with a first theoretical and methodological as well with a first policy and foresight framework, this was laying the ground for the contents and methods of the first empirical phase: the global mapping. The empirical results will feed in the improvement of these three pillars, forming the basis for the second empirical phase: the in-depth case studies. In the end, the results of both empirical phases will lead to the final theory, methodology and policy and foresight recommendations of SI-DRIVE.

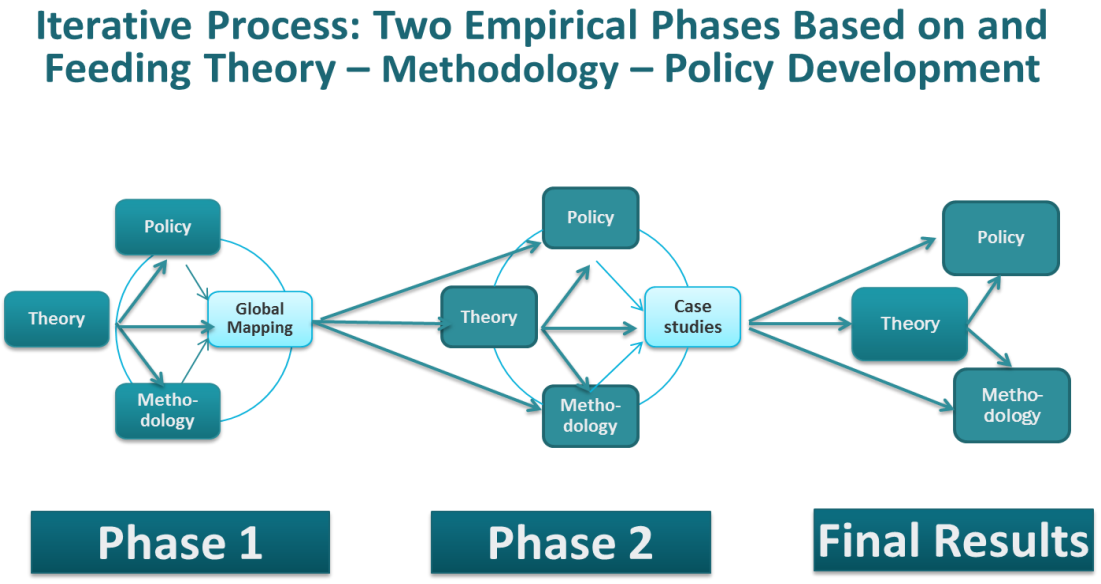



Figure 1: Continuously Updated Research Cycle

The global mapping is based on the working definition of social innovation and the developed key dimensions. We are looking at *new social practices* defined as a new combination or new configuration of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts, prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors in an intentional targeted manner with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices; at the end socially accepted and diffused (partly or widely) throughout society or in certain societal sub-areas, and finally established and institutionalised as social practices.

This working definition also foresees that, depending on circumstances of social change, interests, policies and power, successfully implemented social innovations may be transformed, established in a wider societal context and ultimately institutionalised as regular social practice or made routine.

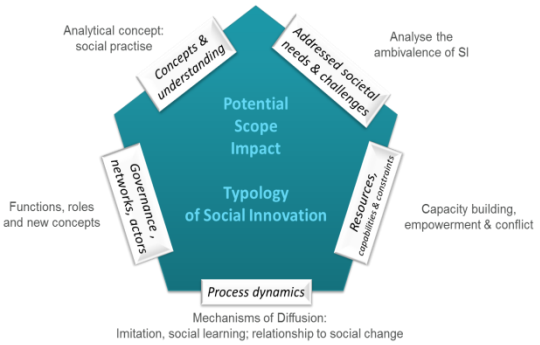
Based on this definition, SI-DRIVE is differentiating between the *macro level* of *policy fields* the *micro* and *meso level* levels of *"social practices"* and related *"projects/initiatives"*:

- *"practice field"* is a general type or "summary" of projects and expresses general characteristics common to different projects (e.g. micro-credit systems, car sharing).

- *"project/initiative"* is a single and concrete implementation of a solution to respond to social demands, societal challenges or systemic change (e.g. Muhammed Yunus' Grameen Bank which lends micro-credits to poor farmers for improving their economic condition, different car sharing projects or activities at the regional-local level).

Main theoretical portfolio of the mapping and analysis of social innovation cases and the reporting are the *five key dimensions*. This means, the review and mapping of social innovation practices:

1. describe *concepts and understanding* (analytical concept: social practice)
2. are based on and addressed to *social demands, societal challenges* (and systemic changes, if feasible)
3. describe *resources, capabilities and constraints* including capacity building, empowerment and conflict
4. embed *governance, networking and actors (*functions, roles and sectors) for social change and development
5. document the different phases of the *process dynamics* (mainly: mechanisms of diffusion: imitation, social learning; relationship to social change).

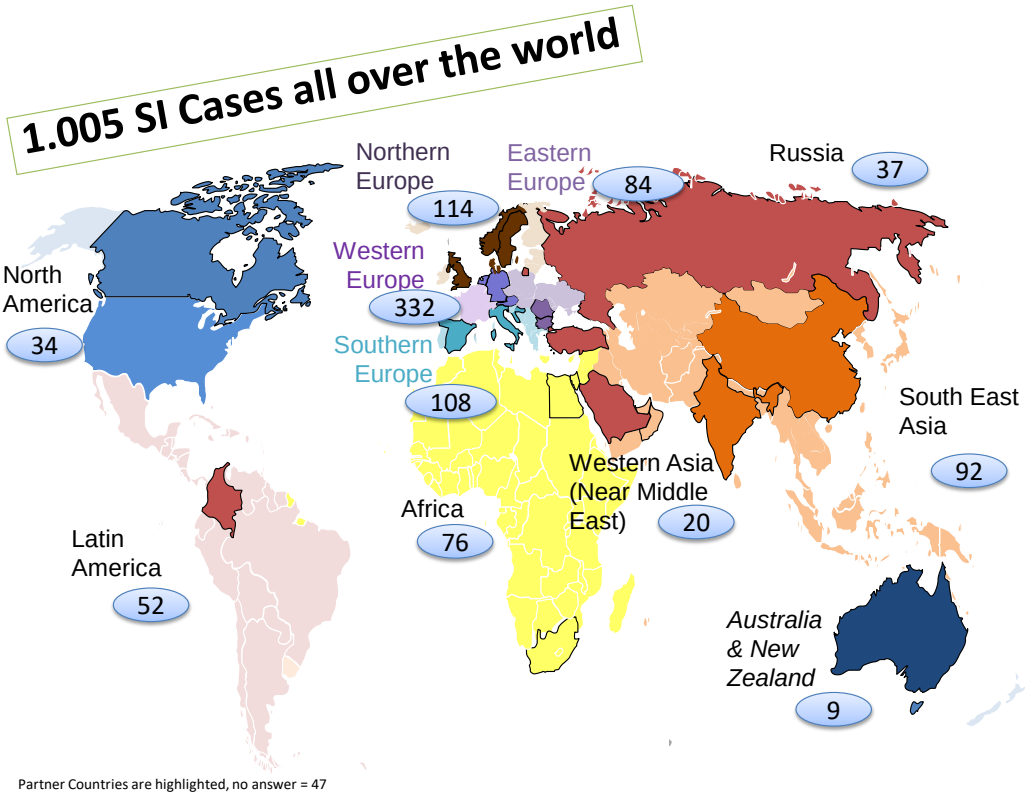



Next to the definition of social innovation and the five key dimensions, *additional research dimensions* are policy fields, cross-cutting themes, sectors of society, and world regions. While the details of the comparative analysis are already described in detail in the extended version (Howaldt et al. 2016), this summary is focusing mainly on the communalities and general results of the global mapping.

**The Sample**

The *quantification* of 1.005 social innovation cases all over the world was done by international experts of the SI-DRIVE consortium, embedded in and representing the seven policy fields and the different global regions and their specific context. This global

selection and collection has led to a comprehensive picture of world regions' and policy fields' related cases.




While the Critical Literature Review (Howaldt et al. 2014a) provided a general depiction of how social innovation resonates within the wider frameworks of existing innovation theory and research, the concepts and perceptions of social change and of societal and policy development, the purpose of this *Comparative Analysis* is to check the theoretical framework against the first empirical dataset of SI-DRIVE (empirical phase 1).

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# 3 KEY FINDINGS

The results of the global mapping reveal the importance of social innovation addressing social, economic, political and environmental challenges of the 21st century on a global scale. Recent years have seen this new type of innovation emerging, as an object of research and development appearing in a variety of forms and influencing our lives. There is a growing consensus among practitioners, policy makers and the research community that technological innovations alone are not capable of overcoming the social and economic challenges modern societies are facing. This is why a vast number of social innovation initiatives in the different world regions, which are providing new levers for solving problems and contributing to social change, can be identified.

