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# Educational Jobs: Youth and Employability in the Social Economy

Investigations in  
Italy, Malta, Portugal, Romania,  
Spain, United Kingdom

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Skills and Labour Market  
E. raise youth employability



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

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## CHAPTER 5

### HOW TO SOLVE THE ISSUE ON MISMATCH BETWEEN DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF COMPETENCES. HIGHER EDUCATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROFESSIONALS IN THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

*Paolo Federighi*

#### *1. Education Services in the Framework of the Social Economy*

Education and training are one of the main fields of social economy organizations. Many of them are involved in «reducing early school-leaving and promoting equal access to good-quality early-childhood, primary and secondary education» (Barco Serrano *et al.* 2012: 33), in «improving the quality, efficiency and openness of tertiary and equivalent education with a view to increasing participation and attainment levels» (Barco Serrano *et al.*, 2012: 34) and in «enhancing access to lifelong learning, upgrading the skills and competences of the workforce and increasing the labour market relevance of education and training systems» (Barco Serrano *et al.*, 2012: 35).

But training is also fundamental for social enterprises because

the lack of cooperative education is the main source of infidelity and opportunism of cooperative problems, which lead to lack of income, indebtedness, capitalization and even undermine the sustainability of the cooperative, [hence] we can conclude that education is an indispensable factor for the performance of this type of organization (Nagao Menezes, Gonçalves, 2013: 17).

Despite the centrality of education in the social economy, studies on the training of the workers specialized in the provision of educational goods and services are rare. The problems of the mismatch between the supply and demand for skills among young graduates entering social enterprises can also be explained by the absence of solid reflection on the matter and the lack of basic shared standards at national and international level.

In order to help fill this gap, in this section I shall attempt to focus my attention on the relationship between social economy and the further education of education and training professionals. In this connection, the first issue to tackle is to identify which spheres we are dealing with: are they only those areas pertaining to the types of activity indi-

cated at the beginning (education and access to lifelong learning) or do they extend to other fields?

In order to answer this question, we need to go through some definitions of the topic. First of all, we need to identify the boundaries, contents and sense of the social economy. As far as boundaries and contents are concerned, we can refer to the definitions adopted by the European institutions.

For the European Commission,

the term 'social economy' is used to define a specific part of the economy: a set of organizations (historically, grouped into four major categories: cooperatives, mutuals, associations, and, more recently, foundations) that primarily pursue social aims and are characterised by participative governance systems. For close to two centuries, these organizations have engaged in the production of goods and services alongside the Market (i.e. private corporations) and the State (i.e. public sector institutions) (European Commission, 2013c: 12).

The social economy (SE) is a *pole of social utility* composed of a great plurality of actors.

Old and new social needs all constitute the sphere of action of the SE. These needs can be met by the persons affected through a business operating on the market, where almost all the cooperatives and mutual societies obtain the majority of their resources, or by associations and foundations, almost all of which supply non-market services to individuals, households or families and usually obtain most of their resources from donations, membership fees, subsidies, etc. (CIRIEC-International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy, 2012: 29).

The social economy can be divided into two main spheres: the market or business sub-sector and the non-market sub-sector.

This distinction helps to identify the sectors that display a greater demand for qualified workers.

For instance, volunteers are mainly found in the organizations of the non-market sub-sector (mostly associations and foundations), while the market sub-sector of the SE (cooperatives, mutual societies and similar companies) has practically no volunteers except in social enterprises; these are a clear example of a hybrid of market and non-market with a wide diversity of resources (revenue from the market, public subsidies and voluntary work) and of agents within the organization (members, employees, volunteers, companies and public bodies) (CIRIEC-International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy, 2012: 29)

The market or business sub-sector of the social economy – according to the classifications adopted by the European Commission (2011a) and also taken up by CIRIEC (2012) – consists of:

*A. Cooperatives*

Depending on the country, they may be considered commercial companies, a specific type of company, civil associations or organizations that are difficult to categorize.

*B. Mutual societies*

Their main activity is covering the health and social welfare risks of individuals and mutual insurance. «Mutualist organizations are also present in the training sector» (Chantier de l'économie sociale, 2014: 5).

*C. Social economy business groups*

Companies or coalitions of companies or any other social economy organizations setting up and controlling a business group to improve the delivery of their objectives for the benefit of their rank and file members (these groups are engaged in agri-food, industrial, distribution and retail, social welfare and other activities).

*D. Social enterprises*

Enterprises

whose main objective is to have a social impact rather than make a profit for their owners or shareholders. [They operate] by providing goods and services for the market in an entrepreneurial and innovative fashion and [use their] profits primarily to achieve social objectives. [They are] managed in an open and responsible manner and, in particular, involve employees, consumers and stakeholders affected by [their] commercial activities » (European Commission, 2011a: 2).

*E. Other social economy companies*

Non-financial corporations set up in order to create or maintain stable employment for their members, organized on a workers' self-management basis, the majority of whose shares are owned by the workers, who also control the governing bodies.

*F. Non-profit institutions serving social economy entities*

The only non-profit institutions serving companies in the social economy.

Within the market or business sub-sector of the social economy, the organizations that have shown a higher potential to attract young people with high levels of competence in the field of education and training are social enterprises, also of a cooperative nature, including non-profit institutions serving social economy entities.

Different research classifies their main sectors of intervention in different ways (see, for example: Selusi, 2010 and OECD, 2013). All, however, agree in attributing to the following sectors – listed in order of importance – coverage of at least 75% of the social economy services:

- Social assistance services (e.g. childcare, eldercare, disability support);
- Education and training;
- Culture and recreation;
- Work integration, employment;
- Economic, social and community development.

