

THE COMPETENCE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP. A MULTIDIMENSIONAL COMPETENCE APPROACH

LOREDANA ORHEI

Abstract

This paper is aimed at presenting a theoretical definition for the construct of social entrepreneurship as competence for the social economy in Europe. This definition is part of a study that was designed and developed in two phases. This paper will present only the results of the first one: the formulation of a hypothetical model for social entrepreneurship as competence in social economy. The formulation is based on specifications of the concepts of 'competence' and 'social entrepreneurship', as a result of extensive literature review, and analysis of theoretical considerations. The result is a model that was constructed on the multidimensional holistic approach to competence, using Austin e. al. (2006) definition of social entrepreneurship to describe the outcomes of the competence, within the framework of the social economy in Europe.

The next step will be validation of the construct with a selected target group based in Romania and the Netherlands as geographical regions within the social economy in Europe.

The Concept of Social Entrepreneurship

A theoretical view on the concept of social entrepreneurship

The interest in social entrepreneurship has increased since the first article written on this subject, "The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur" by Leadbeater in 1997. This could be, according to Martin (2006) a result of "the increase in competition in the welfare sector and the limited resources that are available for the actors of this sector [...]" as well as "the drawback of traditional financing systems and creation of an entrepreneurial mindset and raise in inequality derived from the globalization process" Martin (2006, p. 48). Organizations (in the third sector) no longer need to use local resources, but can explore options in any corner of the world (Simms, 2009). In the face of global competition, social entrepreneurship could be the answer in the form of an instrument for the third sector. There seems, according to Short, Moss & Lumpkin (2009) to be little agreement about a universal definition for the concept. Moreover, "the existing literature is the contribution of professionals as well theoreticians from diverse domains, non profit, for profit, governmental or combination between the both, so a unique definition was not possible." (Short, Moss & Lumpkin, 2009, p. 161).

In their attempt to create a common view on the concept, several authors have classified existing material. Cukier et all. (2009) concluded that so far there three levels of analysis in looking at social entrepreneurship: a micro level (focus on the social entrepreneur), a

mezzo level (entrepreneurial organizations), and a macro level (the economic impact of the concept) (Cukier et al., 2009). This view is complemented by a classification given by Bacq & Janssen (2008). They explain that the literature on social entrepreneurship can be summarized as describing the concept as person, process and organization in a variety of definitions. What is important to mention is that most of the definitions see social entrepreneurship as a construct based and used in the non profit/third sector. The mainstream views on social entrepreneurship include:

- A business or entity in the non profit/third sector and/or social enterprise Boschee (1998); Dees (1998), Alvord, Brown & Letts (2002); Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern (2003) Seelos & Mair (2004);
- Instrument of innovation Leadbeater (1997); Ashoka (2006); Dees (2001); Spear (2006); Austin et al (2006);
- An instrument for wellbeing or/and solving social problems Thompson, Alvy & Lees, (2000); Dees & Battle-Anderson (2003); Alvord, Brown & Letts, (2004); Mair & Marti (2006), Cukier (2009);
- A form of entrepreneurship in the social sector Lasprogata & Cotton (2003); Cochran (2007);
- A practice based on ethical consideration Tan et al. (2005). Jared Sapienza & Bowie (2009).

Even if at a first glance the views seem diverse, there seems to be some similarities in the content. Bacq & Jansen (2008) made an analysis of existing works and definitions of social entrepreneurship, and came up with three conclusions regarding similarities:

1. A central element that appears common to all the definitions of social entrepreneurship as a process is: the social mission;
2. Further the two authors observe that in regard to the view based on an organization, there is a strong and needed link between the (social) mission of the organization and its activities;
3. And last, they notice that there is a need to differentiate the social and the commercial entrepreneurship (Bacq & Jansen, 2008).

The need for a common view on social entrepreneurship resulted in attempts to find a clear cut transatlantic divide in the way of approaching and defining social entrepreneurship (by schools of thought). This assumption was based on the way Europe and the United States consider the government's role in the third sector and consequently, and therefore social entrepreneurship's role.

