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**The role and management of physical space in social innovation**

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## INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims at exploring the role of physical spaces in social entrepreneurship and innovation projects in Europe. In particular, the research aims at investigating how often the management of physical space recurs in social innovation projects and initiatives in Europe, what are business models behind “space-centered” social innovation projects, and what is the social impact generated by those projects.

Social innovation has gained prominence in the last decade both in terms of new initiatives promoted but also as priority in national and European policy agendas. Social innovation initiatives are quite diverse, being promoted by individuals or groups of citizens and may operate in the different fields – healthcare, family care, education, etc-. In all cases, social innovation projects propose new solutions to answer social needs and problems. Those solutions can be products, services, new production or delivery methods, new forms of organizations or of relations among social actors.

As in traditional profit-driven businesses, virtual communication represent the main instrument for communication, collaboration, sharing of competences, experiences, ideas and projects. This is true also for most social innovation projects which rely on web-based solutions and social media for deployment of services, establishment of networks of partners and of users, or for the organization of work and social business.

In parallel in the last decade, big corporate organizations started reconsidering the importance of physical proximity and of face-to-face interaction in enhancing creativity and work performance. As practitioner in European research projects and as founder and CEO of a small company, I also experienced the benefits of face-to-face collaboration and the limits of virtual communication. In 2009 I established a company specialized in the development and management of European funded research and innovation projects. Since its establishment, the company was structured around two offices, one in Brussels and one in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: as CEO I was travelling frequently from one location to the other. I realized that working at distance had a clear cost in terms of coordination but also of productivity and performance of the whole staff. I decided thus to move the core of human resources to one location only and I empirically observed the advantages of being able to work side by side with my colleagues. This led me to think that physical proximity and face-to-face interaction matter in business and that it should matter even more in social innovation initiatives or ventures in which social capital is even more important.

I thus started exploring the role of physical proximity in innovation and more specifically in social innovation. The interest in physical spaces emerged later on and again from an academic and practitioner perspective: on one side, I realized literature on social innovation did not address the topic of physical proximity. At the same time, I wanted to set up a social business focused on space. The need I wanted to answer was a personal one: I just delivered my first baby, I was breast-feeding and had to work from home. I was dependent from the support of my mother and my partner's parents and conciliating professional and personal duties was extremely difficult and tiring. I needed to separate the time (and space) dedicated to work and to maternity. I needed a space which was enough close to my daughter, since I was breastfeeding, and appropriate for work. Renting an office was not an option: it was difficult to find a nice close place at a reasonable price. By talking with other women, I realized that was the need of many mother-researchers, entrepreneur, and possibly of mothers-employees willing to stay closer to their children after maternity leave. I spotted a social need and further elaborated on it: not only women but also men possibly need or care to be able to better conciliate family, work and personal time. Particularly in cities, what happens is that individuals spend every day too much time commuting from children garden to work, and then to supermarket or to the gym. I wanted to make life of individuals with children easier by opening a "community" space where people could work, leave their children and benefit of other "family-friendly" services such as Joint purchasing groups, or laundry services, etc. In my vision, the community living the space would have co-created the services to be delivered. I started investigating about similar projects on one side and started planning my social business. I thus identified other social innovation projects which are developed around a physical space, or say in other words, in which the physical space is the "service" provided.

The two academic and practice paths I took, led me to understand that the acquisition and maintenance of the physical space represent an issue in financial and management terms. This is true for traditional profit-oriented organizations but is even more challenging for organizations driven by social purposes and with hybrid business models such as social ventures. I thus wanted to understand how successful and unsuccessful social innovation ventures providing a kind of "space-based service" had managed from a management and financial perspective the cost of space.

In traditional businesses, performance is measured firstly through profit. Strategies and operational plans are designed against estimation of profit and reassessed based on consumptive information. Instead, in social businesses, social results are the main indicator of performance. Social innovation initiatives must achieve a positive social impact: improving life of individuals, communities or of the environment. This impact can be translated in economic terms but the metrics developed so far are not able to capture the multiplicity of social impact. Some results of social innovation ventures are easy to be measured because they are tangible, but for some others measurement efforts need to build ad hoc indicators. In some other cases, impact is intangible and thus even more difficult – if not impossible –

to be measured. Social impact measurement is fundamental for social business to be accountable towards public and/or private investors. The third main aim of my research is thus also to investigate the impact generated by “space-centered” social innovation projects.

## **I - Research objectives**

Despite of the increasing interesting in social innovation, previous studies missed to tackle *space* as a specific *barrier* and *asset* of social innovation activities. In this sense, this research aims at filling a gap in the conceptual framework of social innovation, analysing how physical space is managed in social innovation ventures and to which extent physical space represent not only a physical asset but might generate also intangible assets.

On the basis of the insights gained, my research aims at describing business models for social innovation projects centered around the acquisition and maintenance of a physical space where diverse services might be delivered. The description of the business models is based on the analysis of practices and the added value of this work lies in the codification of those practices.

On the other side, the analysis performed and the case studies building focused on the social impact generated by “space-centered” project. Social impact is a form of measurement for value in social innovation projects. Social impact might affect the direct users and beneficiaries of the project but also other groups, such as the neighbour community, other profit and non-profit organizations, and civil society to a larger extent. For this reason, measuring the social impact is still a challenge for academics, practitioners and policy makers. The aim of this work is to observe and describe social impact generated by “space-centered” project and identify if any specific impact is directly related to the spatial dimension.

The concept of social innovation has been widely explored in social sciences across a variety of disciplines – management, political sciences, not-for-profit studies, sociology and economics. Praxis in social innovation research is in fact often characterised by multi-disciplinarity and cross-sector collaboration. For this reason, my thesis would produce contributions in at least three fields of study: innovation study, management theory and public policies.

Despite of the limitations given by rare literature on the topic – which in turn generates by the novelty of the theme – and by the limited number of cases studies, the results of this work are of interest both for practitioners – social entrepreneurs, social innovation supporting organizations – and for policy makers.

Future research should explore the role of physical space with the building of a wider number of case studies in Europe and outside and to compare cases in different institutional and normative contexts (for instance by analysing real estate markers). Research supporting policy making would need to integrate the results and considerations on “physical space” in the framework of urban and rural development policies.

## **II - Research methodology**

Firstly, a review of existing literature has been performed to describe social innovation and adopt a definition for the purposes of this work. The state-of-the-art which I aimed at depicting with the literature review implies a multi-disciplinary and a multi-actor perspective, which includes works and analysis sometimes escaping the academic dimension. The desk research has covered in fact academic and policy publications along with grey material. Academic publications include different disciplines: innovation, management, sociology, spatial geography, urban studies, behavioural analysis and psychology. Policy publications concern mainly the studies, analysis, recommendations produced by the European Commission and by national governments.

Literature review has also been done to describe the main knowledge available on the role of physical proximity and face-to-face interaction in innovation. In this case also literature is not wide: physical proximity is correlated more with creativity and performance in teams than directly with innovation. With respect to “space” literature is instead quite wide but the concept of space might differ substantially, addressing “territories”, public space and less often close physical space, which is instead the focus of this thesis. Nonetheless I have identified few works which represent the knowledge foundation supporting the relevance of the research questions first and the drawing of conclusions.

Following the literature review, I engaged in an empirical observation of meaningful social innovation projects. This step aimed at building a first limited taxonomy of social innovation projects and compare that with a classification of social innovation projects produced in 2014 by the European Commission. To build the taxonomy, I used two main sources: the European Social Innovation competitions run in 2013, 2014, 2015 and the catalogue of 75 projects produced by the European project WILCO. I thus selected 52 projects (I excluded from the taxonomy those projects which do not really configure as social innovation projects, but were rather short pilot initiatives or promoted only by the public sector) and organized those in a database, structured on the following information: country, type of sector, presence of physical space element, presence of “sharing of physical space”. The database included contact details for each project, since in many cases I had to contact founders for verify the existence of the business/projects. For each project I performed a netnographic research, seeking for information on the type of service delivered, the organizational form adopted, the number of founders, etc. This exercise allowed me to assess if the initiative was still ongoing, the social value proposed and the



relevance of “space”. As matter of fact, the taxonomy I built presents the main limitation given by the reduced number of initiatives reported.

I finally developed three case studies (Piano C and Spazio Giardini Margherita in Italy, Yalla Trappan in Sweden) among those included in the taxonomy and those identified through the analysis of the Culturability call, the unique call for proposals supporting social innovation projects focused on recuperation of spaces. To build the case studies I have used primary and secondary sources and interviews with the founders or managers of the ventures. In the case of Piano C, Spazio Giardini Margherita and I also visited the venue.

## **CHAPTER 1 – SOCIAL INNOVATION IN LITERATURE**

### **1.1 The evolution of innovation**

In the last decade, social innovation has gained prominence and has become a top priority in the policy agendas of several national government and of international organization, including the European Commission (Haxeltine et al., 2013; BEPA, 2014; 2010). This is not surprising, since policy makers find themselves unprepared in facing unprecedented challenges such as migration, ageing, climate change, under a climate of financial austerity. If the public sector is clearly having difficulties to address such challenging issues adequately, the traditional business sector often does not find it profitable. On the contrary, civil society in the form of individual citizens or of collectives is engaging more and more in the proposition and implementation of solutions. Those solutions configure as new services, products or more often as an hybrid result which solve the specific social problem in an innovative way or simply in more cost-effective way.

Stating on the origin of social innovation is per se expression of the current debate on what social innovation is. What is relatively new is in fact the understanding that scholars and policy makers have of social innovation. This theme has in fact raised a burgeoning interest among policy makers and academics in the last decade because of the increasing relevance of the phenomenon and because of the growing recognition that social enterprise can play an important role in answering societal challenges and fostering inclusive and sustainable growth.

Since at least two decades, innovation has been put at the center of all policies supporting economic development. The concept of knowledge based economy marked the content of the European agenda for innovation and growth, since 2000 when innovation was for the first time considered as a priority in the Lisbon European Council . In the Lisbon strategy, innovation related with and has been measured with the diffusion and adoption of technology among citizens, corporate and public actors and was expected to generate growth, employment and sustainability on the other side. Innovation was mainly technological innovation.

OECD in 1991 described innovation as “an iterative process initiated by the perception of a new market and/or new service opportunity for a technology based invention which leads to development, production, and marketing tasks striving for the commercial success of the invention.” According to this definition, innovation is about the technological development of an invention and its introduction in the market. In 1999 OECD again acknowledged that the linear model of innovation was not any longer valid: knowledge creation and diffusion was not necessarily following a close pre-defined path but a rather open and free model. The importance of creating links and networks between firms and

research organizations and among firms themselves start to be recognized. This process of opening innovation actually enlarged, including an increasing number of diverse actors: the innovation process started involving the customers or users and framed into a model, where research organization and the industry was defining research priorities with the public administration. We were evolving from the concept of “open innovation” (Chesbrough, 2003) and “customer and user integration”, to “triple helix model” to end with “multi-stakeholders dialogues” and “new power of citizenry”. A new understanding

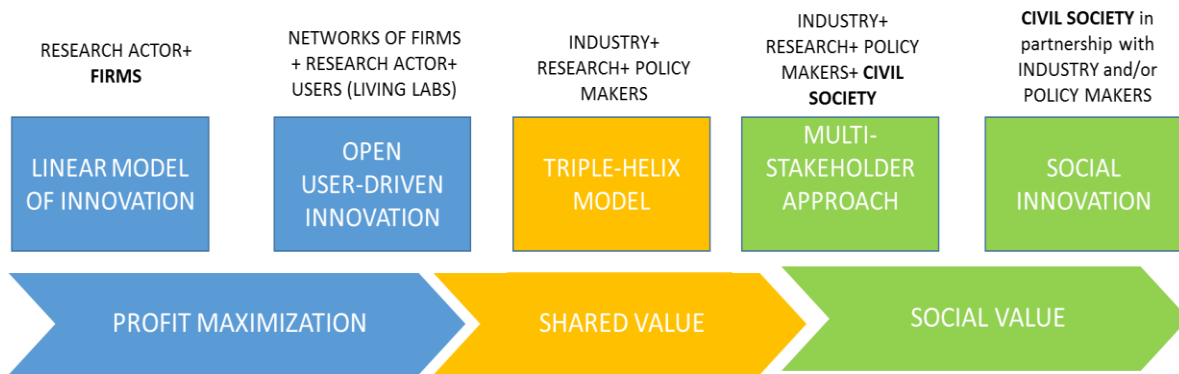


Figure 1 - Evolution of the innovation understanding and practice

of the innovation process emerged, in which openness toward society is central (FORA, 2010). In this new understanding innovation needs to open to society and recipients of the innovation become also promoters of the innovation process (Marg. Et al., 2013).

The evolution of the understanding and practice of innovation does not concern only the type and number of actors involved in the innovation process but also the ultimate aim of the innovation process. In the linear model of innovation and even in the open model, the aim is the maximization of profits. Even in open innovation, the company is collaborating with users but the purpose is to design an innovation which is more responsive to the users’ needs and thus more marketable. In the corporate sector a new sensitivity for the “creation of shared value” (Porter and Kramer, 2012) emerged at the same time, generating more responsible and social practices in the corporate sector. In the triple helix model, The definition of what such a shared value should be is done in collaboration with policy makers, but it is only with social innovation and with the protagonism of civil society that the shared value of innovation become *social value*.

If we focus on the actors of innovation, we observe that the centrality of firms has been shrinking in this overall process with the entry into the scene of new actors such as policy makers, civil society and citizens as individuals or in groups. Even if it is not matter of this work, the author consider of interest a further analysis on the evolution of the role of academia in this process which seems playing a minor part in social innovation.

## 1.2 Social innovation in literatures: a quasi-concept

Because of its multi-stakeholder character and of its social aim, social innovation is broad in scope, forms and processes. Social innovation is by its nature multi-disciplinary – it cuts across sectors and fields of action and in each field - economics, public administration, management studies- different meaning and definition has been formulated and in some cases there is not even a common definition under a same discipline. This is also probably due to the fact that also the practice of social innovation is wide and diverse, as it will be described in the next Chapter.

Definition vary thus substantially and can describe very different facts and phenomena. For some authors social innovation is a new term to describe non-profit sector and activities, while for others it refers to political movements able to generate social change, for others it describes a change in routine practices of individuals. Much of the discourse of social innovation is thus vague, and many academics sustain that there are no shared or common definitions of social innovation nor established paradigm of social innovation (Nicholls, 2010a). Indeed, also the reviews of definitions that have appeared mainly in the last decade (Pisano et al., ESDN 2015; Nichols and Murdock, 2012; Caulier, Grice et al, 2012) did not help in creating a shared understanding of social innovation. Therefore it is probably more appropriate to talk of social innovation ‘literatures’ than of one distinct and unified body of knowledge.

Following this view, Jenson and Harrison (WILCO Report, 2012<sup>1</sup>) define social innovation as a “quasi concept, one whose utility lies less in fabricating certainty than in fostering cohesion across a policy network, composed of researchers, analysts and decision-makers. Quasi-concepts are important to policy communities (..) they provide an analytical focus for identifying policy challenges and diagnosing their characteristics. Such quasi-concepts also shape the directions of policy interventions. Examples of such recent quasi-concepts important to policy development internationally as well as in Europe and other regions are social cohesion, social capital, social investment and sustainable development. A quasi-concept is a hybrid. It builds on empirical analysis and thereby benefits from the legitimising aura of the scientific method. But it is simultaneously characterised by an indeterminate quality that makes it adaptable to a variety of situations and flexible enough to follow the twists and turns of policy that everyday politics sometimes make necessary.”<sup>2</sup>

In reviewing thus the literature with the aim of building a definition of social innovation which was operational, the author ran across definitions which are very specific and exclude many examples of

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<sup>1</sup> The FP7 project WILCO “Welfare innovations at the local level in favour of cohesion” reviewed 17 research projects in social sciences and humanities funded by the European Union’s framework programmes five, six and seven, to examine their definitions of social innovation.

<sup>2</sup> The definition of “quasi concept” was drawn primarily from the responses submitted by researchers to a questionnaire distributed by the FP7 WILCO project (Welfare innovations at the local level in favour of cohesion) team in autumn 2012

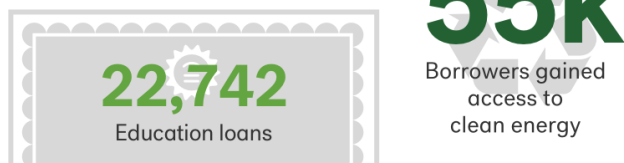
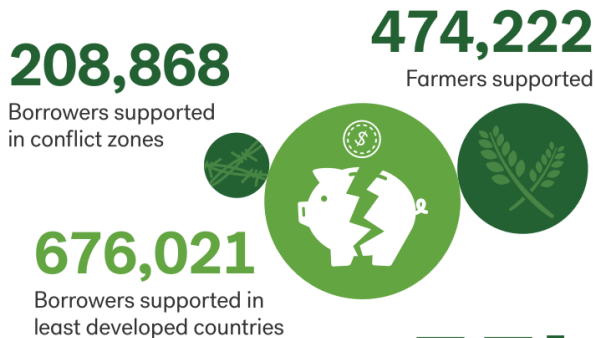
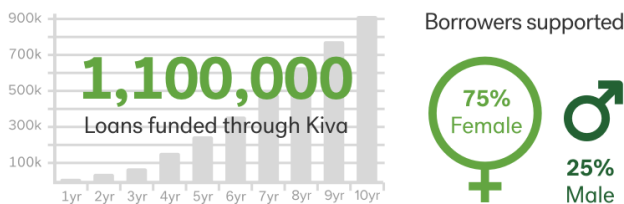


Figure 1 - Kiva impact (Source: www.kiva.org)

social innovation (especially those which emanate from the market) and others which are so broad that they consider projects and organisations that are not particularly innovative, even if they are in some way social. In reality each field of literature focused on one specific element of social innovation: the role and characteristics of the social entrepreneur, the social change generated as impact, the social value as a driver of social innovation ventures. The result of this is that we miss a complete and exhaustive definition of social innovation. As conclusion of the first two chapters the author makes an attempt to formulate a definition of social innovation, which integrated those provided under different disciplines.

At its simplest, social innovation can be defined as “new ideas that address unmet social needs – and that work” (Mulgan et al., 2007). Following this definition, social innovation can be almost anything: an idea, a system, a process, product, a new organizational form. Ideas can be further conceptualized as *new social processes* or *new social outputs and outcomes*. Social processes can refer to “the generation and implementation of new ideas about how people should organize interpersonal activities, or social interaction, to meet one or more common goals” (Mumford, 2002) or, in the view of Wastely and Antadze (2010) to the social innovation process itself, i.e. “a complex process of introducing new products, processes

or programs that profoundly change the basic routines, resource and authority follows, or beliefs of the social system in which the innovation occurs. Such successful social innovations have durability and broad impact”.

As new social outputs and outcome, social innovation is the answer to public failure in providing public goods and services. As OECD indicates (2011) “Social innovation is distinct from economic innovation because it is not about introducing new types of production or exploiting new markets in itself, but is about satisfying new needs not provided by the market or creating new, more satisfactory way of insertion in terms of giving people a place and a role in production”. The social outputs is thus an answer to social need, but this answer should come with respect to new needs and should be innovative. The author finds actually quite controversial to combine the two criteria of “new needs” and “innovative solution” since this exclude those projects which answer existing and well-known needs which are any longer satisfied by welfare state or which social innovation can answer in a more effective and efficient way.

In addition to those two conceptualizations of processes and outputs, Nicholls and Murdock (2012) identified three levels of social innovation (incremental, institutional, disruptive) and three dimensions (individual, organization, network/movement/system). *Incremental innovation* in goods and services address social needs more effectively or efficiently and would mainly consist of the generation of new products and/or services, an example being low-cost irrigation foot pump (Nicholls et al., 2015). *Institutional innovation* would reshape existing social and economic structures to generate new social value and outcomes, as Fair Trade (Nicholls and Opal, 2005). Finally, *disruptive social innovation* aims at system change, and usually concretizes in social or political movements, or other type of groups of networks who aim is to change the power relations, alter social hierarchies and rules to benefit vulnerable or disenfranchised groups. Even if this conceptualization is helpful, from empirical observation of social innovation projects and initiatives it can be easily deducted that many projects lie among one level and another and this is even truer if we decontextualize the specific social innovation project from space and time. Specific incremental innovation can thus result in time into institutional innovation because framing conditions have change and facilitate a bigger impact. An example of this could be the Kiva platform. Kiva is an online microfunds lending platform which was established in 2005. At that time, other micro-funds systems exist and crowdfunding was also emerging as a practice. In this sense we would probably have defined Kiva as an incremental innovation which bring the innovative element of bringing micro-fund online. The impact achieved in 10 years of operation (see Figure 2), definitively falls into the categories of disruptive social innovation: 1,5 million of lenders represent a meaningful group of network who aim to benefit groups not able to access funding.

The same authors proposed different dimensions of social innovation to be defined in terms of the impact the action at micro- or individual level, at meso- or organization level and at macro- or system level. The consideration of different levels of impact is fundamental for many reasons, the first one

being the complexity of social impact measurement. Defining the level of impact definitively helps in the definition and measurement of the unit of impact of a social innovation. Social impact measurement will be treated in the following chapters and at this stage the author would again simply underline that boundaries also when it comes to impact might be blurry. Taking again the example of Kiva, it is clear that the impact affect the micro and macro level at least. In this line, the author considers important to make clear that the effort made to formulate definitions and characteristics of social innovation might risk to simplify too much the reality of social innovation projects.

Definitions which integrate the conceptualization of processes and outcomes have appeared more recently. In BEPA report of 2010, Hubert defined social innovations are “innovations that are social in both their ends and their means.” This definition is proposed again by Caulier-Grice et al. in 2012 and further enriched. “Social innovations are new solutions (products, services, models, markets, processes, etc.) that simultaneously meet a social need (more effectively than existing solutions) and lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and better use of assets and resources. In other words, social innovations are both good for society and enhance society’s capacity to act.’ Caulier brings thus again the focus on the process, mentioning the creation of new relationships and the better use of resources, but in a way conjugate processes with outputs identifying an additional “capacity-building” outcome.

In my view, this capacity-building result is quite natural and is probably triggered by different elements. Civil society is the new protagonist of social innovation and of innovation in general. This means that social innovators and entrepreneurs naturally build capabilities in the development and management of the social innovation. But they do not do it alone since in many cases, they collaborate with other private-public actors, generating thus new relationships. On the other side, social innovation projects are often the result of a co-creation process where users and beneficiaries are the same promoters of the project or contribute strongly and on a continuous basis to social innovation. In this sense, society’s capacity to act in enhanced.

In the framework of this work, I adopt a definition of social innovation which is more close to the concept of social entrepreneurship. Social innovation can in fact be addressed also from the perspective of the more institutionalised fields of social entrepreneurship (Dees, 1998; Nicholls, 2006) and social enterprise (Alter, 2006; Nyssens 2006). From this perspective, **social innovation is any action encompassing new ideas or models that address a social need and social entrepreneurship is simply the procedural and logistic organization of social innovation ideas and models.** Also, social entrepreneurship is a quite recent concept in business and entrepreneurship studies and a brief literature review is developed in the following paragraphs.

### **1.3 Social innovation in social theory: social change and social impact**

Another element which is at the basis of the emerging paradigm of social innovation, is the assumption that social innovation must generate social impact to exist. We will see later how social impact is defined, but at this stage we can acknowledge a clear relation between social impact and social change. On the contrary, there is no clear understanding of how social innovation would lead to social change (Howaldt, 2014). As for social innovation, also for social change a multitude of definitions exists. A generic definition, which has been widely adopted is the one provided by Heintz (1958) which understood it as “the plethora of changes in the institutional structure of a society in a given time frame”. Those changes can occur at the micro-, meso- and macro-level, which all together were described by Zapf as “change in the social structure of a society, in its constitutive institutions, cultural patterns, associated social actions and conscious awareness” (Zapf, 2003).

As Mulgan highlighted, “there is still no consistent or coherent concept of social innovation grounded in social theory that is suitable for empirical research” (Mulgan 2012, European Commission 2013, p.26). The scientific discussion on social innovation is polarised between an actor-centred, individualistic, attitude-orientated perspective on the one hand on an implicit, structuralist perspective on the other. Social innovation is thus either attributed to individualistic acts or considered as deterministic results of external context (Cajaiba-Santana 2014; European Commission, 2013).

More recently social theory focuses on two aspects of social innovation which are in the author’s view more helpful in understanding the phenomenon: social practices and dynamics of change on one side and institutional theories on the other hand. According to practice theories, new practices in social innovation encompasses concepts, policy instruments, new forms of cooperation and organization which are promoted by citizens, customers, politicians (Howaldt et al., 2014). In social practice theory, the innovativeness does not manifest itself as technological artefact but at the level of social practices. Social innovation is thus a new combination or configuration of social practices promoted intentionally by citizens acting individually or collectively to answer social needs. This perspective has been somehow adopted also by the WILCO project which add as criterion for its definition of social innovation “ideas, turned into practical approaches”.

With respect to this work, the most interesting aspect of practice theories lies in their approach to diffusion of the innovation. The most important contributions to this topic come from the work of Gabriel Tarde (2009). According to Tarde, inventions are the central driver of social change. This affects not only the importance of social innovation but also its possibilities to spread or diffuse. In social



innovation, Roger's approach to diffusion is inverted<sup>3</sup>, since in social innovation the innovation itself can be substantively modified during the diffusion process. In social innovation, the asymmetrical communication relationship existing in technological innovation between developers and users disappears since developers and users are the same actor or collaborate at the innovation process. In social innovation, the process of diffusion is thus not about the adaptation of behaviors to the novelties or changes introduced by the technological artefacts. Social innovation is about changes in social behaviors and practices. Inventions can change society and its practices through multiple acts of imitation. Imitations is thus the key to understand how social innovation lead to social change. With respect to this work, Tarde's theory can contribute to understand the potential in terms of impact of social innovation projects and initiatives. Foundations as Ashoka for instance apply a very strong selection criterion for identification of social entrepreneurs to be supported: the capacity to achieve strong impact and to generate social change. Following Tarde's and Ashoka contribution, a model to estimate the "imitation" potential of one social innovation initiative could contribute not only to ex-post measurement of social impact but even to a priori estimation.

#### SOCIAL INNOVATION DEFINITIONS

- 1) Societal transformation
- 2) A model of organisational management
- 3) Social entrepreneurship
- 4) The development of new products, services and programmes
- 5) A model of governance, empowerment and capacity building

*Source: Caulier et Grice literature reviews (2012)*

#### **1.4 Social innovation in economics: the role of social entrepreneur**

Innovation was central in the work of Joseph Schumpeter to describe the theory of economic cycles (Schumpeter, 1974). He stated that booms are due to technological or other innovations whose implementations at first seem to promise high profits. After a while, more and more entrepreneurs copy the strategy of the pioneer firms until competitive behaviour forces profits to go down again and a depression begins, in which the market is cleaned of unprofitable firms. This is a brief description of the well-known process of "creative destruction" — a term made famous by Schumpeter himself. The now-achieved state of equilibrium is only maintained until a new innovation creates the foundation for another boom. The actor responsible for the introduction of the innovation in the market is the entrepreneur.

Throughout the 20th century, both concept of innovation and entrepreneur has been considered by different academics from management and economics theory. Those, starting from Schumpeter's ideas,

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<sup>3</sup> Rogers proposed that four main elements influence the spread of a new idea: time, social system, innovation itself and communication channels

describe the innovation as a process which is any longer turbulent and on the contrary can be systematized and organized within a company (Drucker, 1985, Baumol, 2002).

The first author introducing the concept of social innovation within an economic analysis was the sociologist Johnathan Gershuny (1983) in its book “Social Innovation and Division of Labour”. Gershuny defined social innovation as follows: “over time, the relative desirability of two alternative modes of provision for a particular function may change (...) with the consequence that the household changes from one mode of provision to the other. This change in the mode of provision for particular functions (...) will be referred to as social innovation. Compared with the description reported above, in Gershuny’s theory social innovation is not in opposition to technological innovation but remain “*sui generis*” and take place in the action of individuals who change their routine behaviours, from one form of function realisation to another (Franz, Hochgerner, 2012, p. 115). For Gershuny social innovation is happening thus outside the boundaries of economic development but can have a direct impact on it.

The most cited author, who partially followed Gershuny’s approach, is Geoff Mulgan, Chief Executive of the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA)<sup>4</sup>. For Mulgan, as in Schumpeter, social entrepreneurs have a pivotal role. They are driven by personal motivations and are “competent interpreters of their own lives and competent solvers of their own problems. Social entrepreneur and innovators need to capture the imagination of a community of supporters through the combination of contagious courage and pragmatic persistence.” The difference with respect to technological innovation lies thus in the motivation moving the entrepreneur. For Mulgan, social innovation initiatives are “motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and are predominantly developed and diffused through organisations whose primary purposes are social.” He differentiates then social innovation from business innovation looking at the purposes of those: in business innovation the aim is profit maximisation, in social innovation the aim is answering social needs.

Still for Mulgan, as for Gershuny, social innovation activities can occur at the boundaries of economic development and are not completely disconnected from economic logics. As matter of fact social innovation deliver new services in a more efficient way, where efficiency is measured in terms of cost savings with respect to public provision. Charles Leadbeater (1997), in his description of social entrepreneurs makes clear how social entrepreneur gather in an efficient way existing economic resources. “Social entrepreneurs will be one of the most important sources of innovation. Social entrepreneurs identify under-utilised resources – people, buildings, equipment – and find ways of

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<sup>4</sup> Mulgan is Visiting Professor at University College London, the London School of Economics and the University of Melbourne. Previously he has been CEO of the Young Foundation based in London, Director of the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit (formerly known as the Performance and Innovation Unit).

putting them to use to satisfy unmet social needs. They innovate new welfare services and new ways of delivering existing services. Social entrepreneurs who deploy entrepreneurial skills for social ends are at work in parts of the traditional public sector, some large private sector corporations and at the most innovative edge of the voluntary sector”.

### **1.5 Social innovation and management: the primacy of social value**

In management theory, social innovation displays a major relevance with respect to the social entrepreneur or the social value generated by the innovation. The most relevant article which adopts the management studies perspective in addressing social innovation is “Rediscovering social innovation” (Phills, Deiglmeier, Miller, 2008) which introduces the concept of “social value” as a discriminating criterion. According to the authors, many innovations answer social problems or needs. Social innovations differ from ordinary innovation because of the primary aim which is the benefit for society and not profit maximization.

“Many innovations create benefits for society, primarily through increasing employment, productivity, and economic growth. Some even generate social value above and beyond their obvious economic impact. The computer dramatically enhanced individual productivity, learning, and creativity. The automobile promoted feelings of freedom and independence while uniting people who would otherwise rarely see each other. Pharmaceuticals save lives. Deodorant probably strengthens our social fabric. And so these products benefit not only individuals, but also society as a whole. Yet that does not make these products social innovations. According to our definition, an innovation is truly social only if the balance is tilted toward social value—benefits to the public or to society as a whole—rather than private value—gains for entrepreneurs, investors, and ordinary (not disadvantaged) consumers. We want to differentiate social innovations from ordinary innovations because the world is already amply equipped to produce and disseminate ordinary innovations. It is only when markets fail—in the case of public goods—that social innovation becomes important as a way to meet needs that would not otherwise be met and to create value that would not otherwise be created”.

For Phills and colleagues, social value is thus the most important element in social innovation, over social entrepreneurs and social enterprises. In this sense, they follow Schumpeter in seeing the entrepreneur as an instrument or vehicle of social innovation. Social value is defined as “as the creation of benefits or reductions of costs for society—through efforts to address social needs and problems—in ways that go beyond the private gains and general benefits of market activity.”

Still the main feature of innovation which implies the development of something new, must be there also when we look at social innovation. It is in fact not sufficient to solve social problems or needs but

must be done in a more efficient and effective way, proposing new solutions, models, tools. This relates also to the fact the social innovation occurs when market or welfare state failed because existing solutions do not deliver results or are not cost-effective. “It is only when markets fail—in the case of public goods—that social innovation becomes important as a way to meet needs that would not otherwise be met and to create value that would not otherwise be created”.

### 1.6 Social innovation and social entrepreneurship: overlapping concepts?

There is a clear overlap between social entrepreneurship and social innovation but there is common agreement that social innovation is a wider field and social entrepreneurship a subset of this wider field (Davies, 2014). There is also quite a common agreement about the distinctive element between the two concepts: social innovation should aim at achieving a social change at system level. In this respect Westley and Antadze (2010) argue that while “social entrepreneurship is a human-centred concept that highlights the personal qualities of a person who starts a new organisation’, ‘social innovation is oriented towards making a change at the systemic level”. Similarly, Phills et al. (2008) suggest that social innovation is distinctive in terms of the depth at which it operates: “unlike the terms social entrepreneurship and social enterprise, social innovation transcends sectors, level of analysis and methods to discover the processes – the strategies, tactics and theories of change – that produce lasting impact”. Nicholls and Huybrechts (2012) also argue that, while social entrepreneurship and social innovation clearly overlap, ‘a difference lies in the fact that social innovation is not necessarily market oriented, while social entrepreneurship clearly is. Hence some authors view social innovation as the broader umbrella term under which social entrepreneurship, as well as other novel public and third sector initiatives located outside the market, can be affiliated. Nicholls depicted for instance social innovation, as the overarching concept, encompassing social entrepreneurship, which in turn encompasses social enterprise. More recently, Davies in the framework of the European project SI-DRIVE suggested that there is a minimum degree of independence among the three concepts. The author found particularly useful the visual representation proposed by Davies and presented below.

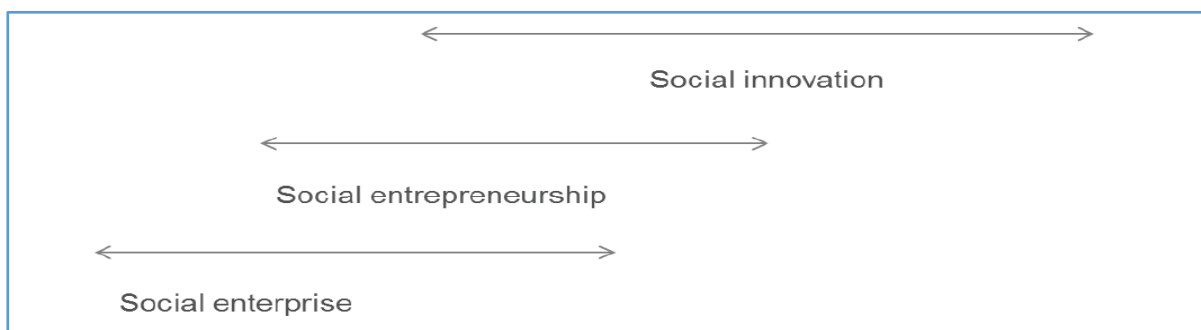


Figure 3- Davies 2014, SI-DRIVE project - Relationship between social innovation, social entrepreneurship and social enterprise

In the framework of this work, the object of study is delimited by the overlapping of social enterprise, social entrepreneurship and social innovation. In this sense, the author share the view of Jenson and Harrison (2012) on social entrepreneurship as “the main mover for social innovation and the social enterprise as the main venue”. Even if, as suggested by many researchers not all social entrepreneurs aims at achieving social change and even if most of them do so “to date, the social innovation produced by social enterprise has largely been presumed rather than empirically demonstrated” (Barraket and Furneaux, 2012), social entrepreneurship remain the most relevant generator of social innovation. Social entrepreneurship is somehow more understood at academic level than social innovation, but there are still no clear cases about mechanisms and tools of social entrepreneurship and even less for the life cycle of social entrepreneurship.

### **1.7 Social innovation and design thinking**

Design thinking has gained attention in the last decade not only in design and innovation but also in urban and regional studies, policy making and governance studies, involving researchers from different disciplines and facilitating cross-sectorial and multi-disciplinary collaboration. Design thinking is considered as an innovation and useful tool to solve problems in different contexts. The term —design thinking was introduced for the first time by Peter G. Rowe (1987) who used it in its book applied to making of buildings and public spaces. According to this view, design thinking is pivotal for architects and planners to conceptualise and shape buildings and public spaces. In his view design thinking can actually apply to all design practice as underlying structure of inquiry. Since then, multiple models and approaches have been developed using theories and approaches from design methodology itself, engineering, psychology, etc. This evolution led to consider design thinking as a new paradigm for dealing with problems in different professions, such as engineering (Dym et al., 2005) architecture, business economics, art, education and educational research and computer science.

The main characteristic of design thinking which relates it with social innovation lies in having abandoned in its approach the uniqueness of design and designer as basis of business models, in favour of consideration of the social context. Design thinking suggested somehow to designers to be more involved in the big picture of socially innovative design, and to go beyond the economic imperative. Likewise design is seen as a collaborative effort among diverse participating stakeholders and competences. The whole design process, which includes prototyping, must be not only user-centred but human-centred (Bjögvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren (2012). The multi-stakeholder co-creation approach is what links design thinking with participatory design, design for change (Bjogvinsson et al., 2012, p. 101) and ultimately socially responsible design (Melles et al., 2011). Design thinking evolves thus from a general theory of design to a resource for organisations (Kimbell, 2011).

Design thinking refers thus to the generation and application of new ideas to solve problems at the micro level by mainly focusing the process of design itself. Its participatory approach recalls the concepts of communities of practice (Wenger & Snyder, 2000<sup>5</sup>) and —communities of innovation (West & Hannafin, 2011) which represent models in which actors organize in form to generate and deliver innovation. Individuals are at the centre of design thinking not only as promoter of the design process but also as source of inspiration. As highlighted by Tom Brown (2008) from IDEO, design thinking is “a methodology that imbues the full spectrum of innovation activities with a human-centered design ethos. By this I mean that innovation is powered by a thorough understanding, through direct observation, of what people want and need in their lives and what they like or dislike about the way particular products are made, packaged, marketed, sold, and supported.” (p. 86). Through its ‘human-centered, creative and practical approach design thinking maximize efficiency and effectiveness in social innovation allowing to find the best ideas and solutions to social needs. Design thinking culture creates thus a safe-to-fail environment for innovation to thrive (Koh, 2012, p. 33). Lastly the idea of empathy – a key element in design thinking but almost not considered in innovation studies – allows to understand and interpret the perspectives of end users and the problems they face (Johansson-Sköldberg et al., 2013). Empathy is one the main drivers of social entrepreneur, who spot a social need and empathically strive to solve it for benefits of a specific group of people<sup>6</sup>. Design thinking moves thus from individualistic models towards social or systemic models. Despite of this aspiration, design thinking approach would still be project-based and misses to propose a systemic approach to social innovation. Stakeholders involvement need to be ensured on a long-term basis and to achieve this, there is a clear need for creating a framework or “infrastructure” for social innovators, stakeholders and policy-makers to connect. Hillgren (2001) proposed an infrastructuring process ‘where we apply a conscious strategy of constantly looking for opportunities to connect larger institutions and businesses with smaller initiatives’.

### **1.8 Drivers and characteristics of social innovation**

Social innovations can be defined thus as new solutions (products, services, models, markets, processes etc.) that simultaneously meet a social need (more effectively than existing solutions) and lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and better use of assets and resources. As highlighted before, the solution proposed, which must be turn into a practical approach, must be more effective, efficient, sustainable than existing ones and “the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals” (Phills et al., 2008). In the framework of this work, we will not consider the

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<sup>5</sup> All resources from Wenger and Snyder

<sup>6</sup> This focus on users and empathy led Verganti (2013) to criticises design thinking for not considering technological innovation, the meaning of products or services, costs, sustainability (ecological questions) and missing a forward-looking perspective.

extended definitions adopted by some researchers and encompassing “a principle, an idea, a piece of legislation, a social movement, an intervention, or some combination of them (Phills et al, 2008) but would apply the five elements listed by Caulier et Grice (2012):

1. Novelty: Social innovations need to be new in some way, either new to the field, sector, region, market or user, or to be applied in a new way;
2. From ideas to implementation: Social innovation is concerned with the practical application or implementation of a new idea that need to be (or have the potential to be) financially sustainable in the mid- to long-term;
3. Meets a social need: social innovation is explicitly designed to meet a social need, understood as something that can cause serious harm or socially recognisable suffering when not met;
4. Effectiveness: Social innovation should be more effective than existing solutions by creating a measurable improvement in terms of outcomes (i.e. quality, levels of user- satisfaction, rates of adoption or a reduction in costs or higher level impacts such as improved wellbeing or social cohesion);
5. Enhances society’s capacity to act: The process of social innovation is important: in fact, the process of social innovation enhances society’s capacity to act and often entails changes in social and power relations. It empowers beneficiaries by creating new roles and relationships, developing assets and capabilities and/or better use of assets and resources.

When it comes to their promoters, we do not see fixed boundaries: social entrepreneurs can be people or legal entity which organize in profit and non-profit forms. Social entrepreneurs can also belong to any sector - public, non-profit and private. Actually, much of social innovation happens at the boundaries between sectors and it would thus be counter-productive to apply a restriction when selecting social innovation project to be included in the study (Murray et al., 2010). Those three sectors of society – public, private and civil society – represent the social innovation triad and more and more collaborate to deliver social innovation. What is true is that each sector operates in a different way following different drivers. Social enterprises combine the different logics and models of the private sector with social objectives and ownership structures (Alter, 2006). Public-Private Partnerships represent the hybrid deriving from the collaboration between the private sector and the state (Bovaird, 2006). Finally a third type of multi-sector collaboration is represented by the “Shadow State” which is the result of the collaboration between civil society and public administration for the provision of welfare services (Nicholls and Murdock, 2012).

There are several different drivers which push each sector towards social innovation. For the private commercial sector, social innovation represents the opportunity to play a new role of business in society

(e.g. the “Shared Value” model, Porter and Kramer, 2012<sup>7</sup>. For the public sector, social innovation represents a gain in efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of welfare services, following the model of the New Public Governance developed by Osborne (2006)<sup>8</sup>.

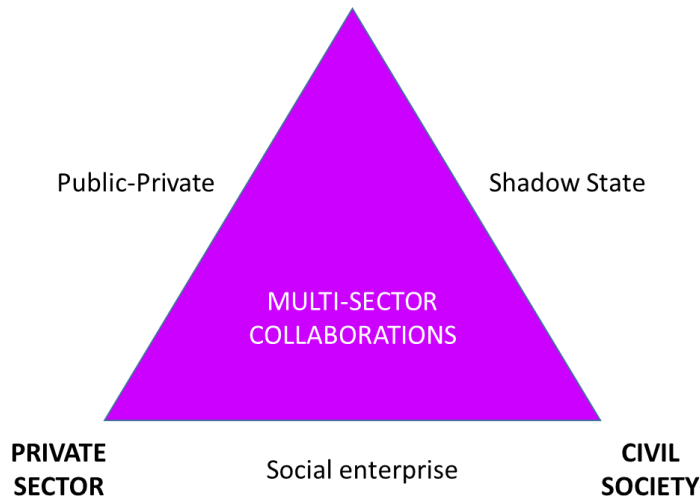


Figure 4 - The social innovation triad. Source: Nicholls and Murdock (2012)<sup>4</sup>

There are two reasons backing the choice of adopting a more flexible approach in defining social innovation for the purpose of this study. The first reason lies in the reality of social innovation practice. As observed in a study of the European Commission and in the taxonomy exercise performed and described in the next chapter, social enterprise might be extremely diverse in the activities performed, the legal and organizational forms adopted, and in the way they have set and maintained their external relations. This diversity would not be represented by a strict and rigid definition of social innovation. Secondly, social innovation is context dependent. “Social innovations takes place in broader social, cultural, economic and environmental contexts. It is in these specific contexts that social innovations are formulated and embedded. Moreover, social innovations are socially and politically constructed, and are, therefore, not value neutral (Caulier-Grice et al., 2012, p.17). Social innovation will take thus different forms in rural India than in urban parts of southeast England as the social needs and the context will be different. A strict definition of social innovation would not allow to capture the differences linked to context, and might risk to exclude from the observation social innovation ventures which do not comply with one of the features reported above.

