



ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ
ΠΑΤΡΩΝ
UNIVERSITY OF PATRAS



**Laboratory of Social Entrepreneurship & Social Innovation
Department of Business Administration
University of Patras, Greece**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AND SOCIAL INNOVATION**

OPEN BUSINESS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (OBCD)

07 – 08 MAY 2025, PATRAS GREECE

Conference & Cultural Center of the University of Patras, Rio, Greece

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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**Co-funded by
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INTRODUCTION

This Book of Abstracts brings together a diverse collection of contributions presented at the **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SOCIAL INNOVATION – OPEN BUSINESS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (OBCD)**, highlighting current developments in social entrepreneurship, innovation, and the evolving social economy across Europe and beyond. The included works reflect the interdisciplinary and practice-oriented nature of this field, offering empirical insights, theoretical reflections, and methodological advances that respond to urgent societal needs through inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven approaches.

A central focus of many contributions is the strengthening of social entrepreneurship ecosystems, and the development of competences tailored to the needs of social economy actors. Several abstracts interrogate the structures that support social enterprise growth, from policy frameworks and training approaches to community-based infrastructure. For instance, the abstract titled *“Προς μια Ολιστική Προσέγγιση των Οικοσυστημάτων Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας”* explores fundamental pillars for ecosystem design, while *“OBCD Local Hub Prototype: Design, Deployment, and Lessons Learned”* presents a place-based implementation model for supporting local social enterprises. The importance of capacity building is further underscored in contributions such as *“European Research Evidence on Training Needs related to Social Entrepreneurship in 4 European Countries”* and *“Enriching EntreComp with Required Skills for Social Economy Actors: The SEntreComp proposal”*, which examine educational frameworks aimed at empowering a new generation of socially driven entrepreneurs.

Another cluster of contributions centers on the integration of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and data-driven evaluation methods within the social economy. These abstracts critically assess both the potential and the risks of digitalization in social enterprise contexts. For example, *“Εταιρική αναδιαμόρφωση κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων μέσω της τεχνητής νοημοσύνης”* provides a timely discussion of AI governance and EU regulatory frameworks, while *“Data-Driven Impact Evaluation Frameworks in Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation”* proposes analytical tools to assess social value creation. The abstract *“Developing Case Scenarios in Circular Economy: How to Create a Baseline”* highlights how scenario planning and technological tools can foster circular practices, offering a crossroad between innovation and sustainability.

The third thematic thread running through this volume focuses on applied social innovation and good practices across diverse sectors. Contributions in this category document how social enterprises operate in practice and how they address complex social needs through context-sensitive and participatory approaches. Noteworthy examples include *“The Combination of Social Innovation and Marketing NGOs as a Driver of Social Change”*, which explores the hybridization of advocacy and enterprise, and *“Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism: Good Practices by a Greek Social Cooperative Enterprise”*, offering a sector-specific view of inclusive development. In a different context, *“KYKA GIRLS”* presents an emotionally supportive, self-development initiative for healthcare professionals in primary care, emphasizing the role of social innovation in public health. Moreover, *“A Social Rhapsody: Orchestrating Organizational Social Capital, Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, and Social Enterprises’ Dual Performance”* provides theoretical grounding on how organizational factors shape dual impact missions.

Collectively, the abstracts presented in this volume offer a timely and multifaceted perspective on how social entrepreneurship and innovation are advancing within diverse institutional, technological, and cultural settings. By bringing together research grounded in both theory and practice, this Book of Abstracts aims to stimulate further dialogue and collaboration



across disciplines, sectors, and borders—reinforcing the commitment to a more equitable, participatory, and sustainable future.

The Laboratory of Social Entrepreneurship & Social Innovation
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1. Strengthening Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystems and Competency Building

This thematic area explores the institutional and policy-level infrastructures that enable the growth of social enterprises. Abstracts in this section examine educational frameworks, competency models (e.g., SEntreComp), local and regional ecosystem development, and evidence from European training initiatives. Through transnational collaboration and localized implementation, these contributions emphasize how capacity-building efforts can foster a thriving social economy across diverse contexts.

Προς μια Ολιστική Προσέγγιση των Οικοσυστημάτων Κοινωνικής Επιχειρηματικότητας: Θεμελιώδεις Πυλώνες και Πρακτική Εφαρμογή

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Περίληψη:

