Introduction

Documenting, Theorising, Mapping and Testing the Plurality of SE Models in Western Europe

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The last two or three decades have witnessed a high number of conceptual attempts to define the notions of social enterprise, social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneur. Many early works tended to consider these three notions as different facets of the same phenomenon. Some underlined a strong kinship between social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurs. Other works only focused on social enterprise (SE). In this body of literature, it is rather easy today to identify the criteria or distinctive features that were most debated in such conceptual discussions: the search for market income in non-profit organisations, as early developed by Skloot (1983), and then more widely in “mission-driven businesses” (Austin *et al.* 2006); the primacy of social aims (Nicholls 2006); the specific profile of individual social entrepreneurs, as described by Dees (1998); the place of innovation, as analysed by Young (1983) and later by Mulgan (2007), who highlighted social innovation; and the issue of governance as a tool to achieve a sustainable balance between economic and social objectives, as highlighted by the EMES International Research Network (Borzaga and Defourny 2001).

In the last decade, various researchers, like Dacin *et al.* (2010), Brouard and Larivet (2010), Bacq and Janssen (2011), Alegre *et al.* (2017), Aliaga-Isla and Huybrechts (2018) or Persaud and Bayon (2019), among others, proposed overviews of existing definitions of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship. Some of them tried to build their own syntheses, in an attempt to reach larger conceptual agreements which would serve as foundations and key references for the academic sphere, public authorities promoting SE development and intermediary bodies providing various types of services (advocacy, legal or technical tools, financial support, and so on).

In spite of all these efforts, it is today acknowledged, to a large extent, that the SE field is too wide and too diversified to be embraced by a single definition which would be unanimously accepted. Against such a background, an increasing number of scholars tend to adopt an alternative research strategy, whose main principle is to accept, *a priori*, the variety of social enterprises, and to describe the various SE types or categories. Some go a step further, looking for factors that could account for such diversity.

This book clearly adopts this alternative strategy. It focuses on social enterprise—as the main unit of analysis—in Western Europe. This is not to say that the diversity of social enterprises cannot be observed through the other two notions, that is, social entrepreneurship and social entrepreneur, or in other world regions. In fact, this volume is part of a series of four books on social enterprise, covering, respectively, Asia (Bidet and Defourny 2019), Latin America (Gaiger *et al.* 2019), Central and Eastern Europe (Defourny and Nyssens 2021) and Western Europe (this volume).

In Europe, the very first study of social enterprise covering several countries and comparing SE types dates back to the late 1990s (Borzaga and Defourny 2001).¹ In line with this pioneering work, the EMES Network then went on to deepen the analysis of SE types operating in a specific field and with a specific mission: the work integration of disadvantaged and disabled people (Nyssens 2006).² Since then, various research projects have been developed at the European level, oriented to management tools, policy instruments and challenges related to the promotion and development of social enterprises.³

In such context, the comparative analysis of SE types or models still lacked strongly integrated theoretical foundations and, even more, empirical surveys that would enable researchers to statistically test typologies of SE models; this was all the more true at the international level, as empirical relevance should be sought beyond national borders.

This book aims precisely at documenting SE diversity in Western Europe, as well as addressing the lack of a scientifically robust typology of SE models by providing an analysis that combines two key strengths: (1) it is rooted in sound theoretical grounds, allowing for a wide diversity of SE models within each country and across countries; and (2) it is supported by strong empirical evidence, provided by the statistical exploitation of a large international dataset, resulting in turn from a survey carried out in the same way in many countries.

The International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) Project was designed in this twofold ambitious perspective. This large research project was carried out over several years by a large number of research partners from all world regions. In this introductory chapter, we will show how this Project was structured and developed along three major phases, which took place one after the other in most cases, but not exactly at the same time across countries, as many researchers actually joined the project at different times during its first years.

0.1 Documenting SE Diversity (Phase 1 of the ICSEM Project)

The ICSEM Project was presented and launched at the end of the 4th EMES International Research Conference on Social Enterprise, which was held in

Liege (Belgium) in early July 2013. From the outset, some 100 researchers from 25 countries decided to get involved and committed themselves to carrying out the proposed work over at least four years. Over the following twelve months, some 80 additional researchers joined the Project; finally, the ICSEM community of active research partners gathered 230 researchers from some 55 countries from all regions of the world.⁴

In short, the main objective of the ICSEM Project was to document the diversity of SE models as a way (1) to overcome most problems related to the quest for a unifying and encompassing conceptualisation of social enterprise; (2) to try to theoretically and empirically build an international typology of SE models; and, consequently, (3) to pave the way for a better understanding of SE dynamics and ecosystems.