So far, research trends of the concept have been classified into two geographical areas: North America and Europe (Bacq & Janssen, 2008). The schools of thoughts associated with the two geographical areas are: Social Innovation and Social Enterprise Schools of Thought in the North American approach and EMES for Europe (Bacq &

Janssen, 2008). Later in 2010, the UK Approach was added to the Europe stream by Hoogendoorn, Pennings & Thurik (2010). At the end of their research, Bacq & Janssen (2008), concluded that the results presented little agreement on views on social entrepreneurship within the American continent. Also there are a lot of similarities (within the American continent) to the European views. Still, the two continent differ in the fact that the European view does not focus on defining the *social entrepreneur* and *social entrepreneurship*. Although it is not specified as such, social entrepreneurship in Europe is associated with the existence of the *social enterprise*, the organization, rather than the individual or process.

A summary of the characteristics of the schools of thought on the two continents is presented below. The reference is to Hoogendoorn, Pennings & Thurik (2010) research, a more recent update of Bacq & Janssen (2008).

Distinctions	American approach		European approach	
	Social Innovation School	Social Enterprise School	EMES	UK
Observation unit	Person	Organization	Organization	Organization
Link between services and mission	Direct	Direct/Indirect	Direct	Direct/Indirect
Legal structure	No constrains	Non profit	Some constrains	No constrains
Innovation	Perquisite	Not underlined	Not underlined	Not underlined
Profit distribution	No constrains	Constrains	Limited constrains	Limited constrains
Source of income	Not underlined	Perquisite	Not underlined	Important
Governance	Not underlined	Not underlined	Multiple stakeholder involvement underlined	Multiple stakeholders involvement recommended

Table 1 *The four schools of thought on social entrepreneurship, Adapted from Hoogendoorn Penning, & Thurik, 2010*

Social entrepreneurship in non profit and social economy perspective

As a concept originating in the third sector on different sides of the Atlantic, the discussion on social entrepreneurship is influenced by the definition of the sector on both continents. The term third sector "has mostly been used in the English-speaking worlds to describe the private non-profit sector that is largely composed of associations and foundations" (Chaves & Monzon, 2005, p. 29). This resulted in a non profit view of the third sector. The nonprofit view, "covers private organizations (charities and US philanthropic foundations), which have articles of law forbidding them to distribute surpluses to those who founded them or who control or finance them." (Chaves & Monzon, 2005, p. 30) It is worth mentioning that, so far, most of the existing literature on the concept of social entrepreneurship is based on the nonprofit view.

The term 'third sector' is also used in Continental Europe to define the social economy (Chaves & Monzon, 2005). The social economy includes: associations, foundation, cooperatives, mutual societies, social enterprises and other hybrid organizations.

Initiatives to better describe the third sector were done both for the nonprofit and the social economy view. For the nonprofit view, John Hopkins University has made great efforts to analyze the organizations that are included in this sector in the 1990's. This resulted in five key criteria that define nonprofit organization, formulated in a 'structural-operational definition'. These criteria have been since then used on a world wide scale as reference to study the third sector and has been included in the United Nations Handbook on Non-profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts (2003).

The social economy approach to the third sector is based on the Charter of Principles of the Social Economy, promoted by Social Economy Europe, the EU level representative institution for the social economy organizations. The charter contains seven key criteria that define the sector. The Europe Commission also refers to the entities in the social economy as social economy enterprises.

The social economy view shares four out of the five criteria of the non profit view, but differentiates itself by two criteria that are not presented in the first view: the democratic control by membership (does not concern foundations as they have no members) and the combination of the interests of members/users and/or the general interest. Also, the non profit view considers the non-distribution of the profit as mandatory, which is not the case in the social economy view. What is more, "the social economy does not just see people in need as the passive beneficiaries of social philanthropy, it also raises citizens to the status of active protagonists of their own destiny" (Arpinte, 2010, p. 142).