Η παρούσα μελέτη επιδιώκει να αναδείξει, μέσα από έναν ολιστικό φακό, τους πυλώνες των οικοσυστημάτων της κοινωνικής επιχειρηματικότητας που ενισχύουν τη βιωσιμότητα και τον κοινωνικό αντίκτυπο των κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων. Πρόσθετα, γίνεται αναφορά στην αναδυόμενη επίδραση της τεχνολογία και της τεχνητής νοημοσύνης (ΤΝ). Τέλος, διενεργείται κριτική αποτίμηση του επιπέδου ολοκλήρωσής τους στο πλαίσιο της ελληνικής πραγματικότητας. Για την επίτευξη των στόχων της έρευνας πραγματοποιείται συνδυαστική ανάλυση ποιοτικών και ποσοτικών δεδομένων από ευρωπαϊκές και διεθνείς μελέτες που εντοπίστηκαν και επιλέχθηκαν λαμβάνοντας υπόψη την ευρεία εμπειρική βάση (συνθετικές μελέτες) και τη θεσμική αναγνώρισή τους. Τα ευρήματα της έρευνας υπογραμμίζουν τη σημασία της ύπαρξης και διασύνδεσης 8 πυλώνων: θεσμικό πλαίσιο και δομές (νομική και πολιτική αναγνώριση), πρόσβαση σε χρηματοδότηση-πόρους και αυτοχρηματοδότηση, εκπαίδευση (έρευνα και ανάπτυξη δεξιοτήτων), δικτύωση, πρόσβαση σε αγορές και δημόσιες συμβάσεις, μηχανισμοί κοινωνικής καινοτομίας, μέτρηση κοινωνικού αντίκτυπου και κουλτούρα. Διαφαίνεται επίσης ότι η συστημική υποστήριξη (νομικό πλαίσιο, δημόσιες συμβάσεις, χρηματοδοτικά εργαλεία) αποτελεί κρίσιμη συνθήκη των οικοσυστημάτων, αλλά δεν επαρκεί για τη βιωσιμότητα και ανάπτυξη των κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων. Απαιτείται επίσης επένδυση στην εκπαίδευση, ενίσχυση των αξιών, στάσεων και κοινωνικών αντιλήψεων που επηρεάζουν την αποδοχή, διάδοση και στήριξη της κοινωνικής επιχειρηματικότητας, καθώς και ενίσχυση της κουλτούρας συνεργασίας και διασύνδεση μεταξύ κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων, φορέων στήριξης, θεσμών και επενδυτών για ανταλλαγή εμπειριών, συνεργασιών και ευκαιριών. Η ΤΝ μπορεί να προσφέρει εργαλεία για την ενίσχυση της καινοτομίας, της αποδοτικότητας και της προσαρμοστικότητας των κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων. Προϋπόθεση γι' αυτό αποτελούν ο προσεκτικός σχεδιασμός και η συνεργασία μεταξύ των συμμετόχων του οικοσυστήματος για την αντιμετώπιση των προκλήσεων και την αξιοποίηση των δυνατοτήτων που προσφέρει. Τέλος, σύμφωνα με τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας, στην Ελλάδα, σε αντίθεση με άλλες χώρες όπως για παράδειγμα η Ιταλία, η Γαλλία ή η Ισπανία, πολλοί από αυτούς τους πυλώνες είναι υπό κατασκευή.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά:

Κοινωνική επιχειρηματικότητα, οικοσύστημα, βιωσιμότητα, τεχνητή νοημοσύνη



OBCD Local Hub Prototype: Design, Deployment, and Lessons Learned

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Abstract:

The OBCD Local Hub Prototype, is a model aimed at fostering local development through open business practices and social entrepreneurship. Developed under the European Union-funded Open Business for Community Development (OBCD) project, the Local Hub serves as a supportive structure for social enterprises (SEs), offering a wide range of services to strengthen their resilience, promote innovation, and enhance their social impact. The OBCD Local Hub model operates both digitally, through an interactive platform, and physically, through in-person support, enabling flexible service delivery. Its mission is to empower SEs by providing business consulting, training, networking opportunities, impact measurement tools, and policy engagement. The model emphasizes inclusivity, sustainability, innovation, collaboration, and digital engagement as core values. Designed for adaptability, the Hub can be initiated by local institutions, consortia of stakeholders, or as a new social enterprise. Its flexible legal and operational framework allows it to align with varying local conditions and ecosystem capacities. The Hub particularly supports underserved populations, such as unemployed individuals and vulnerable groups, and facilitates the integration of SEs into broader economic and social ecosystems. A pilot version of the Hub was successfully implemented in Karditsa, Greece, offering proof of concept and a replicable example for other regions. The financial model supports sustainability through membership fees, service-based revenues, grants, sponsorships, and donations. It also incorporates a robust strategy for social impact assessment, based on the triple bottom-line framework (social, economic, and environmental impact). This prototype serves as a blueprint for replicating Local Hubs across EU member states and beyond, contributing to inclusive, innovative, and sustainable local development through the principles of open business and the support of strong social entrepreneurship ecosystems.

Keywords:

Social entrepreneurship; local development; open business; sustainability

The OBCD Training Approach and Piloting Results

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Abstract:

The Open Business for Community Development (OBCD) project addresses key gaps in social enterprise (SE) education across the EU—particularly the lack of training focused on operational development, long-term sustainability, and the integration of business and social impact. To meet these challenges, OBCD developed two new modular curricula: one for Administrative Professionals (EQF5) and one for Managers and Developers (EQF6). Each consists of ten interdisciplinary modules designed to be flexible and learner-centred, incorporating practical skills, experiential learning, and



real-world engagement with SEs. The curricula were developed through research and competence analysis in Greece, Italy, Spain, and Finland and aligned with European quality assurance frameworks (EQAVET, ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The report presents the methodology, curriculum structure, and findings from a pilot implementation of the OBCD Training Ecosystem—a blended learning approach combining a massive open online course (MOOC) and an intensive four-day Bootcamp in Rome. The pilot engaged 422 learners across five countries, with 257 completing the full training—67.9% above the target. Around 10.5% came from underrepresented backgrounds, reflecting the programme's inclusiveness. The MOOC focused on cognitive and structural aspects of organizational social capital, while the Bootcamp built relational capital through peer collaboration, mentoring, and hands-on learning. The blended format fostered active learning, cross-border networking, and project-based work on social business models. Evaluation confirmed high satisfaction and improved SE competencies, especially in strategic thinking and innovation. Recommendations include expanding digital support, mentorship, and peer-learning communities to strengthen learning outcomes. Future developments will explore advanced simulations and flexible evaluation tools to deepen learners' understanding of open business concepts and enhance programme adaptability.