The sectors covering the remaining 25% consist of:

- Housing;
- Healthcare and medical services;
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, cleaning, maintenance, construction, energy, water, manufacturing, retail trading, tourism;
- Law, advocacy, politics.

The most significant sectors are those instinctively associated with the presence of education and training professionals. Nevertheless, the demand for educational skills is potentially present, albeit in a different way, in the other sectors too.

The social economy is characteristically inspired by principles of reciprocity and solidarity. Hence its attention towards vulnerable groups (the unemployed, migrants, elderly, poor, disabled, etc.). With regard to these brackets of the population, social enterprises operate «as training providers, as employment providers, or as support providers to those furthest from the labour market» (OECD, 2013: 51).

The creation of jobs for vulnerable workers, with low levels of education and professional qualifications is one of the reasons underlying the birth of social enterprises. The same International Labour Office, in its 'ILO reader' on the topic of the *Social and Solidarity Economy: Our Common Road towards Decent Work*, claims that social enterprises play an important role in «creating greater income and employment opportunities for all» (International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, 2011: 89), and it states that «social enterprises have emerged as innovative institutional solutions for supported employment favouring those workers who are discriminated against by conventional enterprises» (International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization, 2011: 90).

This type of enterprise often uses work as a tool for social inclusion and, from the educational point of view, these organizations are mainly characterized by forms of work-based learning (also for re-education). The sectors of production activity are agriculture, forestry, fishing, cleaning, maintenance, etc., but the true corporate mission is to include workers employed in forms of work that are assisted and guided by tutors and mentors. As a result, we can look at the whole social economy as a sphere of employment for education and training professionals.



## 2. Education and Training Professionals in the Social Economy

Education and training professionals involved in the social economy preside over specialist services aimed at boosting the knowledge, competences and capacities of both the people to whom the services are aimed, and the people who operate within the social enterprises. In the enterprises that manage services to citizens they have to perform both tasks, while in the other types of enterprise the tasks are mainly limited to taking care of the employees' personal and professional growth.

Obviously, this definition does not mean that all the social economy workers can be placed in the family of education and training professionals. More simply, it implies that a type of workers who do not necessarily possess an initial training – or identity – that fits with these functions can be seen as having educational functions (either prevalently or in addition to other roles). But, as is known, the current state of things is the result of a lengthy process whose roots can be found in the historical mutual and solidaristic basis of the social movements. The culture of voluntary organizations is based on people's ability to learn through mutual teaching and social practice.

In a modern organization operating in the social economy sector, the education and training professionals are those workers with the capacities needed to imagine, lead and manage the different types of high-quality educational actions that the service provides. At the same time, the enterprise's possibility to constantly enrich its know-how on products, services, processes and clients also depends on them.

From this point of view, all those workers who are involved in a *motivated activity directed at an object* (Engeström, 2005) and with the goal of people's growth are called upon to make use of educational skills. Here is a summary of the different instances and types of this kind of educational action:

1. Educational event, the specific, educational action carried out by the worker in the form of a lesson, a meeting or the combination of different specific events aimed at creating a complex and long-term training programme consisting of courses, coaching, mentoring, etc.;
2. Educational service, the action to provide different types of services in accompaniment to training such as information, guidance, motivation and placements;
3. Organization, the action to define education and training devices inside all kinds of organizations, that is, the explicit and implicit rules and regulations behind the development of individual and organizational learning in a workplace;
4. Training systems, the action to build systems in any type of organization, that is, corporate training systems or local systems for the provision of particular training programmes;

5. Training policies, the actions to devise, guide and manage the process to build and implement public and private training policies at local, regional, national and international level, as well as at the level of every single organization or enterprise;
6. Training strategies, the action to set and choose the goals for an organization, a system or an institutional entity to pursue, along with establishing the routes to follow and therefore the tasks to attribute to the different policies.

At each of these levels, figures operate who make use of specialist training skills which differ depending on the degree of complexity. The mix and types of skills vary depending on the type of training action, the professional's role, the organizational context worked in, and the sector of the social economy in question.

This is why studies of social economy demand for educational skills for the ongoing improvement of service quality cannot be limited to the sectors of strictly educational pertinence (education and training), but must extend to the multitude of spheres providing 'educational actions' for people's growth (customers and social enterprise workers).

The fact that at present this type of action is entrusted to professionals who have trained on the ground does not mean that this is the only possible way of doing things and that it has to continue thus for the rest of the century. It is the result of the history and origins of an economic sector generated by citizens' voluntary involvement. It is also the consequence of the lag in the universities and research centres' dealing with the task of providing the social economy with competent personnel.

### 3. *Characteristics of Social Enterprises*<sup>1</sup>

The definition of social enterprise adopted by the European Commission, which I referred to previously, is similar to others agreed on at international level. See, for example, the one proposed by Mendell and Nogales and taken up by the OECD:

a private and autonomous organisation providing goods or services with an explicit aim to benefit the community, owned or managed by a group of citizens in which the material interest of investors is subject to limits. Attention to a broad or distributed democratic governance structure and multi-stakeholder participation is also important (Mendell, Nogales, 2009: 94).

<sup>1</sup> Henceforth, I shall use this expression, whose concept includes the group of organizations belonging to the market or business sub-sector of the social economy.

The definition put forward in the volume edited by Noya is even more specific (2009: 13):

In Europe social entrepreneurship and social enterprises are very often seen as a ‘different way’ of doing business (*entreprendre autrement*) and are usually located in the third sector. To grasp the dynamic of social enterprises, a list of criteria have been developed which includes: the continuity of the production of goods and services; autonomy; economic risk; an explicit aim to benefit the community; a decision making power not based on capital ownership, and; [*sic*] a limited profit distribution. Attention to a broad, or distributed democratic governance structure and multi-stakeholder participation is also important.