A summary of the common elements and difference in criteria for the two approaches is presented in the table below:

Resemblances	Differences
Private - institutionally separate from government	The nonprofit distributing criteria (non profit view) - organisations may make profits but these must be ploughed back into the organisation's main mission and not distributed to the owners, members, founders or governing bodies of the organisation
Formally organized - institutional structure and presence	Democracy criteria (social economy view) - democratic control by membership (does not concern foundations as they have no members)
Self-governing - to control their own activities. Autonomous management and independence from public authorities	The serving people criteria (social economy view) - primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital as well as the combination of the interests of members/users and/or the general interest
Voluntary and freedom of membership	

Table 2 *Differences and resemblances in the criteria of the third sector in the nonprofit and the social economy view*

The social economy approach towards social entrepreneurship

The difference in the approach towards the third sector (the non profit and social economy view) resulted in different approaches towards the study of social entrepreneurship.

The concept of social entrepreneurship in the social economy in Europe is associated with the existence of social enterprises. The term social enterprise " is American in origin and distinguishes from non profits by having moved away from reliance on more traditional forms of income, such as grants, towards a more entrepreneurial and business-like approach to raising revenue." (Arpinte, 2010, p. 154).

Although there are not yet clear and universal definitions for this entity (in Europe), the social enterprise is present in the classification of the social economy organization as a hybrid form. The social enterprise can originate in all types of organizations that create the third sector in Europe (or social economy enterprises): cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, foundations or hybrid social economy entities. This varies by country and it is still subjected to the national law of each European Union member state.

Although considerable national differences exist within Europe in terms of services provided by social enterprises, welfare states, and legal structures, the EMES European Research Network, is at the moment the main body of research of social enterprises in Europe. Based on the UK's definition and view on social enterprises, EMES has established a set of both economic and social criteria to define social enterprises. They are

Economic criteria:

- a) A continuous activity producing goods and/or selling services;
- b) A high degree of autonomy;
- c) A significant level of economic risk;
- d) A minimum amount of paid work (high reliance on volunteers).

Social criteria:

- a) An explicit aim to benefit the community;
- b) An initiative launched by a group of citizens;
- c) A decision-making power not based on capital ownership;
- d) A participatory nature, which involves the various parties affected by the activity;
- e) A limited profit distribution.

Social economy enterprises in Europe represent 2 million enterprises (10% of all European businesses) and employ over 11 million paid employees (6% of the working population of the European Union): out of these, 70% are employed in non-profit associations, 26% in cooperatives and 3% in mutuals. Social economy enterprises are present in almost every sector of the economy (banking, insurance, agriculture, craft, various commercial services, and health and social services etc.) (European Commission, 2011).

At the moment, there is great effort made by the European Commission, to support all forms of small and medium size enterprises (which include the third sector social economy enterprises) to face the challenges arising out of globalization, rapid technological change and global economic down turn.

Social Entrepreneurship as a Multi-Dimensional Approach Competence

The concept of competence

The traces of the concept of 'competency' date back to medieval guilds (McLagan, 1996, p. 40) or even to the Christian scriptures as well as historical writings (Aiken, 1998). 'Competency' and 'competence' find their modern origin and use in law, clinical psychology, with large application also in human resource management and (vocational) education and training.

However, "much of the related literature bemoans the fact that the notion suffers from fuzziness and conceptual confusion." (Sultana, 2009, p. 19). The confusion is regarding the spelling of the word, with no decision whether one could use competence with competences as plural or competency with competencies as plural. There is somewhere an attribution of the term competence to the UK English and the later as US English spelling origin. (Sultana, 2009, p. 19). Also, in the English "the term competence tends to be used interchangeably with knowledge, skills, or ability" (Sultana, 2009, p. 20).

Competency can be found to be defined as „the behaviour that an employee (or an organization) must perform in a given situation in order to achieve high levels of performance" (Woodruffe, 1991, p. 31). Competence is "related to an overall job done well, as measured against a system of minimum standards, and as demonstrated by performance and outputs." (Sultana, 2009, p. 19). According to (Coi, 2005) there is a difference between the two concepts, by underlining that competence is composed of a competency (or a skill), context (domain where the skill is performed) and proficiency level (the level of mastering, e.g. expert). Another view on the difference of competency and competence is presented by (Woodruffe, 1993). The author talks about competence as aspect of a job that can be performed by an individual and competency as behaviour of an individual underpinning competent performance (Woodruffe, 1993).