Keywords:

Social enterprise; training ecosystem; blended learning; strategic innovation

European Research Evidence on Training Needs related to Social Entrepreneurship in 4 European countries

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Abstract:

There is considerable debate in scientific literature about the unique nature of social enterprises in terms of their employees' training needs. This debate is between those who believe that social enterprises and commercial enterprises share a significant number of skills and those who, on the contrary, perceive strong differences in the skills and knowledge required by these two types of entities. This paper aims to contribute useful information to this debate by analysing how the uniqueness of social enterprises is perceived among respondents from four countries (Italy, Greece, Finland and Spain), all of whom are social enterprise professionals. The results show that there is a significant perceived need for training in soft skills and social skills, compared to a lower perceived need for training in specific economic and management skills. Everything indicates that the social dimensions of social enterprise do not seem to be sufficiently developed in the current training offer. The data also show that the determining factor that most influences the perception of training needs is the belief in the unique nature of social enterprise. The results of this research are relevant to support the design and development of training offers specifically aimed at working for social enterprise, both in entrepreneurial and technical roles.

Keywords:

Social enterprises; training needs; soft skills



Enriching EntreComp with required skills for social economy actors: The SEntreComp proposal

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Abstract:

The EntreComp framework is a benchmark model in Europe in terms of training needs for entrepreneurship. It is designed to meet the training needs of any type of entrepreneurship (commercial, social, non-profit) and developed from any position. Despite this inclusive nature, it is not perfectly suited to the context of social enterprise, with some gaps and aspects being addressed in a superficial manner. To improve this global framework for entrepreneurship, this research develops a proposal to expand EntreComp, based on training needs research carried out in four European countries. The qualitative and quantitative study made it possible to draw up a list of skills, which was then compared with the EntreComp proposal. The general results establish, first of all, that the EntreComp Framework is very well founded and that its shortcomings are specific and not structural. However, aspects such as social literacy, transparency and impact assessment are not very present. For this reason, this paper describes the incorporation of a new core competence and seven new threads. These competences and threads are proposed as additions to the existing EntreComp framework, along with some adaptations to the descriptive text of some of the current competences. The refined framework, named SEntreComp, adapts the EntreComp framework to the unique context of SE and can further support the identification and development of the competences required by social entrepreneurs and related actors. The SEntreComp framework was developed as part of the Erasmus + OBCD project.

Keywords:

EntreComp; SEntreComp; social entrepreneurship

Boosting Social Innovation Capacities in the European Social Economy Transition Pathway: The European Social Innovation Campus Initiative

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Abstract:

The European Social Innovation Campus (ESIC) initiative is pivotal in enhancing social innovation capacities within the European Social Economy Transition Pathway. The multifaceted approach employed by the ESIC initiative addresses the imperative need for upskilling and reskilling workforce and entrepreneurs in the social economy sector, particularly in response to the green and digital transitions. Through collaborative efforts among higher education institutions, vocational training organizations, social economy entities, and European-level stakeholders, the ESIC initiative fosters the development and dissemination of innovative skills and knowledge essential for navigating the evolving landscape of the social economy. Drawing upon evidence-based practices and a



transnational approach, the ESIC initiative aims to equip individuals and organizations with the necessary tools and competencies to drive sustainable social change and foster inclusive growth. The ESIC initiative aims to implement diverse activities tailored to specific sectors or cross-sectors that are adaptable to evolving trends across the EU. It prioritizes enhancing innovation, particularly digital skills, which are crucial across all job roles. Additionally, it addresses the need for qualifications and curricula updates to meet the demand for green skills in a circular economy. The initiative targets immediate and medium-term skills development needs in alignment with initiatives like the European Skills Agenda and the Pact for Skills. The Pact aims to mobilize stakeholders for workforce upskilling, green and digital transitions, and support for skills and growth strategies. The deliverables of this initiative, which include sectoral assessments, strategies, profiles, training programs, and planning, contribute significantly to the Pact's objectives and sectoral partnerships. All this as the Erasmus call for Alliances for Education and Enterprises was set in November 2021 (Funding & Tenders, 2024).

Keywords:

Social Innovation; education; competencies; capabilities

Developing Social Enterprise Ecosystems: Lessons from Finland

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Abstract:

Thriving social enterprises require supportive ecosystems, yet their development varies widely across Europe. Scotland, for example, has a mature ecosystem, while in Finland, roles and structures remain unclear. To address this, the Centre of Expertise for Social Enterprises (YYO) was launched a few years ago to develop both local and national ecosystems. This work remains ongoing, as the concept of social entrepreneurship is still relatively unfamiliar in Finland. The Centre plays a central role in fostering a supportive environment for social enterprises. Its model shares similarities with the local hub model developed through the European OBCD project—both aim to strengthen social entrepreneurship through networking, co-creation, access to finance, and resilience. Established under the Finnish Government's Work Capacity Programme, the Centre promotes employment for Workers with Support needs and advances social entrepreneurship as a sustainable model. Rather than setting up a new state-run entity, the Ministry chose to work with existing local organisations, networks, and infrastructures. This inclusive model draws on a wide range of expertise and fosters adaptability. The national network includes educational institutes (LUT-University, Diakonia University of Applied Sciences), expert organisations (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Arvo - Finnish Association of Social Enterprises, Pellervo Coop Centre, and Vates Foundation) and social enterprises (Silta-Valmennusyhdistys, Valo-Valmennusyhdistys, Live-foundation, Kierrätyskeskus, Rehabilitation Foundation). Silta coordinates the project, and Valo-Valmennusyhdistys is responsible for the local hub work. Together, they offer comprehensive expertise and services and promote cross-sector collaboration. Currently co-funded through the Erasmus+ programme, the Centre aims to establish a broad and sustainable funding base to ensure the long-term continuation. Due to Finland's vast geography and regional diversity, the Centre developed a regionally anchored model supported by local coordinators—ecosystem developers with deep understanding of their areas. They organise events, build networks, and provide hands-on support to local social