The proximity of the definitions and the similarity of the historical roots are based on some traits common to all social enterprises or, at least, to the way they portray themselves. Research around the recurrent elements characterizing social enterprises shows how, despite their differences, it is possible to highlight some common traits. It seems that in our line of reflection we can share and confirm the results of the study carried out by Janel Smith and Annie McKittrick (2010). Hence, below I set out the eight definitional indicators proposed in their report where they highlight the elements common to all social enterprises. They are divided into benchmark values or the companies’ basic characteristics.

#### *Values*

1. Service to Community / Primacy of Persons over Profit: the service to community and primacy of persons over profit indicator implies that the provision of goods and services by a social economy organization is done so in the interests of the public or its members and not solely in the service of capital or for individual profit maximisation.
2. Empowerment: the empowerment indicator alludes to the transformation of individuals or communities to become more invested with power, access and authority, and increase their spiritual, cultural, social, political and economic strength and capacity – though not necessarily at the expense of another. Importantly, it also involves developing and encouraging greater self-sufficiency.
3. Civic Engagement / Active Citizenry / Volunteer Association: This indicator describes the acts associated with the exercise of ‘rights’ enshrined in a democracy, including: equality before the law, upholding civil liberties, freedom of speech, and freedom of political expression among others, as well as investing (non-monetarily) and actively participating in one’s community.
4. Economic and Social Values and Mission: economic and social values relate to the set of economic and social values in addition to the overarching purpose of social economy practitioner/actors and organiza-

tions. Ultimately, this indicator is perhaps best thought of as existing along a spectrum, in that even though the authors differ in the extent to which social values and mission define a social economy organization, they all assert that to some degree social economy organizations must possess a social purpose.

*Structure/Characteristics*

5. Profit (Re)distribution: the profit redistribution indicator is defined by the (re)investment of profits back into the social economy organization and the limited, or prohibited distribution of profits to members of the organization. It is further defined by limited return on capital, and by the stipulation that shares of the organization are not publicly traded or available for purchase on the financial market.
6. Autonomous Management / Collective Ownership: autonomous management and collective ownership refers to the self-management of social economy organizations by members or the public/community, and by the fact that no one individual possesses ownership of the organization.
7. Democracy, Democratic Governance and Decision-making: this indicator refers theoretically to the democratic principles of majority rule, of 'one member, one vote' not 'one share, one vote', as well as ensuring that all those not invested with the power to govern have equal access to power within the organization.
8. 'Third sector': describes a social economy that represents a 'middle way', a sector in its own right that is distinct from both the public and private sectors. In some instances, the term solidarity economy is also used to describe the efforts of social economy practitioners/acteurs that work between and within the public, private and non-profit sectors (Smith, McKittrick, 2010: 19-25).

*4. Specific Characteristics of Education and Training Professionals in the Social Economy*

My reflection mainly centres round analyzing the labour demand for education and training professionals with an academic degree. This demand has undergone a rapid evolution over the last decades and is continuing to change owing to factors connected to the policies and market of reference.

In this sector too, «the social economy is characterized by poor working conditions, short-term contracts and marginal rates of pay» (OECD, 2013: 22).

The short-term nature of government contracts and unpredictable revenue from sales of goods and services in a challenging economic environment [make] it difficult to offer longer term positions to employees' and also to take care of 'work / life balance issues, equality of pay and a safe working environment (OECD, 2013: 59).

The financial imperative to bring in funding to pay wages in many cases prevails over the aspect of the quality of work conditions.

Nevertheless, the demand from social enterprises for qualified workers seems to be accompanied by a progressive improvement in work conditions. This trend varies depending on the type of organization under consideration (size, goods sector that it operates in, market position, level of modernization, organizational culture). This means that the processes of change and evolution – also prompted by the quality standards required by public regulations – have not had the same type of impact on all of the existent enterprises. This phenomenon is due to the progressive – but not yet complete – professionalization of the staff working within the social enterprises. Over the last decades, processes have come about that have had different effects on the social enterprises.

While risking oversimplifying matters, a distinction could nevertheless be made between the following periods and enterprises:

- in a first instance or initial phase, volunteers form the main part of the workers present in the organizations; the different types of processes and activities present within them are entirely entrusted to volunteers, who have mainly trained on the ground and through their experience in the association;
- in a second instance/stage, the importance of the presence of volunteers decreases and some technical direction and management functions are entrusted to professionals and employees. The use of qualified education professionals mainly occurs in enterprises that provide specialised services;
- in a third instance/stage, educational services are provided on a stable basis without the use of personnel with specialist qualifications. The achievement of suitable levels of professionalism is entrusted to on-the-job training;
- in a more advanced stage, we see the start of qualification requirements and structured human resource policies and management processes in response to the need for personnel of the quality expected for the services provided. In this instance, internal processes start to be implemented (no longer imposed by the funding parties' standards) for selection, career development, and the education professionals' appraisal.

The attention towards the education professionals' qualifications goes beyond Human Resources management and arises in response to forecasts of labour demand for the social economy and, therefore, future needs for the training institutions to offer skills.

The picture that emerges from our study shows the distribution of the organizations considered in each of the five instances/stages of develop-

ment set out above. This distribution does not necessarily correspond to a scale of assessment, but rather to a different level of structuring and of economic and entrepreneurial growth.

In seeking to improve the correspondence between the supply and demand for education and training professionals, it is necessary to take into account the processes of evolution of the social enterprises and the specific working conditions in which the various professional figures are employed. The existence of poor working conditions, short-term contracts and marginal rates of pay is not just typical of the social economy, nor of all social enterprises, nor of all the job descriptions. In terms of the workers' further education, these context-based elements need to be taken into account and the people need to develop skills to deal with the negative effects that working conditions can have on individual growth prospects.