0.1.1 Country-Based Contributions about the SE Landscape

All researchers involved in the project were first asked to provide a “country contribution” about the SE landscape in their respective countries. Two distinctive features of this approach should be underlined. First, no *a priori* strict definition of social enterprise was imposed for these national contributions. We broadly delineated the field of analysis as “made of organisations that combine an entrepreneurial dynamic to provide services or goods with the primacy of their social aims”. The emphasis was put on the embeddedness of the SE phenomenon in local contexts. Secondly, most research was carried out by teams rather than by individual researchers, and this fostered discussion at the local or national level, thereby reducing the risks of biases induced by purely personal perceptions.

On such a basis, researchers were requested to follow a work plan made of three main parts.

Part A—entitled “Understanding concepts and context”—aimed to address questions such as: Is the notion of social enterprise explicitly used in your country? If so, in which circles: academic spheres, among policy makers, civil-society organisations ...? What is (are) the major existing or emerging conception(s) of social enterprise in your country? Is it (are they) rooted in any specific social, political or cultural background? Which other terms or concepts tend to be used in your country (instead of or beside that of social enterprise—for example, social entrepreneurship, non-profit organisation, social economy, voluntary organisation, NGO, etc.)? Do public authorities tend to be interested in the notion of social enterprise? If so, which kind of conception tends to be adopted in their discourse or policies?

In a similar perspective, a recent EU-funded study on “*Social Enterprises and their Ecosystems in Europe*” proposed a comparative analysis of the degree of acceptance of the concept of social enterprise across European countries (see table 0.1). It is striking to note how the

acceptance of the SE concept as such may vary from various points of view. The concept seems particularly challenged by other notions, such as the social and solidarity economy, corporate social responsibility or social innovation. Most Western European countries fall in three categories, thereby suggesting different types of challenges to be addressed. Such complexity is reflected throughout ICSEM country contributions.

Part B—entitled “Mapping SE categories”—aimed to identify and characterise various sets of social enterprises as well as their fields of activity, social mission, target groups, the public or private forms of support they receive, their operational and governance models, stakeholders, etc. In such a perspective, researchers were encouraged to collect and analyse all available literature and documentation, to establish a first classification of the main groups/categories of social enterprises, either on the basis of existing classification(s) or through personal intuitive attempts, and to select the main indicators or variables reflecting the major features that differentiate these various categories.

It was suggested to use, as one among other tools, the three dimensions of the EMES “ideal type” of social enterprise—namely the nature of the social mission or social aims, the type of economic model and the governance structure—to inform the diversity of social enterprises.

Table 0.1 Degree of acceptance of the SE concept in European countries

<i>Degree of acceptance</i>	<i>Country</i>
Politically and legally accepted—large self-recognition	Ireland, Italy, United Kingdom
Challenged by social economy/ social and solidarity economy	Belgium, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain
Not commonly used—limited space due to traditional welfare institutions	Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden
Politically and legally accepted but narrow understanding (work integration)—weak self- recognition	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, Sweden
Challenged by other concepts, such as corporate social responsibility, social entrepreneurship and social innovation	Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden
Emerging acceptance	Albania, Malta, North Macedonia, Turkey

Source: European Commission (2020: 35).

In the EMES approach to social enterprise, each of these three major dimensions may be apprehended through various indicators. These indicators were never intended to represent a set of conditions that an organisation should meet to qualify as a social enterprise; rather than constituting prescriptive criteria, they describe an “ideal-typical” social enterprise in Weber’s terms, that is, an abstract construction or a tool, analogous to a compass, which helps locating social enterprises (“stars”) or groups of social enterprises (“constellations”) relative to one another in the “galaxy” of social enterprises. Therefore, the EMES SE ideal type has to be seen as an analytical construct to locate different enterprises with respect to this “abstract model”.

Part C—entitled “Analysing institutional trajectories of the main SE categories or types”—aimed to identify and describe the main “institutions” (at large) shaping the profile of social enterprises: legal frameworks used by social enterprises, public policies and programmes, major forms of financial support, tools such as norms or accreditations, federations of social enterprises, private charters to which they subscribe, etc.