A similar view is later presented by Manley & Garbett (2000) who consider competence (pl. competences) as job-related, a description of an action, behaviour or outcome that a person should demonstrate in their performance and competency (pl. competencies) as the person's underlying characteristics and qualities that lead to an effective performance on a job. Another view is proposed by Rowe (1995) who defines competence as descri-

bing what people do and competency as how people do it. Based on the views presented above, for the current research, the term competence will be used in the construct of social entrepreneurship. The concept of competence is vast and adequate for the description than competency.

Concept of competence has so far found its use fields like human resource development vocational education and training or general education and philosophical perspective. Due to the fields that use competence as a reference, delimitations in the view of competence was developed. Recent authors make the distinction between personal and occupational competence. While general educational field emphasizes the importance of personal competence, the human resource and management practices in organizations use the view of occupational (professional) to describe needed competences for their employees. Guthrie (2009) describes the difference between the two as follows: "For an individual, personal competence is the greater construct, and occupational competence (a) necessary sub-set" (Guthrie, 2009, p. 24).

Competence modelling is the practice of describing what aspects of competence and what competences are needed for a personal or/and occupational practice. Competence modelling can be based on two methodologies: input and outcome methodology. The input methodology is aimed at describing "assumptions about aptitudes, knowledge and skills which individuals possess" (Mansfield, 2005, p. 24). Models based on input methodology assume that competence is an individual attribute and is prominent in the American literature of competence based movement and management development. The second methodology is the outcome one. This methodology describes aspects of work roles which are not confined to descriptions of individual knowledge and skills. The focus in this case is to describe the whole work roles, elements of roles or outcomes of performance (Mansfield, 2005). An example of the difference between the methodologies is illustrated by (Mansfield, 2005) as:

- Input: Operate a photocopier (a description of a task and implied skills)
- Outcome: Reproduce copies of documents and information (the outcome of the activity)

The two methodologies have over time developed as one dimensional views on competence, since the 1970's in different parts of the world, as based on behaviour, functional or generic descriptions of competence. The recent developments in competence tend to see competence as more than one dimension, as the behaviourist approach included elements from the functional approach, as well the opposite (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005). The original view of all the one dimension approach is very much related to culture and areas of occupation that the authors have addressed. Current titles emphasizes the predominance and the need of a multi-dimensional and holistic models of competencies (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005).

Although there is still not a universal agreement on one dimensional approaches to competence in literature, some authors agree on the number of trends: at least three (McMullan, 2003; Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005; Mulder, Weigel & Collins, 2007; Sultana, 2009).

Winterton & Delamare-Le (2005) revealed differentiation in approaches based on competence-based education. Their work resulted in the delimitation of behaviouristic approach (attributed to the USA literature), a functionalistic approach (in the UK) and a multi-dimensional approach (in France, Germany, Austria). Later Mulder, Weigell, & Collins (2006) identify three traditions of competence and competence research: the behaviourist, the generic approach and the functional approach. The behaviourist approach competence is seen as "an action, behaviour or outcome in a form that is able to be demonstrated, observed and assessed" (McMullan, 2003, p. 285). The view is based on the American tradition of personal competency and theoretically grounded in personality psychology. The generic approach aims to identify the common abilities that explain variations in performance according to Mulder, Weigel & Collins (2007). This view uses broad clusters of abilities or general attributes to define variations in performance (Mulder, Weigel & Collins, 2007). The functionalist approach embraces as reference the work and not the worker, and it's based on "the value of occupationally defined standards ... and their applicability to the workplace" (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005, p. 40). It is based on a 'functional-analysis' and job specific outcomes which are defined in different levels, key roles, units of competence and elements of competence (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996).

The holistic multi-dimensional model

The holistic approach is seen in recent literature as to "have been able to address many of the criticism levelled at earlier models, and to propose adequate schemas on the basis of which useful practices supporting the provision of quality services can be generated" (Sultana, 2009, p. 22).