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<sup>7</sup> “The concept of shared value can be defined as policies and operating practices thatn enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operated. Shared value creation focuses on identifying and expanding the connections between societal and economic progress. The concepts rests on the premise that both economic and social progress must be addressed using value principles. (Porter and Kramer, 2012).

<sup>8</sup>



A social innovation depends also on the contexts in which it was born (Evers et al., 2014). While most analyses try to derive from the “social” in a widely consented positive meaning (see BEPA 2010 and Mulgan 2006), social innovations’ values, actions and outcomes will in fact always be a contested issue. By definition, innovations are different from given widespread practices. They may become a mainstream practice over time but this is not already so at the outset. They can be linked with a diversity of goals and take different meanings over time, depending on the wider political concept and institutional system wherein they become embedded (see e.g. Osborne and Brown 2011). Therefore, the (technically) same innovative instrument (e.g. case management) can work and be judged differently in different places and circumstances.

Considering the specific focus of this work, i.e. social innovation projects centered around the management of a physical space and even more specifically the management of a shared space, the author considers very relevant to support the meaningfulness of this choice, the additional eight common features of social innovation proposed again by Caulier and Grice:

1. Cross-sectoral: Social innovations can cut across and occur in all sectors, move between sectors, and occur at the interfaces between the different sectors;
2. Open and collaborative: Social innovations are often inclusive and engage a wide range of actors;
3. Grassroots and bottom-up: Social innovations are often bottom-up, grassroots, distributed and local;
4. Pro-sumption and co-production: In social innovations, boundaries between producers and consumers seem to be less defined, and individuals are not seen only as passive recipients of services anymore<sup>9</sup>;
5. Mutualism: Notion that individual and collective well-being is obtainable only by mutual dependence;
6. Creates new roles and relationships: Social innovations can also be identified by the type of relationships they create, and also by new roles for users and beneficiaries;
7. Better use of assets and resources: Social innovation often recognizes, exploits and coordinates assets and resources which would otherwise be wasted, under-used or not used at all. In some cases, these assets and resources can be latent (i.e. the skills that communities have at their disposal), intangible (i.e. finance) and/or physical (i.e. buildings and physical spaces);
8. Develops assets and capabilities: Many social innovations explicitly aim to develop the capabilities of beneficiaries enabling them to meet their needs over the longer term, highlighting human agency and advocating participation.

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<sup>9</sup> Prosumption involves “both production and consumption rather than focusing on either one (production) or the other (consumption”). See also: Ritzer, G. and N. Jurgenson (2010) Production, Consumption, Prosumption: The nature of capitalism in the age of the digital ‘prosumer’. *Journal of Consumer Culture* March 10(1):13-36

I want to summarize here one of the case study produced and described more in detail in the following chapter: Piano C. Piano C, is a co-working and baby-parking. The project was born to meet the need of recent mothers who wanted to conciliate maternity with work or need to reenter the labour market. The company provides a series of services to two specific type of users: women and/or men with children. The services provided are:

- Co-working space
- Baby parking
- Homecare services

Piano C is concretely a huge apartment in the centre of Milan where mothers and fathers can work, leave children in the baby parking, and benefit of other services. The table below shows the relevance of social innovation projects focused on shared space with the criteria identified by Caulier and Grice:

<b>Social innovation criteria</b>	<b>Piano C characteristics</b>
Novelty	Lies in the conjugation of two services previously delivered separately
From ideas to implementation	Established as legal entity and running since 2012
Meet a social need	Social need of fostering conciliation of private and professional life for mothers and reintegration of mothers into the labour market
Effectiveness	Favour mothers' employment
Enhance society's capacity to act	Increase skills and opportunities for mothers
Cross-sector	Merge work and childcare sectors
Open and collaborative	Users of Piano C can propose new services and delivers some of them
Grass-roots and bottom up	The project was proposed by a group of five mothers who detected this special social need
Prosumption and co-production	Users are recipient of the services but also "deliverers"
Mutualism	Exchange of skills and experiences are common in all working space
Creates new roles and new relationships	Those usually created in working space and additional ones linked to the new opportunities created for women
Better use of access and resources	Shared space use for work and childcare
Develop assets and capabilities	A network of support for families, Capabilities for mothers

*Table 1 - Correspondence of Caulier and Grice criteria of social innovation to Piano C case study*

## CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL INNOVATION: THE PRACTICE

### 2.1 Social enterprises in Europe: European and national definitions

The content of this chapter is the result of two exercises. The first exercise was the review of the report “A map of social enterprise and their eco-systems in Europe” delivered in 2014 by ICF Consulting Services for the European Commission. This is the first study which maps social enterprise diffusion and activity across 29 countries<sup>10</sup>, defining their features and describing the policy and business environments in which social enterprises are developing and working.

The second exercise was to integrate the information provided in the report by building a taxonomy of social innovation initiatives in Europe. With respect to the work performed for the European Commission, the author did not aim at building a map of existing social enterprises in Europe but rather at collecting evidence how often physical space occurs among social innovation initiatives as core business or core value of the project.

The report of the European Commission defines social enterprise, based on the definition provided in the Social Business Initiative (SBI) launched in 2011 by the European Commission<sup>11</sup>. The report operationalizes the SBI definition by developing a set of core criteria which define the “minimum a priori conditions” for an organization to be considered as a social enterprise and mapping criteria, which reflect relevant features of social enterprises. The SBI definition identified in fact three key dimensions of a social enterprise: the entrepreneurial dimension, the social dimension and the governance dimension. The table below reports the criteria set by ICF with respect to each dimension.

<b>KEY DIMENSION (SBI)</b>	<b>CORE CRITERION (ICF)</b>	<b>MAPPING CRITERIA</b>
Entrepreneurial dimension	Engagement in economic activity	Income derived from market resources Paid workers
Social dimension	The organization must pursue an explicit and primary social aim that benefits society	Activity Target groups
	The organization must have limits on distribution of profits and/or assets to prioritise social aim over profit making	Limits on distribution of profits and/or assets Asset lock
Governance dimension	The organization must be independent from public organization or traditional for-profit organizations	Transparency and accountability

<sup>10</sup> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

<sup>11</sup> COM(2011) 682 final- Social Business Initiative: creating a favourable climate for social enterprises, key stakeholders in the social economy and innovation.

	The organization must have inclusive governance, i.e. be characterized by participatory and/or democratic decision-making processes.	
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*Table 2 - Dimension and criteria for definition of a social enterprise*

The study acknowledges since the very beginning the limits of the operationalization exercise. Those limits concern the differences among national legislation in defining social enterprises. These differences are partially explained by the fact that national definitions of social enterprise have been created either as tailor-made legal forms for social enterprise or adopting a transversal legal status (see picture below).

Therefore, even if twenty countries have for instance a national definition of social enterprises, six of those do not include the governance dimension in their definition. The main element of divergence among national definitions concern:

The operationalization of the entrepreneurial dimension by the application of thresholds for revenue generation from market. In Czech Republic social enterprise must for instance generate at least 10% of their revenues from the market, while in Italy social enterprises ex lege must generate at least 70% of its income from entrepreneurial activities.

The primacy of social aim over commercial objectives and the interpretation of social aim which may be very narrow – as in Finland, Lithuania, Poland Slovakia and Sweden – or broad as in United Kingdom and Greece

The non-profit distribution constraint, which must be total for instance in Italy and Poland or partial as in Finland and United Kingdom.

This legal framework still does not capture the multitude and diversity of social enterprises in Europe which can adopt other forms such as associations and foundations with commercial activities, cooperatives, mainstream enterprises pursuing an explicit and primary social aim. This is actually what the author has observed while building a taxonomy of social innovation projects.

In most of the cases observed and recorded in the database built for this work, social initiatives reported were promoted by associations or cooperatives, which engaged in economic activities or by mainstream companies which declare to have a clear primary social aim. In the minority of the cases observed, the social initiatives adopted the form of “social enterprise” or a similar one among those established by their national legislation. This might be explained by a general low awareness about the creation of specific legal forms, by the absence of real benefits in adopting such a legal form or by the limits that the adoption of a specific legal form would apply to the type of activities that can be undertaken.

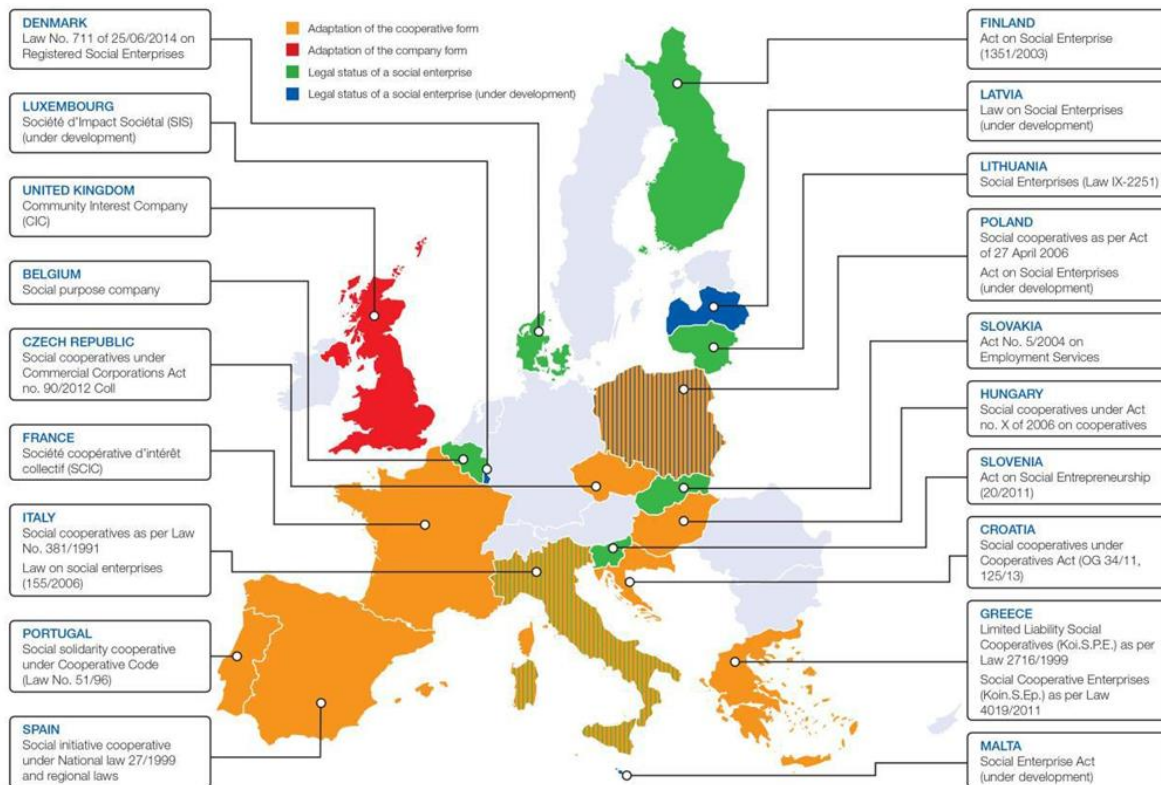


Figure 5 - Countries with specific legal forms or statutes for social enterprise (from the report *A map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe*, European Commission, 2014)

## 2.2 Social enterprise activity in Europe

It exists a “de facto” universe of social enterprise which do not fall in the definitions created at national or European level. The existence of this universe, bigger than the legislative one, hampers the possibility to measure and aggregate social enterprise activity across Europe. Few data and estimates exist at national level, and when they do exist the methodological differences make the aggregation and benchmarking of data problematic. The report of the European Commission has tried to map the social enterprise activity and to create typology of sectors those enterprise operate in. Such a tipology has been created taking into consideration the mission of the social enterprise, rather than the activities, since in many cases activities are the mean to achieve the social mission or a social impact. In this sense looking at activities might be misleading since those cut across standard statistical classifications of economic activity such as NACE. Said in other words, social enterprise might be performing different sectorial activity to deliver a social mission which should have a more precise sectorial character. The report identifies thus the following mission-driven typologies:

- Social and economic integration of the disadvantaged and excluded
- Social services of general interest such as child care, care of elderly, health care

- Other social and community services such as counselling, youth outreach, micro finance
- Public services e.g. maintenance of public spaces, transport services
- Land-based industries and environment e.g reducing waste, recycling, renewable energy
- Cultural, tourism, sport and recreational activities
- Practicing solidarity with developing countries.

The majority of social enterprise belong to the second typology – social services of general interest -, while the first typology – work integration of disadvantaged group – is the most diffused type of social enterprise in a number of countries (for example in Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia).

In few European countries, social enterprise reflects much more closely the full extent of activities possible within any economy (for example in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK).

When it comes to target groups served, social enterprises seeks explicitly to provide social services which are of general interest and which do not refer to a specific group. The only exception concern the social enterprises focused on work integration, which usually target disadvantaged groups such as women, people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups, migrants, ex-offenders, etc. The report of the European Commission indicates that in some cases, the social enterprise aims at providing services to a particular local neighborhood or community.

Following the observations of 52 social innovation ventures/organizations in Europe, the author proposes to create a new typology of service focused on “Family care”. This typology would cover different of the services catalogued by the European Commission study such as: integration of disadvantaged people, child care, medical services. The type of projects identified by our analysis and falling under this new typology will be described later,

### **2.3 Business models in social enterprises in Europe**

In social enterprises, profitability becomes less important as a conventional metric of the business model. This is due to the primacy, at least in most cases, of the social aim over commercial goals and by the constraint on profit distribution. Nonetheless, one of the criterion for an enterprise to be defined social is to generate part of its revenues by economic activity. Moving from these conditions, social enterprises typically adopt a hybrid business model where revenues are generated my market sources and non-market sources. According to the report, market based revenues are generated through the sale of goods and services to other businesses and final consumers. The report considers as public funding that resulting from the public contracting, from both competitive tenders and direct contracting. The author considers that revenues generating from public contracting under competitive tenders should fall under the category of market based revenues, since in this case the contractors, even if public, act as private customer which assign a contract against technical and economic criteria.

Direct grants and subsidies provided by public authorities instead fall under the category of non-market based revenues and of public funds. Those include grants for specific project based activity, or employment subsidies.

The report indicates membership fees, donations and sponsorship as private funds, but does not indicate if they are to be considered market-based. The author considers that membership fees should fall under the category of market-based revenue: membership fee usually represent the cost for membership benefits and in this sense, they represent an economic activity for the organization. The author acknowledge that this interpretation is controversial.

The entrepreneurial dimension of social enterprise, calculated through the share of income derived from market sources varies by country and by organizational form: in countries like Czech Republic, Finland, France, Italy and UK the majority of revenues derive from economic activity, even if in most case customers are public authorities. Since data were not available for all countries, it is impossible to infer any conclusion at European level.

An important correlation is nonetheless observed in most countries between the organizational form adopted by a social enterprise and the share of revenues generated from market sources. Those enterprises which have adopted an institutionally recognized form appear to generate more revenue from market-based activities than “defacto” enterprises, which usually adopted organizational forms belonging to the traditional no-profit sector. Another interesting element to highlight is that public bodies represent the main source of funding, as grant makers or as public contractor. A certain dynamic is however highlighted in the report, which sees public authorities contracting out an increasing number of services in different areas such as healthcare, social care, education, etc.

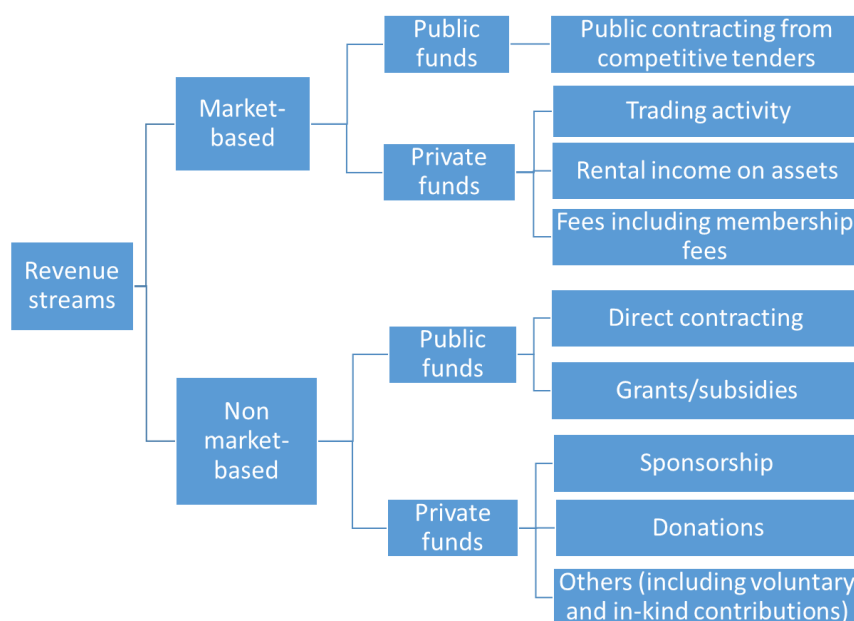


Figure 6- Revenue streams for social enterprise adapted from European Commission, A map of social enterprise and their ecosystems in Europe (2014)

## 2.4 Legal forms adopted by social enterprises and modes of creation

Although there exists a universe of social enterprises with important differences in their organizational forms and business models among European countries, four broad categories of legal forms are the most commonly used in each of the 29 countries covered by the European Commission study:

- non-profit structures such as associations, foundations, and institutions which may be democratic or controlled by managers, do not distribute profit and engage in economic activity to pursue a social mission. In 23 countries the most used legal form used from this category is Association.
- cooperatives, generally owned and controlled on a democratic basis by members, distribute profit from trading activities to members and may have a social purpose written into the constitution or by virtue of the nature of the cooperative.
- social enterprise legal forms which are usually characterized by legally recognized adaptations (changes) to an underlying legal form
- share companies which are generally owned and controlled by shared holders on the basis of shareholding and which may engage in economic activity to pursue a social mission and have other governance features to subordinate profit to social purpose.

The legal form adopted by a social enterprise might depend on its mode of creation, which in turn is determined by national framework conditions and ecosystems for social enterprises. The initiative leading to the creation of a social enterprise might be individual or collective. There is no systematic evidence on the mode of creation and the typology reported below is the result again of a desk research exercise:

### *Citizen-led*

- Citizen-driven mission organization: organizations promoted by group of citizens to address new needs and societal challenges and/or integrated disadvantaged people through work
- Social start-up promoted by a social entrepreneur who sees the opportunity to trade a new good or service to meet a social need.

### *Traditional non-profit organizations such as charities, associations foundations, voluntary and community organizations which engage in a economic activity*

- Existing organization transforming itself into a social enterprise once traded income reaches a critical threshold
- Existing organization setting up a trading arm against a legal, regulatory or risk constraints. The trading arm reinvests a certain level of profits into its parent organizations.



### Public sector Restructuring

- Public sector spin-out (opportunity entrepreneurship): management/staff recognize the greater potential for innovation and new investment sources through autonomy and independence, leading to a spin-out service
- Public sector spin-out (necessity entrepreneurship): drivers such as shifting views on the role of the state in provision, new forms of procurement and provider, social innovation and/or funding cuts lead to an enforced “decommissioning” of an internal public service and an enforced (but possibly supported) spin-out.

Corporate citizenship, linked to new business models and initiatives that connect corporate and social value creation within shareholder companies.

## 2.5 Policy framework in Europe: Europe 2020, Social Innovation Initiative and Social Business Initiatives

Social innovation is a central element of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. This strategy’s goal is both to address shortcomings of the European growth model, painfully exposed by the recent crises, and to create the conditions for a different type of growth. Released in 2010, Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth<sup>12</sup>, identifies research and innovation as one of five main targets, has given rise to the notion of an ‘Innovation Union’, and informs the research framework of Horizon 2020. This notion of an Innovation Union is meant to convey a shift from a conceptual idea to action, focused on creating knowledge and also creating jobs. Innovation from this perspective was meant to go far beyond traditional industrial innovation to include both technological and social innovation<sup>13</sup>. Additionally, the Europe 2020 flagship initiative "European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion" underlines the importance of the social economy for fighting poverty and social exclusion. It proposes measures to improve the quality of the legal structures relating to foundations, mutual societies and cooperatives operating in a European context. Thus, in 2011, the European Commission launched the Social Business Initiative (SBI) in 2011 with the aim to create an eco-system that is conducive to the start-up, development and growth of social enterprises. The plan contains 11 priority measures, organised around three themes as shown in the table below.

At national level, the mapping exercise performed for the European Commission identified the existence of policies supporting the development of social enterprises only in seven out of the 29 European countries studied: Bulgaria, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden, Slovenia and United Kingdom. In other seven countries (Ireland, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Croatia)

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<sup>12</sup> See the Communication from the Commission (COM [2010] 2020 final) and the website [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm) (consulted 23 April 2013).

<sup>13</sup> For an introduction to these arguments, see *Research\*eu*, the issue titled, ‘Innovation: Creating knowledge and jobs. Insights from European research in socioeconomic sciences.’ EUR 24431 EN, published in 2010.

such policies are under development. Those established or under development policy frameworks, differ nonetheless in terms of their scope, content and financial endowment. In some cases, those are presented within the framework of a broader set of policies targeting the social economy, the civil society/non-profit sector, labour market or social inclusion. National policies include the establishment of legal frameworks that recognise and regulates social enterprise activity, the inclusion of tax breaks specifically designed for social enterprises, and the creation of publicly funded support measures for social enterprises. In four countries only (Finland, Poland, Germany and United Kingdom), marks, labels and certification systems for social enterprises

Finally, there are few Member States that have nationally recognised systems or common methodologies for measuring and reporting social impact and those are not mandatorily to be use by social enterprises. The only exception is Italy where social reporting is mandatory for social enterprises ex lege, but compliance is reportedly weak.

<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Priority measures</b>	<b>Actions undertaken</b>
Improve access to funding for social businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Put forward a European regulatory framework for social investment funds.</li> <li>- Encourage the development of microcredit in Europe, specifically by improving the related legal and institutional framework.</li> <li>- Set up an EU financial instrument to provide easier access to funding.</li> <li>- Make social enterprises an investment priority of the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication of a Regulation on European Social Entrepreneurship Funds (EuSEF) (2013)</li> <li>- Publication of a European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision (2011)</li> <li>- Creation of the EU programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) (2014)</li> <li>- Publication of a thematic guidance on Social Economy and Social Enterprise for policy officers of the Directorate General for regional policy</li> </ul>
Increasing visibility of social entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify best practices and models which can be reproduced</li> <li>- Develop a map of social enterprises and their eco-systems in Europe</li> <li>- Create a public database of labels and certifications applicable to social enterprises in Europe.</li> <li>- Help national and regional governments introduce measures to support, promote and finance social enterprises.</li> <li>- Create a multilingual information and exchange platform for social entrepreneurs, business incubators and clusters, as well as social investors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Map of social enterprise published in 2014 including a database of marks, labels and certification systems</li> <li>- Publication of a guide to Social Innovation for public authorities (2012)</li> <li>- Creation of the Social Innovation Europe platform</li> </ul>

<p>Making legal environment friendlier for social enterprises</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simplify the rules regarding legal recognition as a European Cooperative Society; put forward a regulation creating a legal status for European foundations; Conduct a study on the situation of mutual societies</li> <li>- Make quality and working conditions more important criteria for the awarding of public procurement contracts, particularly for social and health services.</li> <li>- Simplify the rules for awarding public aid to social and local services (which would benefit many social enterprises).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Production of report on Simplification of the European Cooperative Regulation (2012)</li> <li>- Adoption of a proposal for a regulation on the statute for a European Foundation(2012)</li> <li>- Production of a study on the situation of mutual societies and their cross-border activities(2012)</li> <li>- Enhancement of the element of quality in awarding contracts in the context of the reform of public procurement (2011)</li> <li>- Publication of a Guide to the application of EU rules on state aid, public procurement and the internal market to SGEI, and in particular to social services of general interest</li> </ul>
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Table 3 - Overview of SBI Action Plan

## 2.6 Social innovation projects in Europe

In order to identify cases to be studied in the framework of this research, the author has built a limited database of European social innovation initiatives. The database has actually several purposes: from a more analytical point of view it serves to build an overview of existing social innovation projects in Europe, and to understand more precisely which sectors do those project work in and how many of those were centred around a physical space and even beyond, how many of those were focused about a shared physical space.

The database has been built using two different sources such as the Social Innovation Competition (for year 2012, 2013, 2014) and the catalogue of case studies developed by WILCO. Those two sources has been chosen in order to be able to analyse and compare initiatives from different European countries, avoiding a national bias. Social innovation supporting policies or prized in all European countries do not exist in all countries.

The European Social Innovation Competition is organised by the European Commission with the support of a consortium made of Nesta, Kennisland, ImpactHub, Shipyard and Matter&Co. The Competition is open to any legal entity (including single persons or group of legal entities) established in EU Member States or Associated countries to Horizon 2020. The Competition aims at stimulating social innovation's potential to provide solutions to societal challenges and foster sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe. The 2016 Competition is entitled "Integrated Futures" and will support entrepreneurial ideas that can turn the challenges arising from the refugee crisis and migrant integration into an opportunity for Europe. In 2015 the theme of the competition was "New ways to grow" aiming at promoting sustainable and inclusive new businesses. The challenge of 2014 was employment while

the first competition in 2013 focused on “New Forms of Work”. The competition select each year three winner of a case prizes which was of €30,000 the first two years and €50,000 in the 2015 and 2016 edition. The support provided to the winning solutions is not only a prize but also a strong mentoring which is actually offered not only to winner but also to semi-finalists. Since the current edition, an impact prize has also been introduced for the winner, out of the three, which will generate the highest impact throughout 2016. I consider the introduction of the impact prize appears meaningful since many of the finalists selected in the previous editions of the Competition, appear not working or active any more.

Overall I have analysed 35 projects from the three competitions:

- 2015 competition: 3 winners projects, 7 finalists projects, 18 semi-finalists projects
- 2014 competition: 3 winner projects
- 2013 competition: 3 winners projects.

The second source of projects I used to select social innovation initiatives to include in the database has been the WILCO report “Social Innovations for Social Cohesion”. The project entitled “Welfare innovation at the local level in favour of cohesion” (WILCO), funded by the 7th framework programme of the EU aimed to examine, through cross-national comparative research, how local welfare systems affect social inequalities and how they favour social cohesion, with a special focus on the missing link between innovations at the local level and their successful transfer to and implementation in other settings. To do so, the project collected 75 examples of social innovation for social cohesion from 20 European cities, one big and one small/medium city from ten regions. In WILCO they defined social innovation “products and processes alike, as:

- ideas, turned into practical approaches;
- new in the context where they appear;
- attracting hopes for better coping strategies and solutions;
- marked by a high degree of risk and uncertainty due inter alia to the specific context wherein they appear.”

WILCO case studies focused on social innovation collaborating or integrating welfare services and include social innovations promoted by public administrations or supported only with public funds. The case studies reported there vary substantially from one country to the other and include also project or initiatives which are not active any more, foundations created with social purposes, etc. For the scope of this work,

The analysis performed was based on desk research and on communication with the promoter/manager of the projects, either by e-mail or by phone. The research was aiming at understanding if the social innovation projects comply with the requirement to be social enterprises defined in the Social Business Initiative. I did not include in the database the following case studies:

- projects/initiatives which were declared as ended already in the report itself
- projects/initiatives promoted and managed only by the public administration
- projects/initiatives which rely only on grants and public support and thus not reflecting the criterion of engaging with economic activity
- projects/initiatives concerning the creation or establishment of a foundation, association, etc. In the WILCO perspective, such case studies were included as example of new form of welfare promoted by a mixed public-private partnership represented by one ad hoc foundation/association.

The database provides per each project the following information:

- Indication of the country in which the project is located
- Short description of the project
- Sector of activity. For this information, the author has used the typology proposed in the report on social enterprises published by the European Commission
- Focus on space (this field was filled with a YES/NO answer)
- Focus on a shared space (this field was filled with a YES/NO answer)
- Name of the founder/director/manager and contact details
- Webpage
- Specific aspects or issues to be mentioned or highlighted.

### ***Services typology***

Out of the 52 projects analysed, twelve initiatives appear ended. To assess if the initiative was still ongoing, the author was checking the webpage and social networks of the initiative and when the information was not available or clear, the author contacted the founders by e-mail, phone or through Facebook when an e-mail was not available. In five cases, the author has not been able to assess the existence of the initiative while in one case the author could not assess the “social innovation character of the initiatives. This was the case of the Social Good Vending Machine initiative in Poland for which it was not clear in which economic activity the organization has engaged. For overall eighteen cases, it was not possible to assess if the social innovation venture continued to exist or have been established and/or if it configures as a social innovation venture following the Social Business Initiative. It must be observed that those “negative” cases reported were collected from the Social Innovation Competition: for the year 2013, the cases included social innovation ideas which entered as semi-finalists. It could somehow be expected that a certain percentage of those would actually not result in the establishment of a social venture. It would be possibly interesting to evaluate the “survival rate” of social innovation

business idea receiving supports under prizes/competitions and other under social innovation supporting policies.

Out of the 52 projects analysed, twenty projects fall under the sector typology of Social and economic integration of disadvantaged people. This is acknowledged as the most diffused typology in the European Commission report, while in the author observation the most diffused typology appear to Social services of general interest. Within this category, project are distributed in a balanced way among projects providing services for 1) Elderly and people with disabilities with five projects 2) Education and child care with eight projects 3) Employment and training activities with eight projects 4) Social housing with six projects. No projects were recorded under the sub-typology of Health care and medical services and under the typology of other social and community services. One project is registered under the typology of Public services and the sub-typology of maintenance of public spaces (Prinzessingarten initiative for the revitalisation of an unused public area for the creation of a gardening area). For the sub-typology of Transport services under Public services no projects were observed. Twelve initiatives were observed under the typology of Land based industries and environment and covered projects based on an innovative use of natural resources or innovative way of managing lands for the creation of employment. No projects were recorded under the Cultural, tourism, sport and recreational activities while one project only was observed in the typology Solidarity with developing countries (MELAWEAR project for production and trading of 100% cotton clothes, produced organically in India). The category of Others services includes twelve projects which operate in three main sectors: 1) Family care with seven projects 2) Micro-credit and crowdfunding or crowdsourcing platform with three projects 3) Food production with two projects.

The author proposes a new typology of services called “Family care services”: this typology define a set of services offered to families which encompasses several typologies: services for the integration of disadvantaged people, child care end education, health cares, etc. If it true that many project encompasses different services, in the case of “Family care” project, the family is the direct beneficiary/target group and the social innovation venture/organization evolves actually according to the new needs identified by and for the family. The definition of the services provided in those case is quite wide and open as we observe for instance in the Voidstarter and Roda projects. The general aim of most projects is in fact to facilitate mutual aid and the creation of relations among families, and in some cases services targeting specifying sub-groups – such as pregnant women or recent mothers, marginalized families, parent undergoing fertility treatments, are offered in conjunction with general child care services. It is interesting to observe that out the seven projects providing “Family care services”, five managed a physical share space.

Finally the author observes that twelve initiatives encompasses between two and three typology of services. In all the twelve cases the services provided belong to the typology of Social and economic integration of disadvantaged people and Social services of general interests.

### *Projects focused on space and shared spaces*

Out of the 52 projects analysed, 12 projects focused on space. This means that providing a physical space to customers/beneficiaries is the core business of the projects. Out of those twelve projects, one project appears not to be active any more.

This the case of **Voidstarter**, one of the three winner projects of the European Social Innovation Competition 2014. Voidstarter covers three tipology of sectors (Services for integration of disadvantaged people, Social services of general interest and social housing). Voidstarter is a project promoted by two peolpe to create employment opportunities and entrepreneurship training to young people in Ireland, by involving them in the refurbishment of vacant social housing buildings. Vacant social housing units are called voids and there is an estimated 3,500 of these voids across Ireland with 600 in Dublin city alone. The promoter of the initiatives observed that empty properties have a number of negative effects on communities including anti-social behaviour, the lowering of property prices and a negative effect on the wellbeing of communities. Voidstarter aims thus at providing young people with meaningful experiential and practice based learning opportunities while being engaged with the issues faced by their own communities. Empty housing and other buildings represent in this project an opportunity for young people to improve their confidence, skills and employability while benefiting at the same time their communities. The renovated voids would be used a pop-up offices and business units to provide entrepreneurship and mentoring and training to young people until the units can be again used for housing. This projects foresees the collaboration with the municipalities and other organizations owner of the building. The author tried to contact the founders but with no results.

The second project focused on space is **RODA**, promoted by a group of citizens who organized themselves into an association – Parents in action. The project provides services of general interest, and would fall into the new typology proposed by the author “Family care”. Their mission is in fact to meet the needs and protecting and fulfilling the rights of children, parents, prospective parents and the family as a whole, including the individual's right to choice based on knowledge. In their Statute their defines it as follows:

“The association was founded in order to influence the creation of a company responsible for all its members, especially to children, parents, prospective parents and families – by informing, educating, and advocating active participation in the processes of change, as well as encouraging all social groups to review the current situation and participate in the changes. In order to achieve this goal, the Association:

1. intercedes for the common good of all groups of society
2. support the right choices based on the available relevant information and evidence of good practice
3. is committed to the protection and promotion of universal human rights of all citizens and specific rights group which Roda engages in their activities (children, parents, prospective parents and the family in all its manifestations), especially in the field of law: a. infertility treatments b. pregnancy and birth c. breastfeeding, breastfeeding protection d. Medical care for children and parentings f. healthy growing up of children g. marginalized groups of parents and children
4. advocates and is committed to achieving optimal conditions of care in institutions providing services to groups which Roda engaged in their activities
5. educates and cooperates in educating all groups of citizens, especially children, pregnant women, nursing mothers, parents and families.

In year, Roda has engaged in supporting social entrepreneurship projects from their customers and users such as the case of Rodino, a small company producing biodegradable diapers. The author could not discern how the space managed has been obtained.

**Potes en Ciel** is a welcoming and open place for children aged 0-16 years together with their parents which promotes children's wellbeing, good parent-child relationships, socialisation and mutual aid between families and generations by developing free creative and participatory learning activities. Potes-en-ciel belong to the international network of *Café des enfants* ([www.cafedesenfants.com](http://www.cafedesenfants.com)) and



*Figure 7 - Café des enfants "Les potes en ciel" (Source : [www.fondation-vinci.com](http://www.fondation-vinci.com))*

was created in 2009. The project received support from different programmes: the Vinci Foundation (20.000€), The Mondale Foundation, from the under two Regional programmes, from the Municipality of Lille, from the local Office for families allocation. They also were awarded in 2007 with the prize of the France Foundation. Les Potes en Ciel clearly set as objective in their Statutes “to ensure the animation of a place of solidarity, socialization, exchange, relax, of social and inter-generation mix”. The space they are managing is multi-purposes hosting a bar, an area for newborn, an area for workshops



with children and young people, a library and an area for parents. Les Potes en ciel is located in a neighbourhood characterised by a high presence (46%) of mono-parental families and aims thus at answering a clear societal need. Les Potes en ciel relies on the work of two employees (working part-time and several volunteer). The strategy and activities of the association are planned through a participatory approach, involving young people who are members of the Steering Committee of the organization.

The **Faubourg de Béthune Childhood** centre was founded at the end of the 1990s. Initially the only service provided was the part-time child care centre (Halte Garderie) which was an association (Doux Calins) created following the observations made by local government representatives and various professionals of the educational difficulties faced by many single mothers, and the lack of any activity centre for young children in this district. Throughout the years, thanks to the initiative of its director, the centre started offering additional services such as a maternal and infant health and care protection centre (Protection Maternelle et Infantile), a child-minder centre (Relais assistants maternelles), a recreation centre, and a games library. The centre is located in the Béthune district which is a disadvantaged residential district where 77 per cent of the housing units are social housing and where the unemployment rate exceeds 30 per cent. The district registers also a higher proportion of immigrants and of single-parent families with nearly 40 per cent of children living with a single parent. Thirty-seven per cent of the children live in a poor household (900 euros per month in 2006, ABS 2006: 26). The association receives financial support from the municipality and the family allocation offices and generates revenues from membership fees. The space is not especially managed following a participatory approach. Users benefit from the provision of a service but are not directly involved in the planning of the services. As for the implementation, the association indeed rely importantly on volunteer.

**Le temps pour toit** emerged in 2005 as an association to match elderly people willing to offer or rent spare bedrooms in their apartment and young people in need of an accomodation. Time for Roof offers users different types of contracts, depending on the needs of the elederly people and the personal commitment of the young people. Le Temps pour toit was established as an association in 2004 and initially provided this service only in the city of Nantes. At that time, they connected only elderly people living in private houses in the urban context. Little by little they expanded their services to a second city – Angiers – and started covering also the rural areas and people living in social houses. As last service, they nowadays provide support to social entrepreneurship or social economy start-ups. They are actually recognized as social economy company under the French Law. In this case, even if the project is centred around physical spaces, the real service provided is about creating connections among space providers and seekers. Nonetheless the added value of this initiative is about having identified an innovative business models for co-housing. Le Temps pour Toit offers users different type of contracts, depending on the needs of the elderly people and the personal commitment of the young people. The

economic model is based on a mix of monetary contributions and solidarity-based mutual help. The association answers thus three main societal needs: loneliness and isolation of elderly people, home care services, and housing problems for young people. As one of the founder says in an interview, their mission is “to organize solidarity exchanges among generations”. The solution proposed by Time for Roof is in fact complementary to “professional” home care services in the way that it does not replace the services of personal care attendants or family caregivers but gives additional help in the form of presence in the evening and during the night, which are generally the moments when people are left alone and may face difficulties.

**Lieux collectifs de proximité** are physical spaces open mainly to family for the provision of family or childcare services and as meeting point for the creation of social relations. A network has been created in Nantes including 5 centres. Most of them are funded mainly with public resources, but three of them raise private funds for a 30% of their total budget. “An LCP is a place that is open to all. It produces services aiming to strengthen social diversity, social ties and citizenship, improving living surroundings, reinforcing community dynamic. Therefore, it promotes inhabitants’ direct participation and cooperation with other local stakeholders, including public institutions. The LCP is an innovative stakeholder in its territory at the level of governance and delivered services. Its services are complementary to public institutions and it plays the role of a bridge between inhabitants and these institutions.” This definition being quite ample, enables LCP to provide different activities and to target different target groups (women, families, youth, children). The following actions encompass thus what is happening in the seven LCP which are located in quite diverse, including the most marginalized and the richest ones:

- social inclusion and professional integration for disadvantaged youth and women, enhancing their professional know-how (sewing, dry-cleaning, child care, intercultural cooking, etc.)
- social and cultural development of children;
- reinforcing parenthood, strengthening ties between parents and children;
- creating exchanges of know-how (computer, cooking, art, etc.) and mutual support between neighbourhood inhabitants;
- developing an economic activity as a means to support collective projects: for instance, the production of food catering services, based on the know-how and participation of the women, enables financing of cultural activities aimed at reinforcing the sense of citizenship among immigrant women.

The LCP network is the result of grassroots initiatives, which have nonetheless been supported by public institutions and the no-profit sector. The WILCO report states in this sense that “the specific local context of Nantes Metropolis Social and Solidarity-based Economy (SSE) policies and the existence of a close public-private partnership have contributed to the emergence of the LCP network. “

The Lieux Collectives de Proximité clearly attaches to sharing of physical space the particular function of enabling conviviality which is “a goal in itself and as a way to achieve its objectives (social inclusion, professional integration, etc.). This is an important dimension of the LCP, created as friendly places where women and families feel at ease and not only as social services providers. The innovative dimension of the LCP lies in their capacity to create family-minded and friendly spaces of exchanges and meetings among people as a way to combat social exclusion and loneliness of people living close by.”<sup>14</sup> It is not clear to the author how each Lieu has obtained the physical space but due to the strong partnership with Nantes municipality, the author supposes that the space has been granted by the local authorities.

**Prinzessinengärten** (Princesses’ garden) is a urban gardening project promoted in Kreuzberg, one of the best-known areas in Berlin. The idea of project is of Robert Shaw and Marco Clausen, founders of the initiative “Nomadic Green”. Concretely the project consists in recuperating an unused wasteland area in Kreuzberg to make it available for cultivation. In reality, Shaw and Clausen created a sustainable meeting and learning space through gardening. The Princess Garden outdoor area is in fact an agricultural learning center for the neighbourhood, where community workshops on city gardening are organized jointly tutorials on organic food production, biodiversity and climate protection. The agricultural space lets neighbours, school kids and curious observe and even help with the growing of potatoes, herbs and vegetables. A small cafe within the garden is also open and supplies fresh products directly from the garden. The garden utilizes a number of flexible concepts that enhance portability and sustainability: tomatoes flourish in growing sacks, peas grow in former breadboxes and basil resides in recycled milk cartons.

Shaw and Clausen did a lot of lobbying in the district for their idea, which they had presented in a detailed business plan. They finally got the opportunity to lease an unused 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> area in the middle of Kreuzberg. Three principles were fixed at the very beginning of the project: 1) the garden should be a “vehicle for social processes” and 2) a place for the community to develop an experiment-friendly do-it-yourself-mentality 3) the garden should be a non-profit project. According to these guiding principles, modes of internal organisation and working have been developed. Since 2009 Princesses Gardens have generated or collaborated with dozens of projects involving up to 2,500 volunteers per year (WILCO and [www.prinzessingarten.net](http://www.prinzessingarten.net)). The project has also resulted in a book which have sold more than 4.000 copies and is currently being translated in English for a second edition.

As a part of the international urban gardening movement, the project pursues an alternative approach how to use urban space ecologically and sustainably. Despite its apparently emphasis on manual labour it succeeded in building bridges to major global discourses such as climate change and sustainability and in establishing collaboration frameworks and partnerships with a different groups of stakeholders

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<sup>14</sup> WILCO report, pag. 100-101

at local but also international level. “The innovation consist (also) in establishing an essential link between urban transformation and

social intervention, something completely new in local planning and based on merging knowledge and professionals from diverse fields” (WILCO)

**Family centres** are an innovative service offered to families in Berlin which conjugate kindergartens and day-care institutions following a holistic approach. In family centres, families are considered in their totality as a beneficiary of the services and in need of building competences. The beneficiaries of the service are also the parents and the services provided do not concern only providing substitutes for those tasks and activities that parents are not able to do. Currently, eight centres have been installed in Berlin, mostly initiated by parents and sponsored by the Berlin Senate. “Centres provide multiple family-related



Figure 8 - Cover of Prinzessingärten book

services and activities on a small scale, starting from giving families the opportunity to share leisure time together, receiving advice and participating in various courses that strengthen (e.g. linguistic and self-help) competences of children and parents up to regular working groups where service provides and families join in order to develop new service arrangements for the respective neighbourhood.” Despite of common services provided in all the family centres, each one has a specific focus. For instance, the intercultural family centre Adalbertstraße, in a rather segregated area in Kreuzberg, puts emphasis on helping families under stress. Contrary to this, the family centre “Das Haus” in Friedrichshain, addressing middle-class families, operates more as a physical place where families can spend their leisure time, e.g. by socialising and cooking. Users, namely parents, are invited to co-creation activities and services. This is particularly the case of the family centre described in the WILCO report that has given birth to new centres, with the support of the families and of third organizations. The co-creation process involves many other organizations and resources at local level and becomes a kind of “think tank” where new services for families are designed and delivered.