All the country contributions prepared during this first phase were presented and discussed during ICSEM Meetings, which took place in different parts of the world.⁵ Then, revised versions of these country contributions were published in the series of ICSEM Working Papers.⁶ The quantity and the average quality of these Working Papers led us to consider the publication of three “ICSEM” books, focusing on three different parts of the world—namely Asia, Latin America and Europe. As already mentioned above, the two first books, covering Asia and Latin America, were published in 2019 (Bidet and Defourny 2019; Gaiger *et al.* 2019), but the number of contributions on European countries kept increasing, thanks to the support of a European COST (COoperation in Science and Technology) Action⁷ whose first Working Group aimed at the production of exactly the same kind of “country contributions” as the ICSEM Project for a dozen additional EU or neighbouring countries. As a result, two books, instead of one, were finally prepared to cover the European landscape—one on Western Europe and one on Central and Eastern Europe.⁸

The first part of the present volume, dedicated to Western Europe, is made of contributions covering Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

0.1.2 Transversal and Comparative Analyses

In addition to—and on the basis of—country contributions, which represent the bulk of the output of the ICSEM Project’s first phase, several international research teams were formed in order to address some transversal issues through a comparative analysis. In such a perspective, four chapters (namely chapters 16, 17, 18 and 19) were prepared to

highlight some specific SE features across Western European countries. These four chapters correspond to a second level in the first phase of the ICSEM Project, which aimed to “document SE diversity”.

In three countries, namely France, Portugal and Spain (Petrella *et al.*, Chapter 16 in this book), the strong heritage of the social economy influences the development of social enterprise, thereby supporting the hypothesis of the existence of a path dependence. As a matter of fact, in these countries, the social economy as a sector has recently been institutionalised through the adoption of a specific law (in 2011 in Spain, 2013 in Portugal and 2014 in France). This process of institutionalisation has also been deeply marked, in all three countries, by a tradition of collaboration between social-welfare social-economy organisations and public authorities. France is characterised by a corporatist welfare-state regime relying on social-security contributions from employers and employees and on the role played by associations, which benefit from significant public support and are major providers of social services, complementing public provision. Spain and Portugal have a Mediterranean welfare-state regime, characterised by the presence of elements of corporatism and gaps in terms of protection; the welfare system developed belatedly, the role of civil society is limited, and social organisations show a strong dependence on public administrations.

From a different angle, comparisons between the three countries enable the authors to identify a relatively common experience, characterised by (1) the strengthening of non-profit organisations (NPOs)’ role as providers of services, which implied a progressive professionalisation of the non-profit sector; (2) the loss, to a certain extent, of NPOs’ civic/political function; (3) a greater selective competition with the for-profit sector, simultaneously with the development of various forms of cooperation to develop social-inclusion projects; (4) an increasing competition among non-profit organisations, due to reduction in funding, but with the emergence of new forms of cooperation and networking; and (5) a reorientation of social work, due to the emergence of new social needs, requiring more complex interventions.

As a result of this evolution of the institutional environments in the three studied countries, organisations meeting the EMES indicators of the ideal-typical social enterprise are in most cases—but not exclusively—social-economy organisations that had to adapt and experiment with new organisational forms and ideas. Through a systemic and comparative approach, different responses can be identified along the axis between path dependence and path creation. In analytical terms, social enterprises may also be seen, in the three countries, as located between three poles: the social economy, the solidarity economy and social entrepreneurship.

Unlike what was the case in Defourny and Nyssens’ (2017a) identification of SE models across various social missions, work-integration

social enterprises (WISEs) are considered here as a separate model, since they have followed their own development path, with roots in the associative sector (rather than in the cooperative one) and a relatively strong reliance on public policies supporting work integration.

The second transversal contribution (Karré, chapter 17 in this volume) focuses on the relationship between an emergent form of social enterprise, namely “social start-ups”, established by socially minded entrepreneurs and strongly anchored in the market economy, on the one hand, and more traditional third-sector organisations, on the other hand, in countries—Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands—shaped by a corporatist tradition. In these strong welfare regimes, non-profit organisations play an important role in the provision of social services, in close partnership with public bodies. They provide services of general interest, funded and regulated by the state. Today, these organisations are expected to behave in a more entrepreneurial fashion and, in some cases, are pushed to reinforce the market orientation of their activities, in line with new public management (NPM) principles. What is at stake is a kind of “reconfiguration” or “externalisation” of services of general interest under the organisational form of social enterprise, with the expressed aims of improving and innovating in the provision and delivery of services, but potentially also with a view to limiting the size of the state and to reducing public expenditure.