At the same time, there are other working conditions that characterise the role of education and training professional in social enterprises and that put the skills they own to the test. In particular, I am referring to:

- relationships with the local area and local networks, which makes it necessary and opportune to know how to read and be constantly open to what is happening in the society and institutions outside the enterprise. Public policies are a source for new intervention opportunities. Social phenomena give rise to new challenges. Different social actors, competitors and potential partners become a resource to improve the quality of day-to-day work;
- the tendency to fairly distribute the enterprise's profits. This may reduce the competitive drive, but it enhances the cooperative dimension in the workplace, the quality of relationships and teamwork. Cooperating and working together as a team in order to achieve results in the provision of services is a fundamental aspect for social enterprise workers;
- the entrepreneurial responsibility that gives each worker an ethical and economic role. Each worker shares the collective moral responsibility for all arrangements to address any harm and wrongdoing associated with the actions of groups acting inside the social enterprise. Each worker also shares the responsibility of knowing how to attract new resources and optimize results in terms of the times, costs and performance of the single activities provided;
- involvement in managing democratic dynamics and in governance of the social enterprise. The governance structure of social enterprises

is characterized by democratic rules. The system sees decision-making power decentralized across the organization's membership to avoid the emergence of controlling single members. At the same time, particular attention is given to ensuring that a plurality of interests is represent-

ed within the governance structure of the organization. The decision-making process is still substantially governed by the 'one member, one vote rule', which breaks the correlation between capital investment and control, which generally characterises for-profit corporations. [...] The multi-stakeholder nature of the governance structures of social enterprises may increase transaction costs and instability but these issues are often counterbalanced by a more structured and less market-oriented system of governance (Noya, 2009: 33).

Working in a context regulated by a similar governance model requires the education and training professionals to know the rules and methods for governing a social enterprise and the specific decision-making processes.

### 5. *Contradictory Trends*

A further influence on the evolution of the demand and the identity of the education professionals is the capacity of some professional groups to activate protectionist mechanisms and to have the public authorities issue regulations relating to quality standards and requirements, connected not so much to the competences effectively possessed, but to their qualifications. They are negative trends because they tend to create hierarchies and privileges inspired by 'credentialism'.

Guaranteeing an adequate skill supply means ensuring that the actors on the job market know 'who knows what', i.e. having a system to know what skills, and not just qualifications, are actually possessed. Research (Collins, 1979) has shown how qualification systems can be more of a barrier for the admission of a social class than a function for identifying actual skills. The main purpose of high qualifications is not necessarily related to the acquired skills, but rather to the selection of new members with the aim of limiting access to some specific professions. Since what unites the components of a social class is a common culture, education plays a considerable role in transmitting and consolidating this culture, regardless of the professional capabilities transmitted.

«The existence of jobs with higher level qualifications can lead to a *credentialism* rather than a more skilled work force» (Dockery, Miller, 2012: 5). All this has happened and is happening through the establishment of professional associations that aspire to work like professional orders. They do not deal with the cultural and moral protection and control of their members' activities, but rather introduce forms of monopoly over slices of the labour market and professions. In order to obtain this result, they tend to exalt and enhance some clinical functions to the detriment of the educational function. In this piece, I prefer not to deal with this phenomenon, in absolute countertendency to the Bolkestein Directive

(«In order to create a real internal services market, the Services Directive aims to facilitate freedom of establishment for providers in other Member States and the freedom of provision of services between Member States»). The directive on services in the internal market (commonly referred to as the Bolkestein Directive) is an EU law aiming at establishing a single market for services within the European Union. It sets out to promote a more open market, which is, however, accompanied in parallel by an improvement in public services and respect for consumers' rights to a high quality of services.

Moreover, Weber also defined this phenomenon well when he stated:

The freedom of the market is typically limited by sacred taboos or through monopolistic consociations of status groups which render exchange with outsiders impossible. Directed against these limitations we find the continuous onslaught of the market community, whose very existence constitutes a temptation to share in the opportunities for gain.

And then:

All other appropriations, especially those of customers or those of monopolies by status groups, are destroyed. This state of affairs, which we call free competition, lasts until it is replaced by new, this time capitalistic, monopolies, which are acquired in the market through the power of property.

And lastly:

The sacred, status and merely traditional bonds, which have gradually come to be eliminated, constituted restrictions on the formation of rational market prices; the purely economically conditioned monopolies are, on the other hand, their ultimate consequence. The beneficiary of a monopoly by a status group restricts, and maintains his power against, the market, while the rationalist-economic rules through the market. We shall designate those interest groups which are enabled by formal market freedom to achieve power, as market-interest groups (Weber, 1961: 638 ff.).

## *6. The Vocational Family of Education and Training Professionals*

Today past, present and future coexist within the myriad of organizations that operate in the social economy. We find a sector of the labour market that is highly diversified and in a phase of rapid change. Nevertheless, the process of professionalisation underway in the world of the social economy has led to the appearance of some main sets of professional roles, with clear elements distinguishing them.



What unites the family of education and training professionals is the function of providing services and education and training opportunities to increase people's skills in various moments of their lives and to develop the organizations' possessed knowledge.

Four main vocational roles can be distinguished within the family, depending on whether they are oriented towards:

- provision of educational activities (for example: crèches, training for immigrants, training for the disabled in production cooperatives);
- management of educational services (for example: residential care for persons at risk, career guidance services);
- strategic conceptualisation and HR planning (for example: consortia HR management office, HR officer, HR executive, HRD specialist, learning and development manager, organization development specialist, HRD director);
- planning, research, development and implementation of the social enterprise's training policies (for example: workforce development policy analyst, research officer, programme manager, accreditation manager, career development facilitator, workforce development specialist, research associate, continuing education and training specialist, career development specialist, deputy workforce development director, research fellow, workforce development director).