The global mapping and the policy fields and regional reports demonstrate the need for social innovation to overcome the (policy field related) societal challenges and social demands. In every policy field we find an increasing number of social innovation initiatives. Social innovations change the manner in which we live together (shared housing), work (telework), consume (car-sharing), distribute wealth (unconditional basic income) or deal with economic crises (short time work instead of termination). Social innovations provide new forms of collaboration between people (co-working spaces), organizations (private-public-partnerships) and states (agreement on the free movement of labour). Social innovations can emerge within different sectors: in civil society (urban farming), politics (parental leave), and economy (micro credits). In short: social innovations in a sense of new practices are omnipresent and contribute to social change. The establishment of new social practices does play a prominent role in making mobility more environmentally friendly, diseases less scary or the energy turn around more successful. The high diversity of social needs and societal challenges addressed by the initiatives are not limited to one but often work across several policy fields. *Social innovation has become a ubiquitous concept.*

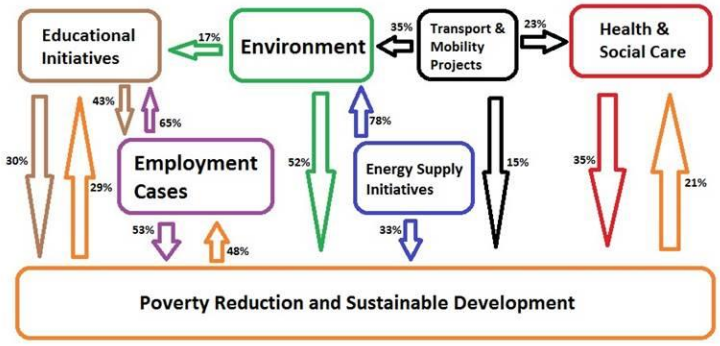
**1. Focus: Social Needs and Societal Challenges**

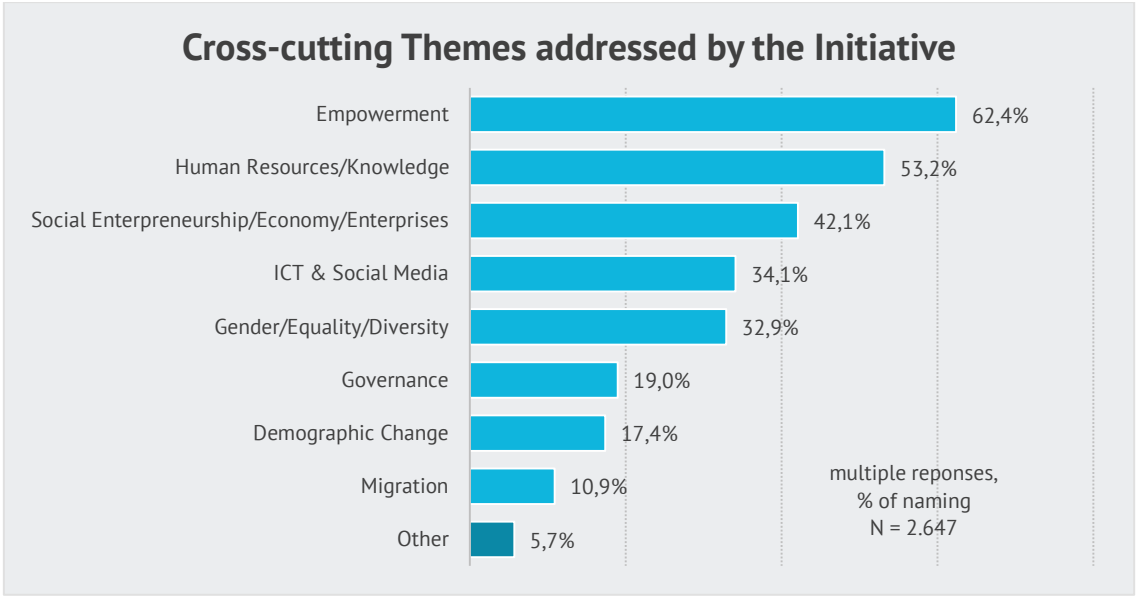
Social innovative projects and initiatives aim to address social needs and societal challenges rather than focusing primarily on economic success and profit. Referring to a distinction introduced by BEPA that "the output dimension refers to the kind of value or output that social innovation is expected to deliver: a value that is less concerned with mere profit, and including multiple dimensions of output measurement" (BEPA 2010, p. 26) there are three societal levels on which output may take place. In this understanding, social innovations

- "respond to *social demands* that are traditionally not addressed by the market or existing institutions and are directed towards vulnerable groups in society […],
- tackle 'societal challenges' through new forms of relations between social actors, […] respond to those societal challenges in which the boundary between social and economic blurs, and are directed towards society as a whole […],
- or contribute to the reform of society in the direction of a more participative arena where empowerment and learning are both sources and outcomes of well-being" (ibid, p. 29).

With regard to the SI-DRIVE definition, a high diversity of addressed social needs and societal challenges in the different practice fields and world regions appear. Still, as shown in the regional report and in the quantitative mapping of SI-DRIVE, there is a common set of major social needs, challenges and opportunities which are driving social innovation in almost all countries. These include demographic change and ageing societies, social inclusion and cohesion, tackling poverty, and environmental issues including new ways in the fields of energy and transport.

The cross-cutting character of social innovation initiatives is underlined by the fact, that they are mostly related to more than one policy field (see figure below, showing the percentage of cases (rank 2 and 3) related to another than the main practice field (rank 1)). They are also covering different crosscutting themes (see figure below). Especially empowerment and human resources/knowledge are relevant themes in most of the initiatives.



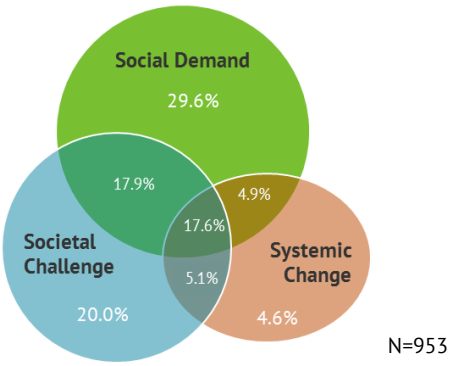




Next to the addressed cross-cutting themes, involved partners' distinct forms of support underline the importance of human resources. The partners of the social innovation initiatives contribute to the development of the innovation not only by funding, but also by idea development and specific knowledge (see figure actors´ functions in key result 3 below).

The need to respond to a specific societal challenge or a local social demand are by far the main motivation and trigger for starting, initiating and running a social innovation. More

than 60% of the initiatives started from this perspective. These objectives are more relevant than having an inspiring new idea (28%), a policy incentive like a policy programme or strategy (18%) or a social movement focusing on specific issues (15%). The possibility of taking advantage of new technologies for tackling social problems serves as a first motivation or trigger for 23% of the cases.

Out of all initiatives mapped for SI-DRIVE, a clear majority seeks to satisfy a concrete social demand (71%) and/or tackle a societal challenge (60%), whereas a minority (32%) wants to achieve systemic change. So almost one third of the social innovation initiatives mapped is "going for the max" and seeks to achieve this most comprehensive output in the process of the innovation journey.

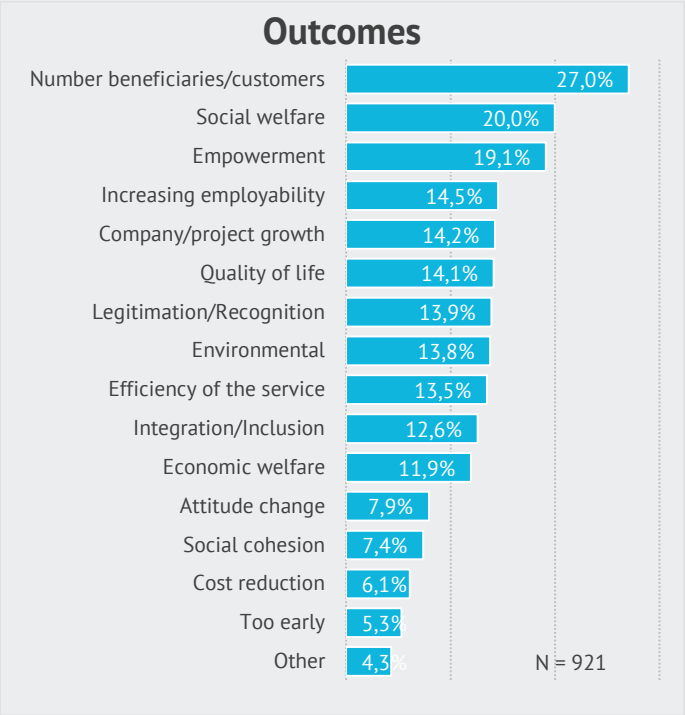



As the figures show, most of the initiatives do not address one societal level alone, rather different combinations. At the same time the societal level addressed by the initiatives is varying in the different policy fields with a strong focus on specific social needs in most of the policy fields, except for Environment and Climate Change as well as Energy Supply which both have a stronger orientation towards overarching societal challenges. This result is also reflected in the feedback from policy workshops[1] highlighting the dominant practices: e.g. cooperatives and well-connected neighbourhood initiatives in the field of Energy Supply are mostly working on an agenda which goes beyond concrete and local social demands.

Although systemic change plays a minor role compared with societal challenges and social needs addressed in general, differences in the relevance of all three are considerable across the policy fields. There seem to be policy and respective practice fields whose initiatives will more likely target satisfying a social demand (*Health* 83%, *Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development* 78%) or tackling a societal challenge (*Environment* 72%, *Energy Supply* 87%). While initiatives in *Education* (48%) and *Environment* (46%) strongly address social change, the objective of systemic change is less pronounced in *Employment* (19%), *Transport and Mobility* (20%), and *Energy Supply* (25%).