Social start-ups use terms such as “social businesses” to distinguish themselves from more traditional non-profit organisational forms, which they often see as bureaucratic and not very innovative. Their discourse is rooted in the Anglo-Saxon school of thought, which views social enterprise as a mission-driven business (Defourny and Nyssens 2010) and was introduced in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands by external actors such as Ashoka and the Schwab Foundation. More traditional third-sector parties criticise these new competitors and their rhetoric for commercialising social-welfare provision and for “social-washing” commercial activities.

These tensions can be explained by the fact that the rationale behind social business has been shaped in countries where there is a strong dichotomy between the private and public sectors, and where the realms of state, market and society are seen as distinct from one another. This school of thought has been exported to countries—such as Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands—where these spheres are, however, much more closely interwoven, giving rise to “welfare-mix” configurations. In this context, to embrace the diversity of SE organisational forms, discussions will have to be conducted on how the relationship between “the new and the old generations” of social enterprises can become more productive, in a world in which societal problems are often ambiguous, complex, volatile and wicked, and have to be dealt with using various approaches.

In Scandinavian countries, that is, Denmark, Norway and Sweden (Enjolras *et al.*, chapter 18 in this book), welfare-state reforms constitute the policy context for the emergence of social enterprise. social enterprises. Indeed, in those countries, although the rise of social enterprise is anchored in a strong civil society and cooperative tradition, and it has been driven mainly by grassroots entrepreneurial initiatives, the opportunity structure for the emergence and further developments of social enterprises is to a great extent delimited by the framework of welfare policies. There is also a tension, in these three countries, between the recent policy discourse at the local level—which emphasises social innovation, civil-society initiatives, collaborative governance—and the policy instruments that, at the central level of government, are still inspired by NPM principles and remain characterised by their market orientation and reliance on quasi-market mechanisms.

In such an institutional environment, social enterprises are likely to be exposed to different forms of isomorphic pressures and to be at risk of losing their organisational specificities and their capacity for innovation. However, the three countries seem to take different developmental paths. The marketisation of welfare services—opening up market opportunities for social enterprises, but also resulting in increased competition from the for-profit sector—is most pervasive in Sweden. Denmark appears to keep a large public sector, which increasingly plays an active role in fostering social innovation and social enterprises. Norway lies somewhat in between Denmark and Sweden, at a crossroads where it can choose to increasingly rely on market mechanisms or to foster social innovation based on post-NPM approaches.

A fourth transversal contribution (Göler *et al.*, chapter 19 in this volume) focuses on one of the most striking features among the various forms or models of social enterprise, that is, the emergence of a new type of cooperative, often referred to as “cooperative social enterprise” (CSE) as it is supposed to serve the community or general interest, beyond its members’ interests. More precisely, the research question addressed in this chapter is the following: which elements of the institutional context shape the characteristics of CSE? Through a three-step screening process applied to eighteen ICSEM country papers from various regions of the world, the authors propose an analytical framework and a grid to map the interplay between contextual factors, on the one hand, and characteristics of CSE, on the other hand.

In order to avoid any simplification about the general-interest orientation of CSE, it is interesting to note that CSEs often remain in line with the whole cooperative tradition, therefore serving their members first, while their “concern for the community” usually remains a secondary goal. At the same time, it is clear that their actual orientation to the community, beyond the group of members, distinguishes CSEs from other cooperative-type enterprises.

Not surprisingly, the state appears as a key enabler for the development of CSE, especially through specific legislations and/or specific funding streams, for instance in the fields of renewable energy, resident-led housing, public-service delivery and management of common-pool resources. It would of course not make much sense to speak about “the best specific legal form” for CSE across countries, but the most prominent CSE-related policy is definitely the Italian social-cooperative legislation, which has influenced social-economy related policies in several Eastern and Western European countries. Work-integration social enterprises (WISEs), also strongly promoted by the Italian law of 1991, clearly appear as a dominant form among social enterprises in general and among CSEs, in particular.