This first classification only (table 1) provides an initial approximation. In each of these spheres, a range of roles can be identified which vary depending on whether they operate at a:

- strategic level, with tasks to direct and put together activities and services;
- management level, with specialist functions to orientate programmes and projects, or with functions to implement programmes, projects and activities;
- operational level, with purely executive and support functions.

This distinction can also serve to define the professionals' initial training pathway.

Table 1 – Roles of education and training professionals in the social economy according to level.

Levels	Educators	Service Managers	Human Resources Managers	Organizational and Human Resources Development
Strategic				
Management				
Operational				

The combination of vocational spheres and levels gives a sort of map of professions and sets them out according to possible vertical or horizontal career paths.

These possibilities exist the more evolved and structured the organization in question is. With regard to recognising the educational role of the different profiles, a determining factor is the training culture present within the organizations and the local, regional and national systems. In each of the four vocational spheres under consideration, the specific educational aspect is the result of a slow and hindered evolution. The obstacles derive from multiple factors, amongst which:

- prevalence of a welfare rather than educational culture;
- scarcity of workers with suitable levels of professionalisation and consequent need to turn to the skills available on the market;
- strong pressure to limit the organization's costs, presence of unsuitable work conditions and a weakened ability to attract the best professionals.

#### *7. A Model for the Education and Training Professionals' Initial Training*

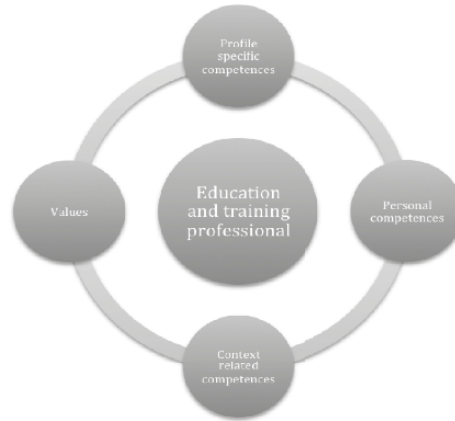
Starting from the map of educational professions present in the social economy, we can therefore distinguish between four different types of training pathways depending on whether they are aimed at figures employed as: training providers (formal, non-formal and informal), accompanying/complementary service providers (from career guidance, to information, coaching, etc.), HR managers or organizational development managers.

By identifying a hierarchy of four vocational spheres it is easier to define the specific knowledge and skills for the different professional figures. This knowledge and these competences make it possible to set out the basic professional profile, but do not help to identify the skills needed to work in the organizational contexts of the social economy: we know what a crèche worker has to know, but not which skills are needed to be able to act in the particular contexts of the social economy (which we outlined in the previous sections). Hence, alongside the specialist skills, it is necessary to identify both a personal and a context-related skillset.

The model adopted by the Singapore Government Institute for Adult Learning provides a useful reference for education and training professionals in the social economy to be integrated with the various context-related values and elements characterizing the social economy organizations.

The model is represented in the following diagram:

Figure 1 – Model adopted by the Singapore Government Institute for Adult Learning.



Below is a description of the contents of the various competence areas.

*a. Competences specific to the professional figure*

The figure of education and training professional involves a skillset with common functions relating to:

- analysis of training needs of customers and in organizational settings;
- delivery of educational and training interventions;
- design of learning programmes;
- development of learning programmes;
- assessment of learners and evaluation of educational and training interventions.

The figure of accompanying/complementary service provider involves a skillset with common functions relating to:

- curriculum and programme management to ensure their effectiveness in developing and evaluating learners' competence;
- management of quality of education and training system and processes to ensure consistent delivery of training products and services, meet accreditation, compliance, benchmark/standards and seek continuous improvements;
- administration of training operations, manpower and resources, from pre- to post-training activities, to facilitate the conduct of training and/or assessment;
- management and use of technology to enhance the effectiveness of training delivery and efficiency of training processes and procedures;
- leadership and management aspects of running a training organization to ensure its sustainability and growth as a business entity.

The figure of HR manager involves a skillset with common functions relating to:

- planning and execution of cross-functional human resource development work;
- development of employees' capabilities, skills and knowledge to meet business, organizational and personal goals;
- organizational development. This functional area covers processes involving enterprise-wide efforts to enhance organization effectiveness through productivity gain and return on investments of human capital-related initiatives;
- design and implementation of integrated strategies, systems or programmes that facilitate the identification, development and management of talents across the organization.

The figure of organizational development manager involves a skillset with common functions relating to:

- enforcement of quality assurance mechanism to support quality delivery of continuing education and training (CET) programmes to the workforce which may include accreditation of organization's system/courseware to meet national, industrial, sectoral or professional group level requirements;
- employment facilitation services offered to any individual or group of any age, of diverse backgrounds, at any point of their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their continuing professional development (CPD) and career development;
- use of workforce development research and analysis results to (a) inform policy and system design and development as well as (b) evaluate systems and policies;
- conduct of workforce development research and analysis to inform policy development and decision-making;
- creation of workforce development structures and professional documents under the national or sectoral frameworks as instruments for human capital development;
- implementation of programmes or initiatives, aligned to CET policy direction, to facilitate workforce capability development through close partnerships with industry stakeholders at the industry or national levels.