[1] See the policy briefs at the website of SI-DRIVE: http://www.si-drive.eu/?p=1934.

The mapping also reveals that there is no shared understanding of a desired outcome by the initiatives. Some initiatives focus on the performance of the project itself (company or project growth, efficiency of the services, cost reduction) others on the customers or beneficiaries (number of beneficiaries/ costumers, integration/ inclusion, empowerment, increasing employability). A third group of answers focused on societal outcomes (quality of life, social cohesion, social welfare, economic welfare, and environmental outcomes) and a forth group on cultural or institutional modes of change (legitimation/recognition and attitude change).




Anyway, one key impression is that a large number of projects have the beneficiaries (37%) and societal impact (34%) on the agenda when asked for outcomes. Nevertheless, at the same time there is no clear understanding of how the outcome can be measured.

## 2. Variety of Forms and Concepts and High Dynamics

The mapping reveals a variety and diversity of social innovation worldwide, the different social innovation initiatives and practices, concepts and approaches, innovation processes and actor constellations.

At the same time, there is a high number of persons engaged (employees, volunteers, experts and advisers)[2] – including a high user involvement – and a high number and diverse types of participating partners and surprisingly high budgets of some initiatives. Social innovation has become a "hot topic" with a high dynamic.

[2] Stated by about 250 initiatives.

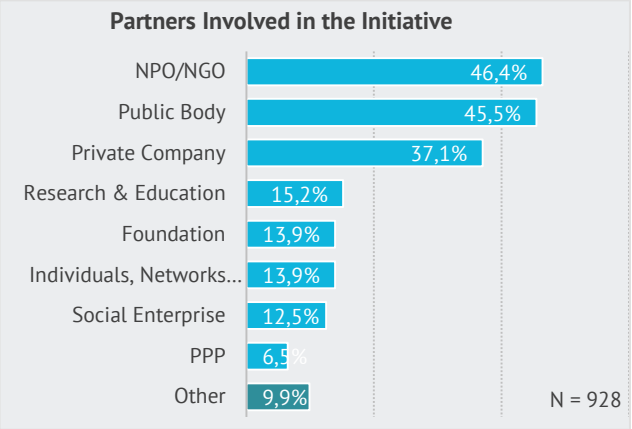
Based on the SI-DRIVE definition the variety of social innovation is shown by a highly diversified list of more than 90 practice fields summarising the 1.005 mapped social initiatives. The table summarises the recently defined major practice fields (with ten or more cases) within the seven policy areas of SI-DRIVE, representing two third of all the cases). Looking at the topics of the practice fields within the policy fields, the already mentioned cross-covering of initiatives addressing more than one policy field becomes evident.

These practice fields have to be seen as *preliminary*, they will be further discussed and improved (summarised, distinguished and complemented) after the second empirical phase (in-depth case studies).

| POLICY FIELD / PRACTICE FIELDS | NO. OF INITIATIVES |
|---|---|
| **Education and Lifelong Learning** | **178** |
| Reduction of educational disadvantages | 44 |
| New learning arrangements, interactive education | 41 |
| Entrepreneurship education and promotion | 18 |
| Alternative forms of educational activities and training (towards consult, mentor) | 17 |
| New strategies and structures for lifelong learning | 17 |
| Occupational orientation, early pupils career planning | 15 |
| New digital and virtual learning environments | 13 |
| Quality improvements, setting of new educational standards | 13 |
| **Employment** | **136** |
| Job search support & matching | 43 |
| Training & education | 31 |
| Social entrepreneurship | 26 |
| Workplace innovation & organisational innovation | 20 |
| Working conditions and working environment | 16 |
| **Environment and Climate Change** | **72** |
| Alternative sustainable food production and distribution | 24 |
| Protection and restoring of ecosystems & biodiversity | 19 |
| Re-use and recycling | 17 |
| Sustainable (strategic) consuming, sharing economy | 12 |
| **Energy Supply** | **74** |
| Energy collectives | 34 |
| Providing examples and inspiration | 16 |
| Energy services | 12 |
| Local (domestic) production of energy | 12 |
| **Transport and Mobility** | **59** |
| Managing multimodality | 16 |
| Transportation for people with reduced mobility | 13 |
| Smart Working, Smart Commuting | 11 |
| Fostering alternative transport modes | 10 |
| Citizen initiated public transport | 9 |
| **Health and Social Care** | **96** |
| New models of care | 44 |
| E-health, m-health | 21 |
| Shift in care location | 16 |
| Integrated care delivery | 15 |
| **Poverty and Sustainable Development** | **140** |
| Disadvantage, vulnerability, discrimination | 44 |
| Lack of integrated support to the poor or excluded | 20 |
| Sub-standard or dangerous accommodation | 15 |
| Inadequate financial resources | 14 |
| Un-nutritious or unhealthy food | 14 |
| Unemployment or under-employment | 12 |
| Inadequate good quality work | 11 |
| Place-specific poverty or exclusion | 10 |

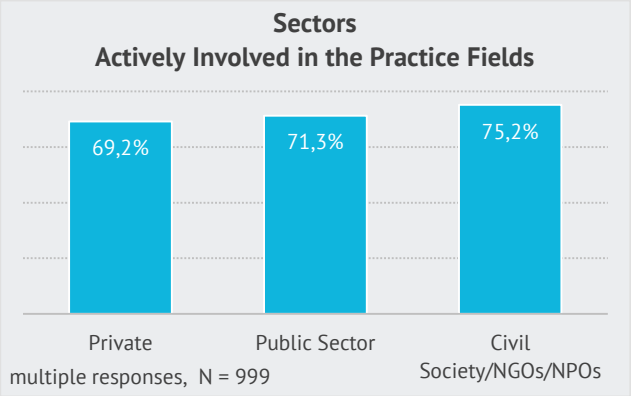
### 3. Manifold Actors and Cross Sector Collaborations

The mapping results reaffirm the assumption that the concept of social innovation cannot be limited to one focus, be it social entrepreneurship or social economy, and demonstrates that widening the perspective is crucial for understanding the concept in its entirety. A broad range of actors is involved in the mapped social innovation initiatives. These quantitative results underpin the substantial role in social innovation initiatives ascribed to civil society organisations such as NPOs and NGOs. The large share of public sector bodies too, is underpinned by the compiling policy field report (Scoppetta 2015, p. 15) which emphasises the importance of public authorities, but also states: *"Despite the important role of public authorities there seems to be a wide range of other actors involved in responding to societal challenges"*.




While private companies, public bodies and NGOs/NPOs are involved in the majority of initiatives, surprisingly, social enterprises are engaged only in minor parts of the initiatives. Additionally, academia is only a partner in some of the social innovation initiatives. The marginal engagement of research and education facilities is in strong contrast to their essential role as knowledge providers in classical innovation processes (source) and as one actor of the triple helix model.

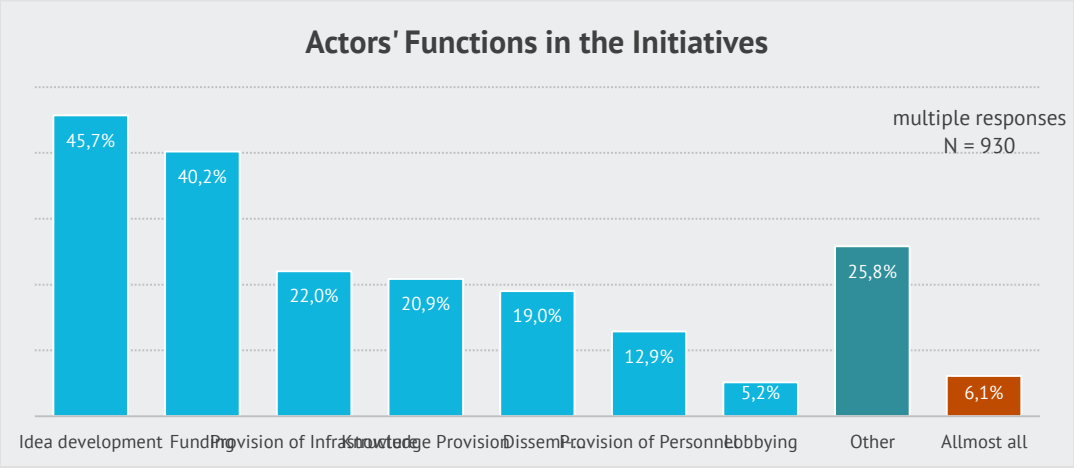
The global mapping clearly shows the participation of partners from all sectors. The majority of mapped initiatives has been developed and implemented in a social network in which more than one sector is involved: Almost half of the initiatives constitute an involvement of *all three sectors* in the practice field (45%); only 23% are related to just one sector. Combinations of two of the three sectors are found in 32% of the initiatives: public sector and civil society (12%), public and private sector (10%), private sector and civil society (10%). We can say that cross-sectoral collaboration of the public sector, civil society and the private sector is playing a key role, and becomes even more important on the practice fields level.




To overcome societal challenges cross-sector collaboration is crucial, actively involving public, economic and civil society partners - including active user or beneficiary involvement in almost half of the social innovation initiatives. This shows that most of the initiatives are developing new alliances, and are guaranteeing cross-sector fertilization and mobilizing civil society (also proved by the high number of volunteers supporting the initiatives).