The importance of the cooperative tradition, the adoption of new laws creating a cooperative form oriented towards the general interest, the implementation of active public policies fostering WISEs, the importance of WISEs among all SE forms, the role of the state as an enabler are all features that may be seen as “bridges” between this analysis of the social-cooperative model and various parts of the other transversal chapters.

0.2 Theorising and Mapping Major SE Models (Phase 2 of the ICSEM Project)

In emerging fields, it is common to develop descriptive works as well as classifications of observed facts or entities to be compared to an ideal type. This may particularly take place in an exploratory research step aimed at developing conceptual tools for future research purposes. Discrepancies between the ideal type and the facts or entities actually observed can then give rise to a set of hypotheses aimed at providing explanations. It is in this perspective that we developed a framework to theorise the diversity of SE models and to highlight theoretically a few major SE models.

Considering that social enterprises are often seen as belonging to the “third sector” or as being somehow related to the latter (Defourny 2014), we chose to build our analysis upon some of the strongest theoretical frameworks focusing on this sector’s identity, such as those proposed by Gui (1991) and Hansmann (1996). Leaving aside “capital-interest-driven” or capitalist enterprises, which distribute their profits to their investors, who also control these for-profit firms, Gui (1991) defines the third sector as composed of “mutual-benefit organisations” and “public-benefit organisations”. “Mutual-benefit organisations” are those in which the stakeholders (other than the investors) who have the ultimate decision-making power (the “dominant category”) also make up the “beneficiary category”, that is, the category of stakeholders to whom the residual income is explicitly or implicitly distributed. Indeed, such

convergence of control and benefit ensures that members’ mutual interest is the objective pursued by the organisation. As for “public-benefit organisations”, they correspond to those entities in which the beneficiary category is different from the dominant category: they are voluntary organisations oriented to serving other people (beneficiaries) than the stakeholders who control the organisation. Beneficiaries are those who are at the heart of the organisation’s mission—more precisely, in the case of social enterprises, of the enterprise’s social mission (Santos *et al.* 2015).

0.2.1 Three “Principles of Interest” as a Cornerstone

These distinctions lead us to consider three distinct major drivers or “principles of interest” that can be found in the overall economy: the capital interest (CI), the mutual interest (MI) and the general interest (GI). We propose to represent them as the vertices of a triangle in which mixes of principles can also be represented along the sides

(see figure 0.1). Before locating types of social enterprise on our graph, we note that all traditional cooperatives and associations that are pursuing the interests of their members (for instance sport clubs) are located in the “mutual-interest” angle. By contrast, those associations (voluntary organisations, charities, etc.) that are pursuing a public benefit as defined by Gui may be

Figure 0.1 Institutional logics and resulting SE models.
Source: Defourny and Nyssens (2017a: 2479).

seen as located close to the general-interest angle. However, they are not in the vertex itself, as their general interest (the community they serve) is usually not as wide as the one targeted by the state. On the right-hand side of the triangle, shareholder companies are located in the “capital-interest” vertex. However, when they develop corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies, through which they tend to express a concern for some issues of general interest, such concern may be represented as a limited move upward along this side of the triangle.

The figure’s lower (horizontal) side represents a continuum between the cooperative treatment of profits and the capitalist stance on profits. The search for profit in a cooperative is mainly instrumental to its productive activity. Profits may only be distributed as dividends with a cap and/or put into collective reserves with an asset lock; by contrast, the main goals of shareholding companies are profit distribution and increasing the value of their shares. Many small- and medium-sized enterprises, though, especially family businesses, although capitalist, may balance in a different way the search for profits and non-financial goals (Zellweger *et al.* 2013).

0.2.2 Market Reliance and the Resource Mix as Key Issues

Many publications and discourses on social enterprise underline a significant move towards market activities as a key feature of social enterprise. When trying to identify social enterprises, many observers suggest to look at the proportion of market income and might require that at least half of the enterprise’s resources come from market sales. Such a stance, however, is often far from the field reality in many countries, and it is not shared by all schools of thought (Defourny and Nyssens 2010). However, we fully acknowledge that market reliance is a major issue in the debate, and it is why we have drawn two dotted lines across our triangle to take into account the various combinations of resource types (market income, public grants, philanthropic resources). Let us also note that the lower dotted line divides the “mutual-interest” angle: cooperatives mainly operate on the market and they appear below this dotted line, as do all enterprises earning all or most of their income from the market; by contrast, mutual-interest associations, like leisure voluntary organisations, are located above the line, because they generally rely on a mix of market resources (membership fees, sales at a bar or cafeteria) and other resources, such as volunteering and various types of public contributions.