*b. Personal competences for holistic development*

The competences at the basis of the professionalism of the family of education and training professionals and which enable horizontal mobility are:

- aspiring to be continuously involved in meaningful and gainful employment;
- having mutual respect for different people groups while understanding their various backgrounds and unique perspectives in a globalized setting;

- being committed to meeting current and future needs of the evolving marketplace;
- being evolutionary in improving and renewing personal skills, abilities and attitudes and in building a network of contacts that will facilitate professional practice, and encourage growth and best practices in individual areas of expertise;
- being innovative in adopting and adapting new and innovative ideas that will increase performance quality;
- being principled, with highest standards of integrity and objectivity, providing reliable, clear and relevant information.

*c. Values*

The values at the basis of the professionalism of the family of education and training professionals in social enterprises can be listed as follows:

- service to community / primacy of persons over profit;
- empowerment and transformation of individuals or communities to become more invested with power, access and authority;
- civic engagement / active citizenry / volunteering;
- economic and social values and mission as overarching purpose of the social economy;
- profit (re)distribution by the (re)investment of profits back into the social economy organization;
- autonomous management / collective ownership and self-management of social economy organizations;
- democracy, democratic governance and decision-making, equal access to power within the organization;
- 'third sector' and culture of solidarity.

*d. Context-related competences*

To exercise the profession of trainer in social economy contexts, as has been said, competences are needed that foster:

- relationships with the local area and local networks;
- cooperative dimension of the work environment, quality of relationships and teamwork;
- shared entrepreneurial responsibility;
- commitment to managing democratic dynamics and governance of the social enterprise and knowledge of rules and methods for the governance of a social enterprise and specific features of the decision-making processes.

The division into four areas does not necessarily mean that different training modules are needed. The most effective training is that which combines the various technical-professional, personal, ethical and context-related dimensions.

### 8. *The Limits of Continuing Training*

This type of challenge cannot be dealt with by the continuing training of the personnel in service in the social economy.

Continuing training is performing a strategic role in responding to the demand to bring competences up to standard in a sector in which numerous enterprises, in the past, would employ staff without considering skills, or simply on the basis of European Qualification Framework-EQF 5 or lower professional qualifications. The study promoted by the Scottish Qualification Authority shows how the demand for continuing training has already been a matter for the attention of social enterprises for over a decade:

In 81% of organisations, employees/volunteers undertake training to comply with statutory obligations, 69% undertake training related to organisational capacity and development, and 75% undertake training related to service delivery. Approximately a sixth of respondents stated that their employees/volunteers undertake 'other' types of training, and when asked to specify further, the following types emerged from 18 respondents:

- Personal development skills (5 respondents)
- Building basic employability skills, confidence building, stress management
- Assessor and verifier awards
- British sign language and deaf awareness
- IT skills
- Management skills
- Qualifications required to comply with regulation/legislation.
- (BiGGAR Economics, Training Activities and Engagement with Qualifications in the Social Economy: A Summary, Glasgow, SQA-Scottish Qualifications Authority, 2006: 11).

Continuing training, as shown by the topics dealt with and the limited amount of time invested by the single employees, can perform a role in the person's growth, but, as a rule, it does not replace basic further education. It can help to support development by expanding areas of competence. For specialist competences, the efficacy of the continuing training is conditioned by the learning outcomes of the initial training.

### 9. *Professionals for HR Growth and Development in Social Enterprises*

Before concluding, I would like to devote my attention to two professional figures who are fundamental for the development of the social economy: the HR growth and development officers and the directors or managers. It is on these figures that the atmosphere, culture and de-

velopment outlook of both the enterprise and the people depend. With the increase in the size of the social enterprises and the quality of the services provided, processes have begun to create structured policies for human resource management and development. Social enterprises now count more qualified and salaried professionals, obliging them first of all to observe their labour rights and then, in a more advanced phase, to deal with their growth and development (Giraud, Leclair, 2015). It is a process that is still in the initial stages, and it is hindered by an only partially structured organizational culture, inspired by self-management in an informal economy framework. The challenges posed by the growth in turnovers, staff numbers and programmes make organized management of the human resources indispensable for the life and identity of the social enterprises to evolve in a congruent and effective manner.

There are some basic functions that require close monitoring.

- Distinction of roles between those who have the task of ‘social entrepreneur’ and those who pay attention to respecting the rules of labour law. The two roles are not always in harmony, above all in a work-intensive economic sector with a widespread presence of ‘unpaid’ forms of work. The continuance of unfavourable work conditions for workers generates conflicts and undermines the quality of the services provided. The human resources manager is the main guarantor that decent working conditions exist. On the other hand, the entrepreneur is exposed to contradictory pressures.
- Selection and recruitment of workers. In complex organizations this requires professionalism and the knowledge of suitable processes and methods. It must be possible to base the hirings on solid analyses of mid-term developmental needs and not on giving jobs to unemployed people. Staff selection must be based on structured processes, mainly driven by the objective assessment of the candidates’ qualities. The entrepreneurs do not have the skills to fill this function alone.
- Management of induction programmes (tutoring, mentoring, placement interviews, development pathways, etc.). This enables rapid integration of the employees, reducing the time required by the new staff to achieve full autonomy and boosting their motivation. If this process is not well monitored, this can negatively affect their insertion in the group, sharing of values, culture, how the organization works and can lead to high staff turnover.
- Management of growth and professional development interviews and then staff training courses. These form the main incentive – together with the system of financial rewards – to keep the best employees and ensure improvements among the poor performers.
- Career development. This is a stimulus that is as important as it is difficult to manage in small social enterprises that are not part of networks or consortia. Taking care of prospects for professional development

allows staff motivation to remain high and to reduce turnover and the loss of skills. This can be done through careful management of the single people, by acting on their tasks and working conditions and helping them build and develop a project for their personal growth and development.