In this context a constructive partnership between the sectors is a very important factor in order to reap the full potential of social innovation. Social innovations are first and foremost ensemble performances, requiring interaction between many actors.

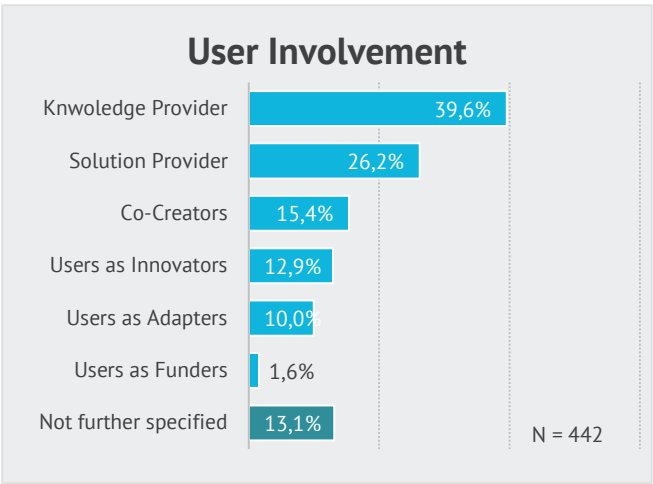
Looking at nine different functions of the actors' contribution in support of social innovation initiatives, idea development and funding are the main support, followed by the provision of infrastructures, knowledge and personnel up to dissemination and lobbying activities.




The function as provider of personnel is only taken up by a rather small share of actors (13%), and lobbying as support activity shows to be of minor relevance (6%). In additional 6% of the mapped initiatives involved actors cover almost all of the previous functions, while it remains an open question to what extent.

### 4. Empowerment and User Involvement as Indispensable Component of Social Innovation

Empowerment of beneficiaries and citizens in the social innovation concept corresponds with the fact that in almost half of the initiatives mapped, a direct user or beneficiary involvement is stated whereby the rates of involvement differ in the policy fields and world regions. Social innovations aim at activating, fostering, and utilising the innovation potential of the whole society. Empowering the beneficiaries, increasing their capacities to meet social needs and giving them 'agency' is an indispensable component of social innovation. Thereby we find various forms of user involvement, from the development or improvement of the solution over providing feedback, suggestions and knowledge to the adaptation of the social innovation idea for personalized solution.

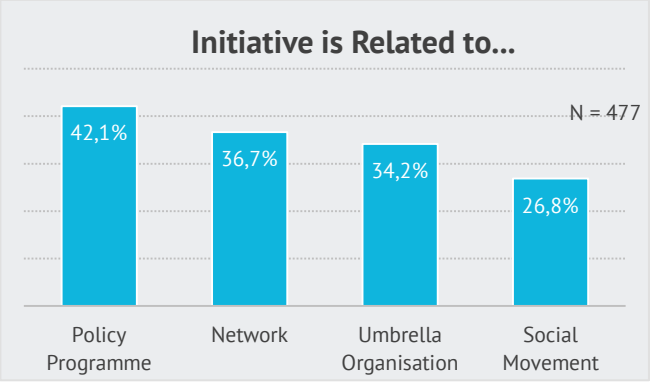



Named in 40% of the cases, it appears that *users' as knowledge providers* is the most common form of involvement. More precisely, users provide knowledge throughout the social innovation process in form of dialogues, feedback, testing and experimentation, suggestions for further improvement as well as tutoring. These findings correspond with the observation that users have

a substantial role in social innovation that goes beyond the mere utilisation of the solution provided by others. Moreover, it suggests that social innovation initiatives rely on users' specific knowledge and feedback to meet their needs properly. *User as knowledge provider* play a crucial role in all policy fields, whereas they are particularly pronounced in Health & Social Care (51%), followed by Poverty Reduction & Sustainable Development and Employment (47%). This may be a result of the governance structures in these three policy fields. According to the compilation report they all fall into the cluster of *"government dependent social innovation"* that are foremost driven by central government and strongly depend on laws and regulation (Scoppetta 2015, p. 29f.).

This is further substantiated by the involvement of *users as solution providers,* which ranks second (26%) and *users as co-creators* which rank third (15%). Concerning the former, users are not part of the solution's development process, but provide the readily available solution to other users. Forasmuch, it can be assumed that the success of the solution strongly depends on users' acceptance and active participation. On the contrary, the category "users as co-creators" refers to users' direct involvement in the development and/or improvement of the social innovation as one partner of many stakeholders. This category is clearly to differentiate from *users as innovators*, where the users are the initiators and core developers of the solution, while in later phases of the innovation process the social innovation may have been adopted by other organisations to advance its implementation. The share of users as innovators (13%) supports the insight from the policy field reports that *"[i]ndividuals such as citizens, farmers and private homeowners are involved in initiating social innovations"* (Scoppetta 2015, p. 14). Besides, *users as adapters*, i.e. personalisation of readily available solutions, have been identified in 10% of the cases. Finally, and not surprisingly, users as funders are of minor relevance.

At the same time the concept of social innovation has to be integrated in and is fostering societal engagement. Therefore, half of the mapped social initiatives are related to networks, social movements, umbrella organisations, and policy programmes.




Empowerment and human resources and knowledge development represent one of the core challenges of social innovation initiatives all over Europe and also in other world regions (stated also in the Policy Field and Regional Reports). A central concern of the initiatives is about the people involved, be it promoters or users, and how their competences and capacities to act can be increased.

### 5. Complexity of the Innovation Processes and Modes of Governance

Alongside with growing importance of social innovation and the growing variety of actors involved within the innovation process we perceive a growing *awareness of the complexity* of innovation processes, along with *increasing demands as far as the management and*

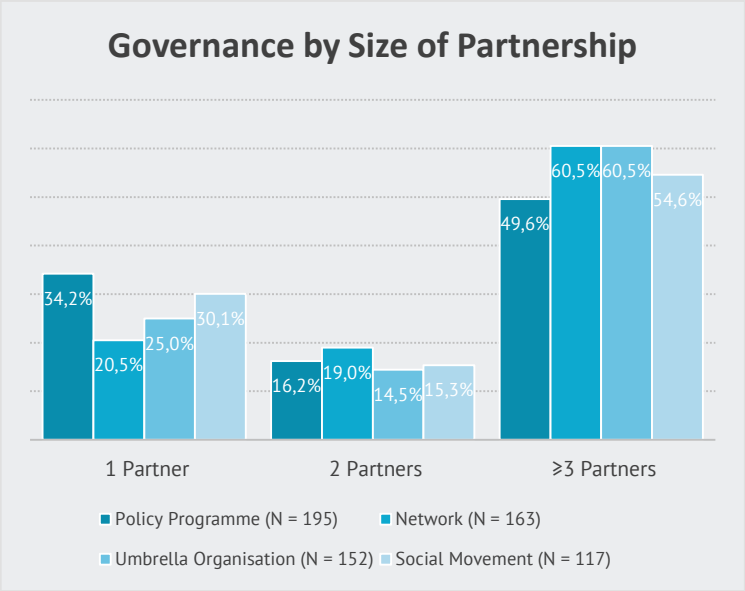
*governance* of innovation are concerned. In this regard, the question arises "which governance structures support the growth of social innovations that are set as combined actions" (Scoppetta et al. 2014, p. 92).

Many Policy Field Reports confirm that the societal and governance systems, in which the social innovations are embedded, are complex and the problems addressed are deeply rooted in established practices and institutions. At the same time we have to admit that many initiatives are small in scale. Therefore - as we emphasized in the Critical Literature Review (Butzin et al. 2014, p. 154) - to better understand this relationship between social innovation and social change we have to analyse the social innovation's embeddedness in a dense network of existing practices, routines, institutions and context conditions.

To unfold the potential of social innovation it is important to develop a comprehensive understanding of social innovation. Considering the complexity of innovation processes, we need to focus on the cross-sector dynamics of social innovation and the diversity of actors and their roles and functions within the innovation process (including their interaction in networks etc.) on the one hand and the framework conditions, including governance models, addressed societal needs and challenges, resources, capabilities and constraints, on the other hand.

In order to approach the distinct levels of governance in social innovation the analysis covered two dimensions, namely "governance as framework" and "governance as process". The former refers to given governance schemes shaped by the European, national and regional governance system in which the social innovation emerges, but also by the policy field. The already mentioned incorporation of social innovations in social movements, policy programmes, umbrella organisations and networks (see key finding 4) could be seen as governance frames and reveal:

- that policy programmes are the dominant governance framework in which social innovation initiatives are embedded and
- that policy programmes are the central governance frame *across* all policy fields, except for the policy field Poverty Reduction & Sustainable Development where umbrella organisations emerge as most relevant.




Taking a closer look at the governance frameworks (in relation to the size of the partnership/alliance) reveals that initiatives with only one partner are more often related to policy programmes (34%) compared to the other governance frames, whereas

small alliances are slightly more often related to networks (19%). The proportion of partnerships of three or more actors embedded in networks and umbrella organisations are equally high (61%), while their relation to social movements (55%) and policy programmes (50%) lag slightly behind.