0.2.3 Institutional Logics Generating SE Models

On the basis of the various elements presented above, we tried to show how various “institutional logics” in the whole economy may generate SE models (Defourny and Nyssens 2017a).

As shown in figure 0.1, SE models (in grey) emerge from six traditional models through two distinct institutional logics.

1. The first type of logic generating social enterprises can be observed among non-profits or public organisations experiencing a *downward move towards marketisation* (solid-line arrows):
 - **The entrepreneurial non-profit (ENP) model** gathers all non-profit organisations, most often general-interest associations (GI-Assoc.), that are developing any type of earned-income activities in support of their social mission (Fitzgerald and Sheperd 2018).
 - The **public-sector social-enterprise (PSE) model** results from a movement towards the marketisation of public services which embraces “public-sector spin-offs”. These social enterprises are usually launched by local public bodies, sometimes in partnership with third-sector organisations, to provide services which are outsourced (such as care services) or new services (such as those offered by work-integration social enterprises).
2. The second type of logic corresponds to an upward move of conventional cooperatives and mutual-interest associations *towards a stronger general-interest orientation*; such a move may also be observed through some advanced CSR initiatives launched by the traditional business world (dotted arrows).
 - **The social-cooperative (SC) model** differs from traditional mutual-interest organisations—that is, cooperatives (Coops) and mutual-interest associations (MI-Assoc.)—in that it combines the pursuit of its members’ interests (mutual interest) with the pursuit of the interests of the whole community or of a specific group targeted by the social mission (general interest).
 - **The social-business (SB) model** is rooted in a business model driven by shareholders’ (capital) interest, but social businesses mix this logic with a “social entrepreneurial” drive aimed at the creation of a “blended value”, in an effort to balance and better integrate economic and social purposes.

At first sight, when looking at figure 0.1, the four SE models seem to arise from new dynamics at work in pre-existing organisations. Thus, it may seem that social enterprises cannot be created from scratch. Such an interpretation would be clearly misleading, as a new (social) enterprise can emerge everywhere in the triangle; its location will depend on its general-interest orientation and on the way in which it balances social and economic objectives and financial resources.

As suggested above, our typology of SE models is based on some key dimensions, but we do not pretend that it covers all possible SE cases. Especially, we are aware of the many types of hybridity that can be observed in the field. For example, partnerships between for-profits and non-profits as well as those involving local public authorities in a community-development perspective are quite common.

0.2.4 Social Missions across Models

Most SE approaches in the literature, if not all, share the view that social enterprises combine an entrepreneurial dynamic to provide services or goods with the primacy of a social mission. For Nicholls (2006: 13), “the primacy of social mission over all organisational objectives is the first key determinant of a potentially socially entrepreneurial venture”. Dees (1998: 2) also argues that “for social entrepreneurs the social mission is explicit and central”. For Chell (2007), it is the centrality of the social mission that distinguishes social enterprises from commercial ventures. As we summarised elsewhere, “for all schools of thought, the explicit aim to benefit the community or the creation of social value is the core mission of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises” (Defourny and Nyssens 2010: 44).

In our analytical construction, the social mission is also central, but implicitly assumed through the notion of “general interest”. However, to what extent are our SE models able to accommodate the diversity of social missions carried out by social enterprises? We do not intend to analyse this question in depth here, but for illustrative purposes, we just present table 0.2, in which the work integration of disadvantaged persons, which seems to be a particularly widespread mission for social enterprises, is presented in the first column. Other types of social mission may have more or less importance in the SE landscape of various countries, though, depending on social or societal challenges that are particularly pressing and poorly addressed by the existing public and private sectors. The other columns of table 0.2 illustrate this fact for some social missions (among others, of course) such as ensuring access to health and social services, implementing ecological transition, fighting poverty and social exclusion, promoting more ethical economic behaviours and access to social finance or housing.

0.3 Testing SE Models (Phase 3 of the ICSEM Project)

The approach we had adopted in the previous section to build a typology of SE models was theoretical. In order to test the relevance of the latter, we relied on the data collected through a large survey that we coordinated and which was carried out by researchers from 43 countries across the world.