- Management of organizational change and the clear definition of roles. This is a vital factor for growing enterprises. This problem is posed by increased participation in joint ventures, and partnerships created for project management. It requires constant monitoring and transparent organizational models and role distribution.
- Working hours management and resource planning. This has become imperative following the reduction in public spending on the social economy sector. It guarantees the maintenance of suitable service quality levels.
- Management of staff turnover and transmission of key competences belonging to each social enterprise. Preventive management is needed in order to avoid staff turnover which leads to the organization's loss of know-how. HR planning helps to prevent this and it can also prepare professional development pathways by defining know-how development, replacement, and transmission monitoring strategies. HR planning also studies changes in social and institutional demand and translates this into business plans to supply the necessary skills in the short- and mid-term.

These basic functions must be allocated to the Human Resources Manager. If monitored by the General Manager or the CEO of the social enterprise, this leads to a hybrid figure that can only be justified in emergency situations and in small-size undertakings. This does not mean that the CEO does not deal with the people's growth. On the contrary, he or she is responsible for defining the growth strategies, but not the measures for their implementation. The glossary by Sybille Mertens and Charlotte Moreau contains the following definition:

[...] the manager is the person who is in charge of others and is responsible for the timely and correct execution of actions. He (or she) works with and through other people, allocating resources, in the effort to achieve goals [...]. It is a person with an executive or supervisory function within an organization. In a social enterprise, the manager is the person who is paid to manage the social enterprise; he (or she) is usually not the elected representative [...].

### *10. Training Managers in the Social Economy*

The managerial training of social entrepreneurs is an area that is now subject to more attention from both the public and private sectors. The



training activities are aimed at young people who have already finished a higher education programme and their objective is to add elements of knowledge and competences pertaining to the social economy sector. There now seem to be more structured interventions in this field. Most management schools (Harvard Business School, Oxford-Saïd Business School, Cambridge-Judge Business School, Duke-Fuqua School of Business, HEC-Paris, ESSEC-Paris, HEC-ULg in Belgium, the University of Trento Masters in Social Enterprise Management) offer training programmes on the management of social enterprises.

The HEC-ULg specialist course on the *Management of Social Enterprises*, for example, gives students:

- an *analysis and management capacity*: to manage the major functions of an enterprise, understand the various forms of economic organizations and their roles and specificity, analyse and anticipate societal challenges;
- *operational tools*: to know the (economic, political, legal) environment in which enterprises operate (be it at the regional, national or European level), learn managerial practices of social entrepreneurship, master the tools designed to take into account social and environmental concerns;
- a *relational network*: to meet the main actors of social entrepreneurship, network with similar experiences in Europe and elsewhere.

In the case of the Trento Masters in Social Enterprise Management<sup>2</sup>, the course contents deal with governance, management and planning, related to the specific context of the social enterprise.

The assumption that managing a social enterprise draws on specific competences is responded to by training that combines social objectives and economic constraint.

However, there is an aspect that must be strengthened through training too, namely, the manager's capacities to promote social innovation through the evolution of social enterprises. Social innovation is a central task for the manager of social enterprises. The sense of the social enterprise's existence derives from the capacity to constantly interpret social dissatisfaction (Mulgan, 2006) and to transform it into soft and hard solutions that improve people's daily lives, and in particular those of the less favoured sectors of the population. This involves innovation in the processes, products, market and organization, which the manager has to be able to sense, encourage and develop. They are capacities that have given rise to micro-credit projects, social start-ups linked to new technologies, crowdfunding, even Wikipedia. The study by the Mercator

<sup>2</sup> GIS Master-Gestione di Imprese Sociali, <http://www.unitn.it/ateneo/852/master-gis-master-in-gestione-di-impresa-sociali> (03/2015).

Forscherverbund (2012) shows how social entrepreneurs often launch promising innovations. These innovations emerge not only as start-ups (social entrepreneurs), but also as well-established entities such as welfare organizations (social intrapreneurs). In Germany, examples of these quasi-markets are the care system, youth welfare services and the health system.

Responsibility for the social enterprise's innovative strategies lies with its directors, precisely because innovation depends on their entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial capacities.

Innovation is the product of the absorption of external knowledge originating from customers, competitors and providers. However, it is also generated by the creation of new knowledge, processes which are produced within the organizations and promoted by their intrapreneurs. Thanks to the training potential of living and workplaces, individuals and groups can participate in training actions that foster the production of new knowledge. Research has shown that

learning-intensive forms of work organisation and workplace learning – in addition to other, more formal modes of learning – correlate with the innovation performance of countries, based on the innovation performance of companies [...] all these forms of learning correlate significantly with the innovation performance of the individual countries (Cedefop, 2012: 88).

Organizational models that favour the growth of innovation ability stand out from the rest because they adopt a model of 'discretionary learning' in which «the expertise of individual professionals [is] characterised by high levels of autonomy at work, learning and problem solving, task complexity, self-assessment of quality of work and, to a lesser extent, autonomous teamwork» (OECD, 2010). This type of organization – more than any other model: lean production, Taylorist, 'traditional' – has the capacity to make 'lead innovators' grow. The choice of models and their implementation in social economy organizations depends on the capacities of their leaders.

«The development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations» depends on the policies adopted and put into practice by the company. Social innovation

represents new responses to pressing social demands, which affect the process of social interactions. It is aimed at improving human well-being. Social innovations are innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. They are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance individuals' capacity to act (European Commission-Directorate General Regional and Urban Policy and DG Employment, Social affairs and Inclusion, 2013b: 6).

### *11. Conclusions. Evolution and Training of the Modern Social Enterprise Manager*

Some years have passed since the threshold of the fourth industrial revolution was crossed (*Industry 4.0*).