enterprises. Ecosystems are built based on local needs and may include for example social and traditional enterprises, public sector actors such as municipal employment services or procurement officials, educational institutions, communities, and associations. However, due to limited resources, this support is only available where coordinators are present, leading to an uneven ecosystem development across the country. The Centre strengthens social enterprises and their operating environment. It offers free advice to individuals and organisations on founding or developing social enterprises, covering business planning, funding, impact measurement, and inclusive employment practices. A key function of the Centre is to raise awareness and provide training for various audiences—entrepreneurs, educators, public officials, and partners. The goal is to increase expertise and provide training at various levels of the education system. A major challenge in Finland has been the lack of social enterprise training providers. The OBCD project has helped lay the groundwork for new course offerings. The Centre also contributes to policy development by producing recommendations and supporting the creation of a national social economy strategy with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. It engages in international cooperation to share practices and adapt proven models from abroad that promote employment and inclusion. The Centre also acts as a platform for social innovation, making new ideas and methods visible and accessible. In this presentation, we will share practical experiences, results, and lessons learned, contributing to the broader discussion on building inclusive, sustainable ecosystems for social enterprises and strengthening opportunities for international collaboration.

Keywords:

Social entrepreneurship; ecosystem development; inclusive employment; international collaboration

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Area-based factors affecting the development and ecosystems of social enterprises – Case Finland

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Abstract:

This study looks into area-based factors that influence the development and ecosystems of social enterprises, particularly in Finland. Study aims to examine region-specific factors influencing the emergence and expansion of social enterprises in Finland. It discusses how social enterprises are



affected by various external influences like fiscal, environmental, and social conditions. The study highlighted the role of institutional support, access to investments, and strategic planning as key enablers, alongside the challenges that hinder their growth. It emphasizes the necessity of local ecosystems in providing essential resources and networks for social enterprise success.

Methodological Approach The study analyzes regional policies and strategies using business statistics, public funding data, and socio-economic indicators. Interviews were conducted with regional experts to model entrepreneurial ecosystems in three distinct Finnish regions. Ecosystem analysis focused on support services, research, business environment, customers, public institutions, funding, networks, and regulatory frameworks.

Conclusions Influencing factors stem from a region's socio-economic structure, but ecosystems operate on a localized scale. Key drivers for SE development include responsible business interest, demographic shifts, demand for innovative solutions, and political support. A barrier to SE development is the early stage of regional SE advisory services and uncertainty caused by employment services reform.

Keywords:

Social enterprises; regional ecosystems; institutional support

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2. Digitalization, Artificial Intelligence, and Evaluation in the Social Economy

The second thematic area focuses on the increasing role of technology in shaping the operations and strategic direction of social enterprises. Contributions investigate how digital tools and artificial intelligence can support responsible innovation, impact measurement, and product enhancement. This section also addresses the implications of emerging EU policy frameworks and ethical considerations in the application of AI to social business contexts.

Εταιρική αναδιαμόρφωση κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων μέσω της τεχνητής νοημοσύνης. Οφέλη / Δράσεις - Πολιτικές / Κίνδυνοι / Νομοθετικό Πλαίσιο για αξιόπιστη και ασφαλή χρήση της Τεχνητής Νοημοσύνης / Κανονισμός ΕΕ 2024/1689

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Περίληψη:

Η Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη (TN) είναι μια ταχέως εξελισσόμενη οικογένεια τεχνολογιών που συμβάλλει σε ένα ευρύ φάσμα οικονομικών, περιβαλλοντικών και κοινωνικών οφελών σε ολόκληρο το φάσμα των βιομηχανιών και των κοινωνικών δραστηριοτήτων. Βελτιώνοντας την πρόβλεψη, βελτιστοποιώντας τις λειτουργίες και την κατανομή των πόρων, και εξατομίκευση των ψηφιακών λύσεων που είναι διαθέσιμες για άτομα και οργανισμούς, η χρήση της Τεχνητής Νοημοσύνης μπορεί να προσφέρει βασικά ανταγωνιστικά πλεονεκτήματα στις επιχειρήσεις και να υποστηρίξει κοινωνικά και περιβαλλοντικά επωφελή αποτελέσματα, για παράδειγμα στην υγειονομική περίθαλψη, τη γεωργία, την ασφάλεια των τροφίμων, την εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση, τα μέσα ενημέρωσης, τον αθλητισμό, τον πολιτισμό, τη διαχείριση υποδομών, την ενέργεια, τις μεταφορές και την εφοδιαστική, τις δημόσιες υπηρεσίες, την ασφάλεια, τη δικαιοσύνη, την αποδοτικότητα των πόρων και της ενέργειας, την παρακολούθηση του περιβάλλοντος, τη διατήρηση και αποκατάσταση της βιοποικιλότητας και των οικοσυστημάτων και τον μετριασμό και την προσαρμογή στην κλιματική αλλαγή. Ταυτόχρονα, ανάλογα με τις περιστάσεις που αφορούν την συγκεκριμένη εφαρμογή, χρήση και επίπεδο τεχνολογικής ανάπτυξης, η TN μπορεί να δημιουργήσει κινδύνους και να βλάψει τα δημόσια συμφέροντα και τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα που προστατεύονται από το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Η εν λόγω βλάβη μπορεί να είναι υλική ή άυλη, συμπεριλαμβανομένης σωματικής, ψυχολογικής, κοινωνικής ή οικονομικής βλάβης. Δεδομένου του σημαντικού αντίκτυπου που μπορεί να έχει η Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη στην κοινωνία και της ανάγκης οικοδόμησης εμπιστοσύνης, είναι ζωτικής σημασίας η Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη και το κανονιστικό της πλαίσιο να αναπτυχθούν σύμφωνα με τις αξίες της Ένωσης, όπως κατοχυρώνονται στο άρθρο 2 της Συνθήκης για την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (ΣΕΕ), τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα και τις ελευθερίες που κατοχυρώνονται στις Συνθήκες και, σύμφωνα με το άρθρο 6 της ΣΕΕ, τον Χάρτη. Ως προϋπόθεση, η Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη θα πρέπει να είναι μια τεχνολογία με επίκεντρο τον άνθρωπο. Θα πρέπει να χρησιμεύει ως εργαλείο για τους ανθρώπους, με απώτερο στόχο την αύξηση της ανθρώπινης ευημερίας. Προκειμένου να διασφαλιστεί συνεπής και υψηλό επίπεδο προστασίας των δημόσιων συμφερόντων όσον αφορά την υγεία, την ασφάλεια και τα θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα, θα πρέπει να θεσπιστούν κοινοί κανόνες για τα συστήματα τεχνητής νοημοσύνης υψηλού κινδύνου. Οι εν λόγω κανόνες θα πρέπει να είναι συνεπείς με τον Χάρτη, να μην εισάγουν διακρίσεις και να συνάδουν με τις διεθνείς εμπορικές δεσμεύσεις της Ένωσης. Θα πρέπει επίσης να λαμβάνουν υπόψη την Ευρωπαϊκή Διακήρυξη για τα Ψηφιακά Δικαιώματα και Αρχές για την Ψηφιακή Δεκαετία και τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές δεοντολογίας για την αξιόπιστη τεχνητή νοημοσύνη της Ομάδας Εμπειρογνομώνων Υψηλού Επιπέδου για την Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη (AI