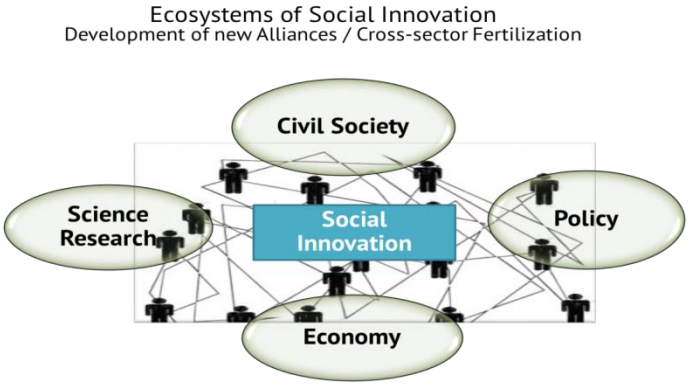
Governance as a process refers to the social innovation initiative itself where (self-) governance is practiced. The levels analysed comprise the strategic and operational management, the implementation structure as well as the organisational background. Main findings are:

- Social innovation initiatives' governance is characterised by rather formal structures in form of executive boards and directors.
- Operative management of initiatives follows a "project logic" with project and task management, but little coordination.
- Initiatives implementation is characterised by network-like, democratic structures.
- The majority of initiatives bases on a public entity as organisational background.

## 6. Emerging Ecosystems

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

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




A comprehensive understanding of social innovation brings the different societal sectors and the surrounding ecosystem for social innovation on the scene. The ecosystem of social

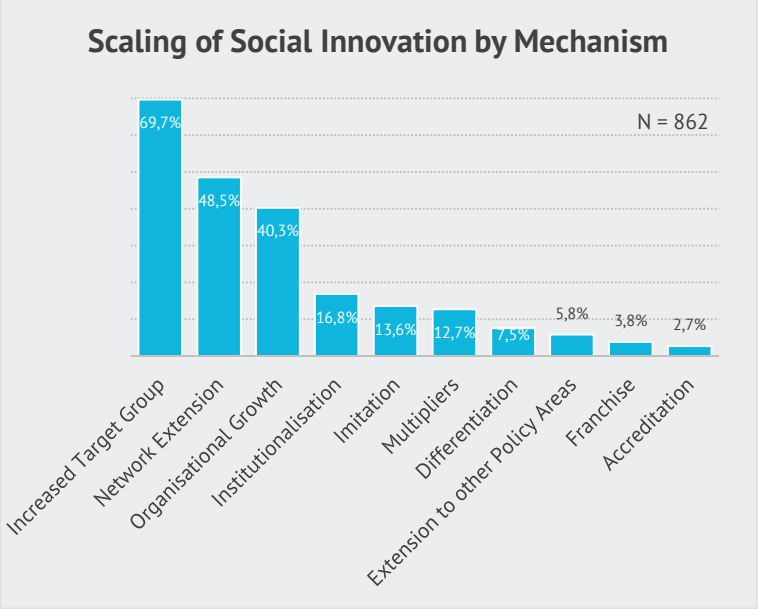
innovation "is in very different stages of development across Europe, however. In all countries, though, the ecosystem is under development and there are a number of important factors enabling the development of social innovation, including important support and impetus from the EU" (Boelman/Heales 2015, p. 7).

It is one of the key tasks of social innovation research to work on the theoretical foundations of the concept and to investigate how social innovations are created, introduced into society, diffused and sustained. Once again, a key question is about the roles and functions of different societal sectors as well as relations and interactions among them.

### 7. Levels of Intervention

In order to understand the process of social innovation and how social innovations lead to (transformative) social change, we have to distinguish between three analytical levels: The first level concerns the role of the actors, their intention and their strategies within the initiatives and projects. The second level is the interplay between the different actors involved in the related practice. In this case we have different actors with different (supporting or opposing) interest and strategies that interact in different modes (cooperation, competition, conflict) of governance. The third level is about politics in the policy field and beyond.

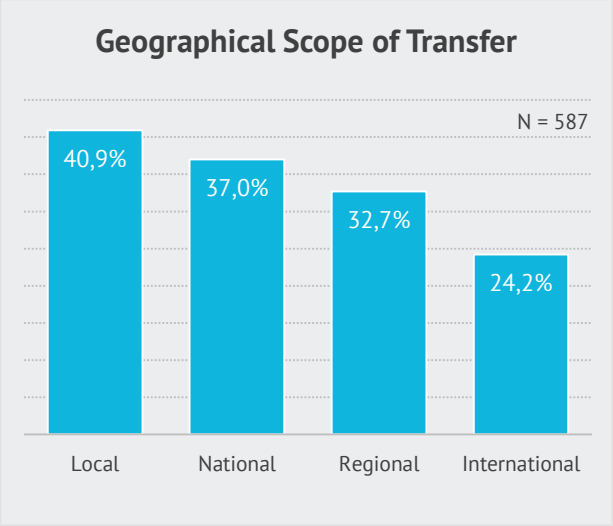
Politics tries to intervene in the process of social innovation in order to give it a direction that fits with the political or societal values. This can mean both: to support social innovation that promises better solutions for societal challenges and/or to avoid social innovations that challenge the given institutional setting. Taking the policy field perspective as empirical core activity of SI-DRIVE, it is not surprising that public authorities play an important role in the mapped initiatives (see key finding 3). To understand what social innovations are in fact doing, we started with analysing the current situation e.g. how the 'market' and 'public policy' are functioning and interacting and what constitute main future challenges. The question is which issues are not solved by this dominant (policy, delivery and innovation) model. It is also important to understand how technological and economic/ business (and other) innovations are developed to tackle the new issues in a policy field and which solutions are generated by citizens, social entrepreneurs, civil society organisations, localities etc., for the most urgent problems. These solutions

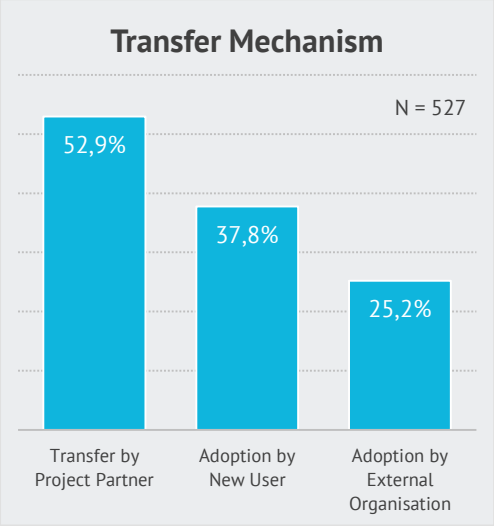


might be niche innovations and there might be strong impediments from policy makers or from private partners limiting the capabilities of actors to develop and implement social innovation on a higher scale. So the question of how to scale up social innovations to become part of a transformative change is a very important topic.

In total, 90% of the initiatives are scaling in one or the other way, whereby *increasing the target group* is with a share of 70% by far the most applied scaling mechanism. At some distance, network extension ranks second with a share of 49%. This result confirms that *"upscaling of social innovations should follow the connection with the other helices"* (Dhondt/ Oeij 2014, p.140).[3] Organisational growth as a scaling mechanism ranks third (40%).

Closely related to scaling is the transfer of solutions, which next to the outlined aspects reflects the dynamics of social innovation processes. The analysis reveals that two of three initiatives transferred their solution in one or the other way. Thus, it can be assumed that transfer is a common practice of the mapped cases. From a spatial perspective, however, it becomes evident that the majority of social innovation initiatives remains local (41%), 33% cases transfer their solutions at the regional scale. Accordingly, the subnational level can be considered the main scale. With a share of 37%, transfer at national level ranks second, while the international level ranks fourth (24%).




With regard to the mechanism through which the solutions are transferred, with a share of 53% transfer by project partners prevails, followed by the adoption of the solution by new users (38%) and external organisations (25%). When asked for drivers of the transfer, the picture suggests that nearly in half of the cases for which we could analyse transfer mechanisms the transfer is done by project partners, and another half by external partners.

Furthermore, our findings substantiate that "*[s]ocial innovation from a micro perspective is linked with bottom up initiatives of citizens, civil servants and local stakeholders. Upscaling and*

[3] From a New Public Management perspective the authors draw on Carayannis and Campell's (2011) «Quadruple helix approach» that differentiates between four helices: academia (first helix), industry (second helix), state (third helix) and civil society (forth helix).

*dissemination seldom occurs, because this demands 'imitation' and 'social contagion' on a larger scale. At macro level we observe the take up of social innovation by public bodies like national and European governments"* (Dhondt/ Oeij 2014,, p. 140). Hitherto, scaling activities that overcome the limits of the single activity seem to be of less importance: Institutionalisation was named in 17% of the case, imitation and multipliers approx. 13% each and spread to further policy areas ranks last with a share as low as 5%.