**Fare e abitare** (Doing and living) initiative was promoted by a private organization, Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana (ISB) in collaboration with the cooperative “Il Calabrone” to support young people (aged 18-30 years) who want to leave their family and live independently. ISB makes available two apartments (fully furnished), one for two young people and the other for four of them. The two apartments are located in a small building owned by ISB and are made available upon a rent much lower

than the average market price in exchange of voluntary services. The apartments were in fact made available through a call for proposals: young people willing to apply had to submit a social project which might be cultural, social or environmental. The initiative apparently ended in 2012 and there is no evidence of the social impact generated despite of the (little) support received by the Municipality.

**Una Casa in Piú** (One home more) is an initiative promoted by the Italian cooperative Scalabrini Bonomelli to offer to migrants apartments to buy. The innovative character of the project lies in the consideration of migrants as buyers of those apartments: The cooperative's mission was, from the beginning, to find housing solutions for migrants (which, in the 90's, arrived quite massively to Brescia), assuming that this could be a good starting point to support their autonomy and their social inclusion in the hosting city. The cooperative aims at creating conditions of social inclusion for migrants, avoiding the development of neighbourhoods inhabited by migrants only. Furthermore, the cooperative was born to increase the "cooperative spirit" (in the sense of working and participating in cooperative activities) in migrants, present not only as members of the cooperative but also in the directory board. The cooperative worked on identifying apartments, restructuring them and then renting them to migrants, also encouraging autonomy and the social and economic growth of dwellers. In 2005, the cooperative transformed itself from a building cooperative to a social cooperative to pluralise their activities, focusing also on prevention and interventions in case of migrant hardship. The cooperative has many relationships with public agencies and with the local church. The project "Una casa in piú" was developed in 2003/2005 following the example of another project "Casa Amica" promoted by another cooperative also in Lombardy Region. In the framework of a special regional programme that financed housing solutions for migrants, the migrants officer of Brescia municipality at that time invited the cooperative to participate in the call for developing something similar to the "Case Amica" project. The idea was to identify apartments that could be rented to migrants with long contracts of 10 + 10 years with the formula "patto di future vendita" ("rent to buy") in order to permit them to have a good accommodation, to pay rents below market prices and to have the opportunity to buy the dwelling at the end of the period. Cooperativa Scalabrini Bonomelli did not win the first call for proposals, but the following one and received 500,000 euros to develop the project. The cooperative identified thus fifteen apartments, half of which were rent at normal prices, while the other half was offered with a rent-to-buy formula. Monthly rents were and are around 500 euros (canone convenzionato), and the price to pay at the end of the 20 years, transforming dwellers into homeowners, around 1,500-3,000 euros. This rent value incorporates also a capital part (to buy the dwelling month by month) and is higher than normal rents applied by the cooperative but is foreseen to increase the cash flow of the cooperative. The project was initially a success but context conditions changed over the year: many migrants started going back to their home countries and there was thus less demand. On the other side the time span to become homeowners – 20 years – was considered too long to attract a sufficient number of buyers. The

social impact of the project lies in the opportunity given to migrants to buy an apartment and empower them with “right” and “duties” deriving from possessing a real estate property. Eventually this led migrants to integrate more in the society. In this case the space was not shared with other users or promoters and the social impact deriving from sharing was thus not observable.

**Neighbourhood management companies** (buurtbeheerbedrijven, or “NMCs”) in Amsterdam were an initiative of the housing corporation mere. In 2007, as part of the larger national Community Development Programme (“wijkaanpak”), it was decided that in a selection of so-called “problem areas” – or “aandachtswijken” - large-scale urban renewal projects were to be carried out: in these neighbourhoods, a significant part of the social housing stock was to be demolished and rebuilt or renovated and sold on the private market. At that time, it was expected that it would take 10 years to complete this transformation. Ymere, which owns a large (if not the largest) share of the properties in some of these “problem areas” in Amsterdam, feared that during the renovation period these neighbourhoods would deteriorate even further. Hence, Ymere decided to set up an easily accessible service point in those neighbourhoods, where tenants/residents could go to if they had any questions or problems. These service points – which then came to be referred to as NMCs – were going to perform additional maintenance tasks, on top of the regular maintenance services that were already provided by the municipality or housing corporations in those neighbourhoods, to keep them “clean, intact and safe” and to ensure that the “livability” (leefbaarheid) would not degenerate in these neighbourhoods during their renewal. At the same time, NMCs would address (youth) unemployment in the neighbourhoods, as they would be set up as learning/reintegration companies for residents with a distance from the labour market. The first NMC in Amsterdam opened its doors in 2009 and by now there are five of them in different parts of the city (Oost, Osdorp, Noord, Slotervaart and Landlust).

The basic framework of all the NMCs is the same: they all provide maintenance services in areas that are going through urban renewal, in order to keep them “clean, intact, safe” and “livable”, and they all provide learning/reintegration places for persons with a certain distance from the labour market. Generally (although there are exceptions to this as, at this stage, some NMCs are more “advanced” than others), a NMC comprises four disciplines: 1) a technical team (klussenteam) – which carries out technical repairs inside the dwellings (owned by Ymere) in a particular neighbourhood; 2) a neighbourhood team (wijkploeg) – which helps keep the public spaces in that neighbourhood “clean, intact and safe”; 3) caretakers (huismeesters) – who handle social and physical problems in the neighbourhood; and 4) a receptionist (baliemedewerker) – who residents of that neighbourhood turn to for information/filing complaints. All four of these disciplines are (or could be) linked to learning/reintegration programmes for people with a distance from the labour market.

Learning/reintegration programmes that are associated to the various disciplines of the NMCs are thus intended to stimulate people with a (relatively short) distance from the labour market. By working in a NMC, people have the opportunity to refresh basic skills - such as being on time, working in a team, etc. – but also to develop specialised skills and acquire new experiences so as to improve their chances on the labour market.

**Yalla Trappan** is an initiative promoted by a woman, a civil servant of an employment office to create job opportunities for migrant women in Rösengård, a degraded area in the Swedish city of Malmö. As a labour-integrated social enterprise, Yalla Trappan integrate permanently permanently employed workers with workers who are there on an internship, on different services (restaurant and catering, cleaning services, sewing). The organization is a cooperative enterprise, which means that its workers are also members of the association. Yalla Trappan is currently managing three different spaces: one restaurant with an open air area and two sewing studios. Apart from creating employment and favouring the integration of the women who work at Yalla Trappan, the project achieved a wider social impact through the restaurant. As meeting point for different people of the neighbourhood the restaurant has triggered the integration in the whole area, leading to a reduced rate of criminality. The Yalla Trappan is one of the case studies presented in this work and will be further analysed in the next chapter.

**Happy Feet** is pre-school service offered by a registered charity located in a underprivileged neighbourhood of Dover (United Kingdom). The neighbourhood and the surrounding area suffer from social and economic problems such as unemployment, drug addiction, alcoholism and so on. The Happy Feet Pre-school is based at The Ark, a Christian church-run centre that hosts a number of different activities. The pre-school is composed of two rooms and a garden. They were initially based in one room only and started using the second room following an increase in the demand of the services. The pre-school supports especially children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Ark generates some income by hiring out its facilities and by employing business practices. The approach of Pre-Feet is similar to those of Family Centre in Germany or Lieux collectifs de proximité in France: they support the whole family to improve child development. The services provided are include adult literacy, health care, etc. The additional services are not formalized and can not evaluated as indicated in the WILCO report “Happy Feet Pre-School has been formally inspection by government body OFSTED, although the wider family support it provides has not been formally evaluated (and would in any case be hard to measure)”. The charity is able to provide that service through a strong collaboration with other agencies that may be involved in supporting the family. In the Happy Feet project, the space in which services are provided has not been conceived as meeting point for families and in this sense the additional social impact deriving from sharing is in fact not relevant.

## Conclusions

From the analysis of the projects focused on space, it emerged that only few of those recognizes and attaches a special importance to sharing of space, as asset to achieve further impact. This is the case of Lieux Collectifs de Proximité in Nantes (France) and of Prinzessingärten and Family centres in Berlin. In all the three cases the promoters clearly state that by sharing the space, users were involved in the co-creation of new services or initiatives, besides achieving additional impact deriving from sharing of experiences, knowledge, etc.

In the cases of Les Potes en Ciel and Yalla Trappan, the promoters of the project was not really aware of the additional benefit deriving from the use of the physical space as place for conviviality. In the case of Yalla Trappan, the restaurant was considered by the promoter of the initiative simply a place where the employees could work and deliver a specific service. In this case the additional social impact derives from inhabitants of the area to be able to spend leisure time with migrants and for migrants to see their (food) culture and tradition be publicly recognized and appreciated. This in turn led to a more pacific coexistence of different cultural background and to the integration of migrants in the city context. In the case of Les Potes en Ciel, the multipurpose space was thought as a meeting point for families only: no additional value or “task” was assigned to the sharing of the space.

The difference between the first group of case and the second one lies in the awareness among promoters of the opportunities offered by sharing the space. This awareness apparently increases the potential social impact which might derive by sharing the space, probably because the space and the activities taking place in it are also conceived and designed in a way to foster creativity, interaction and co-creation.

In the remaining cases, the physical space is considered simply as a tangible asset needed for the specific functions and activities of the organization. None of the promoter attaches another value to the space, even is some of those projects were extremely similar to Lieux Collectifs de Proximité or to the family centres. In these cases, the initiatives indeed managed to reach their objectives, but present a lower degree of innovativeness and remain much more dependent on external public funding and support or risk to become obsolete, such as in the case of Una Casa in Piú project, which were not able to keep pace with the changing context.



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				Elderly and people with disabilities	Education and child care	Employment and training services	Social housing	Health care and medical services		Maintenance of public spaces	Transport services								
European Social Innovation Competition 2014																			
1	Bosnia and Herzegovina (winner)	Apiform makes beekeeping accessible to people in wheelchairs, senior citizens, people with back pain or arthritis	x										x						The project seems not active any more
2	France (winner)	Wheeliz pools the entire automobile fleet by enabling owners of adapted vehicles who do not use them every day to rent them directly to other disabled people.		x														Charlotte de Vilmorin	
3	Ireland (winner)	The Freebird Club is a web-based community platform to enable peer-to-peer home-stays and vacations for older adults with limited economic possibilities	x															Peter Mangan	
4	Greece (finalist)	Phee utilises the dead leaves of Posidonia Oceanica seagrass, legally obtained directly from the municipality, to use it as raw materials in object design.											x						
5	Croatia (finalist)	Smart hearing aid helps people with hearing problems interact better through a remote control appliance		x														Jelena Herceg	The project seems not active any more
6	Latvia (finalist)	Samaritan Mobile Care Complex provides direct services to seniors living in remote/distant areas, where there is poor infrastructure and no care 'extras' are available by bringing equipment and services adirectly to the people in need.	x	x														Andris Bērziņš	
7	Belgium (finalist)	De Landgenoten brings resources together - through shares and donations -, to purchase land that can be managed as organic farmland across generations.											x					Adje Van Oekelen	
8	Germany (finalist)	MELAWEAR is a Fairtrade clothing company that produced organically in India. They state to produce in harmony with nature, but also by building social and transparent partnerships and providing adequate compensation to all actors involved in MELAWEAR.															x	Henning Siedentopp	
9	Italy (finalist)	Last minute sotto casa created an app to allow merchants with surplus food products to quickly and easily inform consumers located in the vicinity who can enjoy ongoing "last minute" promotional sales.											x						
10	Poland (finalist)	Social Good Vending Machine is helping individuals with a history of substance abuse and other groups threatened with social exclusion, has at its disposal a network of centers located all over Poland, often close to big cities, thanks to which production and distribution channels can be organized.	x																The author could not assess if the project engages in economic activity

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11	Poland (semi-finalist)	Jillion is a crowdfunding platform to fund dream projects with money made on auctions.																Edyta Kotowicz , Tomek Nowak, Adam Kudybiński	The project seems not active any more
12	Italy (semi-finalist)	<b>CommHome</b> , through incremental activities of research-action (selection of target groups, communication, constitution of non-profit associative entities, co-elaboration and planning with direct stakeholders) aims at creating co-housing facilities for non-self-sufficient and fragile elderly people.	x	x			x											Stefano Frasi (Cooperativa Koiné)	The Amica Home at San Giustino has been created through a public-private partnership
13	Italy (semi-finalist)	<b>Co-care</b> new domiciliary proposed a new model of domiciliary assistance where the carer is shared in a group of four elderly people.	x	x														Francesca Bottai	The cooperative is still ongoing but the project is apparently not active any longer
14	Czech Republic (semi-finalist)	<b>Cook without Homes</b> aims to provide homeless women job opportunity, but also to portray homeless people differently. CWH offer vegan, healthy food at different farmers markets, various public and cultural events for voluntary contribution.	x																In July 2016 they started a crowdfunding project on Indiegogo but with no success
15	Cyprus (semi-finalist)	<b>Sign Short Message Service</b> is an app based on sign language alphabet	x															George Geratziotis	
16	Romania (semi-finalist)	New generation of <b>probiotic functional beverages</b> using agro-food waste with impact on human gastrointestinal-health.															x - Food production	Dan Vodnar	The site is a personal website with no info about the product promoted
17	Belgium (semi-finalist)	<b>Microsaving Partners</b> : the project's aim is to promote microsaving groups as an innovative tool to prevent overindebtedness via a local partnership in Belgium.															x-Micro-savings/ micro-credit	Bernard BAYOT	Financité is a network of individuals and organizations founder in 1987. The capital of Financité is provided mainly from bank and foundations.
18	Portugal (semi-finalist)	The " <b>Pão com História</b> " bakery will be a social business, located in a vulnerable district, which intends to create lasting jobs and reduce school drop-out and absenteeism.	x				x											Pressley Ridge	The project seems not active any more
19	Turkey (semi-finalist)	<b>From Landfill to Roof Top</b> : the idea is to use all kind of waste plastics to produce valuable, useful and recyclable goods such as roof tiles or profiles.																	The reference website is of another company and does not mention the social innovation project. It has been not possible to get in contact with the founders
20	Greece (semi-finalist)	The <b>Wi-H2O</b> platform is envisaged to deliver fast water consumption information to network operators and consumers, enable network monitoring with innovative means for data transmission.																	The project seems not active any more

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21	Croatia (semi-finalist)	<b>Bars are not Barriers:</b> allows children to visit their incarcerated mothers more frequently by developing a business activity in the Požega Prison (that can be applied in other prisons) where prisoners, parents and designers create products for parents whose origin would be clearly marketed.	x																The project seems not active any more
22	Slovenia (semi-finalist)	<b>My Forest mobile cooperative</b> : the goal is to establish a virtual cooperative through a social media application, which would pool resources by joining together potential forest micro-owners.										x							The project seems not active any more
23	Italy (semi-finalist)	<b>Horus</b> is a wearable device thought as a personal assistant for blind and visually impaired people	x															SAVERIO MURGIA	
24	Slovenia (semi-finalist)	<b>Land Sharing:</b> The project is based on intergenerational cooperation between elderly farmers who cannot work on the land due to their age and unemployed people from towns.																	
25	France (semi-finalist)	<b>Love your waste</b> transforms the biowaste from canteens into renewable energy while raising the awareness of the general public to environmental issues and the solution at our disposal.										x						Juliette Franquet	
26	Italy (semi-finalist)	<b>Crowd4city</b> is an online crowdsourcing and crowdfunding platform which enables citizens, public authorities and entrepreneurs to propose, support and finance real estate projects in their community															x - Crowdfunding		The project seems not active any more
27	Italy (semi-finalist)	<b>SO LUNCH</b> is a community of people willing to offer home-made meals during lunch break in a domestic setting.															x - Food production	Luisa Galbiati	Supported by Rinascimenti Social and Crowdfunding Civico Milano
28	Turkey (semi-finalist)	<b>DA-NEC</b> aims at preventing water waste from a tap by preventing leakage from a tap of cold water that remains between heater and the tap when the flow of hot water from the tap is preferred.										x							The project seems not active any more

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<b>European Social Innovation Competition 2013</b>																			
29	United Kingdom (winner)	<b>Community Catalists</b> aims at developing an online platform to connecting talents in business and communities and thus create jobs for social benefit by helping people to use their creativity to set up sustainable, small-scale social care and health services that people can afford.	x															Ian Coleman	
30	Germany (winner)	<b>Economy App</b> collects information from users on what they could offer in a local economy and what their economic needs are. The software keeps a record of the value of products and services provided and accepted for every person in this economic network and so no money ever needs to change hands										x						Noemi Salantiu	
31	Spain (winner)	<b>MITWIN.NET</b> proposes an intergenerational professional network conceived to facilitate contact between people in order to share a job post and knowledge, with the main goal of reducing the high rate of youth unemployment. MITWIN.NET proposes that older workers share a job with younger people, allowing those approaching retirement to share knowledge with those being incorporated into the job market, easing both entry and exit from the job market and addressing young unemployment.																Lola Urbano	The project seems not active any more
<b>European Social Innovation 2015</b>																			
32	Italy (winner)	<b>From Waste to Wow Quid project</b> intends to recycle textile quality waste from high fashion collection and use it as raw material for sewing activities of unemployed women											x					Anna Fiscale	The project has received funding also under culturability call for proposals
33	Belgium (winner)	<b>Urban Farm Lease</b> aims at providing training, connection and consultancy so that unemployed people take advantage of the large surfaces available for agriculture in the city (e.g. 908 hectares of land or 394 hectares of suitable flat roofs)											x					TroPeople Asbl	The project seems not active any more
34	Ireland (winner)	<b>Voidstarter</b> provides unemployed people with learning opportunities alongside skilled tradespersons in the refurbishing of the voids of cities.	x														x	Laura Howe	The project seems not active any more

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<b>WILCO Project</b>																			
35	Croatia	Started as a spontaneous group of parents, <b>RODA</b> is now an association engaged in economic activity which manage a central place where pregnant women, new mothers and parents can get information and exchange experiences and support one another			x										x - Family care	x	x	Ivana Zanze	
36	France	<b>Potes en Ciel</b> is a welcoming and open place for children aged 0-16 years together with their parents which promotes children's wellbeing, good parent-child relationships, socialisation and mutual aid between families and generations by developing free creative and participatory learning activities.			x										x - Family care	x	x	Sophie Jabari, Helene Giguët, Valerie Meteier, Nicolas Karges, Amelie Beck, Annick Boutten, Helene Hagel, Emilie Lenglet, Liste Mazin, Christine Champale	Lack of stable and professional staff and too much reliance on volunteer is a problem.
37	France	<b>Faubourg de Béthune Childhood</b> centre groups a part-time child care centre, a maternal and infant health and care protection centre, a child-minder centre, a recreation centre and a games library. T By involving parents in the organization of activities, the centre tries to build capacity and self-esteem for usually disadvantage single parents, which are also at risk of social exclusion.	x		x										x - Family care	x	x	Wahida Duschene	Having a receptionist plus a coordinator/manager is a plus.
38	France	<b>Le temps pour toit</b> emerged in 2005 as an association to match elderly people willing to offer or rent spare bedrooms in their apartment and young people in need of an accomodation. Time for Roof offers users different types of contracts, depending on the needs of the elderly people and the personal commitment of the young people.	x															Zelda Sionneau	
39	France	<b>Lieux collectifs de proximité</b> are physical spaces open mainly to family for the provision of family or childcare services and as meeting point for the creation of social relations. A network has been created in Nantes including 5 centres. Most of them are funded mainly with public resources, but three of them raise private funds for a 30% of their total budget.			x										x - Family care	x	x	Bernard Luçon	
40	Germany	<b>Prinzessinergarten</b> is a project promoted by a non-profit company called "Nomadisch Grün" to revitalise an unused public area in Kruzberg for the creation of a gardening areas. The gardening is done by citizens on a volunteer basis. The aim of the project is to provide a space and environment for informal education, sharing of experience, build capacities and create network of people.							49							x	x	Robert Shaw Marco Clausen	The founder manage to lease a public unused area.

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<b>WILCO Project</b>																					
41	Germany	<b>Neighbourhood mothers</b> are an association of mothers which provide peer-to-peer support to families of migrants and favour their integration. They operate directly in the streets or in café. The neighbourhood mother receive a fee as volunteer and a training on social support and integration.	x															x - Family care and migrants			
42	Germany	<b>Pestalozzi Frobel Haus</b> is one of the 8 family centres in Berlin. Family centres offer a wide range of services covering child care but also trainings for parents, consultations, etc. Some of the activities are self-organized by the parents while others rely on a external network of freelancers and experts.			x													x - Family care	x	Prof. Dr. Sabine Hebenstreit-Müller	
43	Germany	<b>MAMBA</b> is a network of public, no-profit and for profit organizations aimed at supporting immigrants in building competences, getting a job and finally getting a residence permit. The network is composed of a local association for Refugees Relief (GGUA), the Society for Promotion and Education, the Centre for Youth Education and the Educational Centre of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce	x																	Joachim Bothe	
44	Italy	<b>Bimbo chiama Bimbo</b> is an association which provided an integrated service composed of a) peer-to-peer and specialised family support b) solidarity-based shopping c) child education and care.			x													x - Family care		Ignazio Di Fazio (Presidente)	The space is offered by Caritas
45	Italy	<b>Fare e Abitare.</b> Immobiliare Social Bresciana is a network of cooperatives of real estate, training and renovating works. They have built or refurbished buildings for social housing. They characterise for being in economic health (annual turnover of around 300.000€). Fare e Abitare is a project offering apartment for young people at a lower rent in exchange for voluntary services.																	x		Manuela Archetti
46	Italy	<b>Una casa in più</b> - Cooperativa Scalabrini Bonomelli identified apartment for migrants to be rented or purchased with rent to buy contract. Rents are higher than usual rent but surplus is for the cooperative to develop further projects																	x		

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<b>WILCO Project</b>																				
47	Netherlands	<b>Management Neighbourhood Companies</b> is an initiative promoted by Ymere, a social housing enterprise. The initiative provide an integrated social housing project which aims at fostering the participation of inhabitants and to provide support to the most vulnerable ones.	x														x			
48	Netherlands	<b>BOOT</b> – Neighbourhood stores for education, research and talent development promoted by the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. A BOOT is a store where students from the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) offer all kinds of advice and services (administrative, financial, judicial, educational, etc.) to residents of deprived neighbourhoods in Amsterdam. The involved students also organize various activities for the neighbourhood and its residents and conduct research into various socioeconomic issues.																	Wieteke Seleen	
49	Spain	<b>Umextea</b> is a neighbourhood association which provides primary attention services. They basically organized activities for children, to protect children rights. They have collaborated with the Municipality of Navarra for some years for the provision of services.				x													Alberto Jauregui	Not sure the association is still working. It has not been possible to contact with the founder.
50	Sweden	<b>Yalla Trappan</b> is a labour-integrated social enterprise whose aim is to provide work for women who would otherwise have severe difficulties entering the labour market. As part of the more commercial side of Yalla Trappan they run a coffee shop and a lunch restaurant, offering affordable lunches and catering services. They run a studio for design and craftsmanship, mostly concerned with sewing. They also offer cleaning and conference services.	x														x	x	Christina Marchi-Siesjö	Case study
51	Switzerland	<b>ORIF</b> is a non-profit association which facilitates the reintegration of young people with health problem in the labour market. To do so the association offer a 3 years programme which provides them with professional training but also with social skills and with an internship experience.	x																	
52	United Kingdom	<b>Happy Feet</b> is a community based initiative of pre-school services for children up to 12 years old. The service is done in cooperation with a church which offers the physical space and receive both public funds (to provide the service to disadvantaged family) and generate profits.				x											x	x	Jenny Mannion, Acting Manager	
			20	5	8	8	6	0	0	1	0	12	0	1	12	12	8			

### **3. SOCIAL IMPACT**

#### **3.1 The current discourse on social impact**

The Michigan University defines social impact as “A significant, positive change that addresses a pressing social need”. The goal of social enterprises is to answer unmet social needs. Maximization of profit is not a goal per se, as in traditional enterprises, but is the “mean” or the condition for the social enterprise to exist. Differently from no-profit organizations, the social enterprise confronts with competitors in the market and rely on profits for its financial sustainability. For social enterprises the social goal or the social value generated is the business idea or the business product. By creating synergies between financial and social goal (Borzaga and Santuari, 2003), the social entrepreneur has to continuously manage trade-offs between increasing productivity for financial gain versus increasing productivity for social gain (Defourny and Nyssens, 2010). On the other side, social enterprises depend on their relations with stakeholders: stakeholders might be of different nature and can be customers of the enterprise, indirect beneficiaries, but also providers, collaborators and even funders. Some of those are integrated into all stages of the decision making process of the enterprises (European Commission, 2011).

Being able to measure its results – i.e. to which extent they have achieved their objectives and thus have generated social impact- is fundamental to evaluate its efficiency and efficacy but also for accountability towards its stakeholders and especially towards private and public investors (Bull and Crompton, 2006). Measuring results is important for the entrepreneurs themselves to guide them in the decision making and strategy planning process but also to evaluate their performance.

Despite of their relevance, measuring the results of social enterprises is not an easy task. The difficulty lies in the multiplicity and diversity of objectives and aims, of the fields in which social enterprises might operate of the stakeholders social enterprises interact with. In 2014 the European Commission published a report on social impact measurement elaborated from the Expert Group on Social Entrepreneurship (GECES). A sub-group within the GECES had been created with the mandate to develop a methodology for measuring the social impact of activities by social enterprises. The report stated clearly that it does not exist a rigid set of indicators to measure social impact in all cases. “This is so because:

- first, the variety of the social impact sought by social enterprises is substantial and it is difficult to capture all kinds of impacts fairly or objectively;
- second, while there are some quantitative indicators that are commonly used, these often fail to capture some essential qualitative aspects, or, in their emphasis on the quantitative, can misrepresent, or undervalue the qualitative aspects that underpins it;



- third, because, owing to the work- and data-intensive nature of measuring impact, obtaining a precise evaluation is often at odds with the key need for proportionality: the amount of time spent and the degree of accuracy sought and achieved in any measurement exercise must be proportionate to the size of the enterprise and the risk and scope for the intervention being delivered
- fourth, because in an area characterised by wide variety in the nature and aims of activities, and the types of SE delivering them, there is a clear trade-off between achieving comparability between activities through using common indicators and utilising indicators that are useful and relevant for the management of the social enterprise; increasing (artificial) comparability can lead to a loss of relevance;
- fifth, because impact measurement and indeed, the world of social enterprise has been evolving very rapidly, making it difficult to stick to any one standard over a number of years.”  
(EC, 2014)

Despite of the outlined barriers to the development of a one-fits-all methodology for social impact measurement, several approaches have been proposed both in literature and at policy level. The same expert group of the European Commission proposed specific approaches for the initiatives and businesses financed under the Programme for Employment and Social Innovation and the European Social Entrepreneurship Funds, while the G8 Social Impact Investment Taskforce, developed a set of general guidelines for impact measurement practice for use by social impact investors globally to ensure that impact measurement is widely recognised and employed as a fundamental part of the practice of social impact investing.

In the next paragraphs, those approaches, instruments and tools will be presented along with the evidence from the application of some of those.

### **3.2 From performance measurement to social impact measurement**

Before even of addressing the problem of social impact measurement, researchers have focused on developing methods to measure the efficiency and efficacy of social enterprises, namely their performance. A unique instrument or method for measuring performance that can be applied to all enterprises does not exist neither for traditional profit oriented businesses and despite of the evolution of performance measurement systems, the adaptability of these approaches to social enterprises appear limited, due to the specific features of those organizations (Arena et al., 2015). From a methodological point of view, the first difficulty lies in the need to identified a set of performance representative of the multiple objectives of social enterprises and which should thus include economic, environmental and social performance, not to mention other sphere such as the happiness of individuals. The main challenges for performance measurement systems is how to translate the social value of the company

into measurable terms (Ryan and Lyne, 2008). From a more practical point of view, the problem is the cost of the performance measurement: this requires time and financial resources to be developed and applied. Social enterprises usually do not dispose of those resources and there is still little empirical evidence of any impact of performance measurement on the actual business practice (Bull 2007).

Arena et al. have reviewed the literature to propose a list of tools and instruments potentially relevant to deal with performance measurement in social enterprises. They have identified two main groups of tools: 1) approaches and instruments to measure performance in social enterprises (and organizations oriented to social objectives) 2) more general approaches and instruments to deal with the multiple informative needs of different stakeholders, in particular in the non-profit sector.

Under there first group, four type of models are proposed. The first tool is the adaptation of the balanced



Figure 9 - Adapted from Robert S. Kaplan and David P. Norton, "Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System," Harvard Business Review

scorecard of Kaplan and Norton (1996). The balanced scorecard is a performance measurement framework that added strategic non-financial performance measures to traditional financial metrics to give managers and executives a more 'balanced' view of organizational performance. The balanced scorecard suggests that we view the organization from four perspectives, and to develop metrics, collect data and analyze it relative to each of these perspectives: 1) the Learning & Growth Perspective includes employee training and corporate cultural attitudes related to both individual and corporate self-improvement. 2) the Business Process Perspective refers to internal business processes. Metrics based on this perspective allow the managers to

know how well their business is running, and whether its products and services conform to customer requirements (the mission). 3) The Customer Perspective sees customer satisfaction as indicator of future performance. 4) the financial perspective considers traditional financial data and add some other data such as risk assessment and cost-benefit.

In the adaptation to social enterprises, several authors (Kaplan and Norton, 2001; Somers 2005; Bull 2007) provide an expanded definition of customers by considering different groups of stakeholders. The customer perspective is thus integrated with that of donors and of recipients or beneficiaries. In particular Somers developed the Social Enterprise Balance Scorecard (SEBC) adding an additional layer – the social goals – above the financial perspective; adding the environmental and social performances to the financial perspective and distinguishing in the customer perspective between donors and beneficiaries. Bull (2007) instead partially modified the four original perspectives into: multi-bottom line which is a synthetic assessment of financial, environmental and social results, stakeholders' environment, internal activities and learning organization. As highlighted by Arena et al. the adaptations of the balanced scorecard still fail to address the complexity of social enterprises. They overlook the social impact, i.e, the long-term effects of the social enterprises and do not incorporate the evolution of the business. Secondly, even if they consider a wider range of stakeholders, they do not cover the diversity of information needed by and from the stakeholders. Finally, some of the indicators proposed, namely the one related to social capital and knowledge, are difficult to measure.

The second type of models are contingency models. Two main contributions have been selected by Arena et al. The first one from Bagnoli and Megali (2011) consists of a map of indicators considering three dimensions: economic and financial performance, social effectiveness and institutional legitimacy. The innovativeness of this model lies in the introduction of the new dimensions of social effectiveness and institutional legitimacy, but the model fails again to consider the different information requirements coming from different stakeholders. The second contribution is the contingency framework developed by Ebrahim and Rangan (2010) and based on a process approach that considers organization inputs and activities, outputs, outcomes and ultimately societal impacts. They differentiate between short and long-term results and consider that each organization should focus on the first or the second one. Also in this case the limit is given by overlooking the different information requirements of different stakeholders.

The third type of models finally address the view of different stakeholders: in the Performance Prism proposed by Neely et al. (2002), the focus is on the identification of stakeholders and definition of their needs. Similarly Simmons (2003) uses a stakeholders analysis to determine the relevance of each one and ranks the aspects considered important to measure.

Finally the last contribution is the social return on investment (SROI) developed by the Robert Enterprise Development Fund and tested by the New Economics Foundation (NEF 2007). SROI assigns a monetary value to social and environmental results combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Stakeholders' objectives are central to the SROI process. Another innovative element is the calculation of deadweight as the proportion of outcomes that would have occurred regardless of the

organization's work. The main limit of this models is its difficult application, especially for small organizations which do not dispose of the needed knowledge or resources to implement it.

The second stream of contributions focus on incorporating the diversity of stakeholders' perspectives and needs. Those contributions are based on the stakeholders theory (Freeman 1984; Donaldson and Preston 1995). According to stakeholders theory, organizations affect and are affected by a wide and diverse group of stakeholders. The way the organizations and their stakeholders interact have impact on both and the perspective of salient stakeholders are especially significant for the organization strategy and operations. The stakeholders analysis allow to understand stakeholders and their relevance for the organization or for a specific project or initiative. In stakeholders analysis the following key issues are considered: interest, influence, interrelations, networks among others. The analysis might consider also different time frameworks. Several methodologies have been developed for stakeholders analysis, but Arena et al. found more relevant those proposed by Fletcher et al. (2003) and Bourne and Walker (2005). Fletcher et al, proposed a visual representation of stakeholders – a map- which should support in determine the roles of each stakeholder and understand their perspective and need. Bourne and Walker instead developed the Stakeholder Circle Methodology that does not limit to identify stakeholders and rank them in terms of relevance but add a more interactive approach including an engagement strategy for the establishment of long-term relationships.

Finally Arena et al. proposed a new model which firstly identifies what measurement dimension are relevant for a specific social enterprise and consistent with its mission and secondly invite the social entrepreneur to engage in a learning process to reflect on his/her normative needs as well as those of the stakeholders. This model has been applied on one company in the energy sector and presents the advantage of being more easily applicable by the entrepreneur.

### **3.3 Metrics for social impact measurement**

The approaches and models described above characterize for the inclusion of other dimensions – social and environmental – in addition to the financial one and for taking into considerations stakeholders. Despite of this innovative features, almost none of them have achieved proposing a set of indicators and metrics able to capture the complexity of social businesses. Social impact measurement goes beyond defining the performance of a social business. For a social enterprise, the social impact is the social effect or social change, both long-term and short-term, achieved for its target population as a result of its activity undertaken.

Some models proposed the calculation of a synthetic indicator to measure the global performance of a social organization. This is the case of SROI which has been presented before. Other types of synthetic indicator are the Local Multiplier 3 (LM3) developed by Sachs (2002) and based on the concept that an economic multiplier effect describes the impact that spending has on the economy; the Gamma Model

/Grabenwarter and Liechtenstain (2011) which aims to measure social or environmental impacts in line with financial market standards (Bengo et al., 2016). Social enterprises usually targets and impact a diverse set of stakeholders and synthetic indicators can not measure such a multiplicity of effects.

The report from the sub-group of GECES experts on Social impact proposes a standard that balances the different perspective of stakeholders such as funders, investors and policy-makers, is cost-effective when it comes to implementation and is applicable to both small and big organizations. The report propose thus a common process that should be used for all social impact measurement exercise and which follows five stages:

1. **identify objectives** both of the measurement exercise itself and of the service being measured. This will define who are the target beneficiaries, what are the expected outcomes, the performed activities and theory of change, i.e. the causative links between the activities being undertaken and their targeted outcomes and impact.

2. **identify stakeholders** defining who gains and who gives what and how? What is their level of engagement with, control over, and contribution to achieving the desired objectives and the outcomes and impacts that come with them? The report suggests for this step to refer to the work of EPVA (Hehenberger et al., 2013) to assess the relative importance of different stakeholders and their needs in setting the measurements required.

3. **set relevant measurement:** starting from this story of change, and based on the identified outcomes, develop a series of measures that fairly and helpfully reflect what is being achieved and establish how they should be presented simply and clearly to meet stakeholders' needs.

4. **measure, validate and value:** assessing whether the targeted outcomes are actually achieved in practice, whether they are apparent to the stakeholder intended to benefit, and whether they are valuable to that stakeholder. Value is the net gain to the stakeholder: that is the gains achieved, net of the costs or sacrifices made to achieve them.

5. **report, learn and improve:** report on the services and on their measurement to enable each stakeholder, to learn, and to revisit, refocus and improve the services. The reporting needs to



Figure 10 - Five-stage process for social impact measurement from EPVA

be appropriate to the audience, and needs to be presented in such a way as both to be transparent and useful, and to encourage the future behaviours most useful to making the service effective in delivering desired outcomes.

### **3.4 Practical experiences of social impact assessment: the case of Ashoka**

The approaches and methods described above has been developed in the more recent years due to the growth of social businesses in Europe and throughout the world. In response to this growth a new financial supply chains started to emerge to provide financial support for this new social sectors. Those chains include both private and public funders such as banks and financial intermediaries, public organizations and social impact investors. A social impact investment market has started to emerge and this has made more urgent the need for the formulation of methods for impact measurement and the application of those methods or tools. As already outlined above, the methods proposed so far are too much expensive for small enterprises but other type of organizations have started to apply other type of social impact assessment methods

This is the case of Ashoka, an international organization that promotes social entrepreneurship by affiliating individual social entrepreneurs into its supporting programme. The peculiarity of Ashoka, with respect to other social innovation supporting organization, is that it focuses on leading social entrepreneurs. “Rather than looking for someone who is building one school or one hospital, Ashoka looks for individuals who are changing the way children learn or the way healthcare is delivered, a process known as systems change.” The Ashoka entrepreneur must seek to create impact on a wide societal scale, a systemic change, defined as the fundamental reform of existing societal systems and/or the creation of new ones. To become Ashoka fellows, social entrepreneurs must thus undergo a very rigorous selection process composed of five criteria:

1. A New Idea: successful social entrepreneurs must promote a new idea—a truly transformational innovation that will change the pattern in a field.
2. Creativity: successful social entrepreneurs are creative both as goal-setting visionaries and as problem solvers that are capable of engineering their visions into reality.
3. Entrepreneurial Quality: successful social entrepreneurs are driven by the vision of solving the problem they are working on. They typically will not rest until their idea is the new pattern for society. For this reason, Ashoka requires and supports its candidates in dedicating themselves full time to launching and growing their idea.
4. Social Impact of the Idea: the idea proposed by the successful entrepreneur must have the potential to change the field significantly and trigger nationwide impact.
5. Ethical Fiber: Social entrepreneurs introducing major structural changes to society will have to inspire that change at a wide scale and across different stakeholder groups. If the entrepreneur

is not trusted, the likelihood of success is significantly reduced. Ashoka insists that every participant in the selection process be assessed for ethical fiber.

In addition to this selection process to ensure since the widest potential impact of a social innovation initiative, even before it starts, Ashoka developed a Measuring Effectiveness (ME) program in 1997 to better understand the progress of its social entrepreneurs toward systemic social change. The ME program is comprised of a two-part evaluation tool designed to track the social change created by Ashoka's Fellows in both the short and long term. The first part of the tool, measures short-term impact, and is conducted via biannual reports submitted by the social entrepreneurs themselves on progress made against benchmarks mutually agreed upon at the start of their Fellowship. The second measurement tool is composed of two components to its ME program: 1) an annual survey containing "proxy indicators," which is distributed to cohorts of Ashoka Fellows at either their five- or 10-year post-election date, and 2) a series of case-study interviews with a subset of survey respondents. To measure how widely a social entrepreneur's impact has spread, Ashoka's proxy indicators address factors such as number of times the idea has been adopted by independent groups and the level to which the idea has been implemented through public policy at local, state or national levels. To measure strength of the social entrepreneur's institution, data is requested about the funding, governance, and staff levels of the organization, among other measures. And to evaluate the influence the entrepreneur has achieved in terms of the overall system or field, indicators such as policy change are collected. Ashoka uses the following core set of specific proxy indicators in its measuring effectiveness survey:

- Are you still working toward your original vision? Ashoka selects social entrepreneurs with a lifelong commitment to their vision for the future. Continued dedication signals a Fellow's ongoing effort to spread a new idea or practice in society.
- Have others replicated your original idea? Replication is not the only sign that an idea has spread, but it is one indication that an idea has taken root.
- Have you had impact on public policy? Changes in government policy signal the adoption of a Fellow's idea in the public sphere.
- What position does your institution currently hold in the field? A strong institution that is recognized as a leader in its field effectively provides permanent status in society for a Fellow's idea and creates the base from which that idea will spread.

Ashoka recognizes that simple qualitative data collected in response to survey questions such as those listed above do not offer a comprehensive answer to the challenge of measuring the results achieved by social entrepreneurs, particularly in the realm of systemic change. Therefore, as mentioned above, Ashoka conducts in-depth case studies of a cross-section of surveyed Fellows to better understand their effectiveness. These case studies emphasize the level of systemic change and the extent of its spread,

offering qualitative information which complements the aggregated quantitative data culled from the surveys

The methods used for Ashoka's Measuring Effectiveness project introduce some limitations. The first one lies in the self/reporting nature of the information collected: all of the information presented are in fact reported directly by fellows themselves. Other limitations concern the fact that the assessment is performed internally and that the way responses are collected can vary: in most cases responses are collected by a e-mail or through an online survey, but in some cases also face-to-face interview or phone calls are used. The other important limitation is given by the prevalent qualitative character of the results of the assessment.

In order to integrate the results of the survey, Ashoka conducts in-depth case studies of some of the surveyed Fellows to better understand their effectiveness.

The Ashoka practice is interesting since aims not only at measuring the social impact of a social entrepreneurial business idea but to maximize its potential through an ex-ante assessment of the social entrepreneurs. In this way, Ashoka reduced the risk associated to the support provided to the social entrepreneur and improve the overall performance of the Ashoka organization itself.



## **4. THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL SPACE IN SOCIAL INNOVATION PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES**

### **4.1 Physical proximity and tacit knowledge**

Although many researchers acknowledge that social innovation needs the appropriate conditions to emerge and flourish, still what those conditions should be has not been defined. Social innovation means creating new strategies, concepts, ideas and organizations that address social, environmental, cultural and economic challenges in order to extend and strengthen civil society and pursue public good. Social innovation can happen in the public, private, profit or non-profit sector and most often at the intersections among sectors. Social innovation can be the results of an individual or collective initiative but in the implementation and management phase it must attract several competences and talents and need to be nurtured with feedback, inputs, resources provided by a wide network of beneficiaries, stakeholders, supporters.

In the knowledge based economy, the production, acquisition, absorption, reproduction and dissemination of knowledge is seen as the basis of competitiveness. Already decades ago, a distinction between codified and tacit knowledge was proposed by philosophers of knowledge such as Ryle (1949) and Polanyi (1966). Codified knowledge is the knowledge which can be expressed using symbolic form of representation, while tacit knowledge can be defined as skills, ideas and experiences that people have in their minds and are, therefore, difficult to access because it is often not codified and may not necessarily be easily expressed (Chugh, 2015). The definition of tacit knowledge belongs actually to Michael Polanyi (1966) who was famous for his sentence “Individuals appear to know more than what they can explain”. He actually referred to the fact that each knowledge produced or acquired by an individual is imbued with his/her deeply personal content. In Polanyi’s view, the tacit dimension of knowledge lays thus in the unawareness or unconsciousness of skills for instance such as those of the swimmers which are able to keep one’s lungs filled with a sufficient quantity of air. Such a skill might remain unrecognized by the swimmer and/or difficult or impossible to be explained to learners. Communication difficulties thus, and not only awareness limits, would keep that knowledge tacit and prevent its transformation to codified.