HLEG). Συνεπώς, απαιτείται ένα ενωσιακό νομικό πλαίσιο που να θεσπίζει εναρμονισμένους κανόνες για την ΤΝ, με σκοπό την ενίσχυση της ανάπτυξης, της χρήσης και της υιοθέτησης της ΤΝ στην εσωτερική αγορά, το οποίο ταυτόχρονα θα πληροί υψηλό επίπεδο προστασίας των δημόσιων συμφερόντων, όπως η υγεία και η ασφάλεια, και η προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, συμπεριλαμβανομένης της δημοκρατίας, του κράτους δικαίου και της προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος, όπως αναγνωρίζονται και προστατεύονται από το δίκαιο της Ένωσης. Για την επίτευξη αυτού του στόχου, θα πρέπει να θεσπιστούν κανόνες που να ρυθμίζουν τη διάθεση στην αγορά, τη θέση σε λειτουργία και τη χρήση ορισμένων συστημάτων ΤΝ, διασφαλίζοντας έτσι την ομαλή λειτουργία της εσωτερικής αγοράς και επιτρέποντας στα συστήματα αυτά να επωφελούνται από την αρχή της ελεύθερης κυκλοφορίας αγαθών και υπηρεσιών. Οι εν λόγω κανόνες θα πρέπει να είναι σαφείς και ισχυροί όσον αφορά την προστασία των θεμελιωδών δικαιωμάτων, να υποστηρίζουν νέες καινοτόμες λύσεις, να επιτρέπουν σε ένα ευρωπαϊκό οικοσύστημα δημόσιων και ιδιωτικών φορέων να δημιουργούν συστήματα ΤΝ σύμφωνα με τις αξίες της Ένωσης και να απελευθερώνουν τις δυνατότητες του ψηφιακού μετασχηματισμού σε όλες τις περιοχές της Ένωσης. Με τον καθορισμό αυτών των κανόνων, καθώς και μέτρων για την υποστήριξη της καινοτομίας, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στις μικρές και μεσαίες επιχειρήσεις (ΜΜΕ), συμπεριλαμβανομένων των νεοσύστατων επιχειρήσεων, ο παρών κανονισμός υποστηρίζει τον στόχο της προώθησης της ευρωπαϊκής ανθρωποκεντρικής προσέγγισης στην Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη και της ανάληψης παγκόσμιου ηγετικού ρόλου στην ανάπτυξη ασφαλούς, αξιόπιστης και ηθικής Τεχνητής Νοημοσύνης, όπως δήλωσε το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο ⁽⁵⁾, και διασφαλίζει την προστασία των ηθικών αρχών, όπως ζήτησε ρητά το Ευρωπαϊκό Κοινοβούλιο ⁽⁶⁾.

Λέξεις κλειδιά:

Τεχνητή Νοημοσύνη, θεμελιώδη δικαιώματα, κανονιστικό πλαίσιο, ψηφιακός μετασχηματισμός

Olive Oil Quality Enhancement Through Color Sorting

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Abstract:

This project presents a collaborative innovation initiative between a cooperation of Greek olive oil producers located in Achaia, Greece and a University of Patras, aimed at developing a prototype for an advanced olive oil color sorting device. The equipment leverages computer vision and machine learning algorithms to analyze and classify olive fruit based on color parameters that are indicative of quality, freshness, and authenticity. The prototype uses high-resolution optical sensors combined with AI-driven software to provide real-time feedback during the production process, enabling producers to ensure consistent product quality and to meet specific market standards. The system is tailored to the needs of small to medium-sized Greek olive oil mills, focusing on affordability, ease of use, and integration into existing production lines. Beyond technical development, the project explores commercial exploitation opportunities within Greece's highly fragmented olive oil sector. With over 2,000 operational mills nationwide, and growing emphasis on quality differentiation for export markets, the device is projected to achieve initial market penetration of 1-2% within the first three years. This equates to approximately 10-20 units sold, with anticipated unit pricing in the range of €5,000–€7,000, yielding potential revenues of €60,000–€120,000 during the early commercialization phase. Adoption is expected to be driven by mills seeking to enhance branding and achieve higher price points in both domestic and international markets. The project also



positions itself for future upgrades, including integration with broader quality control systems, contributing to the digital transformation of the Greek olive oil industry.