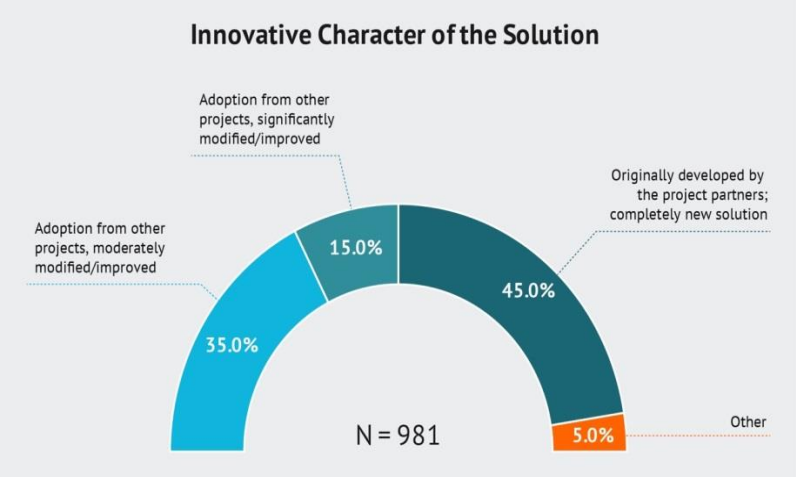
As already stated in the Critical Literature Review (Butzin et al. 2014, p.153) "*[t]he decisive criterion in a social invention becoming a social innovation is its institutionalization or its transformation into a social fact (Durkheim 1984), in most cases through planned and coordinated social action. […] The successful implementation and/or active dissemination of a new social fact usually follows targeted intervention, but can occur also through unplanned diffusion (Greenhalgh et al. 2004) – how much this is the case will be subject to research."*

## 8. Practice Fields

In the SI-DRIVE project we developed the concept of the practice field defined as a general type of different initiatives within one thematic area at meso level for analysing the complex process of interaction of different innovation activities (see SI-DRIVE approach). While an initiative is a *single* and concrete implementation of a solution to respond to social demands, societal challenges or systemic change (e.g. Muhammed Yunus's Grameen Bank which lends micro-credits to poor farmers for improving their economic condition). A practice field expresses general characteristics common to different projects (e.g. micro-credit systems). Only by taking the broader perspective of a practise field we will be able to get deeper insights into upcoming trends and emerging areas for social innovation and their impact on social change.

The practice field approach allows analysing the processes of diffusion beyond the micro-level of single small scale social innovation case studies and a data collection at a more societal level, where wider user groups and a certain societal impact has been reached and where moments of societal change are observable. At the same the approach allows to study the interplay between micro or small scale developments and their merger at the macro-level.

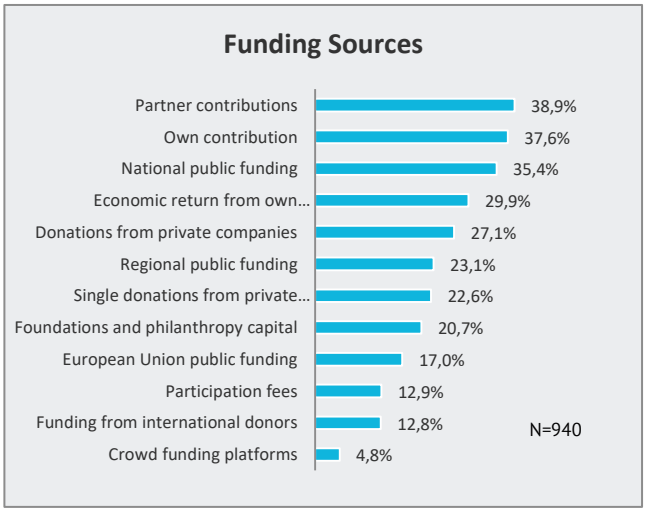
Whereas traditional social innovation and diffusion research offers ex-post explanations of how individual innovations have ended up in social practice, the goal here is to develop approaches to understanding the genesis of innovations from the *broad range of social practice*. Special attention should be paid



to multiple innovation streams, fed by an evolutionary interplay of invention and imitation. There is an assumed strong interactivity in the process of innovation in which imitation and adoption of solutions from other projects and initiatives plays an important role and creates new streams of innovation that mutually reinforce each other. This is underlined by our empirical data: Almost half of the initiatives is creating brand new solutions, almost the same number of initiatives moderately or significantly modifies existing ones.

## 9. Resources and Barriers

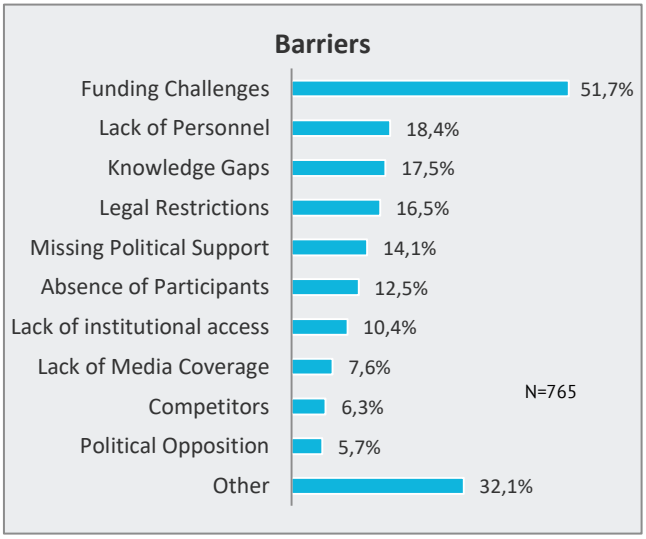
The potential and development of social innovations is based on the resources, capabilities, drivers and constraints they have. The global mapping reveals a wide range of different financial and personnel resources (including volunteers, employees, external advisor etc.) which form the basis for social innovation initiatives. There are differences in the budget the initiatives can deal with and a variety of funding sources.




The main funding sources are internal contributions of the initiatives (own and partner contributions) supplemented by (European, national, regional) public funding. Civil society (foundations, philanthropy capital, international and individual donors) are also a highly relevant funding source. Economy related funding sources (donations from private companies, economic return from own products or services, participant fees, and of minor relevance crowd funding) round up the broad picture of a highly diverse combination of funding sources - which is not a kind of intended risk diversification but a search for any kind of funding.

The mapping demonstrates that a variety of barriers continue to exist. The most frequently mentioned barriers *focus on the initiative* itself (level 1): lack of funding, lack of personal, knowledge gaps.

Although there is a mix of funding sources and funding is not the main driver (as mentioned above), *funding is by far the main challenge* of the social innovations. More than half of the cases which named barriers are concerned with this.



Against the background that empowerment, human resources, and knowledge are the main crosscutting themes, the appointed lack of personnel and knowledge gaps are relevant barriers as well.

Legal restrictions and lack of policy support are not in the main focus which indicates that the process dynamic is on the level of the initiative, and only in a minority of cases a dynamic that challenges policy or practice fields can be assumed (level 2 and 3). At the same time the policy and regional reports reveal a broader problem setting focusing on the (legal)framework conditions and mind-sets that hinder social innovation activities to unfold their potential (contested terrain).

## 10. Framework Conditions and Enabling Factors – Building Blocks for an Ecosystem of Social Innovation

Against the background, the mapping survey, the Policy Field Reports and the Regional Report show a broad range of factors enabling social innovation including (legal) framework conditions, mind-sets/cultural patterns and others as well:

- **Active civil society / inspired and entrepreneurial individuals**. The importance of individuals and groups at the grassroots level is often at the heart of social innovation. As such a country which promotes, encourages and develops an active civil society and proactive individuals creates an enabling environment for social innovation.
- **Funding**. Access to finance is often crucial for developing new social innovations, but also for the other phases in the innovation cycle (sharing information for example). The increasing availability of EU funds, in particular for social innovation, has been an important factor across Europe. In some countries there are also financial incentives available from the bilateral donor community which contributes to the piloting of new innovative initiatives.
- **New technologies**. New technologies offer new opportunities for social innovation. The potential of social media and mobile technologies could be a driver of social innovations.
- **Networks and platforms for cooperation** between different stakeholders. Many social needs and challenges can be regarded as wicked problems, so connecting and facilitating collaboration between stakeholders is of huge value. Networks also provide routes for sharing experiences and learning from best practice at a local, national and international level.
- **A supportive legislative environment.** Legislation can be used as a force to change or to give 'space' to new experiments. In some instances, recent economic crises and constraints on public finances have also led to structural reforms, and the search for new, innovative solutions and mechanisms. In the Western Balkans and some countries in Eastern Europe, political change over the last 20-30 years has also led to a positive regulatory reform.
- **A sense of urgency**. Many social innovations respond to social needs and crises which push issues up the public and political agenda. Increased focus and attention on an issue can help to enable new, innovative approaches to gain traction or acceptability in the face of the (apparent) failure of traditional solutions.

- **Political change**. This is particularly evident in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe where the transition from one system to another, as well as the process of EU integration, have led to significant change in all areas of governance and public policy. It is also evident on a smaller scale elsewhere in Europe as different governments take a more or less supportive approach to things like the role of civil society.