More recently, Howells (2000, p. 3) added the element of experience to the concept of tacit knowledge stating that tacit knowledge is acquired via the informal take-up of learned behaviours and procedures. Maskell and Malmberg (1999, p. 172) went even further asserting that “tacit knowledge can be produced only in practice” for two reasons: knowledge need to be shared between teacher and pupil and/or knowledge is produced as practice in response to a specific problem. This establishes a link between tacit knowledge and a social context, in which teacher and pupil share the confrontation with a problem and the need to produce a response for that. In this literature, the relationship between tacit knowledge

and context is a reflective one, since tacit knowledge both defines, and is defined by social context. Likewise it is generally held that tacit knowledge can only be shared between two or more people when they also share a common social context: shared values, language and culture. If values might not be related to a specific region and even country, language and culture do. I would actually add to Maskell and Malmberg theory that social context define both the awareness/consciousness of the individual learner and of the problem to be solved and the practice put in place to solve it. A similar technological or non technological problem will present different nuance according to the social context in which it originates. As learner and/or teacher the social context will forge my way of learning and of teaching in similar ways but still with different individual nuances. The way in which a teacher and learner solve a problem through practice will be also affected by the social context in which they operate.

The social context is given by the language, the culture and values of a community. Sharing the same social context has been recognized in literature as an enabling factor for communication and knowledge transfer. In the case of tacit knowledge, sharing the social context appears to be even a pre-condition or at least fundamental to more easily achieve it.

Being able to produce and diffuse tacit knowledge represents an asset for organizations' competitiveness: in the knowledge-based economy where everyone has relatively easy access to codified knowledge, the creation of unique added value depends on the capacity to use tacit knowledge which is a key determinant of the geography of innovative activity. Sharing a same social context can nowadays happen online: videoconferences and video streaming allow to share the "practice" which represent one of the element in innovation development shaped by social context. Nonetheless, we acknowledge from the Allen curve (Allen, 1997, 2000) that in an R&D facility communication between two engineers decline as the distances of their offices increased. Distance has a negative impact on social relations in a working spatial milieu. Kabo (2006) and Peponis et al. (2007) have examined the aggregate consequences of the link from spatial layout, to social networks, to organizational outcomes such as innovation, efficiency and efficacy and productivity. Prior to that work, Allen (2000) already found that informal communication is the most affected by architecture since it occurs casually, during change encounters.

Gertler (2003, p. 79) introduced the spatial argument to the social context discourse, saying "that tacit knowledge, because it defies easy articulation and is best acquired experientially, is difficult to exchange over long distances. Second, its context-specific nature makes it spatially sticky, since two parties can only exchange such knowledge effectively if they share a common social context, and thus important elements of this social context are defined locally." He actually added a third element related to the changing nature of the innovation process itself and, in particular, the growing importance of socially organized learning process. Since innovation has come to be based increasingly on the interactions and knowledge flows between economic entities such as firms (customers, suppliers,

competitors), research organizations (universities, other public and private research institutions) and public agencies technology transfer centres, development agencies)", the spatial localization of those actors become fundamental for knowledge flows and interactions.

The positive relation between tacit knowledge and firms' competitiveness is also at the core of Knowledge Management which sees in the social relations surrounding production the ability to appropriate tacit knowledge (Kocha and Osterman, 1994; Wever, 1995; O'Sullivan, 2000). Social relations are fundamental for tacit knowledge reproduction and transfer as indicated also in Lundvall and Johnson's concept of "learning through interacting". It is in fact commonly acknowledged that successful sharing of tacit knowledge depends on close and deep interactions among parties involved and that "spatial proximity is the key to effective production and transmission/sharing of tacit knowledge" (Gertler, 2002). Storper and Leamer (2001) even emphasize the "importance of face-to-face interactions in the production and distribution of new complex ideas".

Nowadays sharing a same social context can in fact happen online: videoconferences and video streaming allow to share the "practice" which represent one of the element in innovation development shaped by social context. Nonetheless, we observe nowadays to physical reorganization of big corporations to gather their human resources in "smart" buildings. In 2014 Waber B, Magnolfi J., Lindsay G. wrote on the Harvard Business Review:

*"In Silicon Valley the tight correlation between personal interactions, performance, and innovation is an article of faith, and innovators are building cathedrals reflecting this. Google's new campus is designed to maximize chance encounters. Facebook will soon put several thousand of its employees into a single mile-long room. Yahoo notoriously revoked mobile work privileges because, as the chief of human resources explained, "some of the best decisions and insights come from hallway and cafeteria discussions." And Samsung recently unveiled plans for a new U.S. headquarters, designed in stark contrast to its traditionally hierarchical culture. Vast outdoor areas sandwiched between floors will lure workers into public spaces, where Samsung's executives hope that engineers and salespeople will actually mingle. "The most creative ideas aren't going to come while sitting in front of your monitor," says Scott Birnbaum, a vice president of Samsung Semiconductor. The new building "is really designed to spark not just collaboration but that innovation you see when people collide."*

We acknowledge from the Allen curve (Allen, 1997, 2000) that in an R&D facility communication between two engineers decline as the distances of their offices increased. Distance has a negative impact on social relations in a working spatial milieu. Kabo (2006) and Peponis et al. (2007) have examined the aggregate consequences of the link from spatial layout, to social networks, to organizational outcomes such as innovation, efficiency and efficacy and productivity. Prior to that work, Allen (2000) already found that informal communication is the most affected by architecture since it occurs casually, during chance encounters. In the line of Allen's thought, Wineman, Kabo and Davis (2008) went even

further stating that not only physical distance negatively affect communication but that spatial layout and organizations affect communication, productivity, efficiency and efficacy. As they explained, “research indicates that spatial organization affects the generation and distribution of movement patterns in space, and unplanned encounters between occupants”. They refer in particular to the work of Hilier and Penn (1991) who “found that the properties of the spatial layout of movement corridors (whether near or far from work areas) will affect whether communication tends to spread among research groups, a pattern I suggest has greater potential to sustain creative awareness on a more global scale”. Wineman et al. explored the effect of spatial layout on the formation and maintenance of social network structure and on innovation in a professional school at the University of Michigan. They considered coauthorship as indicator of successful collaboration in such a context. “Results indicated that being in the same department is by far the best predictor, but that distance has a significant negative effect – that is, the longer the distance, the less the likelihood of coauthorship – after controlling for the departments of the various authors”. They additionally found a significant relationship between integration and innovation. “The higher the extent to which a faculty member’s office is located along a corridor which is well connected (integrated) to all other corridors in the department, the greater the likelihood of coauthorship within the department”.

Physical proximity and cultural commonality matters for the creation and diffusion of knowledge and for innovating. For this they represent a problem, or an opportunity, for major organizations with branches in different countries and continents. Not only physical proximity but workspace design has become a “hot” topic in corporation management since it has been proved that “spaces can even be designed to produce specific performance outcomes—productivity in one space, say, and increased innovation in another, or both in the same space but at different times.” (Weber et al., 2014). Some of the larger consumer goods companies already in the last decades created spaces for encouraging consumer input (Bitner, 1992) into new concept development (e.g. Kodak, British Telecom and Nokia) while the leader design consultancy IDEO make strong claims about the way in which their environment and infrastructure enhances their creativity and innovation performance (Kelley & Littman, 2001).

The lack of face-to-face communication and interactions underexploit the potential of tacit knowledge transfer, of social relations and ultimately of creativity. If we overturn the perspective, physical proximity represents an asset for small organizations, in particular for those which devote attention to the design of the work space. In social innovation projects, the knowledge produced is about innovative strategies to solve existing social problems: the entrepreneur must know the social problem he/she would like to address and must have innovative ideas, propositions to solve those. As indicated before, the entrepreneur might be a user already, holding the knowledge about the problem, or must be in any case in strong contact and in continuous interaction with the users or beneficiaries of his/her business, initiatives. It is unlikely that this continuous interaction happen at distance or remotely, but need to happen physically. Not only, a Baym, Zhang and Lyn (2004) found, electronic communications actually

generates more telephone and face-to-face communications: the more we write e-mail, the more we actually talk by phone or physically to our e-mails recipients.

Also social innovation is very context dependent: the same solution to a same social problem might work very well in one country, region, city and even neighbour and not all in a different one. In this sense physical proximity among the social entrepreneur or innovator and his/her beneficiaries is fundamental for the success of the initiative. Still, as we could observe in the empirical database, there are social innovation projects which strongly rely on ICT and social network and which are entirely built on the web or as mobile app: those projects usually answer quite general and common social problems such as visual impairment, or aim at creating network of beneficiaries or social entrepreneur. Actually most of social innovation initiatives present a replicability limit: most of those work very well in a specific local context but need to be readapted for their transfer or replication to a different socio-cultural environment.

#### **4.2 From physical proximity to “innovative spaces”**

Having acknowledge the relevance of physical proximity as enabling factor for the production and circulation of tacit knowledge in technological and social innovation project, the connection between physical proximity and shared spaces is not yet clear. A first step to be taken is in the definition of physical proximity. According to Allen, the communication among two people would decline progressively up to a distance of 30 metres. Beyond 30 metres there would not be any effect on communication. This would be in line with the need of face-to-face interactions suggested by many authors to facilitate not only the transfer of tacit knowledge but also creativity. If 30 metres is the distance which ensures the emergence of communication, transfer of knowledge and creativity, it becomes clear that the workers, professionals which should interact must be in a same physical space. The increased attention put by corporations in pulling their human resources together in inspiring spaces would also confirm Allen’s theory. The issue is thus not only about physical spaces, where ICT potential is limited without face-to-face communication, but about shared spaces where individuals can actually interact. The role of physical environment in fostering innovation, creativity and higher performances is somehow acknowledge in business, innovation and management literature, even if studies on physical space and innovation are fragmented.

The relation between environment and wellbeing of people was demonstrated already by Ulrich (1984) who reported the case of hospital patients having a nice view and reporting more positive conditions that patients whose view was only on empty walls. There is also much evidence on the way physical environment in which people work affects both job performance and job satisfaction (Vischer, 2007). Also the creativity literature (Csikszentmihaly, 1996; Sternberg & Davidson, 1996) has confirmed that space strongly affects people’s emotional well-being, which in turn is fundamental for creative work.

There is thus a strong correlation with well-being of individual and their job satisfaction, job performance and creativity, along with an enhanced capacity to transfer his and capture other's tacit knowledge. As Kristensen (2004) suggests in his work "Physical space affects the well-being of people, the channels of information, the availability of knowledge tool and sets the stage for coherence and continuity, which may contribute to competitive advantage". If we look at creativity theories, environment is listed among the six sources that creativity requires (Sternberg, 2006) along with intellectual abilities, knowledge, style of thinking, personality and motivation. It is thus generally assumed that organizations can generate more new ideas by using the physical space more diligently but how this can be done has not been yet object of analysis whose results would support practitioners.

The reason for this gap might lie in the definition itself of space. Many definitions have been provided and the concept of space has been related to place, a "built environment" (Lawrence and Low, 1994), "built forms" (Hillier, 1996), etc. There are several concepts of space, which derive from a different analytical perspective: physical, perceptual and phenomenological. There is in fact a physical space which is the foundation of the perceived space: the perceived space offers opportunities for activities of and among individuals. "Physical space is the objective and the perceived space in the subjective aspects of the same space" (Kristensen, 2004). The physical space is also correlated to cognitive space, since much cognitive activity is "situated", happen where we are physically, in response to a problem and challenge which require our action. In this sense, space affects individual, the way he/she learns, act and react to a problem, which is the way he produces and acquires his/her tacit knowledge and expresses his/her creativity.

On the other side, the physical space is where interactions among individuals happen: the way space is organized may affect the way social relations emerge and are shaped. As demonstrated by Wineman et al. (2009), the design of a physical space may determine not only with whom we will collaborate but also the extent of our collaboration with other individuals. Physical space affects thus not only individual creative processes and behaviours but also those of a collectivity or community.

For the purpose of this work, the author has found particularly useful the definition of "innovative spaces" to define the object of this study provided by Oksanen and Stahle (2013). Their study aimed at investigate how physical spaces intersect with innovation and innovativeness, and what are the most relevant attributed of physical space for innovation. They refer thus in their study to "tangible, physical environment, which can interfere with people and their actions, such as social interaction, in various ways" and "use the concept of innovative space, which simply refers to a physical environment where innovation flourishes". The two researchers considered that physical space has been gaining attention because of the shift in the innovation paradigm from maximizing profit to solving problems and generating benefit for the society. Innovation has thus become in their view more open, inclusive how the environment impacts innovation performance and how this performance matches the underlying

strategic intentions of the organizationve, human-centred and collaborative, in other words “more social”. On the basis of this assumptions, they selected key narratives from existing literature and perform a wide number of interviews to identify the important features of innovative physical spaces and which are reported in the table below.

<b>Key narratives from the existing literature and from the interviews</b>	
Themes	Key narratives
The desirable attributes of physical space	Physical space improves the well-being and happiness of people Physical space can be modified in order to meet the diverse needs of different people Physical space encourages communication and enables collaboration Physical space fosters creativity
The changing concept of innovation	Innovation today is more open, inclusive, diverse and wide-ranging than before Innovation is a communicative, human-centred process The environment affecting people has effect on innovation and innovativeness
What constitutes an innovative space	Innovative space highlights team-work and the communicative aspects of working and studying it (it supports collaboration) Innovative space is creatively designed (it is attractive) and reflects the personality and values of users

*Table 5 - Oksanen and Stahle, Physical environment as a source for innovation: investigating the attributes of innovative space*

As a result of their research, the authors present five characteristics of innovative space:

- Collaboration enabling. Innovation is a collaborative work and the work environment need to encourage and enable a fruitful interaction among workers, practitioners, entrepreneurs and so on. As highlighted before, creativity is not only an individual process but a collective and social one. Space should thus facilitate the creation of social capital for each individual living the space.
- Modifiability refers to flexibility in reformation. The space must be responsive to the needs of the users. What is particular interesting in this feature is that reformation does not only concern physical aspects of the space but also intangible aspects such as the destination use of a same areas or space.
- Smartness refers here to the availability of key technologies, such as wireless, sensours, which can enable co-operation of smart objects and ubiquitous interactions with different users. Smartness or intellectuality would affect also the way in which technology interact with and is perceived by humans.
- Value reflecting. Spaces can be viewed as a continuation of one’s identity. Individuals usually create personal micro-cosmos in their dwelling to express their identity. In environmental psychology some values such as privacy, safety are central and generally recognized, but spaces

can reflect additional values such as tolerance, respect, or instead competition, meritocracy, etc. Again this feature enters the sphere of intangible aspects of physical spaces and I personally see a strong relation with the modifiability feature. Value of a space are not generated by the space but by users of the space. In this sense values, although are not expected to change on a short time, might evolve in the medium-long run and the space must on one side allow this evolvement and follow it changing itself.

- Attractiveness relates with individuals feeling comfortable in the space. The concept of environmental comfort might be quite intuitive but was formally formulated by Vischer (1989). Attractiveness of spaces has actually been object of other studies which focused more on public spaces such as open space in cities. In closes spaces attractiveness might depend on design, ergonomics and arts but also on intangible such as “creativity or aesthetics”. As matter of fact attractiveness matters as capacity to attract talents.

In the table below, which is a personal elaboration, I report the different features of physical space and try to infer how each feature actually relates to the individual or collective creativity and innovation process and how each of those concern a tangible or intangible aspect.

<b>FEATURES</b>	<b>INDIVIDUAL/COLLECTIVE</b>	<b>TANGIBLE/INTANGIBLE</b>
Collaboration enabling	Individual for enabling social capital building  Collective for ensuring creation and maintenance of a community	Tangible in the design aspects (input)  Intangible in resulting in social relations creations (output)
Modifiability	Individual since it must answer the need of each individual user and to the entrance and exit of new users  Collective since it must responds to the evolvement of the community (in their values, in their ways of collaborate) and of the space purposes	Tangible when it comes to infrastructure, equipment, furniture  Intangible when it comes to design conveying a certain vision/value, or in the destination use of portions of the space or the whole space
Smartness	Individual since it must allow the work of individuals alone and collaboratively	Tangible in the technologies provided



		Intangible in the way technology interacts and is perceived by individuals
Value creating	Individual and collective since it must respect each individual value and communicate the values of the collectivity	Tangible in the design Intangible in the expression of certain values
Attractiveness	Individual since attractiveness affects each individual (measured as a new user of a space for instance) Collective since attractiveness relies on general aesthetic canons	Tangible in the design Intangible since refers to creative and aesthetics concepts

Table 6 –Physical environment as a source for innovation: investigating the attributes of innovative space ((Source: Oksanen and Stahle, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 17 No. 6, 2013, pp. 815.827

For my study it was very interesting to observe how intangible aspects of space were considered in the work of the two researchers since this is the only work where intangible related to physical space was addressed. As explained above one of my research questions is in fact how to identify intangible assets in social innovation projects focused on space and how to measure those.

In this line, the work of Oksanen and Stahle provide another interesting suggestion which considering “space as an innovative service”. “The new concepts of learning and working spaces such as collaborative workspaces or community spaces resemble the idea of space as a service. Spaces include a variety of services, from basic office infrastructure, such as an internet connection, to unique co-creation experiences.” One of the services spaces can offer relate is “to capture and refine the cultural and social knowledge that is important to innovation creation (..)”. If this would apply to technological innovation, appears to me even more important for social innovation as further described by the authors, who actually do not refer to it in the whole paper. Still they suggest that “As both innovation business and innovation researchers need to explore the society around them, physical spaces have a special role as platforms for enactment and discussion where different players come together to discuss and work with common challenges and goals”.

### 4.3 Physical space from the practitioners point of view

Social innovation has increasingly gained attention in research and in policy making in the last decade. Social innovation policies, funding programmes and supporting initiatives have emerged in most

European countries and outside Europe. More recently, some of those initiatives have started to devote specific attention to the issue of space, recognizing its specific role, and supporting or promoting the creation of shared spaces. In the framework of urban planning and development policies, an increasing number of initiatives embrace more participatory approaches where citizens are called to develop projects for the conversion of abandoned and degraded areas. In other case, architects and urban planners work together to design public spaces which not only host economic and social activities, but are generators of new, peaceful and constructive relations among individuals and organizations.

There are several reasons backing the creation and diffusion of shared spaces. If we think of co-working places, the most evident reason for their emergence is that nature of work is changing and with it the workplace. With new technologies we have observed the rise of “free lance professionals” who work with several clients, from several countries and who are not bound to one physical space. On the other side, real estate prices have been growing worldwide, making it increasingly difficult for small groups and individuals to find affordable workspace. Those trends do not affect only for profit organizations. No profit and charities have suffered from continuous restrictions in their administrative budgets, while facing increasing requests of supports from communities and individuals.

Shared workspaces are themselves a social innovation answering to the above listed challenges. There is increasing recognition that the problems, both in no profit and for profit sector are too complex to be addressed by any single player. Open innovation describes the new way companies innovate, making use of external and internal ideas, resources as well as external and internal paths to market to develop their technologies (Chesbrough H., 2003). Likewise, shared spaces connect diverse organizations and individuals, giving them the chance to collaborate, share knowledge and develop systemic solutions to the issues they are trying to address. In shared spaces, market based organizations can collaborate and even develop joint strategies with mission-based organizations.

Shared spaces are not only co-working: co-living solutions have already been proposed in many cities throughout the whole world and others more hybrid solutions hosting a multiplicity of services crossing professional and personal development sphere started to diffuse as well. The design of shared space is usually a bottom-up or better said a participatory approach in which designers and users collaborate or are the same people.

Public actors started to support this type of projects. This is the case for instance of the Culturability calls for proposals managed by the Unipolis Foundation.

### ***Culturability calls for proposals***

The call is already at its fourth edition and since the second edition the calls focuses on social innovation projects centered around the conversion and/or use of ex-industrial sites, abandoned buildings, etc.

Under the 2014-2015 edition, 6 projects out of the 996 submitted – were retained for funding (€40.000 each). Under the 2016 edition, five projects have been selected among the 522 applications received and supported with a €40.000 grant each.

The first project supported called **Cascinet** was proposed by a group of citizens to regenerate an ex-farm (Cascina in Italian) Sant’Ambrogio in Milan. The Cascina belongs to the municipality and has been rented to the social enterprise Cascinet for 30 years. Several projects have been co-



*Figure 11 - Cascinet Project (Source: Facebook page of Cascinet)*

created with the citizens to recover different section of the Cascina. The activities supported by the call include the development of a co-working for cultural businesses, a handcraft laboratory and shop, a co-housing for migrants and people suffering from autism, the restoration of frescos dated XIII century, and a Food Forest, where plants can be eaten or transformed in medical or healthy infusions. The social enterprise Cascinet is collaborating not only with Milan municipality but with other no-profit organizations

The second project **CasermArcheologica** aims at converting a 1000 square metres previous barracks of the Italian police corps of Carabinieri located in Muglioni Palace - an historical building in the small municipality of San Sepolcro - in the first centre for contemporary art of the Valtiberina area, where the caserma is located. The project is promoted in this case but an artist and a local teacher, together with a group of young professionals and studes from high schools and university. The two upper floors of the palace, which belongs to the municipslity, will host art galleries but also a co-working space and a training centre. The idea is to transform the palace in a physical space where local young people could experience cultural openness, experimentations and exchange and that helps them understand ther vocation by exploring the sector of visual and applied arts and other cultural services.

CasermArcheologica will be the core also of a “diffused” project which will engage families in the area in another project called Art Sweet Art. Art Sweet Art is a programme offering private housing solutions to artist: artists will live at local families’ apartments and houses. Families and other visitors will be

invited to co-create art works which tell about the history of the family. In this way, the family houses will become a diffused museum, which should foster an innovative form of sustainable tourism. Also in this case the project relies on a wide public-private partnerships which include six municipalities (Sansepolcro, Anghiari, Monterchi, Città di Castello, Comune di Citerna, Comune di Città di Castello, Comune di Monte Santa Maria Tiberina), several no-profit organization and one small enterprise.

The third project is called the **Hostel of Ideas** and aims at recovering a hostel next to a previous chemical factory which has been already converted in a multi-disciplinary cultural centre in Terni. The Hostel would offer low-cost hospitality solutions and would host four times per year a school for urban regeneration. The school would focus on the experimentation of new solutions and policies for territorial integration in the area of Terni-Rieti. The recovery of the physical space is thus just a part of the project, which conjugates an innovative training offer. The idea is that the profit from the hospitality activity would finance the training offer. The building is owned by Terni municipality and the association promoting the project has partnered with other associations, with the municipalities of Terni and Rieti and two small enterprises.

The fourth project - **LAB+** - aims at finalizing the regeneration project of Gasparotto square. The square is located in the train station area of Padova (Veneto Region, North-east Italy). The area is characterised by a over 65 population, mixed with migrants and other groups at risks of exclusion. Most buildings in the area are empty and the square was kind of abandoned public space. In 2014 a group of local organizations create a co-working, a urban garden and a Hub centre on Culture Food and Sport. The LAB+ project aims thus at finalizing the regeneration process fostering co-design and co-creation among citizens, private and public organizations. To do so, the project proposes a set of multi-disciplinary activities including social and community theatre, realization of public art works, the widening of the urban garden and the establishment of a weekly fresh biological market. The project is proposed by a group of association in collaboration with Padova municipality.



Figure 12- Gasparotto square (Source: LAB+ website)

MUFANT – the Fantastic and Science Fiction Museum Lab of Turin, is the fifth project supported by Culturability. MUFANT is the first exhibition space and permanent laboratory completely dedicated to fantastic and science fiction which cover all different forms of art (literature, cinema, television, comings, game and videogame). The museum has been conceived following a bottom-up approach and co-created with the public to answer to the needs of “fans” but also of the wider public, to inform it about new technologies, new medias, etc. The project has been promoted by a group of young scholars in collaboration with the fifth district in Turin, which granted the project an ex-school building in the area of Borgo Vittoria. The area is a quite degraded one which has not been included in the urban regeneration plans. The district administration was thus interested in creating a meeting point in the area: the museum opened already in 2015 but was in need of more regeneration works which will be supported by Unipolis Foundation in the framework of the culturability call.

Other ten projects were selected as finalists and foresee the regeneration of different type of buildings, including an ex-cinema or fresh market area, etc. All the projects are promoted by a network of public and private organizations: most promoters are no-profit organizations but small enterprises – mainly in the field of design, architecture and communication – are also participating in some of the projects. This highlights how the role of design is being taken increasingly into consideration. The role of public actors is important not only because those projects represent innovative solutions for urban regeneration strategies. In all cases in fact the physical spaces are owned by public actors, mainly municipalities, and made available for the projects without cost or at lower cost than market prices.

Almost all projects characterised for the multi-disciplinarily and hybrid use of the spaces to be regenerated. In many cases the space will host a co-working together with training or cultural activities, or agricultural related activities and even hospitality structures. Another common aspect to almost all projects is the co-design and co-creation of the services to be offered in the space: the co-creation does not involve only different organizations but also the citizens which will directly or indirectly benefit of the space.

In this sense all the projects proposed shared spaces where “sharing” does not refer only to the use of the space but also to sharing and co-possessing the idea of the space and the design of the activities that can take place into the space. The culturability calls was limited to the Italian territory but other initiative acknowledging the added value of shared spaces have been emerging in different countries.

#### **4.4 Emergence and diffusion of shared spaces: the Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto**

This is the case of the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) in Canada. CSI catalyzes and supports social innovation in Toronto and around the world. They create community workspaces, incubate emerging

enterprises, and develop new models and methods with world-changing potential. They started in 2004 and after few years they were managing a space of 23.000 square foot hosting more than 180 members of different organizations. They have an incredible network of partners and supporters, including Urbanspace Property Group, Canadian Heritage, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canadian Alternative Investment Co-Operative, Ashoka, Harbinger Foundation and the Province of Ontario, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. The Centre for Social Innovation attaches a special importance to space as social innovation enabler.

*“Social innovation needs a conducive physical environment. Social innovators need actual spaces to spark, develop and apply their ideas. (...) As a space-based organization, we are finding ways to create and curate spaces that foster social innovation. We’ve learned that the best spaces are a mix of utility and whimsy. Serving as the foundation is the physical space, the environment which our members see and feel and touch and inhabit every day. It’s at the very base of the pyramid because it’s what sets the tone for everything else: our members want to come to work simply to enjoy the space. The physical space is the container for everything that occurs at the Centre.”* (CSI website – <https://socialinnovation.org>).

CSI is designed to support and foster social innovation. They select all their members based on their commitment to that goal, and all of their programming is designed to increase the capacity of social enterprises, nonprofits, charities, green businesses, artists, designers, creators, and activists to produce social goods and services. They also select according to the number of people per organizations, prioritizing individuals or small groups. The vast majority of their members are one- and two-person operations. The reason for that is two-fold: they observed that individuals or small groups are in the greatest need of shared facilities and administration but also that these groups that are best positioned to collaborate and connect with others.

A third element that distinguish them from other social incubators or shared spaces managers is the importance they attach to physical design for setting the tone of a space and the behaviour of its users.

*“The physical space sets the conditions for community. Community develops as people start to feel comfortable in a space, are happy to spend time in it, and develop relationships with other members doing the same. A kitchen, for instance, isn’t just a place to eat; it can also allow for shared meals and impromptu gatherings, and those, in turn, are the basis of the relationships which lead to a real sense of kinship among the members. With some delicate animation, the bonds of community are forged and strengthened, building social capital and a network of relationships. Community relationships allow members to exchange ideas, to collaborate easily, to find services and access knowledge that might otherwise be hard to come by. In short, community is what leads to innovation, because a community of other creative, engaged people is what blows away the cobwebs, allows you to see an old problem in*



*a new light, and helps you find creative ways of implementing solutions you might not otherwise have considered.” (CSI).*

In a series of report published by CSI identify three distinct but related movements in shared space. Those different movements exemplify also the level of engagement and of activation of the community using the spaces:

- co-location generally refers to more permanent sharing of space among organizations. This is the case of no profit organization sharing a single facility, as a Multi-Tenant No profit Centre. The members in these centres are individual organizations who have decided to share space, often an entire building, as a strategy to save costs and advance their missions. The users of co-location spaces are not especially looking for connectedness or for collaboration opportunities. In this sense, the role of the space in favouring collaboration might be considered at the organization level only.
- Coworking spaces are generally more informal and of smaller scale than co-locations. Many members, usually freelancers and independent workers, are motivated by opportunities for social connectedness. Coworking spaces provide shared space also for part-time members and offer in this sense a more flexible service. Most successful co-working spaces attaches a special relevance to the design of the space: they conjugate infrastructure and other services, with a design of space which fosters creativity and interaction. Some community building and management activities might be foreseen and organized, but this is not the case for all co-working spaces. While most coworking spaces do not apply a ‘social change’ lens to their work, one notable exception is The Hub (the-hub. net), a global network of coworking spaces now reaching into over 20 countries around the world.
- incubators of social change projects. Incubation generally refers to support given to earlystage projects and organizations. This support can include programming, trusteeship, shared services, investment and financial back-end services. There is no evidence of a specific role attached to the configuration and design of the space in incubators. As for community building and management activities, those usually result from the training and support activities provided to start ups.

“Coworking spaces provide a shared context, an entrepreneurial frame, in which actors can reveal useful information to decrease this uncertainty, identify each other and mutually engage in activities that construct trust and enable cooperation.”

*Potts & Waters-Lynch, 2016*

Summarizing we can identify two main needs pushing a freelancer or independent worker to choose a co-working:

- economic/financial need

- need for connectedness, interaction and search for source of creativity and inspiration

If it is true that a traditional co-working space not devoting special attention to the design of the space and the creation of the community, answers both needs, the evidence suggests that those co-working structures where the space has been designed to foster interaction and creativity registered a higher level of satisfaction among their customers. There is a second element which increase the “performace” of co-working: the building and management of the community using the space.

#### 4.5 The role of community: souls of a shared space

Also animation is central as “practice Community animation is what turns “a place to work” to a space of social innovation.” The benefits of the shared space go in fact well beyond the availability of a portion



Figure 13 - CSI Pyramid

of the space or of associated services. The infrastructure is in fact the physical asset of space, while the community living the space is the intangible asset.

In CSI’s view, space is the foundation of the social innovation pyramid and the community is the second upper floor needed for social innovation to occur.

The role of community in innovation has already been explored and proved to be fundamental. In decision making process, both in the corporate and public sector, the involvement and continuous exchange of information and experience between promoters and users of the innovation, improves the efficiency and

effectiveness of the innovation process.

The closest concept of community in shared space is the one proposed by Wenger (1991)- the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) - who suggested that learning takes place in social relationships rather than through the simple acquisition of knowledge. CiP are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interaction and on an on-going basis (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al. 2002). They are considered a spontaneous, natural pehenomenon among people of a similar trade who occasionally meet to learn from each other, and are characterized by three key dimensions: mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. There are four critical elements that make up a CoP (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al. 2002):

- Domain: a Co Phas an identify defined by a shared domain of interest. Memberhsip implies a commitment to the domain and, therefore, a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people.



- Community: A CoP has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership implies a commitment to the domain and, therefore, a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people.
- Interaction: in pursuing their interest in the domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. Having the same job or the same title does not make for a CoP unless members interact and learn together.
- Practice: Members of a CoP are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems – in short, a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction.

CoP fit within an alternative way of thinking about knowledge production that is often referred to as knowledge co-creation (Regeer & Bunders 2009) or transdisciplinary research (Klein et al. 2001). A crucial difference between transdisciplinary research and other forms of research is that the knowledge of local stakeholders/practitioners is considered beneficial for the development of sustainable solutions to real world problems. Transdisciplinary research is a response to address complex and politically relevant issues, which often cross the borders of sectors and disciplines (Regeer & Bunders 2009; Pohl & Hadorn 2008). Over the years, transdisciplinary approaches have gained importance as a problem-solving approach for fields in which social, technical and economic developments interact with elements of value and culture, including sustainable development, health care and housing (Klein et al. 2001). Informal communications between individuals interested in a given domain become the means for sharing information, improving practice and generating new knowledge and skills (Li et al. 2009).

The role of Communities of Practice and of informal learning happening in Communities of Practice has thus already been proved to be relevant for innovation. Communities of Practice should emerge as spontaneous phenomenon and the shared of a common space represents already a pre-condition for this spontaneous emergence. On the other side, as highlighted in the experience of CSI, this interaction and the establishment of this community can be triggered by ad hoc community animation activities.

This appears to be fundamental if the scope of the shared space project is actually to generate social innovation. Community animation starts with the co-creation of the space and of the services but include other activities afterward to foster collaboration and creativity for the design of further services and initiatives. Animation activities requires dedicated efforts and where possible dedicated and specialized human resources. Despite of a clearly higher social impact associated to community animation, evidence from co-workings, including those from the case studies presented in the next chapter, poses the question of the rentability of those activities.

## 5. CASE STUDIES

### 5.1 Case studies selection

The three case studies developed have been identified through the research work. Yalla Trappan is one of the project analysed and included in the database presented above. Piano C is a project that participated to the Social Innovation Competition in 2012 and was semi-finalist. I managed to know the founder of Piano c in a policy conference on Social Innovation which took place in Brussels. Finally Giardini Margherita I encountered while analysing the projects supported by the Culturability competition.

My aim was to cover cases belonging to different sector typologies: Yalla Trappan is about inclusion of migrants, Piano C is about facilitating work-life balance while Giardini Margherita is rather a cultural project. All the three projects are actually multi-services and in the case of Yalla Trappa and Piano c they aim at serving a specific target group (women migrants in the case of Yalla Trappan, mothers or father with small children in the case of Piano C). Spazio Giardini Margherita is also a multi-service project but targeting a wider public.

The three projects have been mainly promoted by women: in case of Yalla Trappan, the project was promoted by Christina who actually worked alone, in Piano C the main promoter was Riccarda, even if supported at least financially by one male partner; in Spazio Giardini Margherita, the project was promoted by a group of people among whom, Nicoletta who is currently the manager.

In the case of Piano C I have been able to interview both the founder of the project, Riccarda Zezza, in 2013, and the community manager, Sofia Borri, in 2016. This has allowed me to observe and report on a longer term the evolution of this project.

### 5.2 Yalla Trappan (Sweden)

I identified and selected this case study from the report of the European project WILCO “Social innovation for social cohesion – Transnational patterns and approaches from 20 European countries” (Evers, Evert, Brandsen, 2014). I built the case studies relying on primary sources (one internal presentation shared by the founder), secondary sources (information on the website, case study description in the WILCO report, online Swedish press) and one interview with the founder and president of the Yalla Trappan Association, Christina Merker-Siesjö.



Figure 14 - Some of Yalla Trappan members  
(image provided by Yalla Trappan)

The interview with her was quite peculiar since at the beginning she declared she would not have much time to devote me but then she was talking even longer than planned. It emerged thus early in the interview that she is very passionate about what she has been doing and what she has achieved so far. As long as the interview continued, it became even difficult for me to interrupt her and make my questions.

### *Services, history, legal form and organization*

Yalla Trappan is a labour-integrated cooperative enterprise whose aim is double: to provide work for migrant women who would otherwise have severe difficulties entering the labour market and to facilitate their integration. Yalla Trappan addresses in fact migrant women who have little or no education at all. The Yalla Trappan association was founded by Christina Merker-Siesjö and is based in Rosengård, Malmö, which is an area characterized by a high degree of immigration and multi-ethnicity<sup>15</sup>. Yalla Trappan has a double soul: on one side they deliver training and capacity building activities to migrant women, on the other they manage one lunch restaurant, one coffee shop, one sewing studio and one shop. Additionally they deliver cleaning services and manage a small conference room. The first commercial activity they launched was the lunch restaurant, which at the beginning was offering mainly ethnic food during lunch time to be eaten there or taken away. More recently they have launched a catering services too. The cleaning services are mainly offered to offices and shops.

Yalla Trappan is organized as a cooperative enterprise and is a membership-based association. Both men and women can become member of the associations, but only women can receive the supporting services and be employed in the association. Usually women receiving the training, start then working on an internship, through the social services administration, and are then integrated permanently as employed workers working at the café and lunch restaurant, in the cleaning services or in the sewing studio.

The training offered to women cover both soft and hard skills, including some basic skills needed to integrate. Soft skills include self-esteem, while basic skills are Swedish language, health management and access to health services. Hard skills concern technical expertise such as cooking, sewing and cleaning and also entrepreneurship and business management.

Yalla Trappan association is the continuation of training and capacity building projects funded previously, since 2008 to 2010, under the European Social Fund (ESF) and involving the city of Malmö and other associations related to education and labour-market programmes such as ABF (The Workers' Educational Association) and ABL (providing job-coaches). Those projects aimed at providing mainly immigrant women whom were considered "un-hirable" with labour orientation services, including trainings. As Christina indicated, most of those women were not able to read or write in Swedish and

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<sup>15</sup> People living in Rosengård originate from 111 countries, and up to 50 different languages are spoken in the area (WILCO).

their only duty was take care of the house and of children. For this reason they were quite isolated from the system and also unseen by policy-makers and other stakeholders.



Figure 15 - Personal composition of pictures taken from Yalla Trappan webpage

*“Malmö was a degraded municipality and there is an area called Rosengård and there were a big group, it is majority group if you’re talking about the women and it’s immigrants living there and there is a big silent group that you never hear about, at that time at least, because now it is almost 10 years since I started and it’s the women who have no experience of both education and work. They come to Sweden and they are, you know they do not have education actually from*

*their home countries and either from Sweden. So, they were isolated in their homes but at the same time in the centre of the house. We thought it was very important to empower the mothers and the women from this group and it was really a huge group and now ten years after I can say that they are talking mostly about this group but at that time they just put them under the carpet, you know try not to see them, so it was a silent group.”*

### ***The social entrepreneur character***

Christina spotted thus a clear unmet social need of this women to be integrated into the labour market, and answered that challenge using their skills in housework as an asset. The ESF funded projects offered them trainings and mentoring to support them rebuild their self-esteem, learn Swedish, acquire basic knowledge on health management and health services in Sweden and on entrepreneurship and business development. The kind of training offered was thus quite diverse and multi-disciplinary.

*“We have to try to empower them to know what can we do more, their confidence was so low that they thought “Well, I can’t do anything” but we started with --- and cleaning and with sewing and then we employed professionals in those three branches and in the same time as they got well education in those branches, we also had education for all of them about health, how the society works, about the Swedish language. It’s three groups and about entrepreneurship, well all those thing that we can find useful for*

*the women and so during the project we started up some very small entrepreneurship in those branches, it was just very simple. “*

Once the ESF projects ended, Christina realized they had to continue with this kind of activity and decided in 2009 to found the Yalla Trappan Association.

*“I felt that I have the responsibility not to end the project, I wanted to continue and I was convinced that there was both the spirit to go along and also the possibilities to go along. Because I had at that time, those years, during the project, I have feelings I have people around me that supported the idea and so, I was convinced this could be possible, so well it was just to...as we say in Sweden “Spit in your hand and continue to work”.*

The Association was established thus by Christina and the beneficiaries of the Social Fund project and started with eight members. Since 2010 to 2016, the numbers of workers has considerably grown attaining 34 members in 2016. Not all of them are working full-time, both because of financial constraint but also because some of those who were offered a full-time job, preferred to share it with other women to allow more people to get a job. This is a signal of the democratic character of the cooperative, according to Christina.

*“at that time (2008) there were 8 persons from the project who were employed and six of them were only put at 25% and that was all we could afford at that time and it was shared, it was because one woman she was offered 75% and she said she wanted to share with others, it’s a cooperative, it’s a women cooperative, so it’s one woman one vote and we decide together and that’s one thing that is very important and democratic of the all thing, it’s not only about getting a work but also about empowerment to decide about their life and so on. It’s two, the strength and the empowerment have been very successful and today, 6 years later we are about 34 employees, so we have more than four double the employees.”*

### ***The physical space***

When I asked her about the space, Christina told me that they moved six times since the creation of the company. I wanted to understand better how much important was to dispose of their own physical space.

*Michelle: But so if you wouldn’t have a space, you think you could deliver your services in some other places, it would have made a big difference or not really to have your own space where you deliver your service, your training service or you could do this in some other place?*

*Christina: No, of course, we have to have our own.*

Actually Christia was not too much concerned on the space, since they disposed already of one space in the framework of the European Social Fund. When that project was almost at the end, they started

looking for other private spaces but finally they rely on their good relation and collaboration with Malmo Municipality and on Christina's capacity to deal with the local authority.

*"Well, now we are in 4 places but we were only in 1 place at the beginning and it was like this, that I was looking for a place where we could settle down after the project and at that time, you the building company was going to build something called Bukolo and I knew it was too small for us, it was not big enough, but still I just put our interest on the table for them. It was owned by the municipality and they have to count us and they said "This is too small for you" and "Is it?" I said. I was a bit surprised. I was not surprised, I know this is what was supposed to happen and then they said "Perhaps we can find something else for you" and I said "Yes, exactly" and they did and we accepted the place and we are there now. The other places we have some kind of agreements: we are both paying ourselves but we also have agreements with the municipality and they pay some of it because we are doing this new project education with the same target group."*

Christina has also clear in mind that the space need to flexible, attractive and respecting values of the users and of members of the cooperative.

*Michelle: But so Christina, you knew exactly the characteristics, the features that the space should have, like in terms of dimension or the location in the city, you had this clear in mind...*

*Christina: Well, we started in one place and I can tell it like this: we have an ambition, we have a vision that we could do, you had to, you had to explain your vision, make it very clear, so that everyone can take a part of the vision. Vision was that I came to a place that before was only an ordinary office and I said "well, let's see, we can do this and that and the colours, the yellow there and the orange there, it's a journey you take, you have to try". We all saw the same picture and now we have changed everything for example, there was an outside, where there is the lunch restaurant today, there was nothing and now there is a garden, so people can sit there we have plant you know, different flowers, things and herbs and we are in an ordinary house in Rosengård where people live, nine, ten and we invite everybody to come and use it free.*

In this sense, Yalla Trappan space corresponds to four of the five features identified by Oksanen and Stahle: the space must enable communication and collaboration, must be modifiable, attracting and reflecting value. The Yalla Trappan restaurant in particular is an innovative service which actually operates as an aggregator for the community of the area. It provides a social innovative service with a multiple social impact: offering job opportunities to migrant women and integrating them into the society is the aimed objective of Yalla Trappan but the project goes even beyond since the integration concerns also the customers of the restaurant, include integration and sharing of culture through the food experience, allow for nurturing and maintaining the cultural heritage linked to food and most important reduce criminality and conflict in the area.

*“You know what happened in Rosengård in these years and nothing ever ever happened in our place.”* Later on she added: *“the women they are living in this area and they are living, they are – you can say – ambassadors in all the houses around there because they are so proud of their work and everybody is so proud of Yalla Trappan and they spread that. So, everyday it’s women knocking at the door ‘Can I get to work here?’ and you know, it doesn’t function like that but I think everybody...for example during all those years we have been there we haven’t had one single glass broken.”*

Christina refers here to the fact that Rosengård has also been the place for several violent clashes between gangs and between local youths and authorities. The most intense episodes of violence happened in 2015 when over a period of few months several shootings took place along with other violence acts.