The first – generated by the introduction of water or steam-driven looms – exhausted its innovative capacity at the end of the nineteenth century when, with the advent of mass production models based on the division of labour and fed by electrical energy, the second industrial revolution began. The introduction of electronics and robotics would then jumpstart the third industrial revolution at the beginning of the 1970s, only to be replaced – less than half a century later – by new production models based on cyberphysics and the integration of intelligence into all industrially produced objects, as well as into the spheres of life and work, including the social economy.

Today, in the context of world competition, our nations' hope of maintaining and developing the acquired levels of well-being is entrusted to the capacity to mobilize the energies needed to be part of and to lead the fourth industrial revolution. We expect the leaders and managers that will be working in the next few decades to make new champions of innovation emerge from the enterprises of all sizes and lead a collective surge around the new social project. Innovation – that which is already available and that which is expected even more so – is enabling new social economy models to be developed and this can boost potential optimization in the production sectors and create new services in important sectors – such as mobility, health, climate and energy.

With this new state of affairs, everything can/must become smarter, starting from the places of industrial production and the cities. 'Smart factories' are intelligent production systems with a new capacity to distribute tasks between different plants and work in networks to make intelligent, ultra-high quality, top-precision, customized products. New intelligent organizations are developing in harmony with the 'smart cities', where they can live and grow, with their intelligent environments and eco-sustainable and resource-efficient production.

The novelty underlying the fourth industrial revolution, however, goes beyond the boundaries of robotics, the Internet of Things, hybrid objects and the eco-factory. The creation and use of innovation depends on people's intelligence, and more refined qualities are requested than in the previous industrial eras. Today we need people with a great capacity of initiative, all-rounders. They must be capable, for example, of collecting and interpreting the great mass of information produced by intelligently monitoring the new production tools and, therefore, they must be able to perform autonomous decision-making processes in real time so as to optimize the activity of the organizations that they belong to.

To guide this type of change in the social economy too, new managers are needed who are capable of quickly making intelligence break out in the workplace and in everyday life.

The managers of the past had to know how to deal with finance, production tools and work. If there was harmony between these three factors, the organizations performed well.

Today that is no longer enough. Present-day organizations, smart factories, are cognitive systems that produce new know-how and live off knowledge. Their success is based on the capacity to produce innovation and technological progress through their economic activity. Knowledge is production's new added factor, and the modern manager has to know how to boost this together with other production factors. If the organization does not constantly produce new knowledge, nor will it be able to absorb any. Innovation is not imported, it is produced above all inside the organizations, but it can be enriched by external contributions. 'Non-innovating' organizations have little probability of benefitting from or transforming into value those innovations produced by others, whether they be research centres or other enterprises.

Managers who can keep abreast of the times must be able to ensure their organizations are in the condition to constantly produce new product, process, organization and market knowledge. This capacity is measured both by the continual improvement of the organization and by the growth of the people who work there.

A modern manager must be able to make his or her people and organization grow, while reaping maximum benefit from a context of increasing globalisation that also concerns the social economy. In the new world contexts, the most significant change that is causing great transformations in the role of manager is the passage from *trading goods* to *trading tasks*. From a globalization process that concentrated on optimizing the advantages deriving from international agreements for the free exchange of goods, we have gone to delocalisation and then to the creation of the global value chain. In other words, now production is organized in such a way that the phases in the process and the relative tasks are distributed around the world depending on the different places' ability to ensure the best conditions for their implementation.

This increases the interdependence between national economies and shifts the competition to the terrain of the people and organization's skills, to their capacity to attract the individuals that ensure the best performances. Producing and attracting talents has become a key component in the new management strategy.

This is why the modern manager must look to the world to understand how to attract activities and competences and how to keep them. This has placed the manager at the centre of the dynamics for an organization's growth.

In the nineteenth century, the engineer, the man of industry, was the engine behind the industrial revolution. Later, the shift of the economy towards the tertiary and financial sectors placed the businessman at the centre of the dynamics. Neither of these figures seems adequate for the new scenarios. Today, in all the industrialized countries, they are exposed to strong drives for change; they are being asked to change profile and acquire new, more transversal competences which unite expertise with ingenuity, agility, responsibility and influence. In substance, the old champions of economic growth are being asked for qualities that are part of the sphere of managerialism and that belong to and are distinctive to the new manager. This is happening because the distinctions between various strategic professional figures are becoming less clear. They all have to possess a series of qualities that in the past were only required of managers. In this sense, the model figure of the fourth industrial revolution is indeed the modern manager, without whom the system just does not turn.

While in the past, in many cases, managers were trained on the ground, today this is no longer either possible or convenient. They are a complex figure, whose success is based not just on a propensity towards the art of commanding, but increasingly on the possession of knowledge and aptitudes that can be acquired through serious initial and continuing training which enables the manager to know how to produce more innovation in the organizations and people in a context of growing globalisation.

It is through management education that managers can develop the will to look at what is happening outside the borders, in order to acquire resources, ideas, efficiency and services.

The quality of the modern manager's training is also measured by its contents, its capacity to form managers, through teaching that can propose and deal with 'global contents', by providing methods to read and interpret the diversities between multiple national and regional realities. The training must teach the manager that all knowledge acquired on basic disciplines such as management, economics, finance, marketing, the information system and accounting must be reread in light of the cultural, legislative and regulatory, political, economic and financial diversities at work in a globalized world. For a manager to be open to the world, he or she must also learn how to modify disciplinary knowledge according to the world-scale variations in the contexts and people worked with.

Nevertheless, despite the changing contexts and the growth in opportunities, the fundamental quality of a modern manager is still to *know how to build the best team of talents around him or herself with the necessary qualities to deal with the impelling challenges.*