The most recent construct of a multi-dimensional model for competence was developed by Le Deist and Winterton (2005), based on initial model developed by Cheetham and Chivers (1996; 1998). Le Deist and Winterton (2005) blended the personal and occupational competence and created four dimensions view on competence. The dimensions that compose the model are:

- Cognitive competence: including underpinning theory and concepts as well as informal tacit knowledge gained experientially. Knowledge (know that) is underpinned by understanding (know why);
- Functional competencies (skills or know how): things that a person should be able to do, and to demonstrate;
- Personal competency (behavioural competencies or knowing how to behave): those relatively enduring characteristics of a person that relate to effective or superior performance;

- Meta-competencies: the ability to cope with uncertainty, as well as with learning, learning to learn and reflection.

Three of its dimensions - cognitive, functional and social competence - relate to the familiar knowledge (know 'that'), skills (know 'how') and attitudes (know 'how to behave') that a person possesses both at a personal level as well as occupational. Meta-competence is an overarching form of competence concerned with facilitating the acquisition of the other competencies (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005).

The authors classified the four dimensions into two categories: operational and conceptual. The conceptual dimensions include meta competence and cognitive. The operational dimensions are functional and personal competence. Still the authors believe that the occupational competence tend to include cognitive (conceptual) competence as well as functional (operational) competences. The competences more associated with individual effectiveness are also both meta-competence (as conceptual) competence and personal (operational) competence (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005).

The illustration of their construct can be found in the figure below:

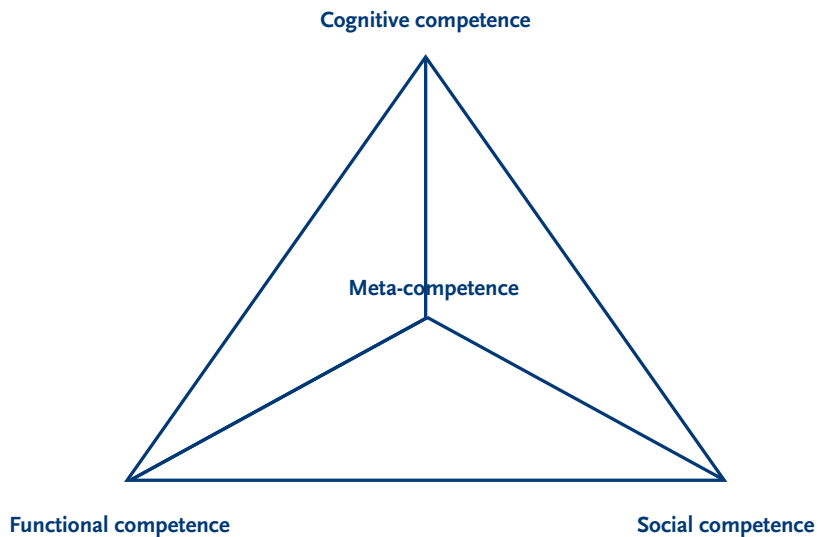


Figure 1 *The multidimensional holistic model for competence. Adapted from Winterton & Delamare-Le (2005)*

The holistic competence model is represented as a tetrahedron in plan view. Meta-competence is presented as an over-arching input that facilitates the acquisition of output competences at the base of the tetrahedron. Practical competences may be thought of as

situated on the faces of the tetrahedron, combining elements of the dimensions of competence in varying proportions. (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005, p. 40).

The biggest contribution of this model was considering occupational/professional competence as a multidimensional construct, that includes personal as well as occupational elements, without separating the person from the occupation, but as complementing. In the description of the competence of social entrepreneurship, due to the vagueness of the concept the multidimensional construct offers liberty for exploration.

The social entrepreneurship competence

In order to describe the construct of social entrepreneurship competence, based on the multi dimensional model, two aspects were taken into consideration. The first is the seven criteria that Charter of Principles of the Social Economy contains. These are:

- 1 The primacy of the individual and the social objective over capital;
- 2 Voluntary and open membership;
- 3 The defence and application of the principle of solidarity and responsibility;
- 4 Autonomous management and independence from public authorities;
- 5 Most of the surpluses are used in pursuit of sustainable development objectives, services of interest to members or the general interest;
- 6 Democratic control by membership (does not concern foundations as they have no members);
- 7 The combination of the interests of members/users and/or the general interest.