Keywords:

Olive oil; computer vision; machine learning; quality control

Data-Driven Impact Evaluation Frameworks in Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation

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Abstract:

The aim of this conceptual paper is to present a systematic literature review of innovative data-driven evaluation frameworks and methods used in assessing social entrepreneurship and innovation, seeking to determine the current state of evaluation tools and identify processes, that could effectively contribute to decision-making and strategic development planning. Given the significance and critical contribution of social entrepreneurship to society, which evolves in a multi-factorial social and economic environment, the evaluation methods applied should be dynamic and capable of extracting valuable insights to enhance these endeavors. Consequently, academic scholars, policymakers and practitioners have progressively developed specialized data-oriented frameworks to effectively evaluate the impact of social entrepreneurship and innovation on society, environment and social economy. This paper systematically examines certain recognized evaluation frameworks, categorizes them into four groups, and explores how they can be applied and combined to achieve better results: Social Return on Investment (SROI), a quantitative method for assessing the social value created relative to investments, combined with Social Cost-Benefit Analysis (SCBA), assessing overall societal net benefits of interventions; Theory of Change (ToC), a structured methodology for mapping and analyzing the processes and assumptions linking activities to intended outcomes; Societal Readiness Assessment (SoRA) coupled with Societal Readiness Levels (SRL), frameworks designed to evaluate innovations' readiness and suitability for societal integration and adoption; and finally, Social Impact Measurement and Management (SIMM), a structured three-stage approach, developed and promoted by EU, aimed at systematically evaluating and enhancing social impacts within social economy organizations. The analysis identifies the contribution that each framework could make to a data-driven approach to evaluating social innovations, showing that no single framework adequately addresses all the complexities inherent in measuring social impact. Each model demonstrates specific strengths, such as stakeholder engagement, monetization of impacts, and readiness for social inclusion, but also has critical limitations, providing scope for future research.

Keywords:

Social Impact Measurement; Theory of Change (ToC); Social Return on Investment (SROI); Societal Readiness Assessment (SoRA); Social Impact Measurement and Management (SIMM)

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Developing Case Scenarios in Circular Economy: How to Create a Baseline

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Abstract:

In the face of increasing environmental challenges, the circular economy has emerged as a crucial framework for promoting sustainability by minimizing waste and maximizing resource efficiency. Scenario analysis, a strategic analysis methodology, is an excellent option for coping with uncertainties and supporting strategic planning processes. This methodology seeks to determine the existing environment within which the initiative operates by identifying future risks and opportunities before proceeding to formulate and design practical solutions for implementation. This study applies this methodology to a circular economy initiative, focused on transforming microfibers into nanodiamonds. It outlines the process of constructing a baseline, that serves as a fundamental base for the development of alternative scenarios and the creation of business models. To build a comprehensive baseline, the study integrates insights from academic literature, grey literature, interviews with experts on microplastic pollution, and a market analysis of nanodiamonds. The resulting baseline offers an in-depth understanding on the issue of microplastic, its impact and mitigation approaches, as well as on nanodiamonds value chain, associated risks and opportunities for the building of scenarios. Results highlight that the baseline construction reveals



key environmental, technological, and market factors influencing the transformation of microplastics into nanodiamonds. Identified challenges include technological limitations and market competitiveness, while regulatory incentives and sustainability trends serve as key drivers for innovation. These findings demonstrate the importance of a well-structured baseline to shape realistic scenarios and give important insights into the viability of different circular economic business models.

Keywords:

Scenario analysis; Baseline; Circular Economy Framework; Upcycling; Nanodiamonds; Microplastic



3. Applied Social Innovation and Sectoral Good Practices

The third area highlights real-world applications of social innovation in various sectors such as healthcare, tourism, and marketing. These abstracts showcase local success stories, social enterprise models, and cooperative practices that drive community resilience and inclusion. Emphasis is placed on the role of organizational culture, social capital, and hybrid performance goals in enhancing the dual mission of social ventures.

The Combination of Social Innovation and Marketing NGOs as a Driver of Social Change

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Abstract:

Introduction

The social economy provides a framework in which communities collaborate to achieve social well-being and inclusion (Utting, 2015). In this context, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a dynamic approach that merges business strategies with a social mission, aiming to solve pressing societal challenges through sustainable and innovative means (Nicholls, 2010; Choi & Majumdar, 2014). Furthermore, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operate independently from government and commercial sectors to promote civic engagement, address inequalities, and advance human rights (Banks, Hulme, & Edwards, 2015). Marketing in NGOs is an equally important tool for visibility and promotion, and this report highlights its specificities. Therefore, this report explores how integrating social innovation and strategic marketing into social entrepreneurship and NGO operations can lead to long-term and measurable social transformation.

The Essence of Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship combines business methods with a social mission, aiming to solve issues like poverty and inequality through sustainable models (Dees, 2001; Poulaki et al., 2024). In Greece, examples include Raft, Wise Greece, Social Cooperative Enterprises (KoinSEp), LocalEyes and Impact Hub Athens. Social innovation plays a critical role in advancing the mission of social enterprises and NGOs. It encompasses new ideas, practices, and models designed to meet unmet social needs (Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010). Importantly, it is characterized by community participation, systemic change, and a focus on vulnerable populations. Successful innovations include collaborative economy platforms, circular economy initiatives, and crowdfunding models that empower excluded groups. By engaging beneficiaries in solution design, social innovation enhances inclusivity and relevance, making interventions more effective. For instance, inclusion models for marginalized communities not only address social gaps but also promote ownership and co-creation.