### ***Social impact***

Christina commented also about a further impact which has apparently been estimated by a Swedish economist.<sup>16</sup>

*“I can say there is a Swedish national economist, his name is Ingvar and he has counted about how much it costs with those people living outside the society, unemployment...you know, what’s happened with them and so on. And he says that, Yalla Trappan had saved during those – when we counted it was only 4 years, but now 6 – 4 years, the society had saved around 118 million Swedish kronors. Because now we have income, they can pay taxes, they have less sickness and so on.”*

Coming back to the features of the space and linking this case study to literature on design, it emerges clearly that Yalla Trappan did not design the space, they rather settled for what they had and adapted the space with few resources. When I asked Christina about the cost of refurbishing the space she answered:

*“Well, the building wasn’t, it was a big deal, because you know some colours, we did not renovate lots of things because it was you know painting the wall and toilet, that was the cost of things and we also negotiate that we have a good rent.”*

In Yalla Trappan case, the acquisition, renovation and maintenance costs of the physical space have thus not been prohibitive and have not affected in a relevant way the business plan. On the other hand, salaries represent the highest cost and the challenge itself, since their main priority is to offer more women permanent jobs.

*“The big deal was to finance the salaries, because we have salaries, it is not a black economy, it’s a white economy, it means you have all the taxes for employees, holidays, sick leave, everything, all those*

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<sup>16</sup> I have sought for sources reporting this information but have not found any.

*things we have to pay for and we also have salary that it is correctly... it contains the Union, that means, we have three financial ways: one is the commercial of course, what we are selling, and then it's..., we also take care of new women, new ones who want to, who the Official Employment Office want to have, they want us to train in our branches and they have to take that, they can come from those Employment Offices and they are unemployed, and they have very low self-confidence or things like that. We can take care of them because you can say that our entrepreneurship is a new kind of entrepreneurship, it is not about making as much profit as possible, it's non..., of course, it should be much money as possible because we can employ more people, that's the only reason, because no one is taking any profit out of this."*

### **Partnerships**

Yalla Trappan has created and had been maintaining very good partnerships with the local public authority, namely Malmo municipality. Actually Yalla Trappan started as result of a joint project with the municipality funded under ESF. At the end of the ESF project, it was still the private initiative of Christina which led to continuation of such a good practice. The public-private partnerships that Yalla Trappan has established are with the municipality and the Employment Office. In both cases, the basis for the partnership is the provision of services. In particular, Yalla Trappan provided catering services to the municipality and training services to the Employment Office. The municipality has granted them access to on of the space they manage and do not provide additional benefits, expect for a lower employment tax that applies to the work contract they sign with long-term unemployed women.

Yalla Trappan has also created a partnership with IKEA Malmo: this is the first case in which IKEA agreed on a partnership in only one of her branches since partnerships decisions are taken at corporate level. Under the framework of this partnerships, Yalla Trappan women will take care of the sewing services of IKEA store.

The partnerships have played an important role to support Yalla Trappan's replication strategy. Actually Yalla Trappan is currently on one side pursuing an expansion of their services testing a new service to rebuild furniture, or training women to support migrant pregnant women just before and after the delivery. On the other side, they have created a scheme called "mentorship commitment" to support other municipalities in setting up a Yalla Trappan in their territory. The commitment, set up in collaboration with Malmo municipality, consists actually in the delivery of workshops to explain the basics of the Yalla Trappan model.

*"it's not franchising, but we call it 'mentorship commitment' and that means that now we are going to start YallaXXX. It's in Stockholm and it is another Yalla in Sweden, and they are not allowed to use our name, they must be non-profit, there must be the influence of all those working there and it has to*



*be, and then they have to buy from us 4 workshops and this altogether costs something but nothing compared to franchising or something like that. It's a quality, a quality marking."*

Christina has been invited also by national authorities to present their initiative and the results achieved. This is since Yalla Trappan has become an attractive trademark that stands for social values and that has become more and more important on the commercial market. Additionally, Yalla Trappan represents a new trend in the Swedish tradition of cooperatives. To answer this trend, the central government has decided on an action plan for social enterprises (N2010/1894/ENT). The plan in particular emphasises the importance of work-integration social enterprises as a mean to reduce social exclusion and highlights the importance of collaboration between the public, private and the non-profit sector to address this matter." According to Christina, the support social enterprise as Yalla Trappan received from public authorities is not enough. She has the feeling that public administrations are interested in their work but not really able to understand it or willing to replicate it. She also suggested that the return generated by the social impact they achieved should be converted in financial support for those enterprises.

*"I have been invited to the Ministry of Work [Employment] and the Ministry of in Stockholm a couple of times, they are listening to me but I'm not sure they do what I want (...)they should count on the third sector and they should be open minded and they should, you know, it's about all the laws around, (...) they have different laws when it's about municipality laws and the laws about the employment, so it's they can't do this, they can't do that and then we come in and we open it up so they have to be a bit brave, they have to give us a chance, they have to say like this 'Okay we have a big challenge now, so they have to listen to everybody' and perhaps we in the third sector have methods that can inspire also the public sector, you know, So I think that they should be open minded, they should be supportive, they should listen to us because we have another relation with the immigrants than they have because they are always official, sitting on the other side of the table but we have a more open relation and I think that they should support and see the value of what we are doing and they can support us, to buy our things that we are producing, or cleaning and things like that...it's the commitment, make the commitment with us be our customer and things like that. (...) if we saved 118 millions this time, I asked the Ministry of Work in Stockholm, I said, 'If we now save all those money for the society, I think that some percent we come back to the activities that made this, enormous social profits so to say and that's an idea that I have so perhaps both kinds, but mostly open up, be our customer, make commitment with us, where they can support us for example we are doing in our...with Yalla, because the municipality they take the cost for the buildings there, for the big catering kitchen, we don't pay that, they do and we have this partnership, so get into partnerships."*

## *Conclusions*

Yalla Trappan covers the main features of a social enterprise: it was born from the detection of a social unmet need, of migrant women with no employment opportunities and at risk of social exclusion. Yalla Trappan adopted the form of the cooperative and all profits are reinvested in the cooperative mission to create more permanent full-time jobs.

Even if the founder defines the cooperative way of functioning very democratic, it emerges clearly the prominence of Christina's role. As matter of fact, she perfectly personifies the "social entrepreneur" model: she has a strong sense of initiative and of responsibility along with a sense of solidarity. She had clear in mind she needs support from other individuals and organizations and she has been very effective in getting and keeping it.

The business model of Yalla Trappan relies in fact strongly on partnerships both with public (municipality, Employment services) and private organizations (IKEA, two private stores)<sup>a</sup>. The partnerships are based on the provision of services from Yalla Trappan but the municipality has also offered them with a physical space.

The role of physical space does not appear to be fundamental from the interview with the founder. Nonetheless, the cooperative is managing four different spaces: one lunch restaurant, one shop, and two sewing studios. Apparently acquiring the space has not represented a major issue or cost for Yalla Trappan: they have achieved good rents on one side while the renovation and refurbishment was not ambitious. There was nclio specific need in terms of feature of the space and this might be the reason why it was relatively easy to achieve the space. In Yalla Trappan, the space adopts a clear function of allowing women to work together. This is the only value that Christina attaches to the spaces they are managing. Nonetheless, she has a clear understanding of the intangible benefits generated by the restaurants: she refers in the interview specifically to the fact that no violence acts or conflicts have occurred in the restaurant or in the neighbourhood despite of the general violence climate observed in these years in Rosengard. In the perspective of my study, the lunch restaurant represents an innovative service: the restaurant is a physical space shared by workers (which are entrepreneurs and beneficiaries at the same time) and customers of the restaurants. The act of sharing is actually at the basis of the reduced rate of violence and criminal act in the area. The assessment of such a relations through the consideration and measurement of other variables (data on criminality, data on GDP per capita, etc) could be the objective of a further study. At this stage, the author could only wonder what would have been the impact of Yalla Trappan if instead of a restaurant they would have established a catering service close to the public. Would the culture integration have occurred with the same intensity? Maybe yes. Would cultural heritage have been maintained? Maybe yes. Would have the community in the area benefited of the catering studio as they do with the restaurant? No. Would criminality decline in that area? As just mentioned, this is difficult to be assessed of course.

For Christina the social objective was to provide women with jobs opportunities and to reintegrate them into the society. Still, she is aware now of the social impact the achievement of this objective has generated for instance in terms of reduced costs for the public administration. As it happens in all the case studies I developed, also for Yalla Trappan they have not tried to measure the social impact generated, despite of the fact that this would represent the key element and information upon which a long-term partnership with national or local authorities could be built.

Yalla Trappan is currently replicating its model in different ways: they are expanding their services (renovation of furniture) and their target group (offering assistance to pregnant women and recent mothers) and they are exporting their models in other cities through a scheme called “mentorship commitment” which consists of transferring their experience and know how in a series of workshops. The Yalla Trappan model appears to be replicable and successful in all those areas with a high rate of immigration and is financially sustainable even without the public support. Partnerships with public authorities are nonetheless fundamental since those are an important customers for Yalla Trappan.

### **5.3 Piano C (Italy)**

Piano C was one of the ten finalists projects of the Social Innovation Competition 2013. I had the opportunity to talk with two of the founders of the project, Riccarda Zezza and Carlo Mazzola, several times and I visited the place three times. I interviewed the founder, Riccarda Zezza in 2014, and the General Director, Sofia Borri, in 2016. This allowed me to observe the company on a longer term. Both interviews are reported in the Annexes.

Piano C was established in 2012 as Limited Company by Riccarda Zezza together with other 6 people. Riccarda was the real promoter of the project and the other individuals were more supporters but are officially partners. The social mission of Piano C was to facilitate work-family conciliation for women mainly with small children and to facilitate their reintroduction into the labour world. In this sense Piano C initially addresses a niche of professionals – freelance or employees – in a particular moment of their life. What Piano C ultimately aims at achieving was a cultural change to disseminate a new more flexible work concept, and which valorises the competences of motherhood. For the founder, Riccarda, the solution passes through the creation of a physical space offering services for the conciliation such as a co-working and a baby parking, and additional time-saving services such as grocery shopping delivery, laundry, etc. Initially those services were delivered together: users can not enjoy the co-working or baby-parking services individually. Later on, Piano C adopted a more flexible approach, both in terms of target groups – including now also unemployed people, and people without children – and in terms of services purchasing options – users can buy one service only.

#### ***Services, history, legal form and organization***

The company was thus initially set to provide a series of services to two specific type of users: women and/or men with children. The services provided were: co-working space, baby parking, homecare services (called *Servizi Salva-tempo*) such as laundry, grocery shopping delivery, yoga courses. For the baby parking they initially tried to deliver the service “internally” meaning that they hired one full-time educator. They soon realized that way was not financially sustainable and decided to externalize the service. They selected thus an association (“Mamma che fatica”) who provides the baby-parking service and get all the revenues: Piano C offers the service to this external association without any remuneration.

They realized also that putting as entry condition that users purchase both services (co-working and baby parking) and that users could be only professionals or employees with children (in the second case, Piano C expected the company employer to contract the services for his/her employee) was not financially sustainable. They thus widened the spectrum of users, including also unemployed people or people without children, and allow to make use of the services separately.

Additionally, they started delivering training courses for the acquisition of soft skills or for personal development, and organize events related to work issues. For those additional services a specific fee is paid.

*“Piano C nasceva con l’idea che esisteva qualcuno bisognoso di questa nicchia dove far stare insieme vita e lavoro, quindi dove si riesca a essere delle professioniste e dei professionisti e allo stesso tempo avere degli altri pezzi di esistenza importanti, e nasce anche con l’idea che però esiste anche un tema, un’urgenza sociale a cui non c’è risposta: il fatto che in realtà poi ci sono un sacco di donne che vengono espulse dal mercato del lavoro e che non solo non hanno accesso a quella nicchia lì, ma non si trovano ad un passo prima, che è vorrebbero far stare insieme vita e lavoro ma purtroppo le porte del mondo del lavoro sono chiuse.”*

*“Piano C was born from the idea that there were people from this niche (NDR: women with unstable job situation and who recently became mothers) who need to put together life and work, to be professionals while living other important parts of their existence. It was born also with the idea that there is another issue, an unanswered social need: the fact that there are actually many women which have been expelled by the labour market and that do not even belong to the niche of having an unstable work but are even one step behind, and they still want to conciliate work and life but the door to the labour would be closed for them”- Sofia Borri, 2016*

***The social entrepreneur character***

Piano C has been founded by seven founders but as Riccarda stated in the interview Piano C is the result of an individual initiative. She highlights that it has been an individual initiative which needed a group of people to start. Nonetheless she complained about missing the collective action and that most of responsibility and work is still on her. When the company was established, the partners founder were seven, while one year later, at the time of the interview partners were nine. The average age of founders is 43 and most of them hold a master degree.

### *The physical space*

The company is located quite centrally in Milan, although it does not dispose of a close access to the metro service. The space is now a 300 square metres apartment in a residential building with no direct access to the street. The dimension and map of the space are published in the webpage of the company. The selection of this place was actually random, since Riccarda was offered with this apartment by Carlo Mazzola, after he got to know about her project through a common friend. Carlo Mazzola was seeking for a social impact project as destination use of his empty apartment. Carlo Mazzola rent thus at a lower than the market price, the apartment and invested in the refurbishment works: the value of the rent and of the investment for the refurbishment has been valued as social capital of Piano C and Carlo Mazzola is thus the first shareholders followed by Riccarda Zezza and the other five founders, who had also invested between 15.000€ and 20.000€. Initially Piano C disposes of 150 square metres: in 2014 they expanded by occupying the next apartment which cover other 150 square metres.

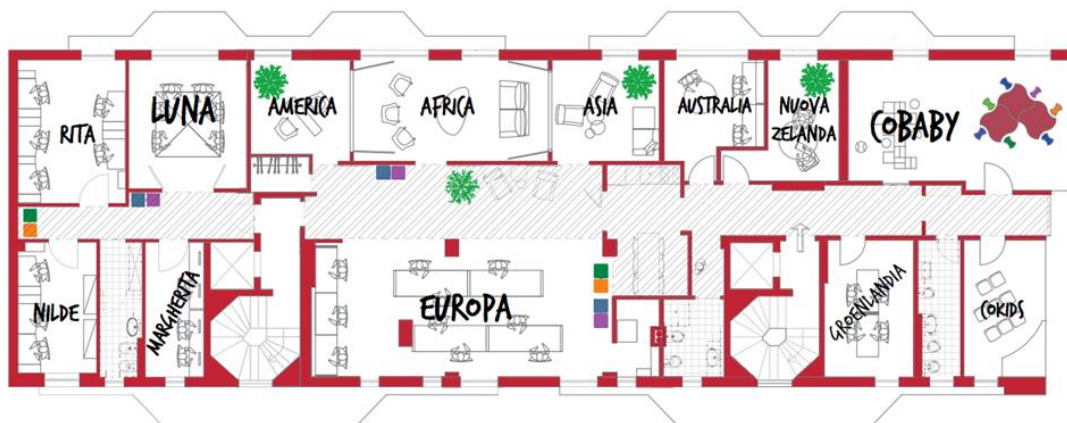


Figure 16 - Map of Piano C (Source: [www.pianoc.it](http://www.pianoc.it))

From the analysis of the interview, it emerged that the availability of the space has been fundamental for the development of the project and it represents around 90% of the financial resources needed to set up the activity. Still in the running phase, the cost of space represents the highest share of total costs. According to Riccarda the minimum dimension for this kind of project is 300 square metres.

For this reason, as soon as the opportunity arose, they expanded into an additional space.

*“(.) tu hai dei costi dovuti all’erogazione di una serie di servizi piú grande é la comunitá che puó usare quei servizi, piú quei servizi ti danno un ritorno. Tu hai un costo fisso nella creazione dei servizi e poi a seconda di quanti riesci a venderne..”*

*“(.) one has fixed costs to deliver a set of services, the bigger the community of users, the higher the return you get from the services. One has a fixed cost for the creation of the service, than according to how many fee you manage to sell...”- Riccarda Zezza, 2014*

Another important feature to determine the success of the project was the location. Piano C was an apartment in a building, not visible from outside, and this apparently compromised the success of the initiative. Also being connected to the main public transport service, the metro in this case, was a negative condition.

*“Un co-working tendenzialmente dovrebbe avere un affaccio su strada che noi non abbiamo avuto. Secondo me un affaccio tu strada ti aiuta molto e deve essere secondo me – soprattutto se é molto innovativo – centrale, visibile e facile da raggiungere. Noi in realtà l’abbiamo vissuta un po’ piu in negativo questa cosa perché comunque siamo dentro un palazzo, siamo un appartamento, non abbiamo la fermata della metro a due passi quindi secondo me abbiamo scontato un po i lati negativi.”*

*“A co-working should have a view on the street that we did not have. According to me, a view on the street would help a lot. The place should also be – especially if it is quite innovative – central, visible and easily reachable. We actually experience this on the negative side, since we are within a building, in an apartment and we do not have the metro stop close, thus we have suffered from negative aspects linked to location”. - Riccarda Zezza, 2014*

With respect to the needed features, Riccarda studied the experience of other co-working and knew they needed different rooms to host work desks but also meeting rooms. Even if they had these features in mind, they finally compromise when they were offered one space by the person who would later join as partner, Carlo Mazzola. Carlo Mazzola got to know about Piano C idea from a common friend with Riccarda and since he disposed of some properties, he decided to offer two apartments as location for Piano C. Actually Carlo’s offer arrived even before Riccarda started to look for other places.

*“Io avevo scritto questo progetto che si chiamava “La città delle donne”. Un mio amico avvocato l’ha raccontato a quello che oggi é il mio socio di maggioranza, lui aveva delle proprietà e mi ha cercato lui. Mi ha detto “ho questi due appartamenti che vorrei usare per qualcosa con impatto sociale e così..”*

*“I wrote a project called ‘Women’s city’. One of my friend, who is a lawyer, told about this project to the man who is now our majority shareholder. He possessed some real estate properties and contacted*

*me. He told me "I had these two apartments I would like to use for something with social impact and so..." - Riccarda Zezza, 2014*

In Piano C the space has thus been made available by one of the founder and is granted to a lower cost than its market value

*"Sul costo di start up, intanto lo spazio è stato valorizzato a capitale sociale, comunque l'affitto calmierato, buona parte dei lavori sono diventati una quota capitale di Carlo, però valorizzati a meno della metà del costo reale, e poi in realtà come costo di avvio, di start-up noi abbiamo speso circa 70.000€ e direi che prevalentemente sono andati nell'arredo, nell'avviamento di tutta la parte tecnologica"*

*"On the overall initial investment, the space has been valued as social capital, the rent price is lower than the average market, a good share of refurbishment work have be registered as social capital of Carlo, but have been valued less than half of the real costs. As start up cost, we have spent around 70.000€ which have been devoted to buying furniture and the set up of the technological infrastructure." - Riccarda Zezza, 2014*

What emerges clearly both from the interview with Riccarda in 2014 and with Sofia in 2016 is that the sub-renting of the space allows barely to cover the renting cost. I asked Riccarda what is the ideal conditions or way to achieve a physical space in projects like Piano C. She considered that public support, and in particular the offer of a public space at a controlled price is one ideal way to obtain a space and to cover its cost. She does not consider fundamental to own the physical space, on the contrary she would not recommend that. The ideal way for her is to use an already existing space which is under or infra utilized: the owner could be of public or private nature and the type of contact could be a simple renting contract or a form of partnership.

### ***Social impact***

In Piano C, the space represents a way to generate social impact, is thus instrumental for the creation of a social value, which in Riccarda's view is promoting a new model of work, more conciliative with respect to family obligations, and to facilitate the reintroduction of women into labour world after maternity.

*"L'idea era quindi di usare uno spazio fisico per dimostrare che si può lavorare in modo diverso e che questo non inficia la produttività, anzi, aumenta il livello di felicità. A quel punto, anziché aprire una società di consulenza e mettermi a spiegare questa roba, ho detto: "Apriamo uno spazio dove facciamo succedere questa cosa".*

*“The idea was to use a physical space to demonstrate that you can work in a different way and that this does not affect your productivity, on the opposite it increase your degree of happiness. At that stage I said to myself – Instead of setting up a consultancy company to explain this concept, let’s open a space and let make this happen”. – Riccarda Zezza (2014)*

In Piano C, the space does not represent only a tangible asset but above all an intangible asset. The intangible value of the space is also strongly connected to the interaction between the users, defined by the respondent as “community”. In this sense the space generated externalities, which go beyond the physical offer of well-defined services.

Finally, given the specific condition of dependence from a minimum dimension of the space, the Piano C project is – according to the respondents – not dependent on the specific geographic and cultural context in which it is located (Milan) and is therefore replicable elsewhere.

### ***Conclusions***

Piano C can not be considered a success project: after five years, the project relies still a lot on volunteer work from many of the shareholders. In 2014, two years after the establishment of Piano C, Riccarda sees two main reasons for the missed take-off of the project: the location of Piano C, which is not well connected to public transport and do not have “a view on the street”, and the difficulty to achieve the cultural change with respect to the work model for women with children. Two years later, Sofia Borri, identified in the narrowness of the business model – focused on a niche target group and on selling the services of baby-parking and co-working only together – the reason for the difficult start.

On the other side, the financial sustainability of the overall project relies basically in the investment of one of the founder, Carlo Mazzola, who offered the physical space at a lower price than the market one. The investment of Carlo, appears actually rather as a donation since the real value of the investment is not even recorded in the social capital. In this sense, the financial sustainability of the project is artificially maintained. When asked about the best model for the acquisition of a physical space, Riccarda clearly indicates a public-private partnership, in which the public administrators make the space available and bear also the refurbishment costs. In this sense, Piano C has never received support by the policy makers, except for some visibility and for small grants distributed through a public call for co-workers.

At the same time, two main features were addressed as fundamental for the success of the initiative. The first one is the characteristics of the space (dimensions – the biggest the place, the biggest the community of users served and as consequence the profits generated -, location – visible from the street, central and/or well connected to transport network, and the design). Aware of this, the project devoted



90% of the initial investment to the acquisition and refurbishment of the space but the choice of the physical space was more an opportunistic one. The second success element appears to be the establishment of an active community of users. Piano C devoted efforts at creating a community of users who would actually be also the providers of some of Piano C services, but they did not engage in any relationship with the wider community living in the neighbourhood.

For this reason probably, the social impact of Piano C appears poor with respect to the other two case studies. Probably if the community of users was bigger, the project would be able to generate a bigger impact but up to day the community of users is not stable: the number of users might vary substantially from one month to the other. On the other side, the location chosen by Piano C has no relevance for the target group it addresses. In the case of Yalla Trappan the project was clearly located in the a neighbourhood with a high density of immigrants, who where the target groups of the project. Also the lack of partnership with public authorities appear to be a weak point: Piano C has established some partnerhsips with private profit and no-profit organizations, but the relation with public authorities has always been limited to dissemination activities.

Last but not least, in the first years Piano C was proposing a franchising model for replication which was quite expensive. They have been contacted by other organizations willing to replicate the project in other cities but none has done it yet.

In the meantime, Riccarda created a parallel association to promote some of the training and awareness raising activities created by Piano C to generate the cultural change about maternity. The association is called MAAM and is developing a mentoring programme, called Maternity is a Master, for women returning to work after the maternity leave.

#### **5.4 Spazio Giardini Margherita (Italy)**

Spazio Giardini Margherita is a project promoted by an association, called Kilowatt and based in Bologna (Italy). This project was one of the projects funded by the first Culturability call for proposals in 2013. Spazio Giardini Margherita is an unused public space which has been reconverted in a multi-purpose space hosting a co-working, a kinder garden, a restaurant, an urban garden and an open space for events. I visited the place and interviewed in 2016 one of the founder, Nicoletta Tranquillo.

##### ***Services, history, legal form and organization***

Kilowatt Association is composed of four young professionals which in 2012 started rented a private architecture study to transform it in a co-working. In 2013 they decided to open also a kinder garden as additional service. The space was tough too small to host the kinder garden and they had to find a new one. In that period they applied to a local call named “Incredible” and organized by Bologna

municipality. The call was offering either consulting services or physical spaces. They won the call and were assigned with the space of Giardini Margherita in the form of gratuitous loan of use for 15 years in exchange of renovation works and of social innovation activities. It was the first time Bologna municipality assigned such a huge space. The space is composed of a building and an open space. The building host a co-working, a kinder garden and a restaurant, while the open air space hosts a urban garden and venue for events. To manage all those different services, Kilowatt has established new organizations: a cooperative for the management of the restaurant and a company for the management of the kinder garden.

As in the case of Piano C, Nicoletta highlighted that revenues generated with renting of working desks are barely sufficient to cover the cost of the maintenance of the space. The kinder garden for instance is not really sustainable per se: the physical space for the kinder garden is given for free to the cooperative managing it. On the other side the activity really generating profits is the bar.

### ***The social entrepreneur character***

Kilowatt is an association composed of four young professionals. The four of them were friends since long time. One of the founder – Gaspare – is an expert in service design; Nicoletta – the person I interviewed – was specialized in corporate social responsibility and sustainability; Massimo is working in the field of cinema and audiovisual communication while Stefano – the president – had more management competences. Stefano was the most active promoter of the project, at least at the beginning. The Kilowatt team was thus quite multi-disciplinary but characterized by a mutual strong trust.

The projects was born because of a common need to find a physical space where they could work at common projects. Also the services of the project were designed according to their needs and actually evolved with them: at the beginning the space was used as co-working but when the one of the partner become a parent they decided to create also a kinder garden.

Three of the four funders were employed at other businesses (with a undefined work contract). Little by little they started resigning from their jobs and start working full-time and being remunerated by Kilowatt. The last two founders, started being remunerated only during the last year.

### ***The physical space***

Spazio Giardini Margherita is a 650 square metres space in the periphery of Bologna composed of two buildings and an open area. Going beyond its physical features, Kilowatt attached since the very beginning a clear intangible value to the space which was “the opportunity to collaborate in an innovative way, more horizontal and less jerarchic” and which was supporting work-family

conciliation. Kilowatt actually has a holistic vision of the intangible associated to physical space: Nicoletta mentioned in fact also “food, culture..”.

*“..l’obiettivo di avere uno spazio dove poterci trovare e dove ognuno portava avanti le sue cose, però stando vicini era più facile fare progetti in comune, perché era una cosa che già facevamo. Quindi diciamo che l’idea era quella un po’ di provare a sperimentare un nuovo modo di lavorare e un nuovo modo anche di pensare lo spazio di lavoro. Quindi un nuovo modo di lavorare perché fortemente collaborativo, fortemente orizzontale e quindi meno gerarchico e anche con dei meccanismi di governance, appunto, più simili alle organizzazioni flat, diciamo no, e dove appunto si potevano, dove poi vita e lavoro potessero provare ad integrarsi in un modo diverso da quella che era la proposta sul mercato e dove vita e lavoro voleva dire bambini, ma voleva dire anche cibo, ma voleva dire anche cultura, voleva dire un po’ tutte queste cose. Quindi diciamo in nuce nella nostra testa c’era l’obiettivo di provare a sperimentare un posto del genere, avevamo...”*

“Innovation social processes centered around a space are generated by a community and generate a community”

Nicoletta Tranquillo, Kilowatt

*“..The objective was to have a space where we could meet and where each of us could put forward his own activities, but staying together so that we could make common projects, because we were already doing that...So, we can say that the idea was to experiment a new way of working and a new way of thinking the work space. Thus a new way of working strongly collaborative, strongly horizontal and less hierarchic and also with governance mechanisms, indeed more similar to flat organizations, let’s say, and where you workn and life could integrate differently from what happen in the labour world, and where life and work means also children, but also food, and culture, where it means all these things. Thus we can say that in our mind there was the objective to try to experiment such a place...”*

In kilowatt there is a strong awareness of the role of community too. Nicoletta stated clearly that for them “social innovation processes space centred are processes activated by a community and that aggregate community”. With respect with the other case studies, in this case the founder see clearly the intangible asset of physical space linked to communities. In an effort to formalize this type of social innovation processes, Kilowatt has collaborated with other social innovation actors at drafting a sort of handbook on how to establish a “Community Hub”.

At the beginning they spotted a nice place, located within Giardini Margherita. They wanted to recover but this space belonged to the public administration which at that time was not ready to collaborate with those kind of projects. They tried to get the place by the public administration but without success and they decided thus to find a place to rent. In order to lower the risk, they already identified potential customers, interested in renting a desk at their working, and they manage to create a kind of community even before they co-working was ready. They actually co-created the services and co-design the space

with this network of people/customers. The capacity to create and maintain a community and engage users in the co-design of services is probably the strongest point of this project.

The initial space was 200 square metres and they simply have to redesigned with no need of refurbishment works. The design of the space was very important to them *“To us, the most important aspect of space was to have a common area, beyond work desks and meeting room, a dedicated room for joint events, workshops, aperitivo, where to have some collective and convivial moments and a kitchen, because ideend we were not looking for another office but a place to live. And actually what we did since the very beginning was to let keys to all customers so that they can use the space 24 hours per day. At the same time we were carrying out community engagement activities with the co-workers: a monthly dinner, during which we tell each other about our projects, or to co-design some things, such as the furniture of the community room...At a certain point we did not need to organize those activities because we became all friends.. On the other side we were organizing open public event, to speak about social innovation basically. We had a dedicated event on social innovation to ask what were the interests or fields that people were intested most in...so we drafted a programme and we were inviting also representatives of other pojects of shared space...”*.

When they decided they wanted to have an additional service – the kinder garden – they started looking for another place. They applied to a local call for proposals launched by Bologna Municipality and got from the municipality the Spazio Giardini Margherita: the contract was a gratuitous loan of use for 15 years in exchange of renovation works. Renovation costs amounted to 500.000€ which have been financed by Kilowatt. As sources of funding they recurred to profits (Kilowatt’s consulting services and bar services – the renovation works were made in two phases. They firstly renovated the bar area and after one year with the profits from the bar, they financed the second phase), private investors (for 100.000€), a crowdfunding campaign for around 20.000€, a grant from Culturability call for other 20.000€ and finally a mortgage for 120.000€.

### ***Social impact***

In terms of social impact meausurement, Kilowatt is quite advanced with respect to the other case studies and the other experiences observed, since they drafted every year a social balance document. Nicoletta, is responsible for drafting this document and having worked in the field of corporate social responsibility is more familiar with impact measurement. Nonetheless she acknowledged the difficulties encountered in measuring specific type of impacts, linked for instance to the collaboration among the users. Kilowatt has nonetheless generated a big impact impact in terms of services provided: number of co-workers registered, number of children enrolled in the kinder garden, number of visitors attending the cultural programme (1.000 people every day in summer) but also in other terms such as number of flower and plant species planted, or number of partnerships with schools and other organizations

developed. The co-working has been presented also as “liquid company” where an extreme diverse set of competences mix and are available for new customers or projects. In this sense, they have also generated new collaborations and professional initiatives.

Kilowatt has also developed a business plan and was expected to have to submit it to banks when they were considering requesting a mortgage. They finally addressed their request to a local bank which curiously almost did not even consider the business plan but assess the project from the storytelling of the founders.

Coming back to the social impact generated, Nicoletta observed that as matter of fact their project was a urban regeneration project which allowed to give new life to a degraded area of Bologna. She also mentioned – without referring to the impact – that they were pioneers in getting and managing public space of those spatial dimensions. After their case, Bologna municipality started assigning other big spaces and participating in those regeneration activities in collaboration with other organizations. Nicoletta highlighted that working with the public administration has been a difficult and long process -as described below - since the public sector was not able to understand and interact with these innovative initiatives. In my view, the learning results for the public administration are another type of social impact, or better said, a multiplier. Thanks to this process, the public administration engaged in other similar project thus multiplying the social impact of those.

Kilowatt took even a step further by developing a publication called Community Hub describing similar social innovation initiatives centred around a space and promoted by or engaging a community. Their aim was to develop a sort of methodology to support their replication of those initiatives elsewhere in Italy and Europe. The methodology has also been presented at a well known Festival on social Innovation, called Rena, which took place in October 2016 in Milan (Italy).

### ***Partnerships***

Kilowatt has partnered with other associations (Fondazione Marino Golinelli, ASTER, Sole 24 ore) and received at a more advanced stage the support of Bologna Municipality and Emilia Romagna region. Their relation with public administration has been tough controversial. Nicoletta acknowledged in fact the need to collaborate with the public sector but at the same time she highlighted the difficulties of such collaboration.

*“a un certo punto inevitabilmente - a mio avviso – (I progetti) si incontrano con la pubblica amministrazione, anzi cioè si dovrebbero incontrare con la pubblica amministrazione. E lì, diciamo, e la pubblica amministrazione non ha spesso gli strumenti per promuovere o supportare queste cose, neanche a volte per leggere questo tipo di...che in realtà, diciamo, nella nostra visione sono invece strumenti, nuovi strumenti, di a) rigenerazione urbana, ma rigenerazione urbana innovativa,*

*rigenerazione urbana che mette al centro la coesione sociale e anche di proprio innovazione sociale perché sono dei processi che ripensano anche i servizi pubblici e quindi welfare collaborativo, ecc... Quindi diciamo secondo noi questo incontro con la pubblica amministrazione ci deve essere però quello che è successo a noi e che è successo a molti altri è che quando incontri la pubblica amministrazione è un tracollo, cioè, ci metti un casino di tempo, i tempi si allungano tantissimo e questo stride molto con invece le esigenze un pochino imprenditoriali di queste iniziative ecc..."*

*"at a certain point, inevitably – in my view – projects encounter the public administration, actually should encounter the public administration. And in that case, let's say, the public administration often does not possess the instruments to promote or support those initiatives, sometimes neither to read those type of...what actually are in our vision, new tools for a) urban regeneration, an innovative urban regeneration, a urban regeneration that put at the centre social cohesion b) social innovation, because those are process which redesign public services and thus collaborative welfare, etc. Thus, according to us this meeting with the public administration should occur, but what happened to us – and happened to many others – is that when you meet the public administration there is a collapse, i.e. it takes a lot, times become extremely long and this clashes with the slightly entrepreneurial need of these initiatives..."*

## **Conclusions**

Kilowatt is probably the most successful case of three case studies proposed. First of all, it is the unique truly financial sustainable project. Even if with the collaboration of the public administration, which granted the space, the project started generating profit quite early and has resulted in the creation of more businesses. Starting as a simple co-working in 2012, the project resulted in other three initiatives in 2014: a kinder garden, a restaurant and in the organization of a cultural summer programme, not to count the urban garden. This has led to the creation of higher number of work places if compared with Yalla Trappan or Piano C.

When we look at the social impact, the project appears to have been also very successful. This is particularly true if we look at the community of users/co-creators and at the indirect beneficiaries enjoying the previously abandoned place of Giardini Margherita (1.000 people per day during summer).

As commented above I believe one of the strongest point of the project is the engagement with the community since the very beginning. The community was engaged in the design of the services and of the space and this has ensured that both were really responsive and tailored to the needs of the users and thus ensuring that the services would be "purchased" by a sufficient number of customers. This has also indirect benefit such as gaining respect and credit towards the public administration.

Differently from the other project, Kilowatt considered the intangible value of the space since the very beginning and developed the whole project around this intangible value.

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this work was to investigate the role of physical space in social innovation activities and projects and its relevance in terms of costs - in the framework of business planning and modelling - and in terms of social impact generated. With respect to the costs, I aimed at – starting from evidence – describing business models for social innovation projects centered around the acquisition and maintenance of a physical space.

On the other side, I wanted to observe and describe the social impact generated by “space-centered” project and identify if any specific impact is directly related to the spatial dimension.

The analysis of the 52 social innovation projects I included in the database confirms that physical space has a pivotal role in more than 30% of the cases included. Those projects are quite cross-sectorial, operating in the field of social inclusion, education, but also housing and gardening. In particular I proposed the creation of ad hoc category in the taxonomy of social innovation projects: the category of family care services. From the analysis it emerged in fact that many projects proposed a holistic set of services to support families. Those services fall under several of the categories identified by the European Commission including health care, social inclusion, education, etc. Many of the “family care” projects were centred about a physical space where not only services are delivered but where users can meet, mutually learn and support each other. The role of the community is indeed the true heart of space-centred social innovation initiatives.

As presented in literature, closeness and physical interaction facilitate creativity, knowledge transfer, learning processes and ultimately innovation. This is due to the fact that only physical observation and interaction allow the process of tacit knowledge transfer, which is fundamental for learning. It was also demonstrated that physical separation reduce the opportunity for collaboration: it is thus not sufficient to be in a same building: for collaboration to flourish we need to share a space which facilitates or even fosters communication and possibly in informal contexts. This is the reason why more and more companies are relocating their employees in same facilities and are devoting resources for the design of those facility.

The role of design in fostering creativity has also been (re)discovered. In two of the case studies developed, the role of design was meaningful: the spaces of Piano C and Giardini Margherita need to comply with specific features (a minimum dimension, a certain degree of functionality – to answer to the multi-purpose needs - a common area for informal interaction, a distribution of space and furniture answering the users’ needs. However design is not only conceived as distribution of the space, or fancy piece of furniture. In particular in Spazio Giardini Margherita the design of the space and of the services has a primarily importance and must especially be done in cooperation with the users. This ensures and lead to the creation of a community of users, which is the true soul of shared spaces.

The analysis of the case studies demonstrated in fact that the wider is the community the space engage



with, the bigger is the success of the initiative and the social impact generated. Shared spaces in social innovation interact with two levels of community: the community of users of the space and an external community of people which might not be direct users of the space but can enjoy some of the activities organized in or by the space. In Piano C for instance the users of the space can be only people paying for the use of the co-working desk or of the baby parking service. No other activities were conceived and organized for people not users of the space. In Yalla Trappan the direct beneficiaries of the project were women migrant who were offered a job. A wider community could still access the restaurant, eat there but also enjoy it as meeting point. In Yalla Trappan, the space was thus open to the community. In Spazio Giardini Margherita, the community of users was created even before the project started and actively involved in the design of the services and of the space itself. The community was made thus responsible of the project itself. Apart from the that, Kilowatt organized dedicated activities to a wider public to inform them about social innovation and interact with them to define social innovation purposes and aims to answer the public needs'. The level of engagement of the community in Spazio Giardini Margherita was extremely high and this led to several positive consequences: the project was successful since the very beginning (the co-working spaces were never empty) and at the very end (with thousands of people visiting the place every months), Kilowatt gained respect towards the community and the public administration. The wider is the engagement with the community both in terms of number of people involved and in terms of scope, the bigger the social impact achieved.

The role of the community is even more important than the design of the space. In case of Yalla Trappan, the founder Christina, did not consider the space as a relevant element of the project: for her the space was simply a tool, a place where to deploy the services envisaged. She did not really have in mind specific conditions. Probably the only condition that really matter and that was self-fulfilled by the nature itself of the project was that the place was located in the Rosengard area where most migrants were leaving. Apart from that, Kristina did not care about dimensions, distribution, decoration. No refurbishment works were foreseen and decoration of the place apparently did not really impact the project budget. Disregarding the tangible assets of the space, Kristina was even more far away from attaching a value to the intangible assets of space. In the case of Piano C and Spazio Giardini Margherita, both founders have a clear understanding of the intangible value of spaces. Space represented in both projects a way to generate a cultural change, towards a new life model where professional and personal life would conciliate and where new relations and synergies among people could emerge. In both cases, the projects acknowledged the role of design in shaping the space so as to maximize this intangible value. In Piano C tough the selection of the place was not function to the project but more opportunistic: the apartment offered by the founded was the only available opportunity to get a space and it was seized even if the space did not satisfy certain requirements like the accessibility from the street. On the contrary, the space of Giardini Margherita was granted following by Bologna municipality following a thorough assessment of their project. The evidence

would suggest thus that it is not sufficient to dispose of a space and to organize it or decorated it following “trendy” design styles. The space need to be co-designed with the users or at least organized in a way that users feel comfortable in it (as it was the case for Yalla Trappan). Again, the intangible of the space depend on the feelings the space trigger in the users: users need to recognized themselves in the space, either because it recalls them of their background and everyday context (as in Yalla Trappan) or because they have participated in its design and creation (as in Giardini Margherita). The recall effect to the socio-economic context of the users would be confirmed by one of the feature of social innovation which is the context dependence. We acknowledge in fact from literature that social innovation is context dependent in the sense that the innovative solutions or answer proposed in the framework of one project could effectively work in one context and not in another one.

When it comes to the business models characterizing this type of projects, I focused especially on the acquisition and maintenance of the space and on the generation of revenues from the space. As for the acquisition, it emerges that the best way for the acquisition of the space is through a partnership with the public sector. A public administration should grant the use of a space, against the refurbishment of the space or the programming and implementation of social activities. All the founders I interviewed agreed on that. Piano C achieved the space through a sort of donation of one of the shareholders and other projects I observed followed the same model. The value of the space is usually very high and the owner of the space would usually be the major shareholder. This might be an issue if the interest of the owner of the space does not collide completely with the social mission of the initiative or if the space is not the most adequate one. A third way of achieving a space is through a traditional commercial contract. The analysis does not allow to assess if and when this solution is viable. Among the case studies developed, this was the case of Yalla Trappan, which actually rented a space in a degraded area where possibly prices are lower than average prices. With respect to this, it must be highlighted that in the case of co-working, the revenues generated by renting desks do not generate profit but only allows to cover maintenance costs. This was the conclusion of the founders of Piano C and Spazio Giardini Margherita. Most relevant sources of revenues appear to be those deriving from food services (bar, restaurants).

Directly related to business models for the acquisition of space is the issue of partnerships. The evidence from the three case studies observed is that the widest the network of partnerships established by the project, the highest is the probability of success of the event. Both Yalla Trappan and Spazio Giardini Margherita established several partnerships with public and private organizations. The public administration represents the most ideal partner not only as owner of potential spaces but also as user of the services developed. For Yalla Trappan social services represent the main customer since Yalla Trappan provides migrant women with training and job opportunities. Spazio Giardini Margherita provided cultural and social services to the municipality through the kinder garden and the summer cultural programme. Relations with the public sector are not easy: the public administration does not

always possess the mentality and concrete tools to interact with social innovation initiatives. The time perspective of public and private sectors are different and might result in a *bureaucratic fatigue* for the social innovators. However the evidence suggests that partnering with the public sector is almost a *condition sine qua non* for the success of the project. Among the three case studies developed, Piano C is the only one which did not manage to establish a partnership with a local or national public body and this might be one of the reason for the project not to take off. With respect to the collaboration with the private sector, I observed, especially among the initiatives supported under the Culturability call, that private companies are increasingly involved in space-centred social innovation activities. This is particularly the case of design or architecture businesses or communication agencies. In the case of Yalla Trappan, the most important private partnership established is with Ikea: the relevance of this partnership does not lie really in the concrete contribution provided by Ikea but in the intangible value in terms of visibility and accreditation.

The complementarity of the skills and competences needed in this type of initiatives is another important element for the success of those. If it is true that in Yalla Trappan this diversity of skills was not really represented since the founder of the initiative was one person only, both in the case of Piano C and Giardini Margherita the promoter of the project was always a team composed of different professionals. I observed though that even in teams there is always one person who plays the role of the motivator, the real promoter of the business who assumes more responsibility, more risk and put more efforts than the rest of the group. In case of Piano C, this was Riccarda which I interviewed; in the case of Giardini Margherita, this was Gaspare as indicated by Nicoletta which I interviewed. This is particularly interesting when we look at it from the Ashoka's special perspective on social entrepreneurs.

Finally, when it comes to the social impact generated and its measurement, as matter of fact it is not possible to rank the case studies in terms of the social impact generated. As commented in the previous chapter social impact is difficultly measured, or at least a common methodology applicable to different type of social innovation initiatives does not exist. Out of the three case studies developed only Spazio Giardini Margherita attempted to estimate the social impact and developed a social balance sheet. All the three social entrepreneurs interviewed acknowledged the importance of social impact measurement as a way to accredit their work and strengthen their position in the negotiation with public and private investors. Spazio Giardini Margherita envisaged a series of indicators to measure its social impact: number of visitors, number of events, users of co-working and kinder garden but also number of species of flowers planted in the urban garden. When it comes to the intangible impact, neither them were able to propose indicators for its measurement.