Table 0.2 SE models and diversity of social missions

<i>Social mission</i>	<i>Work integration</i>	<i>Access to health or social services</i>	<i>Ecological transition</i>	<i>Fight against social exclusion, access to housing, culture, social finance, etc.</i>
<i>SE models</i>				
Entrepreneurial non-profit	WISE implemented by a charity	Association providing home care services for the elderly	Second-hand associative shop	NGO providing training to migrants
	WISE implemented by a local public authority	Local public body providing social services on a quasi-market	Joint initiative of municipality and citizens to produce renewable energy	Social-housing public agency
Social cooperative	Cooperative WISE	Cooperative of health-care professionals	Citizens' cooperative in short circuits for organic and local food	Social-finance cooperative
Social business	Social venture whose primary social mission is to hire vulnerable people	Residential care institution launched by a social worker	small and medium enterprise (SME) providing compensation for CO ₂ emissions	SME active in fair trade

Source: Based on Defourny and Nyssens (2017a: 2488).

In order to address the lack of reliable datasets at enterprise level, in-depth information was collected about social enterprises on the basis of a common questionnaire. Researchers were asked to collect information regarding the nature of the enterprise's social mission or social aims, type of economic model and governance structure, relying on the hypothesis that these three dimensions particularly informed the diversity of social enterprises, in line with the use of the EMES ideal type as an analytical tool.

More precisely, ICSEM research partners interviewed the managers of three to five social enterprises that were deemed emblematic of each of the SE types which they had identified in the project's first phase. As a result, detailed data were collected in a rather homogenous way for 721 social enterprises from 43 countries. Within this dataset, a subset of data covering 164 social enterprises from 12 Western European countries was extracted to provide a workable statistical basis.

In the last step, which also corresponds to the last chapter of this book, the dataset built through the ICSEM survey was exploited to see if it provided any empirical support to the proposed typology of SE models in Western Europe. More precisely, a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed in order to identify relevant clusters. A careful analysis of each of these clusters was carried out and paved the way to the identification of three of the four theorised SE models (see section 0.2.3): the entrepreneurial non-profit model, the social-cooperative model and the social-business model. No significant support was found for the public (or quasi-public) SE model.

This book's introduction was designed as a guide to navigate the various steps of the ICSEM Project and their specific objectives: a first phase to document SE diversity in each country; a second phase to theorise SE diversity and to map SE models through an original analytical framework; and finally a third phase to empirically test the relevance of these SE models in Western Europe.

Notes

- 1 This EU-funded research project was carried out from 1996 to 1999. It focused on "the Emergence of Social Enterprise in Europe"—hence the acronym "EMES", which was subsequently retained by the research network that had carried out the project.
- 2 This large EU-funded research project was based on a detailed survey covering 160 "work-integration social enterprises" (WISEs) across eleven Western European countries.
- 3 Major EU-funded research projects included EFESIIS (2013–2016), TSI (2014–2017) and SEFORIS (2014–2017); see also European Commission (2020). Although it was much less oriented toward academic research, the "Social Business Initiative", launched by the European Commission in 2011, also played a significant role in fostering SE development across Europe.
- 4 One outstanding feature of the ICSEM Project was that participants did not get any financial support. Only accommodation costs and sometimes part of

travel costs to take part in meetings were covered by the Belgian Science Policy Office, national and international foundations as well as a COST Action at the European level.

- 5 So-called “ICSEM Local Talks” were organised in a dozen countries. At the regional level (Latin America, Eastern Asia, Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe), ICSEM Symposiums took place in Chile, Belgium, South Korea, Albania, Brazil and France, and at the worldwide level, ICSEM General Meetings were organised in Finland, Sweden, Belgium and the United Kingdom, in relation to the EMES International Research Conferences, in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019.
- 6 All these country contributions are available on the website of the ICSEM Project: <https://www.iap-socent.be/icsem-working-papers>.
- 7 This COST Action (2017–2021) was named “Empowering the next generation of social enterprise scholars”, and it was coordinated by M. Nyssens and S. Ferreira.
- 8 The ICSEM Project also generated a set of country contributions that did not fit the “regional approach” adopted for the four books. Most of these contributions were published in a special issue of the Social Enterprise Journal (Defourny and Nyssens 2017b), which included country contributions about Australia, Canada, Israel, the US the UAE, Rwanda, South Africa and South Korea.

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