Marketing Beyond Promotion

In the context of the social economy, marketing transcends traditional commercial functions. Rather than selling products, NGOs and social enterprises sell values, actions, and change. Marketing thus becomes a strategic tool for awareness, engagement, and resource mobilization (Andreasen et al., 2008). The emotional bond created through storytelling, social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, and video storytelling helps convey the authenticity and urgency of the mission. Tools like email advocacy and live digital events are designed to convert passive supporters into active ambassadors of social change. The case of The Ocean Cleanup, which combines technological



innovation with compelling digital storytelling, exemplifies how marketing can amplify social missions globally. Similarly, the Be My Eyes app uses digital tools to connect visually impaired users with volunteers, illustrating how marketing can be woven into the user experience itself.

Social enterprises are increasingly adopting social impact branding, where the brand identity is rooted in purpose, action, and measurable impact. Transparency is key, with tools such as interactive dashboards, user-generated content, and live progress updates providing credibility and visibility (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014). Gamification and co-creation with stakeholders—both volunteers and beneficiaries—enhance engagement. By turning supporters into collaborators and donors into ambassadors, these organizations create deeper relationships and more resilient support networks. This approach strengthens legitimacy and ensures long-term sustainability.

Future Perspectives

Despite their potential, NGOs and social enterprises face persistent challenges, such as a lack of professional resources and marketing expertise, and intense competition for public attention. Many lack the skills or structures to implement effective strategic communication. However, the opportunities are many. Collaborations with corporations under corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, partnerships with startups, and support from creative agencies can provide critical resources and expertise. The tailored campaigns, integrated storytelling, and the use of impact metrics can further enhance user outreach and engagement. Importantly, NGOs must increasingly adopt a business mindset—embracing innovation and marketing not merely as auxiliary functions but as essential components of their operational model.

Social entrepreneurship is a powerful change-maker, offering innovative solutions to entrenched societal problems. Innovation generates unique, scalable solutions, while marketing ensures those solutions reach and resonate with wider audiences both from a donation perspective and from a volunteer outreach perspective. Merging business thinking with a social vision drives sustainable change and enhances the creation of a strong brand and a brand with a distinctive personality with permanent position on public mind. It empowers organizations to not only address urgent needs but also to communicate their purpose with clarity, authenticity, and impact. As the field evolves, interdisciplinary collaboration, creativity, and professionalism will be indispensable for scaling both innovation and influence.

Keywords:

Social innovation; marketing NGOs; social entrepreneurship

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A Social Rhapsody: Orchestrating Organizational Social Capital, Social Entrepreneurship Orientation, and Social Enterprises' Dual Performance

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Abstract:

Social enterprises (SEs) operate at the complex intersection of commercial viability and social value creation, embodying a hybrid organizational model that seeks to achieve dual performance—economic sustainability and meaningful societal impact. While theoretical advances have illuminated this dual mission, empirical insights into the internal organizational mechanisms that drive it remain underexplored. Addressing this gap, the present study integrates resource-based theory, organizational social capital (OSC) theory, and behavioral entrepreneurship theory to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework. Using quantitative methods, data were collected from 345 Greek SEs to examine how internal relational assets and entrepreneurial behavior relate to performance outcomes. The findings demonstrate that SEs exhibit high levels of perceived OSC, particularly characterized by trust, reciprocity, and shared values among members. Additionally, these organizations display a pronounced social entrepreneurship orientation (SEO), evidenced through innovation, proactiveness, and a commitment to enhancing social impact. Social performance—reflected in beneficiary satisfaction and societal well-being—was rated significantly higher than financial outcomes. Correlational analysis revealed strong, statistically significant associations between OSC and SEO, and between SEO and social performance. Weaker, though still significant, relationships were observed with financial performance. A strong positive correlation between social and economic performance also emerged, reinforcing the conceptual need to treat them as distinct but interdependent dimensions. These results advance theoretical understanding of how intangible organizational resources and behaviors coalesce to enable SEs to navigate their dual mandate. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of cultivating internal trust and fostering socially entrepreneurial mindsets to enhance both impact and sustainability in resource-constrained environments.

Keywords:

Social enterprises; organizational performance; organizational social capital; social entrepreneurial orientation; resource-based theory; social innovation



Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism: Good Practices by a Greek Social Cooperative Enterprise

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Abstract:

Social Entrepreneurship is a dynamically growing institution of the social economy. This fact acquires particular importance in tourism which creates significant social and environmental pressures and is associated with a number of market failures (Sheldon & Daniele, 2017). In a country like Greece, where tourism is a key pillar of the economy, Social Cooperative Enterprises (SCEs) come to offer an alternative model of development (Mantzios et al., 2024). Through the SCEs, forms of tourism that respect the environment, culture and local communities – such as agrotourism, ecotourism, cultural and walking tourism – are promoted. These enterprises, based on cooperation rather than the competitive model, enhance collective action, offer employment opportunities to vulnerable groups, and create economic benefits that return to the community (Aquino et al., 2018; Zeng, 2018). In addition, SCEs' flexibility and innovation allow them to fill local gaps that traditional tourism businesses often ignore – such as highlighting lesser-known destinations, preserving traditional arts and creating authentic visitor experiences (Iorgulescu & Răvar, 2015). According to the official data of the Platform for the Networking of Social and Solidarity Economy Organizations (K.A.L.O, 2025), twenty-seven SCEs throughout Greece are active in tourism. Despite their value, they remain very little studied. The present paper examines the role and prospects of the SCE "Messolonghi by Locals", which exploits the local cultural, natural and social capitals of the rural Greek town of Messolonghi, promoting mild, responsible and alternative tourism through the eyes and voice of its inhabitants themselves. This study presents the business model, the promotion strategies, the challenges and the prospects that this SCE faces in the highly competitive but also dynamically changing field of Greek tourism. Through this case study, good practices are highlighted that can help develop a model of mild and sustainable tourism, the benefits of which are equally disseminated to local communities.