Even if not measurable, the social impact of at least Spazio Giardini Margherita and Yalla Trappan was observable: in both cases the urban degraded area where the spaces were located took on new life. In

Bologna the number of visitors night and day, reaching the daily amount of 1.000 during summer, revitalize naturally the area. In Malmö, the criminality rate decreased so much that when the city was hit by a series of vandalism acts, nothing occurred in the Rosengård district.

A particular impact I was interested about is the multiplier effect of shared spaces. I supposed there was a positive relation between the number of users involved directly or indirectly by the project and their sense of belonging to the project, and the multiplier effect the project would have. The evidence does not demonstrate the existence of such a positive relation. The entrepreneurs I interviewed did not report the creation or promotion of new initiatives from the any of the users of the spaces, not even in the case of Giardini Margherita where the community of users was wide and highly engaged.

On the contrary, the replication potential of those projects appear to be high. The three projects appear in fact replicable since the needs those answer to are common in many other European countries. Yalla Trappan is in fact already replicating in other cities in Sweden. Piano C received expression of interest from individuals and organizations willing to replicate their experience while Kilowatt has collected other success stories on Community Hubs and is preparing a methodology to be shared with future potential entrepreneurs.

To conclude, in a world made increasingly of virtual communication and (online) social networks, social innovation projects centred around space appeared to leverage on the physical and face-to-face interactions as driver of creativity, entrepreneurship and a new sense of ethics. When backed by a solid business models, where the provision of spaces is ensured by a public operator, and when a wide community is involved not only as user but as designer of the social innovative services, those projects are sustainable and generate social impact. The success concretizes in the form of social services and ultimately result in increased wealth and happiness of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project.

In this sense this work sets the basis for the formulation of recommendations for policy makers in the field of urban policies, social innovation and social services.

Future research could focus on developing a complete taxonomy of social innovation projects in Europe and beyond. Concerning shared spaces and social innovation related project, the conclusions formulated in this thesis should be further reinforced by the development of more case studies. Case study development could focus on better identifying and possibly listing the intangible assets of space in social innovation projects and eventually on measuring the social impact deriving from the intangible value.

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## ANNEXES

### Interview with Christina Merker-Siesjö (Yalla Trappan)

M: Dear Christina, many thanks for your availability. As I explained you, I am focusing my research work on social innovation projects which are focused on the management of a physical space to offer their services, and which is a space which is also a shared spaces, so where users live or work together. I arrive to Yalla Trappan through the Wilco project, which is a European project, and I thought it was really very relevant for my work, so this is why I contacted you.

C: *Ok, so you have visited Yalla Trappan*

M: No, I've just read about it. Maybe would you like to tell me shortly how the project was born. Because I read it was mainly an initiative for migrant women, but I would be interested to know something more.

C: *Do you know? If you have an e-mail, I can send you some English presentations.*

M: Ok, great, that would be really useful.

C: *Well, I have your e-mail, I will send it afterwards. Well it started from the third sector, I am from the third sector, the civil society. It's an adult education organization, it's called the Workers Education Organization, something like that you know. It started in 1990 in Sweden because all of those who did not have the possibility to receive education. I was working there and I was free to choose to do what I thought was needed to do. Malmö was a degraded municipality and there is an area called Rosengård and there were a big group, it is majority group if you're talking about the women and it's immigrants living there and there is a big silent group that you never hear about, at that time at least, because now it is almost 10 years since I started and it's the women who have no experience of both education and work. They come to Sweden and they are, you know they do not have education actually from their home countries and either from Sweden. So, they were isolated in their homes but at the same time in the centre of the house. We thought it was very important to empower the mothers and the women from this group and it was really a huge group and now ten years after I can say that they are talking mostly about this group but at that time they just put them under the carpet, you know try not to see them, so it was a silent group. But today you can see that even the employment's rights and work come to this group. Still, it's a group that is anonymous. Anyhow we built on what we had learned from the collaboration with the municipalities and the social, well, those who run the social systems in the municipalities. Then we started as a European Social Fund project in 2008 and we started as social European project for two years. During that time, the system was about to build on the skills that the women had, and then we have to try to empower them to know what can we do more, their confidence was so low that they thought "Well, I can't do anything" but we started with \_\_\_ and cleaning and with sewing and then we employed professionals in those three branches and in the same time as they got well education in those branches, we also had education for all of them about health, how the society works, about the Swedish language. It's three groups and about entrepreneurship, well all those thing that we can find useful for the women and so during the project we started up some very small entrepreneurship in those branches, it was just very simple.*

M: Sorry Christina, one question: when you are saying those branches, what do you refer to exactly.

C: *From the beginning it was in lunch restaurant, we had a lunch restaurant. During the project...it was about making food, out from what they can do, their main choice so to say...and then it was a*

*cleaning service and third was sewing, we had a studio. Because those three things from the beginning were those they can build on.*

*M: so the three things were cleaning, sewing, and...*

*C: Lunch restaurant, cooking*

*M: So you were providing those trainings in different places, you did not have a specific place at the beginning.*

*C: From the beginning during the project we were in one place in Rosengård, but when the project ended in 2010, we had during the time before been in contact with the municipalities or those who have shops, where we can hire somewhere, so from one day to the other we started such thing but it was one year at least we have counted it before, it was in Rosengård and at that time there were 8 persons from the project who were employed and six of them were only put at 25% and that was all we could afford at that time and it was shared, it was because one woman she was offered 75% and she said she wanted to share with others, it's a cooperative, it's a women cooperative, so it's one woman one vote and we decide together and that's one thing that is very important and democratic of the all thing, it's not only about getting a work but also about empowerment to decide about their life and so on. It's two, the strength and the empowerment have been very successful and today, 6 years later we are about 34 employees, so we have more than four double the employees. And those who have been employed afterwards they all have been trainees in our branches, but now we also have moved, so we are in three different places. So we still have our lunch restaurant, we have also catering nowadays, the catering has become huge, we also have our sewing studio, we have moved three times during the 6 years and now we are more in the centre of the town and actually we also have a studio inside IKEA.*

*M: Yes, I've read that. That's great.*

*C: We have two studios. We are happy, lots happened during the last years.*

*M: Can I ask you something. Nowadays there are 34 partners in the cooperative and they are all employees and they are all women, did I understand correctly?*

*C: You can say they are all women but actually there is also one man but he is not employee, he is attached to us but he is not employee.*

*M: Ok, he is not an employee. I am curious about the age, the average age of your employees and average education level?*

*C: To start with the age, the women there, most of them are in the middle age, many of them are grandmothers because they've got children very early, so well they can have, most of them have children, are in the middle age. Now, we try to employ also younger women. Now we have been for so many years, well over 6 years and we have not used to work outside that age, we need to have a balance.*

*M: And the education level...*

*C: From the beginning they could not write or read, they were supposed to be able to write and read when they came. But they can hide that and we understood that for most of the women so most of the women could not write and read but now they can during the project. But otherwise we had employed lately two sewers [tailors?] to have some more education in the branches, because for this commitment with IKEA we had to have someone who could (INTERRUPTION FROM ONE COLLEAGUE) we need someone who can do more in sewing for example because of the quality we have to had for all what we do. Otherwise they are very low educated and no education and have no branch education at all, some*

*of them had 40 days in school some two years but most of them had no education for work, but only education for home. But lately we have some more education.*

*M: But so, If I understood well, Yalla Trappan was your initiative, your idea, your started it alone with the support of other people, but it was mainly you, am I correct?*

*C: Indeed, yes, what you said, the last thing. What did you say?*

*M: I said it was mainly you, your idea, I suppose you received some support from other people but the promoter of this idea was you alone.*

*C: Yes, it was me. I was working in a non-profit organization, in this non-profit organization I had such a position I could take initiative to start project for those who have less and need most. It was...Of course I tried to open my arms to always try to negotiate with everyone, those political, municipalities, in the projects, so on, very open very open.*

*M: You told me when you started with the European Social Fund you did not have in mind you needed a physical space, you just wanted to provide some training services but you didn't think you wanted to have a space to deliver this service or yes?*

*C: Of course I thought from the beginning this could be, when I met all these women, and I saw their, what to say, the possibilities with the skills that they have and of course after all the education that they got from us in the different branches, I felt that I have the responsibility not to end the project, I wanted to continue and I was convinced that there was both the spirit to go along and also the possibilities to go along. Because I had at that time, those years, during the project, I have feelings I have people around me that supported the idea and so, I was convinced this could be possible, so well it was just to...as we say in Sweden "Spit in your hand and continue to work".*

*M: But so if wouldn't have a space, you think you could deliver your services in some other places, it would have made a big difference or not really to have your own space where you deliver your service, your training service or you could do this in some other place?*

*C: No, of course, we have to have our own. It's a social...we own this ourselves. It's a work integration social enterprise and it's...so we only need ourselves and we hire different mentality to do this and now I can say we have at least two projects going on together with the municipalities, for example today we have as with our catering, the municipality goes in and we have something called, it's some kind of partnership with the municipality which means that we have the idea, and we have the method and we employ people and then as a municipality, has started with for instance Yalla Way to work and this means that every 6 months they have education for 14 women in the same area where our employees, those women who gone through the same process now are the leader for those women. They are learning about working culture, you know, what is a work, what does it mean, what is the difference between our lunch at home and where you work, and also they get the branch education in this Yalla Way to Work you know is about making food, we have a catering there. The second is we are going to scale up our method in another place, in Malmö called YallaXXX. And we do the same in a new area, where also people outside society, immigrants, and mostly women but also men actually. And there we have also this..., it's very much about recycling, about sustainability, about economy, because they get their first salary, and it is also about environment because we have much production recycling, then it's a social sustainability, because now they are..., how are they called, I have it here, let me think, so they are an example for their children. You know they say, my mother she is happy, she built her work, she is not depressed, because before they started here, it many of them have long term sickness and now*



*it's very different, many of them were dependent on medications and now they have decreased that, they also had very few social contacts and now they have a lot of contacts, and so on.*

*M: But concerning the spaces that you are working in, how did you get those, was through an agreement with the municipality, or how did it go? The question is: the physical space, the buildings in which Yalla Trappan is working: how did you get those?*

*C: Well, now we are in 4 places but we were only in 1 place at the beginning and it was like this, that I was looking for a place where we could settle down after the project and at that time, you the building company was going to build something called Bukolo and I knew it was too small for us, it was not big enough, but still I just put our interest on the table for them. It was owned by the municipality and they have to count us and they said "This is too small for you" and "Is it?" I said. I was a bit surprised. I was not surprised, I know this is what was supposed to happen and then they said "Perhaps we can find something else for you" and I said "Yes, exactly" and they did and we accepted the place and we are there now. The other places we have some kind of agreements: we are both paying ourselves but we also have agreements with the municipality and they pay some of it because we are doing this new project education with the same target group.*

*M: But so Christina, you knew exactly the characteristics, the features that the space should have, like in terms of dimension or the location in the city, you had this clear in mind...*

*C: Well, we started in one place and I can tell it like this: we have an ambition, we have a vision that we could do, you had to, you had to explain your vision, make it very clear, so that everyone can take a part of the vision. Vision was that I came to a place that before was only an ordinary office and I said "well, let's see, we can do this and that and the colours, the yellow there and the orange there, it's a journey you take, you have to try". We all saw the same picture and now we have changed everything for example, there was an outside, where there is the lunch restaurant today, there was nothing and now there is a garden, so people can sit there we have plant you know, different flowers, things and herbs and we are in an ordinary house in Rosengård where people live, nine, ten and we invite everybody to come and use it free. We have a good relation with the neighbours living around. You know what happened in Rosengård in these years and nothing ever ever happened in our place.*

*M: Christina, one thing, you were talking about the improvement that you made in the building and outside, but how did you finance those? Usually renovating buildings costs quite a lot, how did you pay for those?*

*C: Well, the building wasn't, it was a big deal, because you know some colours, we did not renovate lots of things because it was you know painting the wall and toilet, that was the cost of things and we also negotiate that we have a good rent. But the others, the big deal was to finance the salaries, because we have salaries, it is not a black economy, it's a white economy, it means you have all the taxes for employees, holidays, sick leave, everything, all those things we have to pay for and we also have salary that it is correctly... it contains the Union, that means, we have three financial ways: one is the commercial of course, what we are selling, and then it's..., we also take care of new women, new ones who want to, who the Official Employment Office want to have, they want us to train in our branches and they have to take that, they can come from those Employment Offices and they are unemployed, and they have very low self-confidence or things like that. We can take care of them because you can say that our entrepreneurship is a new kind of entrepreneurship, it is not about making as much profit as possible, it's non..., of course, it should be much money as possible because we can employ more people, that's the only reason, because no one is taking any profit out of this.*

*M: It's no-profit driven but still you need profit to... I see, but you were saying that you are selling-of course-products, then.*

*C: We get paid for those, those new ones coming to train in our branches, and we get paid for those, because it's our women who are employed who have 20% of their salary, because they are leaving their families, and that's our income and then the last income come because we have good commitment with the municipality in the project, that means that we also can..., so and we have also negotiate with IKEA, IKEA sourced almost nothing but at the same time we are so proud, now that we have sent something good ..., so for example the negotiation with IKEA was really really hard, and we had a team for them and we have expanded and expanded inside and we are the only one in the whole word, no one else. We opened the doors for other. Before you called me I had another telephone call from another IKEA and people around, so just now we know, we have some kind of... it's not franchising, but we call it 'mentorship commitment' and that means that now we are going to start YallaXXX. It's in Stockholm and it is another Yalla in Sweden, and they are not allowed to use our name, they must be non-profit, there must be the influence of all those working there and it has to be, and then they have to buy from us 4 workshops and this altogether costs something but nothing compared to franchising or something like that. It's a quality, a quality marking.*

*M: This is the Yalla scale, right? The project they are doing to replicate Yalla. Because I read about this in the website... But so, the municipality is participating with you in this replication initiative?*

*C: Yes, yes they are. But we are just, you know, we inspire them, and we give them advice and we have those workshops about the membership, about the financial state, about the activities and it's about the leadership...and they pay for that. Otherwise they have to do it locally where they are, they have to have all the organisation, we are supporting their organisation...*

*M: With respect to this - and I'm coming to my last questions - in your case replication is about replicating the same activities in the same city or other parts of the city but it's not about widening the spaces in which you are in.*

*C: No, it's just local and natural. But it's also that, we are continuing to making new things on our own and this is for example, now we are trying to start to rebuild furniture and it's a new activity that we have and the other one that we're going to start it's called XXX and that means that women coming from other countries and are not good in Swedish the risk for them when they are pregnant and deliver the baby, the risk is the four double. So we are now trying to educate women from thirty nationalities, we are now trying to educate, pick out some of those women and educate them to supporting the women. One month before she's going into labour...what's the word? Yes, delivery, and during delivering and one month after, that means it's a lower cost for the society, and first of all it will be more commitment for the women. I can say there is a Swedish national economist, his name is Ingvar XXX and he has counted about how much it costs with those people living outside the society, unemployment...you know, what's happened with them and so on. And he says that, Yalla Trappan had saved during those - when we counted it was only 4 years, but now 6 - 4 years, the society had saved around 118 million Swedish kronors. Because now we have income, they can pay taxes, they have less sickness and so on.*

*M: Yes, this is what we call the social impact of the project. And about this, when you established the cooperative, I suppose you made a kind of business plan, I don't know if you did it actually, and if you did it, did you address the social impact, so were you really thinking about this kind of effects and trying to quantify those or not really?*

*C: No, no. You know, this, we started in a cellar you know, we had nothing, we were so small and something has happened during those years. It's absolutely impossible to imagine at that time that it was possible. I have written a book and is called "Yalla Trappan So We Did it" and this book has been sold now to about 90 municipalities in the whole Sweden and they also have been visiting us and they want to do the same. But we want the state to go in and support more because that's, that's important. I have been invited to the Ministry of Work [Employment] and the Ministry of in Stockholm a couple of times, they are listening to me but I'm not sure they do what I want [they both laugh]. So when I started I had no idea it could be so, there was such a big interest in this. At the beginning I didn't believe in this at all but something has changed during the way, well the world changes.*

*M: Okay, my last question Christina. It's about the spaces where... these women are basically working together only, they are not living there, they only working together right?*

*C: Yes, yes. They are only working there. And I would also say one thing. We always focus on what we people have together, you know, ordinary human things. What have we in common? More than what's dividing us, because of culture and things like that and I would say I had well a background, I've been brought up in a workers family and a rather poor worker family: my mother herself was a cleaner, she was cleaning and she was also working in a factory, my father he was a blacksmith. So I have my background from rather poor circumstances. Back in the same time actually they together started some entrepreneurship, not so big, but still. And I think that the most because I think... actually we are from 13 different nationalities but we focus on working together: this is what binds us together and it's our own source. Many of the women say it's unbelievable that we have work, it's their first work in Sweden ever, they never had work before and they say they didn't have any contacts either so now they both have work and contacts!*

*M: But so, because I'm really interested in understanding if the fact that people are sharing the space working or living together in a space so they are physically in contact, this actually generates some benefits or ?*

*C: Yes, yes. They are all employed in our community in Rosengård and most of them are living in the same space, that's right.*

*M: Okay. And how this, I mean the existence of Yalla Trappan in that specific area affect the neighbourhood?*

*C: It's like you know, the women they are living in this area and they are living, they are – you can say – ambassadors in all the houses around there because they are so proud of their work and everybody is so proud of Yalla Trappan and they spread that. So, everyday it's women knocking at the door 'Can I get to work here?' and you know, it doesn't function like that but I think everybody...for example during all those years we have been there we haven't had one single glass broken.*

*M: Yes, I was referring to that, I was about to ask you about that, so it had an effect on people who are not working there.*

*C: Yes. They had of course effect on the family, for the children mostly, of course, but also for other people: friends and neighbours and so on, because everybody knows today that we are there and they are proud of it and they can use our herbs and so on, they go in and out, they take a coffee, yes. So it's...we have never had any problems with that.*

*M: I'm curious Christina, when the women come to receive trainings do they bring their children? Or how do they do with their children usually?*

*C: No, the children they can come here after school...but we are...you know, they don't have so small children anymore, otherwise they would be in school and so on. I mean, they come and visit but no, they don't have the children there at the same time. Only, you know, if someone perhaps is on holiday...but normally not.*

*M: So, my very last question. The project is so interesting that I would love to spend a day with you! If you had to, if you could say to public administrators, the best way to support projects like yours what is the best way, which kind of support would you expect from the public administrations, the private sector, what is for you the best model?*

*C: I think that the best model is that they should count on the third sector and they should be open minded and they should, you know, it's about all the laws around, for example now we are so "inclined" sometimes, you know...they have different laws when it's about municipality laws and the laws about the employment, so it's they can't do this, they can't do that and then we come in and we open it up so they have to be a bit brave, they have to give us a chance, they have to say like this 'Okay we have a big challenge now, so they have to listen to everybody' and perhaps we in the third sector have methods that can inspire also the public sector, you know, So I think that they should be open minded, they should be supportive, they should listen to us because we have another relation with the immigrants than they have because they are always official, sitting on the other side of the table but we have a more open relation and I think that they should support and see the value of what we are doing and they can support us, to buy our things that we are producing, or cleaning and things like that...it's the commitment, make the commitment with us be our customer and things like that.*

*M: So be your customer, not provide you with grants, so...*

*C: I can save..., if we saved 118 millions this time, I asked the Ministry of Work in Stockholm, I said, 'If we now save all those money for the society, I think that some percent we come back to the activities that made this, enormous social profits so to say and that's an idea that I have so perhaps both kinds, but mostly open up, be our customer, make commitment with us, where they can support us for example we are doing in our...with Yalla, because the municipality they take the cost for the buildings there, for the big catering kitchen, we don't pay that, they do and we have this partnership, so get into partnerships.*

*M: You know the United Kingdom, they are doing this. So the state is paying back enterprises like yours to provide services, because they realised that they are saving money this way, so there are already examples like that. Okay. But then...I know, as I told you I would like to spend more time with you but you're really busy so thank you very much Christina, I will transcript all our interview and I will send it to you, so that if you want to check it and anything else, and actually I should come to Sweden because of a conference I've been invited to which is in Kalmar, I'm not sure how close it is to your place but if I come I will pay you a visit for sure.*

*C: When are you coming to Kalmar?*

*M: In November.*

*C: I will be there in September, what a pity.*

*M: But is it far away from your place?*

*C: NO, it's not that far, it's in the South of Sweden also it's in the lowlands so it's..., how far can it be? Well, you can take the train from Kalmar to Malmö.*

*M: Okay, I might pay you a visit. Okay and Christina if you could send me those documents that you were mentioning it will be great.*

*C: Yeah I do. I will do that.*

*M: And the last thing, it's not fundamental but it would be really good for me, I don't know if among any of your workers, women there is somebody who would also like to have an interview with me? This is not compulsory for me, for other case studies I'm doing that so I'm also receiving the feedback of people who are the beneficiary of the service more because I'm interested in the part of the networking with other people and how being together in a place can help, I don't know if you have somebody in mind, because otherwise I wouldn't bother with*

*C: Well, no one speaks English, no one else...sorry about that.*

*M: I imagined that and this is why I asked. But then thank you very much Christina, I will send you the transcript and I will send you when I have done it the case studies, that will be my thesis so you can also read it.*

*C: Yeah, very good, very good, You're so welcome!*

*M: Thank you very much Christina!*

*C: I hope we see each other in the future*

*M: Yeah, and congratulations for your initiative! It's really a very nice one.*

*C: Thank you*

*M: Okay, have a good day and a good work*

*C: Okay, bye bye!*

*M: Bye Christina, bye bye!*

### **Interview with Riccarda Zezza (Piano C)**

*M: Ciao Riccarda, grazie mille per la tua disponibilità. Come ti spiegavo nella mia mail quest'intervista é parte di un lavoro di ricerca per la mia tesi di dottorato. Come ti dicevo l'argomento sono progetti di innovazione sociale che si sviluppano attorno alla creazione e condivisione di uno spazio fisico.*

*R: Sí, mi sembra molto interessante.*

*M: Ecco, anche se conosco già il vostro progetto, potresti raccontarmelo brevemente tu?*

*R: Sí, guarda, Piano C nasce alla fine del 2012 a Milano come il primo spazio nato per far incontrare donne e lavoro. L'abbiamo lanciato come una realtà di coworking e servizi per donne e papà, ma in realtà vuole dimostrare che un nuovo modo di lavorare è possibile, e che la felicità e la produttività non sono un gioco a somma zero. L'idea è nata così. Il co-working l'avevo incontrato proprio lavorando in Banca Prossima; il co-working specie a Milano, è nato soprattutto intorno alle imprese social come "The Hub". L'idea era quindi di usare uno spazio fisico per dimostrare che si può lavorare in modo diverso e che questo non inficia la produttività, anzi, aumenta il livello di felicità. A quel punto, anziché aprire una società di consulenza e mettermi a spiegare questa roba, ho detto: "Apriamo uno spazio dove facciamo succedere questa cosa".*

*M: Quindi che tipi di servizi offrite?*

*R: Qui coesistono tre elementi: c'è lo spazio di lavoro, c'è il cobaby e tutti gli altri servizi salva-tempo e poi c'è importantissima- la community. Tutte le attività si svolgono in queste sale multifunzione e creano così delle situazioni in cui ci si scambiano delle prospettive. E poi magari capita di fare delle cose che, se tu dovessi andare a cercartele in giro per la città non le faresti, ma siccome ce le hai qui le fai. Ecco, forse questa cosa del fare delle cose assieme, del mettersi assieme, è l'elemento più importante di questo spazio, viene anche prima del co-baby. Diciamo che il co-baby dovrebbe diventare quasi di default, nel senso che la possibilità di portare i bambini piccoli alle cose dei grandi e liberare così le donne che altrimenti si sentono obbligate a stare in casa, dovrebbe essere normale.*

*I primi sei mesi abbiamo offerto il co-baby affidandoci a un professionista con un costo fisso per noi altissimo. Adesso abbiamo trovato due ragazze molto brave, una è una pedagoga e l'altra è una psicologa -la loro associazione si chiama "mamma che fatica"- che gestiscono lo spazio in proprio, quindi loro non pagano niente a noi, noi non paghiamo niente a loro e tutte le entrate del co-baby sono loro. Pensiamo debba essere questo il modello. Loro comunque ci offrono un servizio e noi in cambio gli diamo uno spazio.*

*M: Parliamo di come è nato Piano C: è stata un'iniziativa individuale?*

*R: E' un'iniziativa individuale che però non sarebbe partita se non ci fosse stato un gruppo di persone. Quello che oggi manca di più però è la collettività, oggi è ancora troppo individuale.*

*M: Sei responsabile troppo tu ancora?*

*R: A me va bene essere responsabile, ma se non si è in due con igual forza propulsiva alla fine..come in tutte le imprese probabilmente. E' più individuale di quello che vorrei ma senza i miei soci non sarei partita.*

*M: Quanti soci eravate e quanti siete adesso?*

*R: Eravamo 7, adesso 9.*

*M: Etá media?*

*R: 43 anni*

*M: Livello medio di istruzione?*

*R: Laurea*

*M: Quanto siete partiti avete sviluppato un business plan o è stato tutto abbastanza spontaneo/pianificato?*

*R: Io ho fatto una specie di business plan che non trovo più – è destino – però i miei soci non mi hanno tanto chiesto la parte numerica quanto gli è bastato il progetto, un testo di progetto. C'è un business plan, adesso è molto diversa la realtà, ma c'era un business plan.*

*M: Una curiosità, hai seguito il modelo Canvas?*

*R: No avrei dovuto, perché non è male il Canvas. Ho usato più un índice tradizionale per i business plan. Avevo già fatto un business plan di un'altra start-up quindi ho seguito quello.*

*M: Non hai fatto fatica a mettere insieme i benefici social con il modelo di business plan classico?*

*R: Eh si, nel senso che i numeri non tornano particolarmente, non è un progetto particolarmente attraente a meno che uno non preveda delle cose che poi non succedono. Diciamo che ad un certo*

punto mi sono anche sforzata di mettere l'impatto sociale, ad esempio i numeri dei beneficiari, per renderlo piú interessante per chi voleva effettivamente investire per i benefici sociali e non economici.

*M: Però non sei riuscita a quantificare in termini economici l'impatto sociale..*

*R: Quello é guarda...sarei miliardaria se sapessi fare quello, nel senso che cercavo di farlo anche in Nokia. Ma non c'è modo, perché siamo parlando di cose talmente diverse. Non puoi tradurre l'impatto sociale in denaro, ci hanno provato la London Business Group hanno fatto tutto un modello Excel che noi usavamo in Nokia, il numero di ore, delle sale riunione usate, per dare un valore in uscita oltre che quello in entrata...London Benchmarking Group si chiama.. Negli anni che ero in Nokia ne ho visti tanti di questi tentativi ed anche in Banca Prossima era un po' il Sacro Graal, trovare il modo di misurare l'impatto sociale, ma l'impatto sociale lo misuri in termini social. Ecco, la cosa piú simile ad una corretta misurazione dell'impatto sociale é data dal social impact bond, perché loro riescono a dirti qual é il risparmio in termini di costi di un miglioramento sociale. Quindi devi avere comunque...un libro molto bello che é "The end of fund-raising"- la parte piú bella é l'introduzione – ti dice che comunque qualunque attività sociale ha uno stakeholder che é disposto a pagare, anche se molto spesso non é il beneficiario però é qualcun'altro che ha un beneficio dal fatto che ci siano quei beneficiari e questo é il meccanismo dell'impact social bond.*

*MAAM Campus, io vorrei farne un social impact bond. Il non rientro delle donne dalla maternità ha un costo sociale, económico. Se noi avessimo un paese in cui questo costo viene misurato se fossimo in grado di misurarlo, e siamo in grado di farlo, perché é un costo per le aziende e per la società, quindi uno stakeholder istituzionale potrebbe decidere che parte di quei soldi prova a metterli su un MAAM Campus e poi va a vedere "quante donne poi rientrano?" e a quel punto vedi quanto risparmi, quella é la misurazione dell'impatto sociale, però é a progetto e a seconda di chi sono gli stakeholder intorno al tavolo.*

*M: Sarebbe un proceso piu lungo...*

*R: Richiede una bella visione, una visione a lungo termine e una presa di responsabilità, che molto spesso purtroppo i governi hanno una visione a corto termine e non sono disposti ad investire oggi per una cosa che avrà un ritorno tra 5 anni o 10 anni perché ne prende i benefici chi viene dopo di te.*

*M: Quanto ha contato nel vostro progetto la localizzazione geografica, la città, il quartiere in particolare?*

*R: E' importante, Milano é una città molto attiva, reattiva, in cui é facile collaborare con le istituzioni. Un co-working tendenzialmente dovrebbe avere un affaccio su strada che noi non abbiamo avuto. Secondo me un affaccio su strada ti aiuta molto e deve essere secondo me – soprattutto se é molto innovativo – centrale, visibile e facile da raggiungere. Noi in realtà l'abbiamo vissuta un po' piu in negativo questa cosa perché comunque siamo dentro un palazzo, siamo un appartamento, non abbiamo la fermata della metro a due passi quindi secondo me abbiamo scontato un po' i lati negativi.*

*M: Il tipo di spazio di cui avevate bisogno l'avete definito a priori o l'avreste potuto adattare in seguito?*

*R: Avevamo un'idea a priori basata sull'esperienza degli altri. Nei co-working buona parte del business viene dall'affitto delle sale e quindi dovevano esserci delle sale e degli uffici. Quindi avevamo un desiderata, dopodiché essendo comunque uno spazio del mio socio, ci siamo presi quello che é arrivato, perché non é che avevamo 10 opzioni e dovevamo sceglierne una.*

*M: Quindi un margine di adattamento c'è stato..*

*R: Abbiamo fatto dei bei lavori di ristrutturazione e quindi nella ristrutturazione abbiamo potuto pensare che noi volevamo una sala grande per il co-working e diverse sale. Infatti abbiamo questa caratteristica di avere tre sale con le pareti mobili perché così possiamo affittarle singolarmente o metterle tutte insieme, quindi c'era una competenza dietro, una conoscenza del modello data da altri co-working.*

*M: Quindi c'erano delle caratteristiche a priori che erano imprescindibili tipo avere delle sale, una certa dimensione e poi il resto era abbastanza adattabile*

*R: C'è anche una metratura che secondo me è minima, 300 mq. Da lì a salire è sempre meglio, fino a salire a 1.000-1.500.*

*M: Secondo te, l'aumentare della dimensione dello spazio ti permette di aumentare la tipologia di servizi o migliorarne la qualità?*

*R: Aumentare la dimensione dello spazio ti permette di aumentare i margini di questi servizi, perché tu...*

*M: Quindi fare economie di scala..*

*R: Esatto perché tu hai dei costi dovuti all'erogazione di una serie di servizi più grande è la comunità che può usare quei servizi, più quei servizi ti danno un ritorno. Tu hai un costo fisso nella creazione dei servizi e poi a seconda di quanti riesci a venderne..*

*M: Come l'avete cercato o trovato lo spazio?*

*R: Io avevo scritto questo progetto che si chiamava "La città delle donne". Un mio amico avvocato l'ha raccontato a quello che oggi è il mio socio di maggioranza, lui aveva delle proprietà e mi ha cercato lui. Mi ha detto "ho questi due appartamenti che vorrei usare per qualcosa con impatto sociale e così.."*

*M: Quindi non avevi iniziato a cercare già per altre vie..*

*R: No perché era veramente ancora all'inizio..ancora stavo ragionando. Se mi guardassi indietro, non so se rifarei tutto.*

*M: Quando succedeva?*

*R: Inverno del 2011.*

*M: Quanto ha inciso il costo dello spazio sul business plan, sui costi totali?*

*R: Sul costo di start up, intanto lo spazio è stato valorizzato a capitale sociale, comunque l'affitto calmierato, buona parte dei lavori sono diventati una quota capitale di Carlo, però valorizzati a meno della metà del costo reale, e poi in realtà come costo di avvio, di start-up noi abbiamo speso circa 70.000€ e direi che prevalentemente sono andati nell'arredo, nell'avviamento di tutta la parte tecnologica.*

*M: Quindi nel vostro caso, lo spazio ha rappresentato un 90% dei costi?*

*R: 90 o quasi 100. C'è poco altro, il commercialista, un po' di tasse..*

*M: Beh, ad esempio le risorse umane..*

*R: Ma no, abbiamo cominciato a pagare Raffaele (ndr l'unico impiegato) a gennaio.*

*M: Ecco ma quindi le risorse umane, è stato proprio "lavoro di volontariato" di un po' di persone.*



*M: Raffaele é stato pseudo pagato un po da me, un po da Carlo insieme con i soldi nostri, non pesava sulla societ . E poi ci sono io che tanto sono a gratis da due anni ormai. Infatti ai soci abbiamo detto che da quest'anno mi prendo un aumento, 12.000€ in un anno lordi, anche per dare la percezione che io sto lavorando, perch  sai quando non hai una linea di costi, la gente non capisce neanche che..*

*M: Anche per valorizzare quello che stai facendo.*

*R: Adesso con Carlo io ho legato le mie reali entrate alla vendita di Maam, che sar  una percentuale su quello che faremo, una forma di consulenza, perch  il problema   che non lo stiamo vendendo.*

*M: Avete cercato di ricorrere a finanziamenti privati e/o pubblici?*

*R: Ci abbiamo pensato, abbiamo guardato, sono andata a cercare se c'erano finanziamenti per l'imprenditoria femminile ma non c'era niente quindi abbiamo guardato, pensato ma alla fine non ci sono state opportunit .*

*M: Poi c'era gi  lo spazio..*

*R: C'era comunque bisogno di cassa, che poi alla fine l'abbiamo trovata con i soci, ognuno ha messo dai 10 ai 25.000€. L'idea era che fosse difficile da raggiungere (ndr: il finanziamento esterno). Con i finanziamenti devi sapere come si fa, devi avere il tempo di aspettare, non so, non sono capace.*

*M: A me interessava capire come un possibile finanziatore privato/pubblico veda la questione dello spazio. Di solito ad una start-up gli finanzia altre cose: risorse umane, ecc.*

*R: Lo spazio non   interessante per un investitore, o c'hai sopra qualche cosa oppure non gli interessa, perch  l'investitore ti viene a vedere i ritorni, qua ci sono dei margini sottilissimi, margini di sopravvivenza.*

*M: Ma neanche un investitore immobiliare secondo te?*

*R: Eh no, quelli ci hanno cercati, dopo quando avevamo gi  aperto, per replicare, ma non siamo mai andati avanti perch  a noi non interessa quel punto di vista l *

*M: Pero' un investitore istituzionale o privato non guarderebbe il vostro progetto con interesse. Se fosse arrivata un'amministrazione pubblica a dirvi vi cedo uno spazio ad un costo agevolato, quello sarebbe stato interessante.*

*R: Col Comune di Milano ne avevo visti un paio di spazi,   che costava metterli a posto un milione di euro. Uno c'aveva ancora l'amianto nel tetto e per terra, l'altro era enorme. Il problema   che lo spazio ce lo davano pure poi perch  per averlo bisognava partecipare ad un bando e va bene, perch  lo spazio era in condizioni tali che ci volevano tanti di quei soldi per rimetterlo a posto che io non avevo neanche quelli. Mi costava di meno prenderne in affitto uno.*

*M: Ma non hai mai fatto delle indagini per vedere se i comuni hanno degli spazi a disposizione?*

*R: Lo fanno, adesso hanno cominciato a farlo. A Milano hanno messo a bando quattro grandi spazi in cui hanno fatto quattro aree di co-working, Messi anche un pochino meglio del nostro perch  hanno cominciato a farlo un po dopo, adesso a noi non interessa pi . Anche Torino adesso lo sta facendo no? Bisogna comunque avere sempre i soldi iniziali per metterlo a posto lo spazio, ma   giusto, il modello giusto   quello...quello in cui l'amministrazione pubblica mette a disposizione lo spazio..possibilmente anche coprendo parte dei costi iniziali. In realt  il vero modello che funziona   andar  ad installarsi in attivit  gi  esistenti. Molti spazi sono gi  funzionanti..una banca che perch  ha bisogno di met  dello*

spazio che usa, che però già sta sostenendo molti costi per portarlo avanti, tu ti innesti e devi sostenere solo la quota di costi che riguardano te, quello secondo me è il modello sostenibile, l'ibridazione totale.

M: Ma come modello di partenariato o semplicemente un contratto di locazione?

R: Possono essere entrambi. Se tu non devi prendere uno spazio e metterlo in piedi tu e accollarti tu tutti i costi, già è un buon punto di partenza. Non è solo il costo dello spazio ma anche la manutenzione, le bollette.

M: Ecco, quando prima ti chiedevo del costo dello spazio, al di là della fase di creazione, anche in fase di gestione, rappresenta la quota più importante dei costi totali?

R: Sì, adesso sta crescendo il personale e l'affitto è ancora calmierato. E così siamo 50-50 tra costo personale e gestione spazio, però l'affitto è assolutamente calmierato

M: Come è andato questo primo anno e mezzo?

R: Bene, faticoso, con un po' di frustrazione dovuta al fatto che c'è veramente tanto potenziale, ma ci vogliono – la cosa che ho scoperto facendo l'imprenditrice e che non sapevo prima è che tu puoi avere anche qualcosa che piace un sacco e che la gente vuole comprare ma prima che arrivi ad autoripagarsi devi continuare ad investirci, soprattutto se è innovativo. Se inventi una cosa innovativa c'è tutta una fase di progettazione e sperimentazione che ti devi accollare tu, è dura, non è una settimana, lo metto sul mercato, piace un casino, l'esempio tipico secondo me è MAAM. MAAM si vende come il pane, nel senso che la gente dice "è veramente un'invenzione", in teoria, poi in pratica, devi costruire la didattica, fare il pilota, fare progetti azienda per azienda, in pratica più è innovativo, più non hai la strada battuta, quindi la devi battere tu e battere le strade per venderle delle innovazioni è costoso, costosissimo in termini di tempo, di fatica e di denaro.

M: E' interessante perché questo vale per l'innovazione tecnologica ma anche in questo caso per l'innovazione sociale

R: Vale per tutta l'innovazione, ancora di più per l'innovazione sociale perché con la tecnologia alla fine lo vedi più immediata. Io vedo che parliamo con le aziende di Maam, gli piace ma non sanno dove metterlo perché non ce l'hanno il canale maternità leadership, hanno o maternità o leadership, allora di cosa stiamo parlando qui, stiamo curando la maternità o sviluppano la leadership, è banale no? Nel momento in cui tu crei qualcosa che non è nessuna delle due cose.. e la stessa cosa è con il co-working e il baby parking, in teoria è geniale perché ti risolve dei problemi, in pratica la gente si è già organizzata in un altro modo, quindi devi inserirti nelle loro abitudini, far cambiare loro il modo di vedere le cose, ed è un investimento forte, cioè dovresti avere delle forti campagne di comunicazione per spingere le persone a cambiare le loro abitudini.

M: Per quello ti chiedevo se la localizzazione del quartiere era importante, perché la gente si è organizzata in un altro modo in una parte del mondo piuttosto che in un'altra

R: In tutto il mondo le donne si sono organizzate in modi diversi. Dopodiché lo puoi cambiare, lo puoi migliorare, ci vuole tempo, ci vuole qualcuno che ha interesse ad investire nel cambiamento.

M: Nel frattempo in questo anno e mezzo, avete modificato gli spazi, li avete ingranditi?