These criteria constitute de framework for the existence of social entrepreneurship in the social economy in Europe, therefore they underline where the competence of social entrepreneurship can exist.

The second aspect taken into consideration is the outcome of what the competence of social entrepreneurship will be. For that, existing literature on social entrepreneurship was used. The definition of Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern (2006) was considered the most suited to describe what the competence of social entrepreneurship should deliver: "an innovative, social value-creating activity that can occur within or across the non-profit, businesses or government sector." (Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006, p. 2)

Output of the competence of social entrepreneurship

Innovative activity output

The concept refers to 'characterized by innovation'. Innovation is "the process of improving an existing product or service and not, as is commonly assumed, the introduction of something better." (License, 2011) or:

"a change in the thought process for doing something, or the useful application of inventions or discoveries. It may refer to incremental, emergent, or radical and revolutionary changes in thinking, products, processes, or organizations." (McKeown, 2008, p. 4)

Innovation thus exists when there is change/something new and/or improvement. What is more, an action/activity is innovative when it is consciously taken (King & Anderson, 2002). In the case of the social entrepreneurship construct, the elements that will be used relating to innovative will be: change consciously taken.

Social activity output

The term social is hard to describe as a lonely concept. Most of the existing definitions containing the word social includes other individuals. An example is the definition given by Webster Dictionary as "relating to human society, the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society" (Merriam-Webster, 2011). A social activity thus can refer to an activity that takes into account other people (or at other people).

"A central element that appears common to all the definitions of social entrepreneurship as a process is: the social mission" (Bacq&Janssen, 2008, p. 12), whether social entrepreneurship is viewed as person, organization or process.

In the case of the social entrepreneurship construct, the elements that will be used relating to social will be: aimed other people.

(Added) value creation activity output

A value creation activity is an action/sum of actions directed at creating a (sur)plus compared to the initial moment.

"Individuals create value by developing novel and appropriate tasks, services, jobs, products, processes, or other contributions perceived to be of value by a target user (e.g., employer, client, customer) relative to the target's needs and when the monetary amount realized for this service is greater than what might be derived from an alternative source producing the same task, service, job, and so forth." (Lepak et al., 2007, p. 183).

Just like innovative activity, there has to be an intention, and almost certainly a conscious decision behind the action/activity. In order to better visualise added value, an existing model, created by Vinke (2009) illustrated below. The model describes how an employee can be seen as two aspects H(uman) R(esource) and as P(erson) in one (Vinke, 2009).

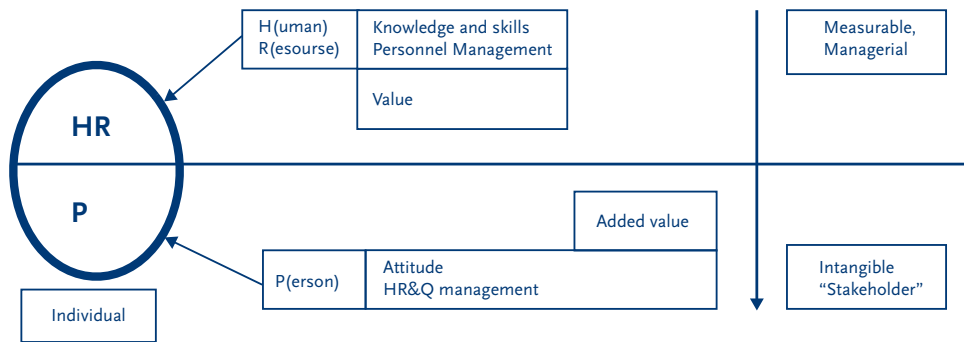


Figure 2 Visualization of an individual in two aspects, "human resource" (HR) and "person" (P) related to the three levels of a competence. Adapted from Vinke (2009)

In the figure above, the Individual is 'divided' into two separate parts: the H(uman) R(esource) that is the source knowledge (cognitive) and skills (functional) dimensions in a competence, and the P(erson) who is the source of attitude (personal) dimension, which is intangible. In regard to value creation, according to this view, the HR is the value creator (knowledge and skills). Added value starts where the knowledge and skills are combined with the attitude. As it can be observed in the figure above, (the) added value (box) starts where (the) value (box) ends. In the case of the social entrepreneurship construct, the elements that will be used relating to added value will be: perceived extra value.