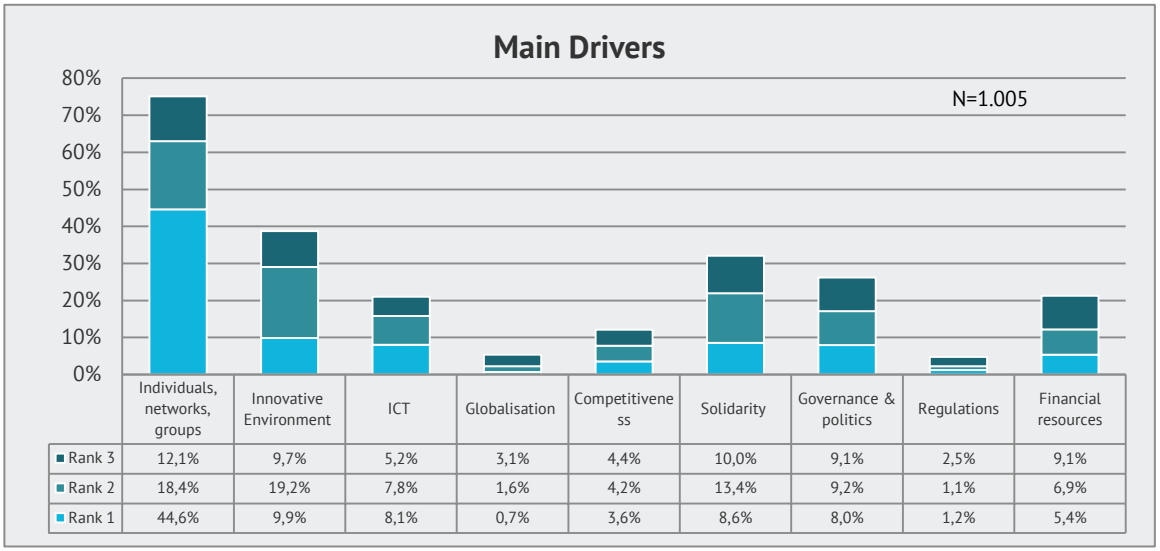
These factors correspond with other factors which constrain social innovation, which are also relatively common across **Europe and beyond**:

- **Poor funding models.** Above and beyond a complete lack of funding, social innovation is often constrained by poor funding models. This particularly includes a lack of second-round financing for projects that would enable proper piloting and roll-out/ scaling of solutions. Short-term funding all too often leads to short-term projects which do not have time to achieve or demonstrate their potential impact. A related aspect is the complexity of obtaining funding, particularly from the EU or other major funders, which often overstretches the resources and capabilities of smaller innovators. This is compounded when matched financing is required. There is a need for more innovative funding programmes that will better meet the needs of social innovators in terms of their size as well as structures (e.g. support for hybrid organisations)
- **Resistance to change/ risk aversion**. Centralized and hierarchical structures, typically government, are often identified as barriers to change. This can be due to the slow and bureaucratic nature of decision-making itself or, in some policy fields such as health, due to a high degree of risk aversion
- **Conflicts of interest.** While collaboration across sectors and with multiple stakeholders can lead to highly successful social innovations, it can also lead to tensions arising from mixed objectives. The complex social problems, which the innovations are trying to tackle, often mean that stakeholders from multiple policy fields are involved and, for example, investments in one area will lead to benefits in others, with few mechanisms in place to recognise this appropriately
- **Poor knowledge sharing.** The social innovation community often recognises that it has still got more to do in terms of effectively sharing knowledge, examples and best practice. There is also still much to be done in terms of learning from failures so that other innovators do not repeat mistakes.

**11. Social Innovation Initiatives - Driven by Problems and depending on Individuals**

While the development of technological innovation is a self-driving dynamic process motivated by the new possibilities of technologies, social innovation processes are more problem-driven. The main motivation and trigger for starting, initiating and running a social innovation is the need to respond to a specific societal challenge or a local social demand - being by far more relevant than having an inspiring new idea, a policy incentive (like a policy programme or strategy), a social movement focusing on specific issues or taking advantage of new technologies for tackling social problems.

Looking at the concrete drivers of the project, it becomes evident that by far individual persons, groups and networks are the main and most important force of driving social innovations. 75% of the initiatives rank this driver among their top 3. That implies that the initiatives and their sustainability are *highly dependent on these actors*, the more so, because social innovations are not embedded in public innovation programmes yet.




| | Individuals, networks, groups | Innovative Environment | ICT | Globalisation | Competitiveness | Solidarity | Governance & politics | Regulations | Financial resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank 3 | 12,1% | 9,7% | 5,2% | 3,1% | 4,4% | 10,0% | 9,1% | 2,5% | 9,1% |
| Rank 2 | 18,4% | 19,2% | 7,8% | 1,6% | 4,2% | 13,4% | 9,2% | 1,1% | 6,9% |
| Rank 1 | 44,6% | 9,9% | 8,1% | 0,7% | 3,6% | 8,6% | 8,0% | 1,2% | 5,4% |

Additionally, it had to be stressed that - different from technological innovation – science and research are not having a relevant role as a trigger or driver (this is underlined by the low number of involved universities and research institutions as partners of initiatives).

# 4 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The results of the global mapping reveal the importance of social innovation addressing social, economic, political and environmental challenges of the 21st century on a global scale. Social innovation has become a ubiquitous concept with high dynamics.

At the same time, there is an increased awareness of the size of the challenges modern societies are facing and the complexity of innovation processes. Like technological innovations, successful social innovations are based on a lot of presuppositions and require appropriate infrastructures and resources. Moreover, *social innovations* are requiring specific conditions because they aim at activating, fostering, and utilizing the *innovation potential of the whole society*. Therefore, new ways of developing and diffusing social innovations are necessary (e.g. design thinking, innovation labs etc.) as well as additional far reaching resources, in order to unlock the potential of social innovation in society and to enable participation of the relevant actors and civil society.

This is not only a matter of *appropriate funding* but also of *new participation and collaboration structures, co-creation and user involvement, empowerment and human resources development*. Attention has to be paid to the invention and its development as well as its diffusion and imitation. From this innovation process and development perspective resources, capabilities and constraints, drivers and barriers are not only relevant for the invention and implementation but also for scaling and diffusion of successful innovations.

The mapping demonstrates that social innovation processes and the underlying resources, capabilities and constraints are related to the actors of the different sectors of the social innovation ecosystem. This includes a new role of public policy and government for creating suitable framework and support structures, the integration of resources of the economy and civil society as well as supporting measures by science and universities (e.g. education for social innovation performance, know-how transfer).

The main question evolving from the theoretical review is: How can we enhance the 'innovation capacity of society' and 'how can we empower citizens'? Which resources and capabilities are necessary for the development of brand new innovations? How can these resources and capabilities be used for diffusion, adaptation and imitation of innovations? While civil society as an innovation actor is a widely untapped area, we have to put a strong research focus on the role of civil society (citizens, non-governmental and not for profit organisations (NGOs, NPOs) social movements, communities) in the innovation process.

The mapping reveals that already a wide range of different financial and personnel resources (including volunteers, employees, external advisor etc.) exist. They build the ground for many successful social innovation initiatives. Yet, there are big differences in the budget the initiatives can deal with and a variety of funding sources. The growing importance of social innovations is especially indicated by *emergence of infrastructures and institutions that promote social innovations and provide a variety of funding and support structures*.

At the same time the mapping reveals an underdeveloped status of *conceptualisation and institutionalisation*. There is no shared understanding of social innovation (including a clear differentiation from other concepts such as social entrepreneurship or technology innovation) and no uptake/integration in a comprehensive (social) innovation policy. Policy field related documents of public authorities such as the European Commission, the United Nations, the OECD, the World Bank, etc. often even do not refer to social innovations (exceptions are Horizon 2020 documents as well as publications of some DGs). Only in a few countries as e.g. Columbia, Germany, Italy, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA, social innovation has been taken up by politics. But in most of the countries there are no policy institutions with direct responsibility for Social Innovation. The initiatives and their sustainability are *highly dependent on these actors*, because social innovations are not embedded in public innovation programmes yet.

Even though a *broad spectrum of social innovations* is present in the policy fields, all Policy Field Reports of SI-DRIVE, in addition, notify an *unclear understanding of the concept of social innovation*, report on social innovations in their policy fields even if they are not called social innovations and call for further social innovations to respond to the societal challenges the world is facing.

The good news is that there is an increasing awareness and promotion of social innovation: In many countries, the promotion of social innovation itself by the EU has served as a driver and opportunity for various actors to embrace new ways of working, access new funding streams, and promote change at a national level. Even though a lot has been done during the last years, there are still some important steps to take in order to move social innovation from the margin to the mainstream of the political agenda.

The absence of a comprehensive social innovation policy corresponds with the *low maturity status of the social innovation ecosystems*. While social innovation initiatives and practices have drawn a lot of attention within the last years in the different world regions, being imitated by manifold actors and networks of actors and diffused widely through different societal subareas, the ecosystem of social innovation "is in very different stages of development across Europe, however. In all countries, though, the ecosystem is under development and there are a number of important factors enabling the development of social innovation, including important support and impetus from the EU" (Boelman/Heales 2015, p. 7). One of the major challenges will be the development of these eco-systems.

This also raises the question of the role of universities in social innovation processes. The marginal engagement of research and education facilities is in strong contrast to their essential role as knowledge providers in classical innovation processes and as one actor of the triple helix model. That means that at this time we find an uncompleted eco-system of social innovation (quadruple helix) with one important pillar missing. It will be a major challenge for the development of social innovation to ensure a much higher involvement of research and education facilities. This also includes the question of new modes of knowledge production and scientific co-creation of knowledge aiming at an integration of practitioners and social innovators in the innovation processes.