R: Sì, abbiamo ingrandito, si è liberato l'appartamento accanto e con ottica molto imprenditoriale, visto che non avevo ancora iniziato a coprire i costi abbiamo preso anche quello proprio per l'idea che più grande è lo spazio, le economie di scala. Noi infatti eravamo 250 mq adesso siamo 300, e nell'area nuova abbiamo preso 3 uffici, di cui uno l'ha preso una camiciaia, uno l'ha preso OXFAM, uno è

*ancora da affittare, e uno fa da sala riunioni. Quindi non abbiamo ingrandito la parte di co-working, abbiamo ingrandito la parte di altro. La camiciaia genera un traffico pazzesco..il nuovo spazio già si ripaga da solo e già dá un piccolo margine, se affittassimo il terzo ufficio avremmo tutto margine, bisognava farlo, é giusto.*

*M: E secondo te il progetto é replicabile in spazi diversi, e quando parlo di spazi mi riferisco di dimensioni e strutture diverse e in contesti culturali diversi? Se questo progetto tu lo porti non a milano, ma a Torino o in Spagna oppure lo porti in Danimarca, é replicabile?*

*R: Secondo me sí, con gli apprendimenti, i key learning che abbiamo preso noi. Che non é necesario avere uno spazio análogo, ma puoi fare un satellite in uno spazio di qualcun altro che fa altro, il tipo di partnership che devi avere con chi ti eroga i servizi, ne abbiamo imparate di cose...*

*M: Quindi in realtà lo spazio non é poi cosí limitante?*

*R: Non é cosí determinante, no, avere uno spazio tu assolutamente no.*

*M: Mi riferisco alla dimensione, alle caratteristiche...*

*R: Se tu vuoi aprire uno spazio che sia il tuo devi avere una dimensione minima, se no non sta in piedi.*

*M: Quindi quello é il requisito fondamentale*

*R: Se invece ti puoi innestare su spazi esistenti, ed evitare di accollarti tutta una serie di costi fissi, e farli diventare variabili. Per esempio un co-working esistente, tu usi le sale quando ti servono e fai l'angolo piano c del co-working quando ti serve, automáticamente i costi diventano variabili.*

*M: Quindi c'è un modello, che é slegato dalle caratteristiche fisiche dello spazio e che può essere poi replicabile*

*R: Che può aggiungere valore a spazi esistenti anche..*

*M: Quanto l'uso delle tecnologie ICT é stato fondamentale nel vostro progetto?*

*R: E' stato molto importante. Usiamo molto il cloud computing sia per il CRM che per la gestione dei progetti usiamo dei software di una società che si chiama Signal37, che sono molto bravi, e per la prenotazione delle postazioni e delle sale riunioni ci siamo fatti fare un software apposta da una società che ci chiama COBOT che é olandese, quindi abbiamo considerato sin dall'inizio la tecnologia come un mezzo importante, uno strumento importante e continua ad esserlo, ci ha consentito di non perderé tutta una serie di spunti iniziali, perché altrimenti all'inizio quello che succede é che tante cose le lasci nel limbo e dopo dieci mesi ti dici le mille persone che ho incontrato quest'anno che fine hanno fatto, invece per esempio HiRay ¿? Ci ha permesso di classificarle tutte.*

*M: Ma infrastrutture ICT a parte la banda larga..*

*R: No, tutto cloud, noi siamo molto per il pay per use, lean, sharing, usa quello che ti serve.*

*M: Perfetto, abbiamo finito, grazie ancora della disponibilità*

## **Interview with Sofia Borri (Piano C)**

*M: Sì, loro hanno avuto un sacco di sostegno veramente...*

*S: Che è sensatissimo secondo me perché questo...cioè da una parte secondo me è giusto che siano anche...poi le innovazioni vengono spesso dal privato, no...poi le istituzioni hanno anche bisogno di ricevere stimoli poi dal tessuto sociale e economico, è anche vero che è bello quando poi le istituzioni in un'ottica di visione di politiche pubbliche si spera almeno a medio periodo riescono poi a non...diciamo senza ottica assistenzialista perché è evidente che le nostre sono esperienze che nascono sapendo di dover sopravvivere e stare sul mercato però in qualche modo ti rendono facile una serie di cose che è anche poco giusto che io stia sul mercato uguale a chi poi in realtà legittimamente si fa profitto puro e business, no. Sembra utopico, non è che mi sembra di essere poi così, come, dire rivoluzionaria a dire una cosa così*

*M: No, no, no ma anche perché alla fine è quello che si fa...*

*S: Quindi va beh Milano in realtà ha questa cosa che è, nelle intenzioni è totalmente solidale e appoggia, per noi il Comune di Milano è stato un Comune che ha, come dire, che crede nella nostra sfida, appena può ci appoggia in termini di visibilità, ha fatto un bando di sostegno ai coworker...*

*M: Ah, ai coworker e non ai coworking*

*S: No, ai coworking l'ha fatto strutturale, per cui chi come noi aveva già lo spazio già messo a posto, o ci inventavamo dei lavori da fare ma tra l'altro co-finanziati al 50 per cui comunque ci devi spendere e proprio per prendere soldi così anche no, nel senso fare cose che non servono. Invece ha fatto un albo di coworking certificati per coworkers che volevano comprare degli abbonamenti presso questi coworking e ne finanziavano la metà, l'ha fatto per due anni e poi non più*

*M: E a voi questa cosa è servita?*

*S: È servita nel senso che due delle nostre coworkers hanno vinto il voucher, hanno acquistato il loro abbonamento annuale e poi hanno fatto richiesta e hanno vinto il voucher*

*M: Che gli copriva quindi il 50%?*

*S: Sì, dei costi. Detto questo, non molto altro. Per cui per esempio noi, ecco ti faccio una premessa che può essere un po' così... perché secondo me questo è importante*

*M: Io tra l'alto non so come si è evoluta Piano C*

*S: Allora, Piano C è nata – e questo anche secondo me è importante – con un gruppo di soci che veniva dal mondo aziendale, che quindi aveva un approccio che era proprio quello di creare una S.r.l. che vende servizi. Evidentemente non era l'S.r.l. su cui avresti fatto margini e profitto, però una S.r.l. che stava sul mercato perché intercetta un target che vuole comprare quei servizi. Cos'è successo? Abbastanza, te lo dico quasi da subito, che in realtà quello che era il target di Piano C è un target tendenzialmente che non necessariamente è emarginato, con problematiche, no, diciamo, da servizi sociali, però un target con non un grande potere d'acquisto, spesso con una variabilità rispetto alle entrate, legato un po' a quello che è oggi il mondo del lavoro. Quindi donne con un lavoro non stabile, magari con lavori da freelance che potenzialmente, a cui potenzialmente Piano C avrebbe fatto benissimo, però facevano fatica ad essere l'entrata stabile che faceva stare in piedi Piano C 1). 2), Piano C nasceva con l'idea che esisteva qualcuno bisognoso di questa nicchia dove far stare insieme vita e lavoro, quindi dove si riesca a essere delle professioniste e dei professionisti e allo stesso tempo avere degli altri pezzi di esistenza importanti, e nasce anche con l'idea che però esiste anche un tema, un'urgenza sociale a cui non c'è risposta: il fatto che in realtà poi ci sono un sacco di donne che vengono espulse dal mercato del lavoro e che non solo non hanno accesso a quella nicchia lì, ma non si trovano ad un passo prima, che è vorrebbero far stare insieme vita e lavoro ma purtroppo le porte del*

*mondo del lavoro sono chiuse. E sono chiuse a doppia mandata, cioè c'è crisi, sono chiuse per tutti, il mondo del lavoro è problematico per tutti, per le donne e per le donne con figli piccoli lo è ancora di più. Questo pezzo che è come dire, c'è un bisogno a cui rispondi, c'è ed è un bisogno grosso, in realtà è un bisogno per cui un'S.r.l. può fare poco, nel senso che si posiziona verso altri partner, verso gli enti dicendo 'io potrei fare del bene, posso dare delle buone risposte a questo problema, ma con che strumenti? Vendendo servizi?' Forse non funziona. L'intuizione di Riccarda di creare da subito un'associazione è stata intelligente, inizialmente sembrava un'associazione molto legata all'advocacy, cioè facciamo cultura, cioè queste cose, per cui l'idea è un po' cambiare il mondo e la mentalità, facciamo cultura. In realtà è diventato dal 2015 in poi lo strumento con cui Piano C fa tutta la parte progettuale.*

*M: L'associazione?*

*S: L'associazione, sì. L'S.r.l. è fondamentalmente uno strumento che gestisce la parte di affitto, scrivanie condivise e stanze riservate, quindi che fa la parte puramente commerciale che un'associazione non può fare*

*M: Parli di questo e non parli più del baby parking perché non c'è più il servizio?*

*S: Sì. Il cobaby è diciamo un servizio access...che noi uniamo all'offerta del coworking, ma abbiamo anche coworker che non lo usano, non è più vincolata, perché ci siamo rese conto che Piano C fa bene l'incrocio di tante, cioè più persone, più la community si arricchisce, non è tanto quindi a categorie ma a mentalità che è l'accesso...*

*M: Quindi un po' il senso si è perso, perché era molto l'identità di Piano C: coworking, baby parking, donne, coworking solo per donne con figli o padri con figli...?*

*S: No, in realtà non si è perso secondo me. Allora oggi è fondamentalmente più ampio, Piano C è legato a favorire l'incontro tra donne e lavoro e ha diversi strumenti. Uno di questi è la conciliazione ma non è l'unico, cioè quello che ci siamo resi conto è che non è sufficiente, cioè esiste tutta una fetta di problemi legati alle donne e al lavoro, diciamo di cortocircuito nell'incontro tra donne e lavoro per i quali la conciliazione e basta non è sufficiente, è un ingrediente importante, ma non è sufficiente. Ti dico questo perché in realtà, per farti un esempio, una donna disoccupata ha bisogno del cobaby e cercare lavoro è quasi un lavoro, però non acquista un carnet scrivania + cobaby perché sta cercando lavoro, è disoccupata, non ha reddito...quindi l'idea di base di piano C è utile, è importante, ma bisogna trovare altre strade, perché altri soggetti arrivino e la possano usare. In questo senso è un po' più, sembra più diluita ma è solo che si è ampliato...la potenzialità e le persone che possono in qualche modo transitare da qua dentro. Lo spazio non è secondario in realtà perché senza il luogo questa alchimia è un po' difficile farla succedere, per cui intanto ha iniziato a succedere una cosa: abbiamo iniziato a contaminare questo luogo con chi lavora e con chi non lavora, cioè c'è chi accede a Piano C e non ha un lavoro. Quindi in questo senso l'idea iniziale della professionista che ha bisogno del coworking e del cobaby non è più solo quella. Questa cosa fa bene a chi non lavora perché un conto è accedere un programma di placement in una società che fa formazione in delle aule x, in un luogo dove tu fai corsi tra disoccupati, esci, te ne vai al bar, mandi il curriculum forse là... un conto è mettere insieme dei servizi al lavoro, diciamo, che favoriscono il reinserimento di certe donne nel mondo del lavoro, o un inserimento migliorativo di donne nel lavoro cioè di donne che oggi non è che non lavorano, ma lavorano male, lavorano poco, non sono felici...mischiare tutto ciò con chi invece la casa Piano C con tutto il suo bello la può usare perché ha già trovato il lavoro che gli piace, ha un bambino e semplicemente vuole tenere insieme le due cose. In questo senso abbiamo provato, facciamo un po'*

*fatica perché sempre veniamo riportati all'idea del coworking, sai che le persone si attaccano alle definizioni, adesso coworking tutti sanno cos'è...noi proviamo sempre più a chiamare Piano C come un laboratorio di innovazione sociale. Ma nel senso proprio di laboratorio dove far succedere con le provette le alchimie, no, e stiamo facendo vari esperimenti.*

*Uno, continua ad essere quello che tu hai visto all'inizio, per cui cerchiamo di diversificare sempre di più i pacchetti che offriamo perché, di spazio + cobaby diciamo, perché ti faccio un esempio, la flessibilità è la cosa che attira tantissimo qua le donne libere professioniste perché i nidi, per esempio a Milano ce n'è, non tantissimi e si rimane fuori dalla graduatoria, però di base l'asilo pubblico e anche privato esiste. Le libere professioniste magari un po' di potere d'acquisto ce l'anno e magari un nido privato se lo permettono anche. Quello che però fa Piano C è il tema della possibilità, per cui per esempio se tu vuoi – come ho fatto io – allattare fino ai sette mesi in maniera esclusiva a richiesta, o vuoi...questa cosa te lo permette.*

*Due, non hai bisogno magari tutti i giorni dalle 9 alle 5 quindi pagare tutti i giorni dalle 9 alle 5. Ormai il lavoro si è molto modificato, quindi queste due caratteristiche Piano C le continua ad offrire. E quindi cerchiamo di diversificare il più possibile i pacchetti che offriamo alle persone, donne e uomini che vengono qui e vogliono usare coworking e cobaby. Però, cosa succede? In realtà, quello che abbiamo visto, all'inizio non lo sapevi perché non c'era storico, è che è un tipo di servizio temporaneo. Tendenzialmente una libera professionista apprezza questa cosa e la usa fino all'anno di vita, quasi sempre poi invece un posto al nido lo trovi, forse c'hai anche voglia di non avercelo proprio a un corridoio di distanza...magari Piano C è una ed è in una zona di Milano, quindi lo sbattimento di venire fin qua con un bimbo te lo fai quando sei in quella fase ma poi ti è comodo avercelo vicino a casa. Quindi, intanto il ricambio, per cui noi abbiamo, abbiamo bisogno di offrire questa flessibilità che Piano C è una risposta anche temporanea, molto utile, ma temporanea. È come se fosse, io la chiamo così perché poi l'ho vissuta sulla mia pelle, ho avuto la mia seconda figlia che ero già la direttrice di Piano C...*

*M: Tu quando sei entrata a Piano C?*

*S: Sono entrata qua a novembre 2014, fine 2014. Si è stato tutto abbastanza veloce e quando ho accettato di lavorare a Piano C, dopo poco ho scoperto di essere incinta della seconda figlia. E ne avevo una di neanche 1 anno, quindi era un momento...Io l'ho vissuto sulla mia pelle e poi la chiamo quasi come una vasca di decompressione cioè è uno spazio che permette di riprendere in mano le fila della tua storia professionale, in un modo che sia graduale che tenga conto delle tue esigenze da professionista e delle esigenze di un bambino, non è la fregola di tornare al lavoro. Questo in un'ottica anche di risposta a chi 'ah, non si tutela più la maternità come una volta', come dire, anche il valore della relazione mamma-bambino: è proprio evitare quello che succede oggi, che è un'apnea prolungata per non togliere cose al tuo bambino, in realtà appunto ti inchiodi 24/24 in casa quando non è necessario più, un conto sono i primi 20 giorni, 30 giorni, 40 giorni, 45, due mesi, dipende, il primo figlio magari ha bisogno di un po' di più, il secondo di meno, dipende da come sei fatta, c'è chi è in una specie di simbiosi fino all'anno, c'è chi dopo tre mesi gli manca l'aria...bene o male non siamo tutte uguali. Quello che fa Piano C è proprio, crea questo spazio, un po' come i vasi comunicanti di Archimede cioè per andar su dall'apnea, no, perché non ti esplodano i timpani devi riprendere fiato piano piano. Io per esempio avevo il bisogno di riprendere in mano una serie, avevo un ruolo di responsabilità in un progetto in cui credevo molto e volevo riprendere in mano delle cose. Allo stesso tempo volevo vedere mia figlia avevo voglia di vederla, era piccola, aveva due mesi, quindi cosa ho fatto? Ho iniziato a fare cose che a Piano C si possono fare, che si dovrebbe poter fare in tanti posti di*

lavoro, potevo fare delle riunioni con una sdraietta, dove un bambino fino a 3 mesi 4 mesi se ne sta lì, allattare durante una riunione se c'era bisogno e queste cose – semplici poi, non stiamo dicendo mamma ci siamo inventati una sala, no, con...quindi questa cosa qui rimane.

Poi cosa c'è, tutta quest'altra schiera di donne, ma tantissime che hanno iniziato a bussare: 'Ah Piano C, il luogo che incontra donne e lavoro! Io il lavoro non ce l'ho più, io voglio ricominciare, io ce l'ho ma sono infelice perché adesso ho due bambini e quella vita lì non la voglio più fare, ho un'idea ma non so da dove ripartire', di tutto un po'. Quindi abbiamo iniziato – e stiamo facendo questo perché io non è che io ho la soluzione – a sperimentare tramite l'associazione dei progetti fatti per, diciamo, favorire l'empowerment delle donne in relazione all'identità professionale. Quindi sono di vario tipo: per donne che non stanno lavorando/disoccupate. Per questi cerchiamo dei finanziamenti per offrirlo in maniera gratuita, perché le donne che non stanno lavorando tendenzialmente non spendono soldi che o non hanno, o se hanno non li mettono in una cosa di questo tipo. Coinvolgiamo chiunque, di base però delle aziende e facciamo un progetto che si chiama 'C to work' che praticamente crea dei gruppi di donne che ricevono una committenza da un'azienda e per tre mesi si mettono al lavoro su un progetto operativo con l'idea che è più facile trovare lavoro se stai già lavorando e accanto al percorso di gruppo hanno anche un percorso individuale, di coaching su se stesse: dove sei oggi? Dove vuoi essere tra tre mesi? Il lavoro operativo con le altre 4/5 è un dispositivo, una palestra di lavoro, non deve assorbirti completamente, ti rimette in movimento. Perché il problema vero che noi riscontravamo appunto nelle tante donne che hanno iniziato a bussare qui e che abbiamo ascoltato praticamente tutte, o che scrivono, è l'isolamento, è la solitudine, è il senso del 'chi mi vuole fuori da qui?' Sono una donna, che tendenzialmente (suono disturbato), ho dei figli piccoli o più grandi, quindi sono da tanto fuori dal mondo del lavoro. Quindi il primo pezzo è la consapevolezza: cosa so fare? Il mio talento? Quindi se tu ci pensi non è tanto diverso dal perché è nato Piano C: valorizzare i talenti femminili, ricordare al mondo che è stupido perderli che le donne hanno voglia di lavorare: il fatto che fanno figli non vuol dire che voglio lavorare meno o male o dequalificate e smettere di fare quello che fanno. Quindi questo è il bloccone, diciamo, per le disoccupate, la dico un po' brutale.

Sono...diciamo il coinvolgimento dell'azienda ha una doppia valenza: da una parte arrivano le aziende che hanno un po' un'aspettativa un po' di fare un po' una buona azione, noi abbiamo una buona comunicazione, abbiamo una buona visibilità, che è una cosa che alle aziende piace, abbiamo uno spazio di racconto, di storytelling sul blog di Donna Moderna in cui diamo...perché poi c'è il tema anche del racconto di se, personal-branding, adesso serve tantissimo nel mondo del lavoro quindi questo è un po', è un po' il pezzo. E le aziende fondamentalmente questo 'comprano' – passami il termine – finanziano. Poi in realtà il progetto operativo che gli danno da fare un po' anche per scherzo invece poi piace tantissimo perché di solito sono gruppi di donne stra motivate a dimostrare che sono capaci, perché arrivano anche con un livello di frustrazione altissimo, quindi si spendono tantissimo. Ti faccio degli esempi, che se no non...uno degli ultimi sponsor è stato QVC che è un canale multiretailer che fa...loro volevano investire dalla casa madre in progetti sociali per le donne, a questa marketing manager è piaciuto C to Work e ha detto 'che cos'è che potremo fargli fare che ci potrebbe interessare? Ah, noi siamo un marchio per niente conosciuto, abbiamo un problema di employer branding, cioè come attiriamo i talenti? Cioè tutti vogliono andare a lavorare da Google, da noi niente, manco la scarpa...Eppure siamo grossi, abbiamo lavoro da dare...'. Quindi ci hanno detto, facciamo una call per donne più o meno con profili di risorse umane e marketing che non stiano lavorando, e noi l'abbiamo fatta. La risposta è che raccogliemmo un sacco di candidature, cioè c'erano 5 posti e abbiamo raccolto 200 candidature. Quindi c'è quel pezzo lì, poi ne selezioniamo 20 a cui fare un colloquio di gruppo...già quel pezzo lì fa empowerment, le metti attorno ad un tavolo, si raccontano, e

anche Piano C..., poi ne scegli 5, le altre 15 ti assicuro che quasi tutte poi ti scrivono 'Mi ha fatto benissimo quella mezza giornata in cui sono riuscita a raccontarmi, a capire cosa fanno altre persone...' Le 5 gli hanno fatto una ricerca, intanto una panoramica dei concorrenti, di come il personal branding, di come altri fanno employer branding e poi gli hanno fatto una proposta di piano di comunicazione credo. L'hanno presa così: nel settore risorse umane manco voleva dare i materiali, per dirti, perché boh sì vediamo cosa fanno, ma che ne so, ma chi sono...Ovviamente tutta questa parte del lavoro di gruppo la gestisce Piano C, perché non è che tu gli fai...un conto è se ti prendi uno stagista che ti fa sviluppo ricerca, quindi noi poi facciamo il lavoro di tutoraggio, le accompagniamo nel lavoro di gruppo, le aiutiamo a tenere insieme l'individuale con il gruppo...E poi in realtà la responsabile delle risorse umane quando ha visto il prodotto della ricerca era contentissima adesso una di loro 5 ha avuto un appuntamento Skype e poi presentando l'HR manager mondo di QVC. Ora noi non gli abbiamo trovato un lavoro a queste persone: noi le abbiamo semplicemente messe in moto con un cappello per tre mesi, perché loro per quei tre mesi per fare la ricerca dei competitor hanno dovuto scrivere a dei manager delle risorse umane, dire 'Sono di Piano C, stiamo facendo una ricerca su questo, possiamo intervistarvi ...' Questa cosa qui le ha attivate. Poi ognuna di loro la usa come meglio crede, c'è la fortuna, c'è la capacità, il momento in cui ti trovi...quindi questo è un pezzo. In tutto ciò essere a Piano C non è neutro, fare questa cosa in un luogo così, dove poi qua magari incroci la professionista che poi proprio si è messa, per esempio, nella pausa pranzo, che tu sei lì che ci pensi e fai due chiacchiere...

Poi un altro pezzo 'solo' invece e quello, è il tema della formazione. Spinoso, nel senso che insomma non è proprio un mercato dove c'è tanta trippa per gatti diciamo, però dall'altra parte io mi sono detta quasi da subito 'è un po' difficile lavorare sul lavoro, sul rimettere le donne nel mondo del lavoro e non metterci il tema delle competenze, un po' dell'aggiornamento delle competenze. Quindi abbiamo progettato quella che si chiama Piano C school, poi magari ti dico nostro sito trovi il nuovo programma, con l'idea che fosse un tempo definito, di solito dura un mese e mezzo, sono dai 10 ai 12 corsi, brevi: dalle 4 alle 8 ore massimo, fatte in due incontri, in tre incontri, a costi diciamo contenuti secondo un po'...su un po' di competenze digitali trasversali che adesso ci vogliono: un po' i social, un po' appunto LinkedIn, un po' il marketing online, un po' di strumenti trasversali, Excel, di public speaking...con l'idea che più o meno secondo noi sono le cose che possono essere utili se ti devi mettere in movimento. I docenti vengono dal mondo del lavoro, gli abbiamo chiesto di essere pragmatici, di non...la docente di Excel non arriva a spiegargli tutte le potenzialità di Excel, le guarda e dice 'io faccio così, il budget e le somme le faccio così, dovete fare una pivot la fate così', punto. Tutto il resto...Wordpress, hai un'idea in testa imprenditoriale? Vuoi farti il sito? Fattelo così, questa è un po' l'idea di base.

M: E questi corsi ve li finanzia qualcuno?

S: No, questi li stiamo facendo pagare dagli utenti e per chi fa il percorso e non lavora invece sono gratuiti. Gli diciamo, gli proponiamo di sceglierne 3 tra i 10, quindi anche lì creiamo classi miste, creiamo classi miste anche un po' un tema di solidarietà sociale: chi compra il corso finanzia la sostenibilità della scuola, che poi viene offerta ad un numero riservato di donne che al momento non lavorano. Abbiamo avuto qualche finanziamento, Groupon ha finanziato 3 borse di studio, abbiamo fatto insieme una call per trovare 3 donne con idee di impresa a cui loro offrivano poi tutta la scuola.

M: Ho capito bene, Groupon?

S: Groupon, sì. Allora tutto ciò...diciamo che abbiamo bisogno di farci un po' un portfolio di aziende che stanno credendo in noi, è arrivato un po' il momento di fare un po' un salto di qualità perché tutto



*questo sta in piedi per la nostra passione enorme, non ci paghiamo tanto, stiamo così sul mercato...perché poi bisogna dire le cose come stanno. L'innovazione costa, perché significa tentare, provare. Se non è di qualità sparisce, muore, quindi non puoi raffazzonarla: noi dedichiamo tempo-lavoro a questi progetti, in realtà poi il finanziamento che ci danno è molto più basso, quindi, come dire, ti ho raccontato tutto il pezzo positivo. Adesso in questo momento secondo me dobbiamo riuscire con questi, con questo storico aziendale magari a costruire delle partnership un po' più strutturate, magari con altri numeri, magari in altri luoghi, magari con altri partner. Stiamo lavorando anche all'idea di bandi. Abbiamo avuto un finanziamento da Fondazione Cariplo che, così, ci crede, ci prova. Il terzo filone che abbiamo un po', che io vorrei sviluppare adesso, questo autunno, è quello invece del supportare le donne con idee d'impresa tenendo conto della specificità femminile, per la quale gli incubatori che adesso vanno tanto di moda non funzionano tanto. Perché tendenzialmente non sono la stratuppara di grido che ha l'idea con cui fare i milioni di euro e se non va bene prende, la butta e fa un'altra app. Sono donne che ragionano sull'idea dell'autoimpresa come alternativa al reddito, sono prudenti, hanno un altro approccio al rischio, partono magari da un loro talento, sono molto competenti su quello che vogliono fare, quindi l'idea è di provare a fare una pre-incubazione, un lavoro di pre-incubazione, quindi aiutarle a passare dall'idea di progetto, anche per arrivare a dire forse non la devo fare l'imprenditrice. Prima di cercare fondi, fare il business plan e poi rimanere super frustrate dall'ennesimo fallimento, vediamo. Su questa cosa abbiamo presentato un paio di progetti a delle aziende e vorrei presentarne un altro a fondazione Cariplo e come sempre, far delle prove.*

*M: Posso chiederti, in tutto questo lo spazio è rimasto lo stesso? Non è più cambiato? Perché io con Riccarda ero rimasta a che volevate acquisire un'altra parte.*

*S: Ah non c'era ancora il pezzo di là?*

*M: No.*

*S: Cioè tu sei entrata, sei venuta a destra, a sinistra non c'era niente?*

*M: Non c'era ancora. Quando ho parlato con Riccarda, che però era, io non sapevo neanche di essere incinta di Gabriel...Ah no sì lo sapevo quindi era boh, fai marzo 2014*

*S: È successo di lì a poco, è un...*

*M: Vi siete ampliati...*

*S: Sì, è in realtà una parte non molto grande dove ci sono altre due stanze riservate, "uffici", e una un po' grande dove si fanno i corsi di formazione quindi questo è*

*M: Che però non è di Carlo*

*S: Sì è sempre di Carlo. Si è aggiunta una parte*

*M: Quindi il modello è rimasto lo stesso in realtà*

*S: È una proprietà a cui abbiamo aggiunto un altro contratto specifico su quella parte, un altro contratto d'affitto specifico su quella parte, sì.*

*M: Ma quindi state pagando l'affitto a Carlo?*

*S: Stiamo pagando l'affitto a Carlo, diciamo non è cambiato nel prezzo, quindi quello è...Ritardiamo e siamo molto tollerati nei ritardi che abbiamo, non siamo sempre puntuali con i pagamenti questo bisogna dirlo. Una cosa che succede è che l'associazione di base è ospitata gratuitamente dall'S.r.l. negli spazi, però se riceve finanziamenti per fare...perché voglio dire le 5 donne per 3 mesi le ospitiamo*

qui, occupiamo uno spazio di Piano C, per esempio dei fondi della fondazione Cariplo una parte ha pagato gli spazi. Ovviamente, perché non sfori il passaggio di fondi da una no-profit a una profit anche se una Piano C S.r.l. non è una profit, perché poi bisogna dirle le cose, in realtà Piano C S.r.l. fa dei prezzi super calmierati, fa dei prezzi super vantaggiosi, a Piano C associazione, quindi non costa come tre mesi di scrivania per un qualunque hotel. Però se c'è la possibilità, Piano C Associazione, soprattutto nei progetti con le donne, non per la mia scrivania, anche perché poi io coordino il tutto voglio dire non per, anche perché appunto le funzioni sono molto trasversali.

M: Raffaele c'è ancora?

S: Raffaele c'è ancora, in realtà ormai è in uscita e c'è una community manager che è Renata e tiene ormai l'organizzazione di tutto, a cui Raffaele ha passato la maggior parte delle mansioni e oggi, stamattina, faceva il passaggio di consegne con la nuova amministratrice a cui Raffaele sta passando l'ultimo pezzo. Raffaele sta collaborando praticamente all'80-90% con Riccarda su Mum, che ha la sede qui comunque, per cui, ecco, la galassia Piano C è sempre quella. C'è Kibra, che ci ha portato il caffè, che è la nostra responsabile di comunicazione ed advocacy che fa la comunicazione per Piano C, ovviamente. La comunicazione sul lato spazi è un po' più scarna perché cioè abbiamo le promozioni sugli spazi di cobaby e lei mette delle... quello che succede è che tutta la mole di progetti di Piano C Associazione, che fanno anche la credibilità del progetto Piano C è tutto valore aggiunto per il progetto commerciale degli spazi perché lo rendono... Cioè di coworking adesso a Milano è piano, pienissimo quindi devi, devi, quello che lo rende speciale e unico è anche tutto quel pezzo che fa sì che sia un luogo dove veramente favorire l'incontro tra donne e lavoro, con vari strumenti

M: In realtà, quindi, però, il posto lo spazio è diventato il contenitore non solo delle attività degli utenti ma anche di altre attività dello stesso progetto...

S: Però sai, nell'ottica del fatto che i coworking, gli spazi vivono se ci sono community, in realtà, per esempio buonissima parte delle donne che hanno fatto quei percorsi C to Work e finiti i tre mesi qualcuno ha trovato lavoro, qualcuno no, una se n'è andata in Mozambico, sai la vita delle persone... in realtà poi diventano per noi pezzi di community. Una dopo i 3 mesi di C to Work ha deciso di accettare di rilevare un portale di e-commerce quindi si è messa in proprio, cosa che prima non avrebbe fatto, poi si è comprata dei corsi della school. Perché ha rilevato l'e-commerce di un vecchio tedesco che manco aveva i soci soltanto che lei ha detto 'Eh no io adesso per metterlo in movimento devo aprire le pagine, ah! Piano C ha un corso di Instagram per le aziende, me lo faccio, mi prendo la scrivania'. Quindi in realtà, non so come dirti, è come se fosse veramente una galassia, una comunità che sta qui intorno, che sta attorno a Piano C.

M: A me interessa capire anche questo, cioè, nel senso, io credo che dalla comunità si generano quelli che io chiamo intangible assets, cioè dei benefici che sono intangibili, no, che non siamo secondo me in grado di quantificare, no, di descrivere e che secondo me ci fanno la differenza, sono il valore aggiunto dei progetti in cui c'è uno spazio, un insieme di persone dentro ad uno spazio...

S: Eh, guarda, tocchi una corda delicata, cioè delicata, che per me è sensibile. Nel senso che io da prima dell'estate con due colleghe che ho messo un po' al lavoro su questa cosa, sono un po' in fissa con la misurazione dei nostri risultati

M: Che era l'altra domanda che ti volevo fare

S: Perché c'è dappertutto, l'impatto sociale come si misura, no, sembra che appunto, ehh! sembra che se lo misuri convinci a 360 gradi... peccato che poi non si capisce come si debba misurare. Io vengo dal mondo della cooperazione internazionale dove si fa monitoraggio da milioni di anni in realtà, si è

*molto più avanti di quello che appunto, adesso sembra che le cooperative sociali debbano tutte fare e anche con tutte le difficoltà no, di misurare qualcosa che, appunto, è intangibile e forse non dipende solo da te, quindi se te lo attribuisce in toto non sei neanche così trasparente. Queste donne hanno trovato lavoro, è tutto merito di Piano C? Non so. Però dall'altra parte a dire 'è impossibile misurarlo, vi assicuro che Piano C fa bene' e 'ti faccio un indice tipo lo (Sr?)', i famosi, no, forse ci sono delle vie di mezzo, che hanno anche a che fare con un po' la condivisione con la comunità di quello, che è anche uno strumento di comunicazione di quello che fanno. Quindi stiamo lavorando un po' al tema della misurazione del nostro impatto, anche se abbiamo di numeri un po' piccoli quindi io ero un po' preoccupata all'inizio di...ne ho parlato con Paolo Venturi che è il direttore di Aiccon, che è il nostro amico e gli dicevo, io mi sento un po' in difficoltà perché non sono alla cooperativa di inserimento sociale romagnola che ha 9000...quindi già, fa due torte, già fa numeri. E lui mi diceva Piano C è un'avanguardia, come dire, che racconta un orizzonte possibile quindi che voi vi sforziate di rendere, misurare, rendere raccontabili alcuni dei vostri risultati, sia per l'utente, che per la community, che per i vostri stakeholders...[sottintende, è già tanto] Quindi noi siamo in quella fase lì. Solo lo sforzo di provare a fare sistema di tutto questo ci ha fatto rendere conto intanto che questi intangibile assets che tu dici sono nel nostro caso veramente trasversali cioè è multilivello anche, perché veramente io credo che a catena questa cosa ha degli effetti sulla vita delle persone singole che sono qua dentro e quindi qua non è che posso sparare dei grandi numeri. Hanno effetti sui nostri, diciamo, stakeholders stretti, le aziende che ci intercettano e decidono di finanziarci, il Comune di Milano che decide di presentare con noi un progetto, il nostro quartiere che osserva e vede che qua ci sono queste cose, le famiglie di queste donne, i loro compagni, le loro mamme che gli dicono 'ma no stai a casa con i bambini' e queste che tornano molto più motivate di prima, sai che c'è? Ultimo, e questo, non voglio fare la presuntuosa, un po' la società intera, nel senso che io sono convinta che c'è bisogno di altre narrazioni. In periodi di crisi si tende sempre veramente, no, ad assecondare il lamento, il ma tanto il lavoro non c'è, ma dove vuoi andare, come fai a stare sul mercato, ma sei sicura, cioè ha tanti livelli, sia per le organizzazioni che per le persone, un'isola di resistenza dove si dice che invece SI PUO' e che queste cose succedono alle persone, non sono solo magiche e auspicabili, io credo che sia qualcosa che serve e fa un po' cultura, prova a produrre dei modelli alternativi. In fondo il sistema dominante sta un po' crollando, non sta dando soluzioni quindi la breccia esiste per...certo che a me piacerebbe avere un megafono triplo, certo che, non so come dire, quante volte ci capita 'ah che bello tutto quello che fate!' e poi dopo alla resa dei fatti, magari in un grande convegno finisci lì, no, nella sfilza di cose appiattenti. Cioè, il discorso dominante esiste e non è facilissimo da scardinare però ha tanti spazi e tante crepe, diciamo io le vedo. In questo senso ti dico che è multilivello: probabilmente oggi non misureremo il primo di livello, faremo delle interviste all'inizio e alla fine a tutte le donne che ruotano qua intorno che in qualche modo usano le esperienze di Piano C e proveremo a dare delle risposte a questi dubbi a questo livello. Però se faremo mai un report d'impatto, che io vorrei un po' affiancare per esempio anche le richieste finanziamento, comunque gli altri due pezzi...*

*M: Vengono a mancare*

*S: Che sono anche, per esempio, una cosa che non ti ho detto, alle donne disoccupate che accedono a C to Work no offriamo il Cobaby gratis, che è un bagno di sangue perché il Cobaby non è un servizio su cui si guadagna, anzi. Però come fai a dire a una donna disoccupata 'vieni a fare sta cosa, però devi essere qui per tre mesi, lì con la testa, due giorni a settimana a tempo pieno e poi magari da casa lavorare...' e dirgli 'pagati una baby sitter'. Quindi, questo. I corsi di formazione, gli eventi che facciamo qui...avere un figlio non è una cosa che ti deve impedire di fare le cose che vuoi fare. Questa cosa per esempio ha avuto per alcune di queste donne l'effetto che sono riuscite a fare C to Work ma*

*anche hanno messo in moto un processo di distacco che le stava immobilizzando. È venuta qua una ragazza molto giovane, aveva fatto un figlio presto sull'onda dell'entusiasmo mentre ancora studiava, si è laureata, si è messa a cercare lavoro, tutti la chiamavano perché era neolaureata ma quando diceva che aveva una figlia non la richiama più. Quindi se sei giovane penso che non ne puoi.... È arrivata poi con la figlia che aveva un anno che non era mai stata con nessun altro che non fosse lei: primo figlio, che sembrava una cosa difficilissima da fare, difficile proprio, è arrivata qua e il Cobaby le è servito anche a quello. L'anno dopo l'ha iscritta al nido, nel frattempo ha trovato un lavoro...L'avrebbe fatto uguale, io non dico che poi lei sarebbe rimasta attaccata alle gonne fino a...però questa comunità gliel'ha reso anche meno doloroso, meno traumatico, l'ha fatta sentire meno in colpa, gliel'ha reso graduale, ha trovato un interlocutore che capiva la situazione in cui era. Credo che sia una cascata a tanti effetti che uno spazio progettato, pensato così la rende possibile.*

*M: Sai qual è la mia sensazione? Perché prima mi colpiva il fatto che mi dicevi che comunque dal punto di vista finanziario fate ancora fatica no, e sono passati anche anni...e pensavo agli altri progetti che sto seguendo e o credo che voi siete estremamente visionari. Cioè cambiare questa mentalità, che mi sembra l'obiettivo forse più importante, è però una roba difficile da tenere in piedi finanziariamente...*

*S: Sì, sì. Sì anche perché appunto l'idea che il coworking potesse essere il business che finanzia ciò è impossibile...*

*M: Anche quelli di Kilowatt mi dicevano che il coworking copre i costi degli spazi e basta*

*S: E noi adesso tra l'altro abbiamo spostato quasi tutti i costi sull'associazione in termini di personale perché è di lì che ci sono in corso dei progetti...già che ospiti tutte queste attività è una buona cosa, però di sicuro non è, capito, il profit che può poi finanziare il suo coté buono. Ma poi non ha nemmeno senso secondo me che sia così, no, perché sono veramente alla pari. Allora, fossimo in periodi più floridi, allora io sto, le linee di finanziamento noi le stiamo esplorando tutte. A proposito, tu che fai europrogettazione, ma perché non ci infili? Cioè l'idea di provare a entrare nei progetti europei, io vengo da quel mondo lì (si interrompe)*

## **Interview with Nicoletta Tranquillo (Spazio Giardini Margherita)**

*M: Mi stavi dicendo qualcosa tu...*

*N: Sì, ti stavo dicendo che adesso, poi ti racconto di Kilowatt per bene, ma ti anticipo questa cosa: noi, diciamo, è dal 2012 che lavoriamo su Kilowatt, no, e abbiamo sempre cercato di portare avanti un po' di cioè, un po' di progettazione, sperimentazione sul campo e un po' di modellizzazione di tutto quello che stavamo facendo per, così mantenere...anche per formalizzare, per dare corpo a quello che stava succedendo e quindi questo processo di formalizzazione abbiamo provato a mettere in rete altre realtà che stavano facendo processi simili a noi perché in realtà quello che succede è che, cioè tendenzialmente i processi di innovazione sociale che hanno uno spazio al centro, sono dei processi che sono attivati da una comunità, aggregano comunità, però a un certo punto inevitabilmente - a mio avviso - si incontrano con la pubblica amministrazione, anzi cioè si dovrebbero incontrare con la*

pubblica amministrazione. E lì, diciamo, e la pubblica amministrazione non ha spesso gli strumenti per promuovere o supportare queste cose, neanche a volte per leggere questo tipo di...che in realtà, diciamo, nella nostra visione sono invece strumenti, nuovi strumenti, di a) rigenerazione urbana, ma rigenerazione urbana innovativa, rigenerazione urbana che mette al centro la coesione sociale e anche di proprio innovazione sociale perché sono dei processi che ripensano anche i servizi pubblici e quindi welfare collaborativo, ecc... Quindi diciamo secondo noi questo incontro con la pubblica amministrazione ci deve essere però quello che è successo a noi e che è successo a molti altri è che quando incontri la pubblica amministrazione è un tracollo, cioè, ci metti un casino di tempo, i tempi si allungano tantissimo e questo stride molto con invece le esigenze un pochino imprenditoriali di queste iniziative ecc... e quindi c'eravamo dati un po' l'obiettivo di provare a modellizzare quello che noi stavamo facendo, confrontandoci con una serie di altri soggetti che stavano facendo esperienze simili per tirare fuori un po' quelli che sono gli strumenti comuni e quindi gli strumenti da utilizzare, le competenze che andrebbero favorite. Quindi voglio dire se la regione ha dei soldi per fare formazione, che provi a metterli su questo tipo di competenze che servono e poi anche strumenti economici e anche policy pubbliche che invece devono essere... Quindi in questo percorso qui noi abbiamo scritto un documento che si chiama 'Community Hub', abbiamo provato, diciamo, a dare un nome a queste esperienze che stiamo facendo e le abbiamo chiamate 'Community Hub', poi non siamo gli unici, all'estero è un tema che, in Inghilterra un po', già si sta usando e quindi abbiamo fatto un documento che si chiama 'Community Hub' e lo trovi su questo sito [www.communityhub.it](http://www.communityhub.it). Questo è un piccolo estratto di un documento più lungo che abbiamo scritto e comunque è un documento che aveva l'obiettivo – e ha tutt'ora l'obiettivo – di raccogliere commenti, cioè di cominciare a fare rete, con l'obiettivo poi di far uscire il documento più lungo arricchito dai commenti e da tutte le persone che ne hanno preso parte e faremo un piccolo lavoro, un piccolo workshop anche durante il festival di Rena che ci sarà a Milano l'8 e 9 ottobre quindi anche lì se sei a Milano, se ti interessa

M: Eh non ci sono però mi sarebbe piaciuto, adesso vedo se riesco a organizzarmi per venire

N: Va beh, te lo dicevo perché...e comunque, quindi, cioè è molto interessante quello che stai facendo tu e in qualche modo, al di là di Kilowatt come caso, però secondo me potremmo insomma, fare un pochettino di sinergia su, su questo

M: Sì, sì, assolutamente, me lo leggo con calma, non l'ho visto in realtà

N: Beh sì ma magari appunto segnati il sito... Da dove vuoi che cominciamo?

M: Io ero curiosa di sapere beh Kilowatt, com'è nata e poi com'è nato questo posto

N: Okay, però guarda, Kilowatt è nata nel 2012 da un gruppo, eravamo in 4, provenienti diciamo da esperienze diverse, amici, però tutti con un altro lavoro e diciamo con l'obiettivo, da un lato, cioè, con l'obiettivo di avere uno spazio dove poterci trovare e dove ognuno portava avanti le sue cose, però stando vicini era più facile fare progetti in comune, perché era una cosa che già facevamo. Quindi diciamo che l'idea era quella un po' di provare a sperimentare un nuovo modo di lavorare e un nuovo modo anche di pensare lo spazio di lavoro. Quindi un nuovo modo di lavorare perché fortemente collaborativo, fortemente orizzontale e quindi meno gerarchico e anche con dei meccanismi di governance, appunto, più simili alle organizzazioni flat, diciamo no, e dove appunto si potevano, dove poi vita e lavoro potessero provare ad integrarsi in un modo diverso da quella che era la proposta sul mercato e dove vita e lavoro voleva dire bambini, ma voleva dire anche cibo, ma voleva dire anche cultura, voleva dire un po' tutte queste cose. Quindi diciamo in nuce nella nostra testa c'era l'obiettivo di provare a sperimentare un posto del genere, avevamo...