Keywords:

Social Cooperative Enterprise; tourism; solidarity economy; local community; locality

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Acknowledgments:

Η εργασία υλοποιήθηκε με την χρηματοδότηση της Επιτροπής Ερευνών του Πανεπιστημίου Πατρών μέσω του προγράμματος «ΜΕΔΙΚΟΣ». / This work has been financed by the funding programme “MEDICUS”, of the University of Patras.

Mountains of Change: Open Cooperativism and Commons-Based Economic

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Abstract:

This article examines the High Mountains cooperative in Greece as a case study of open cooperativism, analyzing how alternative economic forms can emerge and evolve within existing capitalist structures. Using Vincent and Feola’s (2020) framework for analyzing diversity beyond capitalism, we explore how the cooperative combines capitalist, alternative-capitalist, and non-capitalist elements while fostering commons-based practices and networks. Through initiatives like Community-Supported Mountain Production, a Mountain Support Center, and participation in commons-based projects like Tzoumakers, the cooperative demonstrates innovative approaches to integrating local needs with ecological priorities and global knowledge networks. The research employs a participatory approach to reveal that successful alternative economic initiatives often develop hybrid configurations that transcend traditional sectoral boundaries. Our analysis shows how the High Mountains cooperative effectively creates and maintains multiple types of commons—from physical resources and infrastructure to knowledge commons—while building new institutional arrangements that support post-capitalist development. The High Mountains exemplifies how open cooperativism can balance deep local embeddedness with global connectivity through communing practices, while maintaining organizational viability. This article contributes to understanding how alternative economic forms can develop through configurations that combine traditional practices with commons-oriented networks, while addressing contemporary challenges of rural revitalization, ecological sustainability, and economic transformation.

Keywords:

Open cooperativism, commons-based practices, alternative economies, rural revitalization

«KYKA GIRLS»: Μια καινοτόμα καλή πρακτική αυτό-ανάπτυξης και συναισθηματικής υποστήριξης για υγειονομικούς στην Πρωτοβάθμια Φροντίδας Υγείας-Κέντρο Υγείας

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Περίληψη:

Η Ομάδα Αυτοανάπτυξης και Συναισθηματικής Υποστήριξης «KYKA Girls», αποτελεί μια πρωτοβουλία και καινοτόμα πρακτική του Κέντρου Υγείας Κάτω Αχαΐας, η οποία λειτουργεί τα τελευταία τρία έτη ως κλειστή ομάδα, ειδικά για γυναίκες επαγγελματίες υγείας. Η ομάδα

συγκροτείται ετησίως από 8–9 εργαζόμενες διαφορετικών ειδικοτήτων (κοινωνικοί λειτουργοί, μαίες, επισκέπτριες υγείας, νοσηλεύτριες, ιατρός), με μικρές διαφοροποιήσεις στη σύνθεση των μελών. Τον συντονισμό της ομάδας αναλαμβάνει μια από τις κοινωνικές λειτουργούς με εξειδίκευση στη συμβουλευτική και εμπειρία στην εμπύχωση ομάδων.

Η καινοτόμα αυτή πρακτική και δράση, θεμελιώνεται στην αναγνώριση της ψυχικής υγείας των επαγγελματιών ως θεμελιώδους παράγοντα για την παροχή ποιοτικών υπηρεσιών υγείας στη κοινότητα.[1] Στόχος της είναι η ενδυνάμωση των μελών μέσα από την αυτογνωσία,[2,3,4,5] τη συναισθηματική αποφόρτιση,[1,2,5,6] την ενίσχυση της ενσυναίσθησης και της επικοινωνίας,[2,6] την διαχείριση συγκρούσεων[2,4,7,8] και την πρόληψη της επαγγελματικής εξουθένωσης [1,2,5]. Οι συναντήσεις πραγματοποιούνται σε μηνιαία βάση και περιλαμβάνουν βιωματικές τεχνικές (χορός, χαλάρωση, role-playing, παντομίμα, αναστοχαστικές ασκήσεις όπως journaling, το δέντρο της ζωής και feedback) [9,10,11,12,13,14]. Η θεματολογία διαμορφώνεται σε ετήσια βάση μέσω ομαδικού συμβολαίου, ενώ παραμένει ευέλικτη στις αναδυόμενες ανάγκες.

Τα αποτελέσματα της δράσης αυτής αναδεικνύουν την ενίσχυση της ομαδικότητας, τη μείωση άγχους και τη βελτίωση της επικοινωνίας τόσο μεταξύ συναδέλφων όσο και με τους ασθενείς των συμμετεχόντων. Η επιτυχία της καλής αυτής πρακτικής αποδίδεται στην αμοιβαία στήριξη, τη δέσμευση των μελών και την προσαρμοστικότητα, καθιστώντας την καινοτόμα πρακτική προς αναπαραγωγή σε άλλες δομές πρωτοβάθμιας φροντίδας υγείας.

Λέξεις-κλειδιά:

Ομάδα Αυτοανάπτυξης, Συναισθηματική Υποστήριξη, Βιωματικές Ασκήσεις, Επαγγελματίες Υγείας

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CONCLUSION

The abstracts collected in this volume reflect the growing maturity and diversity of research and practice in the fields of social entrepreneurship, innovation, and the social economy. From ecosystem development and training frameworks to technological integration and community-driven initiatives, these contributions offer valuable insights into the evolving role of social enterprises in addressing complex societal challenges. As the sector continues to adapt to global transitions, this Book of Abstracts underscores the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, critical reflection, and evidence-based innovation in shaping inclusive and sustainable futures.