Another important challenge for social innovation policy and research is the unsatisfactory status of conceptualisation. SI-DRIVE is based on a comprehensive concept of social innovation. The critical literature review revealed that social innovation has many different (and sometimes conflicting) meanings, spanning a variety of areas such as innovation studies, management and organisational research, the field of workplace and quality of working life, as part of the social economy, in sustainable development, or as an aspect of local competitiveness and territorial development (Howaldt et al. 2014a). The international academic debate has seen a significant upswing in recent years in light of increasing political interest in the concept of social innovation (Howaldt/Schwarz 2010; Franz et al. 2012; Moulaert et al. 2013). However, this has not resulted in any clarity.

This lack of consensus mainly has to do with different understandings of the notion of the 'social'. In this regard, we argue that with social innovations the new does not manifest itself in the medium of technological artefacts but at the level of social practices. If it is accepted that the invention and diffusion of the steam engine, the computer or the smartphone should be regarded differently from the invention and social spread of a national system of healthcare provision, the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) or a system of micro financing, then it stands to reason that there is an intrinsic difference between technological and social innovations.

In this perspective, we describe social innovation as a new combination and/or new configuration of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors in an intentional targeted manner with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices. An innovation is therefore social to the extent that it, conveyed by the market or "non/without profit", is socially accepted and diffused throughout society or in certain societal sub-areas, transformed depending on circumstances and ultimately institutionalized as new social practice or made routine. As every other innovation, 'new' does not necessarily mean 'good' or 'socially desirable' in an extensive and normative sense. According the actors' practical rationale, social attributions for social innovations are generally uncertain (Howaldt/Schwarz 2010, p. 26).

The results of the first empirical research phase of SI-DRIVE demonstrated that this approach is helpful in integrating the manifold meanings of social innovation under *a shared umbrella definition* based on and leading to a common concept and framework. At the same time, it gives us the opportunity to understand the complexity and embeddedness of social innovation processes in a dense network of existing practices and institutions as a precondition for a better understanding of the relationship between social innovation and social change.

In this context the mapping reveals the capacities of social innovations to modify or even re-direct social change and to empower people – i.e. to address a wide variety of stakeholder groups, as well as the broader public, in order to improve social cohesion and to allow for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The mapping shed light on the great many, often nameless but still important, social innovations responding to specific and every-day social demands or *incremental* innovations. The distinction between three different output levels is taken up by the SI-DRIVE project, but also has to be modified to

some extent. There is a strong relationship between social demands, unmet social needs societal challenges and transformative social change in different policy fields and approaches. However, the very idea of systemic change implies that multiple institutions, norms and practices will be involved, and that multiple kinds of complementary innovations would have to be introduced in order to copy with the high complexity of problems which require structural changes in society. Only then we will be able to fulfil the excessive expectations of ground-breaking *systemic* social innovations (or *radical* innovations in the common language of innovation theory and research), and transformative change.

Against the background of the objectives of the SI-DRIVE project it will be also crucial to further research why political intervention may or might *not* work in some fields of social innovation, and where or when prevailing trajectories of societal variance and respective policies exhibit impediments to social innovation. Social innovation requires also appropriate *social innovation policies*. The traditional framework for public administration of rules and regulations needs new ideas and methods. Many potential social innovations (ideas) are hindered by traditional approaches in public policies. If Europe wants to tackle the challenges as documented through its Strategy for Smart, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth as well as its specific Flagship Initiatives, policy makers need to understand how to involve and make use of the participation of citizens to serve the public good (Bourgon 2011). Based on accurate integration of conceptual and empirical knowledge, in the end SI-DRIVE will offer a coherent *policy strategy platform* for policy makers

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# ABOUT SI-DRIVE

**Social Innovation – Driving Force of Social Change**", in short **SI-DRIVE**, is a research project aimed at extending knowledge about social innovation in three major directions:

- Integrating theories and research methodologies to advance understanding of social innovation leading to a comprehensive new paradigm of innovation.
- Undertaking European and global mapping of social innovation, thereby addressing different social, economic, cultural, historical and religious contexts in eight major world regions.
- Ensuring relevance for policy makers and practitioners through in-depth analyses and case studies in seven policy fields, with cross European and world region comparisons, foresight and policy round tables.

In 2016 SI-DRIVE involves 25 partners: 15 partners from 11 EU Member States and 11 partners from other parts of the world. The approach adopted ensures cyclical iteration between theory development, methodological improvements, and policy recommendations.

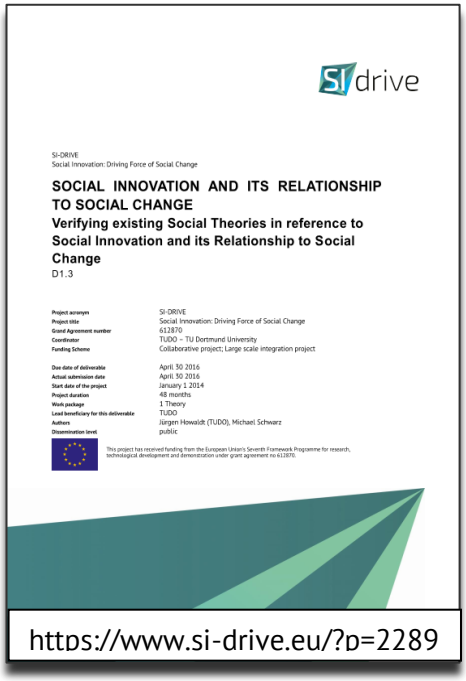
Research is dedicated to seven major policy fields: (1) Education and Lifelong Learning (2) Employment (3) Environment and climate change (4) Energy (5) Transport and mobility (6) Health and social care (7) Poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The approach adopted ensures cyclical iteration between theory development, methodological improvements, and policy recommendations. Two mapping exercises at the European and the global level are carried out in the frame of SI-DRIVE: Initial mapping captures basic information of about 1000+ actual social innovations from a wide variety of sources worldwide, leading to a typology of social innovation. Subsequent mapping will use the typology to focus on well documented social innovation, leading to the selection of 70 cases for in-depth analysis in the seven SI-DRIVE policy areas. These case studies will be further analysed, used in stakeholder dialogues in seven policy field platforms and in analysis of cross-cutting dimensions (e.g. gender, diversity, ICT), carefully taking into account cross-sector relevance (private, public, civil sectors), and future impact.

The outcomes of SI-DRIVE will cover a broad range of research dimensions, impacting particularly in terms of changing society and empowerment, and contributing to the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

www.si-drive.eu

# KEY PUBLICATIONS



SI-DRIVE
Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change

**SOCIAL INNOVATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL CHANGE**
**Verifying existing Social Theories in reference to Social Innovation and its Relationship to Social Change**
D1.3

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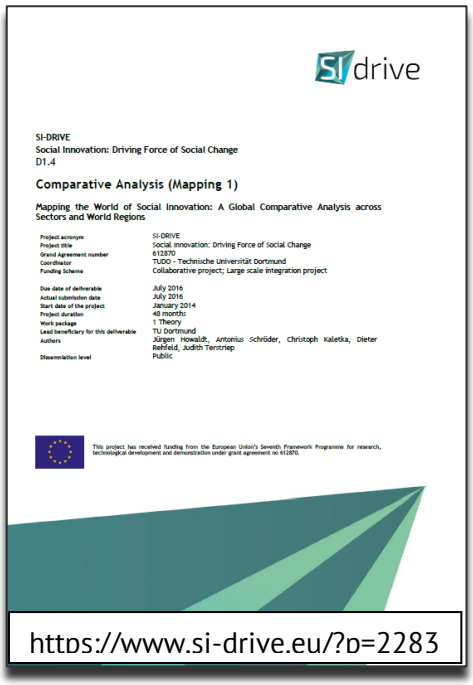

SI-DRIVE
Social Innovation: Driving Force of Social Change
D1.4

**Comparative Analysis (Mapping 1)**

Mapping the World of Social Innovation: A Global Comparative Analysis across Sectors and World Regions

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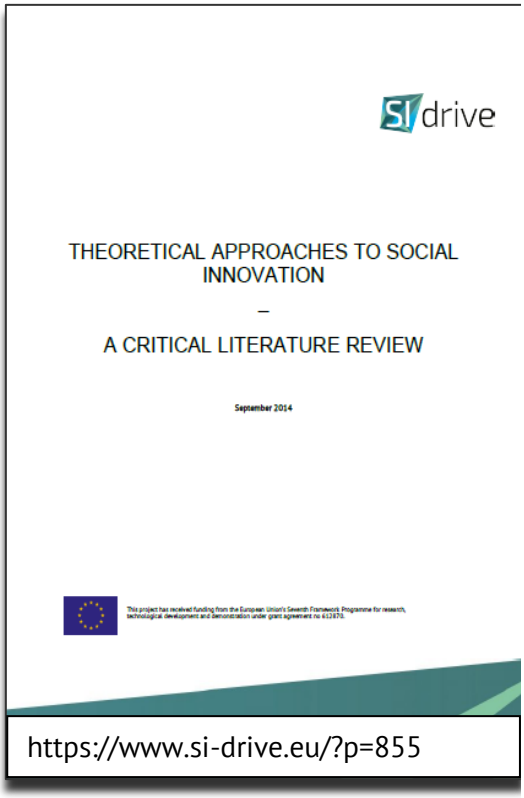

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