*M: Un posto del genere aperto a tutti, cioè era una cosa che non volevate fare solo per voi*

*N: Assolutamente no, assolutamente no. Nel senso con delle postazioni di lavoro aperte a chi le affittava e però un posto attraversato dalle persone. Pensavamo che questa cosa qui avesse una valenza pubblica, quindi avevamo, diciamo, attivato un contatto col Comune quasi da subito. In quel periodo lì ancora il Comune non era pronto diciamo per un discorso di questo tipo: da un lato il Comune non era pronto, dall'altro perché forse è poco pronto anche adesso, noi non eravamo ancora nessuno, cioè non eravamo conosciuti, no, quindi...Avevamo addirittura individuato uno spazio che era questa ex cabina dell'Enel che sta qua dentro ai Giardini Margherita e quindi il nome Kilowatt deriva proprio perché volevamo rigenerare quello spazio lì. Quindi Enel, rigenerare, energia, ecc, aggregare energie e risorse, Kilowatt. Poi appunto il dialogo con il Comune stava prendendo dei tempi troppo lunghi, noi comunque abbiamo avuto l'intuizione che dovevamo intanto partire perché altrimenti, diciamo, anche le energie nostre si sarebbero dissipate e quindi abbiamo trovato uno spazio privato da affittare. L'abbiamo affittato e anche lì, un po' perché all'interno di Kilowatt c'è una persona che è Gaspare che si è sempre occupato di design dei servizi, quindi abbiamo sempre cercato di utilizzare, diciamo, le nostre competenze per modellizzare su di noi, sulle nostre esigenze ma anche sulle nostre competenze, lo spazio.*

*M: Posso chiederti le competenze che avete?*

*N: Sì, lui design dei servizi, io sono un'economista e mi sono sempre occupata di sostenibilità e quindi di responsabilità sociale d'impresa e ambiente, in realtà cinque dall'inizio, poi c'era Massimo che è il ragazzo che hai visto qua e Lorenzo che è un altro e si occupano di cinema, video, comunicazione, e poi c'è Stefano che è il presidente, che ha più delle competenze gestionali e poi è stato quello che, diciamo, si è sempre buttato avanti e quindi ha fatto molto da traino soprattutto all'inizio e ,insomma, lui è il presidente e quindi si occupa di tutta la parte amministrativa ecc... E quindi ti stavo dicendo che, appunto, abbiamo intuito da subito l'importanza, cioè di creare una comunità intorno a noi, no, anche per abbassare un po' il rischio legato a prenderci, a sobbarcarci un contratto, di uno spazio...Okay quindi abbiamo fatto un po' di incontri con dei soggetti potenzialmente, che erano un po' nella nostra rete, altre realtà giovani che stavano nascendo, così, e che potevano aver bisogno di uno spazio e quindi insomma utilizzando poi proprio le tecniche del design dei servizi e del community engagement – lo chiamerei adesso a posteriori – abbiamo creato un gruppo che era interessato ad avere uno spazio in un co-working, e quindi poi abbiamo firmato il contratto e siamo entrati lì*

*M: Il contratto lo avete firmato a nome vostro?*

*N: Noi. Esatto, cioè quello che forse è la differenza del nostro caso rispetto ad altri casi di community hub, di rigenerazione è che noi ci siamo sempre presi il rischio di impresa, noi come Kilowatt, e abbiamo cercato di abbassare questo rischio coinvolgendo una comunità che di volta in volta potevamo essere utenti, clienti, fra virgolette perché poi noi i co-worker non li chiamiamo clienti però alla fine gli stacciamo delle fatture effettivamente...e così. E quindi siamo partiti con quasi tutte le postazioni affittate e quindi diciamo con già la copertura dei costi completa.*

*M: Quant'era grande quel posto?*

*N: Mah, non grandissimo. Era...200 metri quadri, più o meno, e avevamo 12/una quindicina di posti*

*M: E lo avete trovato messo a posto o lo avete dovuto ristrutturare?*

*N: Messo a posto. Quello era totalmente messo a posto, noi abbiamo fatto dei lavori, nel senso che era uno studio di architettura e abbiamo dovuto ripensarlo un po' co-working, quindi le scrivanie, delle*

porte, ecc. La cosa che per noi era importantissima nello spazio è che avesse una sala comune, cioè al di là dei posti dove lavorare e la sala riunioni, però va beh una sala comune dove fare eventi comuni, workshop, aperitivi, momenti collettivi e convivialità e una cucina, perché appunto, cioè, è fondamentale, noi non stavamo cercando un altro ufficio, cioè stavamo cercando un posto da vivere. E infatti quello che abbiamo fatto fin dall'inizio, per esempio, è stato dare le chiavi a tutti, cioè chi faceva parte della community aveva le chiavi, quindi poteva essere utilizzato 24h24 ecc. Poi abbiamo fatto due cose contemporaneamente: una è un'attività di community engagement con le persone che facevano parte del co-working, quindi una cena mensile, in cui ci vedevamo tutti, ci raccontavamo i progetti che stavamo facendo, su alcune cose le abbiamo proprio co-progettate, quindi per esempio la sala comune come la arrediamo, l'abbiamo fatto con una co-progettazione. Poi queste cene via via sono andate un po' diradandosi perché ormai eravamo diventati tutti talmente amici che ormai non c'era più bisogno di fare delle cene. Quindi questo da un lato, e dall'altro lato, invece, abbiamo fatto una serie di eventi pubblici, aperti alla città, in cui abbiamo iniziato a parlare di innovazione sociale, sostanzialmente. Quindi abbiamo fatto un primo evento proprio di co-design del programma, cioè proprio di, noi vogliamo parlare di innovazione sociale, che cosa vi interessa, quali sono gli ambiti che vi interessano di più, conoscete qualcuno, vorreste portare... così da lì abbiamo fatto un programma e poi attivando un po' le nostre reti facevamo queste serate gratuite in cui invitavamo sempre due o tre casi che raccontassero la loro esperienza, quindi non so, gestione di spazi condivisi: Milano, Firenze, fablab, così condivisione di strumentazione, finanziamenti, così. Invitavamo quindi due o tre realtà, una cosa super informale, tutti seduti a terra, così...E poi c'era un aperitivo che di solito offrivamo noi e quindi anche lì insomma un piccolo investimento da fare da parte nostra...

M: Ma in questa fase riuscite a sostenere tutti costi?

N: Sì, tutti i costi con gli affitti ma tieni conto che nessuno di noi veniva pagato e avevamo tutti un altro lavoro. All'inizio, cioè per i primi..., io e Lorenzo siamo stati gli ultimi due che ci siamo licenziati e ci siamo licenziati a marzo, quindi dal 2012 ad oggi gradualmente, prima si è licenziato Stefano, però insomma, sì era una cosa che facevamo la sera, nel weekend, nei ritagli, cioè tutti ritagli di tempo.

M: Ma voi eravate freelance?

N: No, eravamo tutti a tempo indeterminato in altre aziende.

M: Okay, quindi non lavoravate nello spazio...

N: Solo Gaspare lavorava nello spazio. Lui è sempre stato freelance e...quindi lui era l'unico che lavorava nello spazio ed era quindi anche un pochettino il punto di riferimento. Però per dirti, tutti i contratti, la parte amministrativa la faceva Stefano, quindi anche senza essere lì. Poi è vero che era un posto che ognuno di noi staccava alle sei e andava lì e quindi comunque tutti ci vedevano, le sere facevamo queste cene assieme, così. Però abbiamo sempre tentato di responsabilizzare molto le persone, quindi per dire, non so, c'erano le spillatrici della birra condivise con un porcellino dove chi si faceva una birra metteva dentro la moneta, quindi diciamo il posto era molto vissuto come casa da tutti e quindi facevamo la spesa insieme, lavavamo i piatti, così. Poi, quindi, diciamo, il nucleo iniziale era sostanzialmente un co-working con degli eventi. Quindi poi abbiamo fatto questi eventi gratuiti, poi abbiamo iniziato a fare un po' di formazione sull'innovazione, cioè su start up, innovazione sociale e insomma tutta una serie di attività che ci hanno un po' a) legittimato verso la pubblica amministrazione come soggetto effettivamente credibile e b) verso, cioè, legittimato verso la comunità perché, insomma eravamo quelli che parlavano di questa cosa qui..., poi forse è stato un po' anche un tempismo perché comunque ancora a Bologna non c'era niente, cioè siamo stati i primi a fare questa cosa, cioè dopo ha

*aperto working capital, hanno aperto altri co-working, ecc...e così, e quindi poi nel frattempo cos'è successo, una delle ragazze, in realtà la compagna di uno dei soci è rimasta incinta e quindi lì abbiamo avuto l'occasione di provare a costruire anche la parte di welfare che ancora mancava e quindi abbiamo fatto, abbiamo adottato più o meno diciamo lo stesso processo che avevamo fatto prima. Quindi abbiamo detto okay, facciamo un asilo condiviso e quindi abbiamo fatto una call, abbiamo coinvolto le persone interessate*

*M: Una call per trovare di nuovo dei potenziali utenti?*

*N: Dei genitori. Quindi persone che, sì, potenziali utenti interessati a ripensare...cioè, diciamo, non soddisfatti dall'offerta di welfare e di asilo esistente. E quindi però abbiamo sempre guidato molto noi, nel senso che in questo percorso per esempio io avevo provato a coinvolgere degli altri soggetti, una mamma, questa ragazza qui, così, però alla fine ci vuole molto metodo, molta passione, quindi diciamo, cioè la comunità va molto guidata. Cioè, me è fondamentale averla però non è la comunità che tira da sola*

*M: Che promuove...*

*N: No. Quindi diciamo io ho governato molto molto questo processo e questo ancora di più del co-working aveva bisogno di un'interlocuzione pubblica perché un asilo, soprattutto un asilo un po' particolare non lo puoi aprire così. Quindi lì i tempi sono stati molto molto lunghi perché siamo partiti secondo me nel 2013 e abbiamo veramente aperto il servizio a settembre dell'anno scorso, quindi nel 2015. (19:38)*

*M: Però, ci stavate pensando mentre eravate ancora nell'altro spazio, o lì poi vi siete detti 'dobbiamo trovare un posto nuovo'?*

*N: Allora, noi avevamo sempre pensato che dovevamo trovare un posto nuovo, visto che quel posto lì era un posto diciamo di transizione. Però, appunto, vedevamo un po' che i tempi dovevano maturare per noi, per il Comune ecc. Quindi questa cosa dell'asilo, per esempio, cioè nel nostro modello iniziale...c'era appunto uno spazio di lavoro dove c'era il ristorante, l'orto, l'asilo, l'arte contemporanea, la ciclofficina, cioè avevano idea, no di crearci un mondo...E però appunto questa cosa ancora non aveva trovato una sua sede e alla fine con il senno di poi, cioè, meglio così, nel senso che quando siamo arrivati qui eravamo molto più consapevoli, molto più preparati, molto più pronti. Però appunto questa cosa dell'asilo a un certo punto poi, diciamo, è nata l'esigenza forte che, appunto, Alessandra è rimasta incinta, per cui questa cosa ha accelerato la nostra progettazione e programmazione. Quindi, nel frattempo avevamo cercato altri spazi privati perché quello spazio lì che avevamo non permetteva di far un asilo, era troppo piccolo, non aveva gli spazi, così...quindi stavamo cercando sul privato. In tutto ciò nel frattempo si è finalmente aperto questo bando del Comune che era un bando che si chiama 'Incredible', che è un bando per associazioni culturali, libere forme associative, così, e dava consulenza o spazi.*

*M: Non le due cose, o l'una o l'altra...*

*N: 'o, o', esatto. Tra l'altro è un bando particolare perché gli spazi non venivano messi a bando ma tu partecipi, quelli che vincono alla fine gli viene offerta la possibilità di avere un po' di denaro (3-4000 euro, così) o delle consulenze gratuite, o degli spazi che però vengono individuati sulla base delle tue esigenze dopo che hai vinto. Che in realtà questa cosa è molto interessante perché taglia fuori un po', diciamo, la speculazione da questo bando, perché tu all'inizio non lo sai qual è il bando ma dopo sulla base delle tue esigenze...Quello che è successo è che noi abbiamo partecipato a questo bando con il nostro progetto diciamo complessivo, il progettone, abbiamo vinto, cioè vincono 5 o 6 in realtà ogni*



anno, quindi eravamo tra i vincitori e noi abbiamo detto che ci serviva uno spazio e lì a quel punto, diciamo, siamo stati anche invitati dal Comune a partecipare al bando perché quella poteva essere l'occasione di legittimazione e quindi insomma quando abbiamo vinto, abbiamo iniziato ad interloquire in modo anche più strutturato con il Comune, che a quel punto – mi viene da dire – si è fidato di più di noi perché avevamo una storia alle spalle e ci ha proposto questo spazio. È stato molto interessante perché gli spazi che questo progetto aveva dato fino a prima, diciamo, di noi erano spazi molto molto molto piccoli, un negozietto, un piccolo ufficio...cioè non aveva mai proposto uno spazio così grande. E dopo di noi in realtà ne ha assegnati, negli anni successivi, altri 3 di spazi così grandi, quindi diciamo abbiamo fatto un po' da apripista rispetto a questa cosa, proponendo un modello diciamo, a me viene da dire di innovazione sociale pura, fortemente imprenditoriale e fortemente a impatto sociale perché noi in questo spazio abbiamo investito quasi 500.000 euro di ristrutturazione. Quindi noi abbiamo sempre detto al Comune: dacci lo spazio, ce ne occupiamo noi, non ci servono soldi e ovviamente il nostro modello era un modello in cui la ristorazione era una parte importante dei fondi, cioè produceva una parte importante dei fondi per la ristrutturazione ed era però anche, diciamo, l'occasione di aggregazione di pubblico che altrimenti in un co-working non viene. Cioè qua se tu vieni la sera, ma anche a pranzo, la mattina a colazione ci sono le vecchiette, le coppie giovanissime con i bambini piccoli, i ragazzini, cioè gente che non andrebbe mai in un co-working, a The Hub non si infilerebbe mai e invece per noi il ristorante aveva questo doppio fine. Nel senso che il co-working, a mio avviso, paga le sue spese, cioè tutti i co-working secondo me, a meno che boh non arrivi a scalare a livelli incredibili...Per dire quando sono stata a Boston ho visto dei palazzi interi che erano dei co-working, però hanno il nome di co-working ma quelli sono degli uffici condivisi, cioè, non hanno...

M: Anche la comunità ha un suo limite, no?

N: Eh sì, esatto. Quindi secondo me il modello di business del co-working è che si va a pagare le spese e secondo me difficilmente paga una persona che fa il manager del co-working, difficilmente. Anche perché tra l'altro ne stanno aprendo così tanti che non puoi avere dei prezzi troppo alti...altrimenti ti vengono Ernest&Young, Price che cominciano a prendere degli uffici nei co-working per stare in mezzo a delle realtà più giovani. Però, capito, non è più la stessa cosa...

M: Sì

(interruzione chiamata a Nicoletta)

M: Ma, scusa, domanda, 500.000 € di ristrutturazione sono tanti: dove li avete tirati fuori?

N: Allora, li abbiamo tirati fuori un pochino erano dei soldi che Kilowatt aveva messo via, perché comunque, diciamo...(Interruzione)

M: Quindi dicevi, questi soldi erano soldi che avevate voi da parte...

N: Un po' di soldi sì perché, diciamo, una delle cose che, una delle caratteristiche del co-working secondo noi o comunque come noi lo abbiamo sempre inteso, era quella di, diciamo del nostro ruolo nel co-working, era quella di fungere da soggetto aggregatore delle competenze all'interno del co-working e generatore di opportunità nel mercato, quindi comunque c'era capitato di attivare delle progettualità in cui magari noi avevamo l'interfaccia col cliente, noi facevamo un po' di project management, noi facevamo l'ideazione e poi aggregavamo le competenze delle persone del co-working. Quindi insomma un po' di budget tra questo, poi i ragazzi appunto del gruppo video avevano fatto un po' di campagna di comunicazione, un po' di video, così tutte fatte sempre la sera, nel weekend, la notte...però insomma avevamo un po' di budget. Poi, avevamo vinto un bando, bando Culturability, la prima edizione del bando Culturability e quindi avevamo 20.000 € da lì, poi abbiamo fatto un aumento

*di capitale sulla cooperativa, quindi abbiamo trovato dei finanziatori che ci hanno dato 100.000 €, poi abbiamo fatto 120.000 € di mutuo, e poi in realtà abbiamo fatto una prima stagione (interruzione), avevamo fatto poi una prima stagione estiva qua con il bar un po' improvvisato quindi diciamo il totale della ristrutturazione è stata fatta in due anni. Siamo partiti ristrutturando tutto il piano terra facendo il bar, ristorante, tutto l'esterno e poi abbiamo ristrutturato il primo piano; quindi c'è stato un periodo in cui avevamo il co-working ancora in centro e qui l'attività più culturale, così...E poi quindi, poi abbiamo iniziato a ristrutturare di sopra e poi abbiamo chiuso di là e portato tutte le persone di qua.*

*M: Quindi comunque vi siete fatti un business plan...*

*N: Sì, sì, assolutamente, sì, sì, quindi così. Quindi dicevo che...*

*M: Quindi il mutuo lo state ancora pagando...*

*N: Beh, sì, sì, però insomma...*

*M: State bene...*

*N: Quindi ti dicevo che noi il modello che abbiamo proposto al comune era quello, cioè voi provate – e anche secondo me è il modello vincente – è che la pubblica amministrazione deve facilitare, facilitare anche perché per dire qua è tutto vincolato dalla soprintendenza, è comunque un immobile pubblico...*

*M: Ma non state pagando un affitto*

*N: No, comodato gratuito per 15 anni in cambio di ristrutturazione. Questa è stata un'altra cosa nuova, nel senso che i contratti, gli affidamenti in Incredible erano molto più brevi, per le altre realtà. Però noi gli abbiamo detto, cioè noi siamo intenzionati a fare un investimento di questo tipo, a renderlo un posto di questo tipo, però ci dovete dare un po' di tempo...*

*M: Un orizzonte temporale sensato*

*N: Non è stato per niente semplice, adesso te la racconto con una certa distensione però...perché purtroppo appunto, e questo è anche il motivo per cui abbiamo deciso di scrivere il documento, Community Hub ecc, perché la pubblica amministrazione non è pronta a questo tipo di ragionamenti. Nel senso che, per dire, questo tipo di progetti toccano una serie di assessorati, quindi magari tu hai un assessore che soffia nelle tue vele e gli altri no, oppure ancora peggio, hai l'assessore che soffia nelle tue vele e tutto l'apparato tecnico, che è quello che deve firmare, che blocca. Perché poi da un certo punto di vista hanno paure reali perché, vai a generare più lavoro, poi loro devono firmare quindi loro sono responsabili, la Corte...hanno questo terrore della Corte dei Conti che potrebbe comunque creare problemi nel momento in cui tu stai dando ad una attività commerciale un posto a un affitto che non è di mercato, cioè, diciamo la legge...*

*M: Non è sufficientemente flessibile...*

*N: No, non prevede, cioè difficilmente prevede questo tipo di cose. Cioè tu ti devi un po' infilare sempre nel grigio, no, della normativa.*

*M: E peraltro con il rischio che il cambio di amministrazione...che crolli tutto, oppure no? Perché in questi casi che cosa succede?*

*N: No, allora, l'affidamento è stato dato. Però, per dire, noi abbiamo infatti avuto una campagna elettorale adesso da terrore, perché c'era il ballottaggio tra la Lega e il Sindaco uscente: fortunatamente ha vinto il sindaco uscente, se vinceva la Lega noi un po' di terrore ce l'avevamo. Nel senso che appunto ormai l'affidamento era stato dato però di problemi te ne possono creare centomila,*

*quello che puoi fare, quello che non puoi fare, cioè comunque hanno sempre loro...quindi ci vuole un po', no, di come si dice, disponibilità a rischiare - che secondo me ogni imprenditore deve avere - ma per questo ti dico che la comunità importante ma non può essere una cosa gestita totalmente in modo associativo, insomma, perché a un certo punto devi prendere delle decisioni, devi caricarti di responsabilità...*

*M: Devi essere agile, e in gruppo diventa complicato*

*N: Quindi la nostra mediazione è sempre stata quella di usare gli strumenti del community engagement, del design dei servizi per coinvolgere il più possibile ma rimanendo snelli da un certo punto nei meccanismi decisionali.*

*M: Quindi nel vostro caso il grande costo è stato all'inizio, cioè è stato l'investimento, dopodiché a regime i costi non sono così alti.*

*N: No, cioè, c'è una parte di manutenzione dello spazio che perché nel nostro caso abbiamo tutto questo spazio esterno, che non è indifferente, che si giustifica con i numeri che facciamo d'estate. Cioè qui da maggio a settembre abbiamo una media di mille persone al giorno che passano, quindi molte. Quello che stiamo facendo adesso è provare a destagionalizzare, cioè quest'anno per la prima volta il ristorante sarà aperto anche d'inverno perché negli anni scorsi, perché la ristrutturazione non era completa, comunque anche noi dovevamo strutturarci e stava diventando un lavoro eccessivo e quindi a ottobre chiudevamo e rimaneva solo il co-working e l'asilo. Da quest'anno sarà sempre aperto, ovviamente lo spazio all'interno è molto piccolo quindi vogliamo provare a far vivere anche l'esterno per quanto possibile...è un po' una scommessa.*

*M: Scusa, però, tipo, cioè il ristorante è un'entità giuridica a parte, giusto?*

*N: Sì, esatto. Quello che abbiamo fatto è stato creare una S.r.l. che è di proprietà al 100% della cooperativa e quindi non delle persone ma della cooperativa. In questo modo ci sembrava un modello più bello, più trasparente, più pubblico, così che gli utili dell'S.r.l. non possono essere divisi tra i soci, ma vengono passati alla cooperativa. E la cooperativa per legge non divide utili, quindi, diciamo, era un modo per garantire anche pubblicamente anche il fatto che quei soldi lì vengono poi utilizzati per fare attività sociali, o comunque ristrutturare lo spazio che ha una finalità sociale o per pagare degli stipendi, però diciamo, non per arricchirci direttamente. Questa è stata un po' la cosa che ci è venuta in mente, che abbiamo proposto al Comune che ha anche sbloccato un pochettino la situazione perché all'inizio non ci volevano far fare il ristorante...*

*M: Chiaro, perché con fini di lucro...E l'asilo invece? È kilowatt...?*

*N: Sì, anche perché l'asilo economicamente, cioè non sta proprio in piedi. Nel senso che quest'anno è il secondo anno e siamo riusciti a fare il contratto a tempo indeterminato alle ragazze, alle educatrici, quindi un costo superiore e, diciamo, le rette pagano il loro contratto e qualche piccola spesa, però l'asilo non paga l'affitto a Kilowatt, per esempio. Quindi, diciamo, è una delle attività a sfondo sociale che viene in parte sostenuta dal ristorante.*

*M: A Piano C hanno lo stesso problema. Loro ad esempio l'hanno esternalizzato, cioè cedono lo spazio...*

*N: Anche perché in termini di rischi e di assicuraz...cioè di autorizzazioni è un incubo. Non so se loro sono asilo però*

*M: No, sono baby parking (?)*

*N: Quella era infatti l'alternativa, noi siamo molto testardi!*

*M: Beh siete riusciti effettivamente..., perché comunque l'asilo significa spazi a norma, x metri quadri per x...*

*N: Molto complesso, però cioè il nostro obiettivo era provare a fare welfare veramente e con uno spazio come il loro tu i bambini non li puoi avere...invece noi volevamo proprio, cioè nel nostro modello, capito, di nuovo modo di intendere il lavoro, ci stava che tu vieni a lavorare e...*

*M: E puoi lasciare tuo figlio qua, e puoi mangiare, e puoi fare...è un progetto che ho in mente anch'io!*

*N: Eh guarda è bellissimo, guarda, infatti, adesso ti dico che mi sono licenziata a marzo, cioè sono la persona più felice del mondo, veramente. Ovviamente c'è sempre un...cercare progetti, va beh come insomma, qualsiasi imprenditore*

*M: Tanto magari lo facevi anche nel...da dipendente, quindi almeno, no, no capisco...ma quante persone lavorano adesso in tutto tra Kilowatt e Vetro?*

*N: Allora, diciamo, soci Kilowatt siamo diventati 6, più i soci finanziatori che ti dicevo prima però che non lavorano. Poi Vetro, appunto, è una S.r.l. in cui la gestione la facciamo sempre noi di Kilowatt, i dipendenti variano moltissimo tra l'estate e l'inverno ovviamente, e d'estate arriviamo a 35 dipendenti, un casino (ride)*

*M: Avete qualcuno che fa gestione del personale?*

*N: Stefano al momento, che è appunto il presidente, che ti dicevo che fa amministrazione*

*M: La trovo la roba più complicata in assoluto*

*N: Io non lo farei mai infatti*

*M: Io ho tre dipendenti ma...è difficile, difficile farlo bene*

*N: Esatto. Lui fa la gestione amministrativa ecc., le educatrici le gestisco io in termini di turni, problemi, questioni da sentire. Mentre sulla parte di ristorazione abbiamo fatto una piccola partnership con un gruppo di persone che sono un'altra società di ristoranti a Bologna, su cui diciamo ci siamo trovati molto bene, avevamo una visione comune, diciamo, della ristorazione e quindi abbiamo, cioè loro ci hanno dato una mano il primo anno e poi insomma ci stanno dando una mano in cambio di una percentuale sull'utile totale, quindi diciamo un accordo molto flessibile che a noi ci permette di non avere degli altri costi fissi, ma allo stesso tempo non ti improvvisi a fare ristorazione con questi numeri, così. Quindi noi in realtà negli anni, questi due anni, abbiamo, cioè stiamo imparando, abbiamo anche, cioè stiamo definendo sempre più quella che deve essere l'identità dello spazio, quindi per dire stiamo andando verso una scelta di valorizzazione delle verdure, sempre di più, meno carne, più biologico, ecc. ecc. che stiamo guidando noi direttamente come Kilowatt, questo cambio di visione. Però siamo riusciti a farlo perché comunque abbiamo avuto qualcuno che ci ha aiutato all'inizio, se no sarebbe stato un delirio...*

*M: Però, aspetta, ti riferisci adesso proprio solo alla ristorazione o?*

*N: Sì, perché mi chiedevi anche della gestione del personale. Per esempio tutti i colloqui per trovare le persone, così, li hanno fatti loro. Noi ci confrontiamo con la consulente del lavoro, firmiamo i contratti, facciamo gli stipendi, però abbiamo un po' esternalizzato una parte. Che poi è un'esternalizzazione parziale perché abbiamo voluto tenerlo molto dentro e lo stiamo gestendo molto in partnership però ci siamo dovuti far dare una mano...Ma va bene così in realtà: noi stiamo facendo così su un sacco di*

*cose, ed è anche secondo me un punto di forza, nel senso che se Kilowatt cresce, crescono anche una serie di realtà che ci stanno attorno e questo ti permette di essere sempre legittimato verso le persone, cioè di essere in uno spazio che è accettato.*

*M: Prima parlavamo del business plan che avete fatto. Ci avete inserito qualcosa rispetto all'impatto sociale, cioè avete provato a misurarlo o era, così, una descrizione?*

*N: Guarda, allora, ti dico, abbiamo fatto un business plan molto legato al bando Culturability che ce lo chiedeva e poi in realtà come strumenti nostri cioè avevamo i nostri piccoli piani di investimento sui vari ambiti di attività e quindi, cioè, non abbiamo mai scritto le 60 pagine del business plan, mai. Abbiamo fatto un lavoro interno, tra di noi, per costruire un canvas comune, per definire un'identità comune, per decidere qual era la nostra vision e, diciamo, abbiamo fatto un forte lavoro su di noi per costruire una governance che ci rappresentasse, tant'è che una volta all'anno andiamo via 4 giorni tutti assieme tra di noi e facciamo gruppo ma anche costruiamo la visione, infatti andiamo via venerdì prossimo per esempio per fare questa cosa.*

*M: Venite a Las Palmas la prossima volta? Lo fate d'inverno, poi, che si sta bene...*

*N: Guarda, veramente! Una bomba, glielo propongo, credo che tutti sarebbero d'accordo!*

*M: Quindi avete fatto questo lavoro più internamente...*

*N: Più internamente, esatto, e poi ci siamo costruiti quindi i nostri piccoli strumenti. Per esempio prima di fare il ristorante abbiamo fatto un piano economico-finanziario, prospettico, per cercare di capire come sarebbe andato*

*M: Anche perché ve l'avrà chiesto poi anche la banca...*

*N: In realtà guarda, paradossalmente si sono innamorati così tanto del nostro progetto, che non ci hanno chiesto praticamente niente, ma neanche garanzie personali*

*M: Ma che meraviglia!*

*N: Allora, va beh, garanzie personali non ce ne hanno chieste, perché noi siamo una startup innovativa e quindi il fondo, no la cassa depositi e prestiti fa da garanzia direi dell'80 forse %...*

*M: Quindi voi siete una startup innovativa, non siete un'impresa sociale*

*N: Siamo una startup innovativa*

*M: Perché alla fine conviene...perché le imprese sociali sembra che non abbiano nessun vantaggio in Italia*

*N: No, poi adesso sta cambiando la legge e capiremo, però prima assolutamente no. No, noi siamo una startup, una cooperativa/startup innovativa.*

*M: Okay. Quindi con la banca in realtà è andata easy*

*N: Super bene, abbiamo scelto EmilBanca, che è una banca quindi molto locale e di matrice cooperativa e loro ci hanno creduto tantissimo*

*M: Che bello*

*N: Quindi mi chiedevi dell'impatto sociale. Allora, diciamo che io sono molto fissata perché mi sono sempre occupata di responsabilità sociale d'impresa quindi, diciamo, in modo molto informale, la valutazione del nostro impatto, ma appunto in modo molto informale l'abbiamo sempre discussa, pensata, tenuta in considerazione, ecc. L'anno scorso per la prima volta abbiamo fatto un bilancio*

*sociale che abbiamo presentato a dicembre all'assemblea dei soci perché avevamo tutti questi soci finanziatori, e poi perché comunque ci credo molto, cioè siamo in uno spazio pubblico, poi la gente viene qua destate dove abbiamo una programmazione culturale molto – poi ti lascio il programma – varia, vengono qua, bevono la birra, mangiano qualcosa, sentono un concerto e quindi tendenzialmente penso che Kilowatt è uno spazio che fa eventi, no. Poi in realtà quest'anno è il terzo anno e cioè che ci cominciano a conoscere di più, abbiamo un sacco di iscrizioni per l'asilo, quindi sicuramente le persone diciamo stanno iniziando a capire, però, soprattutto i primi anni, cioè pensavano che fossimo un locale e quindi dici, cazzo, un locale che fa tutto questo incasso perché comunque tutti qua vedono quanta gente c'è, in uno spazio pubblico, non pagano, poi sai le voci – a un certo punto si era diffusa la voce che il Comune ci aveva dato un milione di euro per... Quindi a maggior ragione il tema dell'accountability per me era importante, Quindi l'anno scorso ho fatto io un bilancio, ti dico, cioè, nel senso, avendo appunto sempre fatto bilanci sociali, cioè si metterebbero le mani nei capelli, chi fa bilanci sociali nel modo, cioè nel senso, io ho contabilizzato gli atti ex-post, però diciamo, comunque, ho fatto la mia matrice di materialità, ho identificato quali erano i nostri soggetti nostri interlocutori, diciamo i nostri stakeholder chiave e quelli che erano gli impatti generati per ognuno di loro. Te lo giro ma c'è anche sul sito il bilancio. Quindi vorrei lavorare sempre di più su questa cosa, nel senso che appunto anche nel progetto Community Hub lo vedrai, c'è scritto, che il tema dell'accountability è un tema centrale, anche per legittimare il costruire questo rapporto pubblico-privato.*

*M: Chiaro, perché poi è quella la chiave*

*N: Esatto, cioè di tipo innovativo, dove non c'è solo uno scambio, non c'è una relazione top-down, quindi tu mi autorizzi e io faccio e tu controlli quello che io faccio ma quindi implica inevitabilmente una responsabilizzazione del privato, io sono convinta. Diciamo che non ho mai avuto tempo di mettermi lì e impostare, strutturare, cioè voglio dire noi siamo in 6, di cui una ancora lavora full time, io per un'altra azienda, quindi diciamo, cioè non abbiamo le risorse proprio umane per tutta questa cosa. Quindi penso che quest'anno ancora farò un bilancio, così, un po' ex-post, però diciamo che è un tema che mi interessa moltissimo, devo solo trovare un po' il tempo, nel senso che, esatto.*

*M: E in questo lavoro che ha fatto sei riuscita ad identificare in qualche modo l'impatto della condivisione, cioè, le interrelazioni che si creano all'interno della formazione della comunità e qual è veramente il beneficio di tutto questo?*

*N: Guarda, diciamo che...è più una valutazione qualitativa quella, cioè quantitativamente ho misurato quelli che più sarebbero outcome, cioè output scusami, più che outcome, più risultati. Quindi va fatta una lettura che è un po', che va oltre quello. Cioè il fatto che qua sono venute cinquantamila persone è il risultato, l'impatto, che magari abbiamo rigenerato una zona di Bologna che era abbandonata. Quindi lì non li trovi, se non in minima parte, nel senso che un impatto della collaborazione dal pdv del mercato del lavoro, a mio avviso, è dare una risposta a (interruzione cameriere) è che...Cioè ti riferisci proprio al fatto di creare nuovi...non solo creare nuovo lavoro ma, secondo me la precarizzazione così del mercato ha creato tutti questi liberi professionisti, piccole imprese, soggetti estremamente vulnerabili che messi insieme in un luogo così e create le relazioni tra di loro riescono a proporsi al mercato in un altro modo. Noi ad un certo punto avevamo iniziato a presentarci come un'azienda liquida, cioè senza avere i costi strutturali di un'azienda con 25 dipendenti, però di volta in volta arriva un lavoro che ha bisogno del social media team, c'è una realtà qui dentro che fa social media management e la mettiamo dentro nel progetto.*

*M: Cioè presentavate tutto il co-working come un'azienda liquida?*

*N: Esatto, esatto, quindi con competenze che man mano si possono attivare a seconda delle esigenze. E quindi diciamo questo fa sì che le persone che vengono qui non hanno solo l'ufficio ma tendenzialmente hanno altre competenze a cui attingere, tant'è che addirittura, ancora quando eravamo nell'altro spazio, è nata una piccola startup di tre realtà che stavano lì dentro: ognuna ha mantenuto la propria attività e in più ha aggiunto quest'altra cosa insieme. Quindi, diciamo, questa secondo me è un'outcome della collaborazione e quindi un po', no, consolidamento forse di una presenza sul mercato di soggetti molto deboli. A me piacerebbe tantissimo portare questa cosa ancora più avanti per affrontare il tema (interruzione cameriere), per parlare anche di previdenza, welfare, queste cose qui perché tutte le persone che stanno qui sono quasi tutte a partita iva, senza nessun tipo di welfare, quindi questo c'era proprio dall'inizio inizio del progetto, quando ancora non eravamo nessuno: uno degli assi era 'servizi condivisi', vado dall'assicurazione e negozio un'assicurazione a più soggetti, vado dal commercialista e negozio un prezzo diverso perché ti porto tutte queste aziende...Diciamo questa cosa qui non è poi stata portata avanti in modo iper strutturato perché lì ci vuole tempo e noi dovevamo decidere su cosa investire il nostro tempo, però per dire dal commercialista siamo andati a dirgli 'noi siamo Kilowatt, se ci fai un buon prezzo ti portiamo altre 10 realtà'.*

*M: In tutto questo gli utenti, gli utenti, i beneficiari hanno co-creato, proposto dei servizi loro, si sono gestiti in modo autonomo?*

*N: Sì, mmh...alcune cose se le autogestiscono, nel senso che si trovano a pranzo, viene fuori un progetto e se lo fanno, cioè senza passare da noi. In altri casi a volte passano da noi, dipende, però diciamo c'è una forte produzione, da non so, 'facciamo i saponi insieme' a...*

*M: C'è una progettualità comune*

*N: Sì assolutamente. Quindi secondo me quello è sicuramente un impatto, poi...*

*M: Scusa se ti interrompo Nicoletta, mi sembra di capire che c'è una progettualità però limitata in qualche modo...*

*N: Loro? Delle persone che vengono qui?*

*M: Sì o non è, magari poi non ha impatto sul posto in sé, cioè sul progetto Le Serre in sé*

*N: Bah, allora no, dipende per esempio, dipende dalla volontà di chiunque, di loro, cioè nel senso che noi siamo molto aperti tendenzialmente a, appunto, a far scaricare a terra idee utilizzando noi. Solo che cioè da un lato secondo me non siamo tutti uguali, cioè c'è chi ha il suo lavoro e poi la sua vita privata è un'altra cosa, divide le due robe, per cui viene qui, è uno spazio collaborativo bello, piacevole, magari appunto se deve fare un progetto in cui ha bisogno di qualche competenza che c'è qui, prende quella competenza, fanno un progetto assieme e le cose finiscono lì. C'è qualcuno che si fa trascinare molto di più per dire, adesso tutta la parte di Vetro in cui io da quando mi sono licenziata solo entrata molto di più nella parte proprio di ideazione, di vision, ho coinvolto, però anche perché lei si è proposta, quindi diciamo non è stata soltanto..., una delle ragazze che lavora sopra e quindi lei adesso sta seguendo con me il progetto e sta portando la sua competenza, le sue idee sulla cosa. Piuttosto che una realtà che non è fisicamente qui però diciamo fa parte della rete che si occupa di educazione ci ha proposto di fare dei campi estivi per i bambini legati all'innovazione, alla tecnologia e quindi noi avevamo lo spazio e quindi anche, tra l'altro, parte di competenze sull'educazione all'aria aperta perché il nostro asilo fa tutta educazione all'aria aperta. E quindi loro ci hanno proposto la cosa, noi abbiamo messo spazi e parte delle competenze e l'abbiamo fatto assieme e lo abbiamo fatto qui, parte dell'offerta di questa estate era...oppure un altro dei ragazzi che è passato prima fa parte di un'associazione di cultura giapponese che fanno yoga, che ci ha proposto un festival di yoga, cultura*

giapponese ecc. qui e noi, tendenzialmente chi vuole fare delle cose qui, cioè non gli diamo lo spazio e basta, a meno che va beh non serva una sala riunioni...Se no diciamo noi manteniamo la regia alta per garantire una coerenza del tutto. E poi ci piace, cioè vuol dire che ogni volta impari diciamo cose nuove, quindi non è solo un meccanismo di controllo, è proprio, cioè ci piace farne parte. Poi non so, la ragazza che sta lì al bar mi ha proposto di fare delle cose di yoga e domani verranno fatte, abbiamo fatto una programmazione, quindi no no, siamo molto ricettivi su questo, moltissimo.

M: E rispetto al vostro progetto iniziale, che tra l'altro a me piace molto perché era quello a cui pensavo anch'io, cioè di migliorare fundamentalmente la qualità del lavoro, qualità di vita in generale...questa cosa tu hai riscontrato che è avvenuta per le persone che stanno usando gli spazi, è avvenuta per voi...?

N: Per noi incredibile, proprio. Per le persone che stanno usando gli spazi assolutamente sì, tant'è che noi a differenza di tantissimi altri co-worker abbiamo un turnover basissimo, cioè la metà delle persone che lavorano qui sono con noi dal 2012. Quindi si sono spostati dall'altro co-working a qua, questo...cioè, sì, siamo proprio diventati molto molto amici, capita che lavoriamo assieme, quindi sì. Poi per dire, se abbiamo una postazione libera di solito è sempre qualcuno dei co-worker che porta qualcun altro da fuori, quindi direi proprio di sì.

M: Non avete mai pensato a fare dei sondaggi tra i vostri...?

N: Ma diciamo che informalmente li facciamo. Allora per dire sull'asilo li facciamo anche formalmente cioè perché va beh poi lì serve per la progettazione e tutto, quindi alla fine dell'anno abbiamo fatto un questionario che andava al di là, diciamo, dei questionari tradizionali degli asili dove chiedi soltanto del servizio. E per il resto invece, più informalmente, ma li facciamo sempre, cioè, li facciamo molto spesso, cioè, a parte che se c'è qualcosa che non va la voce bene o male ci arriva, oppure se noi vogliamo fare qualche cosa insomma lo proponiamo, insomma, magari a qualcuno che si fa portavoce, oppure a volte lo abbiamo fatto via mail quindi diciamo è una cosa che in realtà avevamo pensato di fare, ma anche... Poi per dire un'altra cosa che non ti ho detto è che abbiamo un orto qua dietro che anche lì abbiamo deciso all'inizio di gestirlo come orto condiviso, quindi come una community garden. Quindi anche lì abbiamo fatto una call, coinvolto persone che potevano essere interessate e abbiamo proposto loro un piccolo percorso diciamo di co-progettazione e di formazione. Quindi abbiamo fatto due tre incontri dove invitavamo altre community garden che ci raccontassero la loro esperienza, poi una volta è venuta una ragazza, una docente che ci ha fatto una piccola formazione sulla permacultura, quindi abbiamo, diciamo, organizzato noi un po' di formazione e di workshop per definire insieme alla community che forma doveva avere la nostra community garden. E lo abbiamo gestito in questo modo per un anno, adesso un gruppo Facebook con tipo 250 iscritti, poi no ovviamente come nelle regole delle community poi il 2% è veramente attivo, viene qua e fa le cose, però insomma abbiamo gestito l'orto in questo modo. Adesso, quest'anno, vorremmo fargli fare un salto di qualità, nel senso che vorremmo utilizzare l'orto per piantare delle specie molto particolari che verranno utilizzate in cucina e però vorremmo comunque mantenere la community coinvolta, anche perché abbiamo visto che un po' è proprio emerso – tu mi chiedevi i sondaggi. I sondaggi in questa community per esempio li abbiamo fatti, abbiamo proprio iniziato chiedendo loro che cosa vorreste, che cosa vi immaginate e una cosa che non ci aspettavamo che è emersa, è che la maggioranza ci ha detto 'noi dall'orto vorremmo relazioni, cioè non prodotti', ma occasioni di relazioni. Infatti abbiamo un sacco di famiglie con bimbi piccoli che vengono, così i bambini si conoscono tra di loro oppure...

M: Fate attività...?



*N: Educative, sì esatto, anche.*

*M: I miei bimbi vanno in una scuola Montessori a Las Palmas, hanno l'orto e...*

*N: Noi adottiamo, diciamo, così, la pratica dell'outdoor education che ha in parte tutti dei dettami montessoriani, non abbiamo giochi, tutto materiale informale, di riciclo, non strutturato*

*M: Okay e quindi...scusa finisci tu sull'orto che mi stavi dicendo delle cose*

*N: Quindi era per dirti che per esempio con loro siamo partiti facendo una serie di sondaggi e soprattutto adesso vogliamo rivederli fare un sondaggio, capire com'è andata e proporgli un po' un'evoluzione della cosa. Quindi diciamo qui nel co-working non ne facciamo tanti ma perché non ne abbiamo proprio bisogno, capito, perché c'è una community molto coesa. Con quelle altre community che magari invece sono, abbiamo relazioni meno stabili, sì.*

*M: Ma ci sono...cioè, ci sono tante community quindi c'è la community orto, la community co-working: si interrelazionano?*

*N. Sì sì, in parte sì. Nel senso che nell'orto ci stanno anche, cioè noi la prima cosa che abbiamo detto è ovviamente ai co-worker se volevano farne parte e quindi sì. Quindi sì, diciamo, noi praticamente siamo sempre un po' il tassello, cioè il ponte. Infatti una roba bellissima che abbiamo imparato in permacultura e con cui adesso amiamo definirci è 'ecotono urbano' e anche un po' i community hub potrebbero esserlo quindi è questo ponte tra comunità, tra mondi ecc. E quindi...così.*

*M: L'ultima domanda che ti avrei fatto ma in realtà ci ricongiungiamo con la prima cosa di cui abbiamo parlato, cioè era capire se volevate scalare, esportare il modello ed è quello che state un po' facendo con il documento che mi hai inviato...*

*N: Sì, sì, guarda, lo vorremmo fare per due motivi: 1) perché ci annoiamo molto velocemente noi e quindi abbiamo bisogno di nuove sfide, stimoli e 2) perché in realtà appunto, cioè, ragionando sul modello che abbiamo adottato, provando a ragionare sugli errori e quindi sulle cose che si potrebbero fare meglio, così, cioè crediamo veramente che possa essere un format ma in termini proprio di processo e di competenze, quindi noi non abbiamo intensione di candidarci a gestire degli altri spazi da un'altra parte perché secondo me non avrebbe, cioè secondo noi non avrebbe senso, cioè ci devono essere dei soggetti radicati. Però vedendo i grandi fallimenti delle rigenerazioni urbane oppure insomma, i grandi fallimenti anche degli spazi pubblici chiusi, così, crediamo, cioè ci piacerebbe moltissimo provare - anche poi per testarci ulteriormente - provare a, sì a portare questo modello...e ce lo immaginiamo in realtà un po' come un accompagnamento e un capacity building a delle realtà locali che dopo si prendono cura dello spazio una volta che poi noi ci allontaniamo, no, una specie di piccola accelerazione.*

*M: Sarebbe un ulteriore servizio di Kilowatt...*

*N: Esatto, sì, questo ci piacerebbe moltissimo, stiamo un po' provando...un po' appunto con questo documento e aggregando una rete è ancora meglio, anche perché poi ti confronti con altri e un po' individualmente stiamo un po' provando a proporlo...insomma vediamo che cosa nasce.*

*M: In questo state collaborando col Comune di Bologna, con la pubblica amministrazione?*

*N: Guarda, in realtà ti devo dire che non lo so, sono un po' delusa, nel senso che paradossalmente sembra che abbiamo avuto talmente tanto successo che loro non...fanno fatica...Cioè poi sai un po' forse la politica è così...cioè ovviamente loro hanno avuto tutta una serie di lamentele di altri spazi, locali, bar, ristoranti capito, così, che hanno gelosie nei nostri confronti, quindi da un lato ci portano*

*come esempio, dall'altro in altri casi fingono...cioè non ci nominano proprio. Quindi adesso va beh poi c'è stato tutto il periodo elettorale, figurati, che è stato un po' un delirio quindi in realtà adesso, insomma, un po' vorremmo (si interrompe)*