The dimensions of the social entrepreneurship competence

In order for the competence of social entrepreneurship to deliver the outcomes as presented earlier, within the framework of criteria in the Charter of Principles of the Social Economy, all the four dimensions of the competence have been described in specific elements. Existing literature on the concept of social entrepreneurship was used, as already formulated conclusions from the work of practitioners in the field is a valuable source. As the authors of the model explain Winterton & Delamare-Le (2005), the multidimensional model of competence does not make a strict separation of the personal and the occupational competency. Existing literature was consulted in order to define for each dimension the needed elements. The results are presented in the table 3.

One of the dimensions in this model presents itself as important for the talk of social entrepreneurship. Defined as the ability to cope with uncertainty, as well as with learning and reflection, the meta-competence dimension of the construct is "an over-arching input that facilitates the acquisition of output competences at the base of the tetrahedron" (Winterton & Delamare-Le, 2005, p. 40). The meta-competence is the driver or motive to acquire all the other three dimensions of the competence (cognitive, functional and personal).

Dimensions/Output	Innovative activity (change consciously taken)	Social activity (aimed other people)	Value creating activity (perceived extra value)
Cognitive (knowledge)	Knowledge of current state and desired state	Knowledge about self and the environment	Knowledge current value (self or elements in the environment)
Functional (skills)	Skills to make decisions and implement change, improvising on the spot	Communication and interpersonal skills	Skills regarding decision making/ action taking
Personal (attitude)	Curiosity to explore new options	Focus on (helping) other people	Curiosity to explore new actions
Meta competence (motive)	Help others		

Table 3 *The dimensions and the description of output elements of the multidimensional competence construct for social entrepreneurship*

Although there is not a clear idea among scholars what is the mechanism behind the drive of an individual, a useful illustration can be found in Clary & Snyder's (1991) model of function of motive in volunteering. The choice is due to the framework in which the construct of social entrepreneurship as competence is included: the social economy sector. One of the seven criteria include volunteering and free membership, Clary and Snyder's model is a comfortable start. Their model is "concerned with the reasons and purposes that underlie and generate psychological phenomena-the personal and social needs, plans, goals, and functions being served by people's beliefs and their actions" (Clary & Snyder, 1991, p.123). Clary et al. (1998) found six functions of motive which they applied to the concept of volunteering:

- Values function- concerns for the welfare of others, and contributions to society, helping others;
- Understanding function - volunteerism gives an opportunity to learn, understand, practice, and apply skills and abilities, learn new things;
- Career function - volunteerism may serve to increase one's job prospects and enhance one's career;
- Social function in which an individual volunteers due to strong normative or social pressure, or to get along with others in his or her reference group;
- Protective function whereby one volunteers to reduce feelings of guilt about being more fortunate than others, or to escape from one's own problems;
- Esteem or enhancement function in which volunteerism serves to enhance one's self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-improvement.

Although the functional approach for motive is a multi-motivational perspective (Houle et al., 2005) which means that volunteering may satisfy more than one motive, the author's

view is that there is always one motive stronger than the other ones, e.g. one person could think that his or her aim is to help people by volunteer work, but the real motive is really to learn new things: how to behave around different social groups, how to be less shy etc.

When looking at Claire et al.'s model (1998), the closest to simultaneously satisfy encourage the acquisition of the three dimensions of the social entrepreneurship competence is according to the author is the value function: *helping others*. According to the author, all the other five functions create pressure on the output presented earlier as *social activity*.

A visualisation of the full construct, including the framework of the social economy sector, and the illustration of the multidimensional model of the social entrepreneurship competence can be found in the following figure:

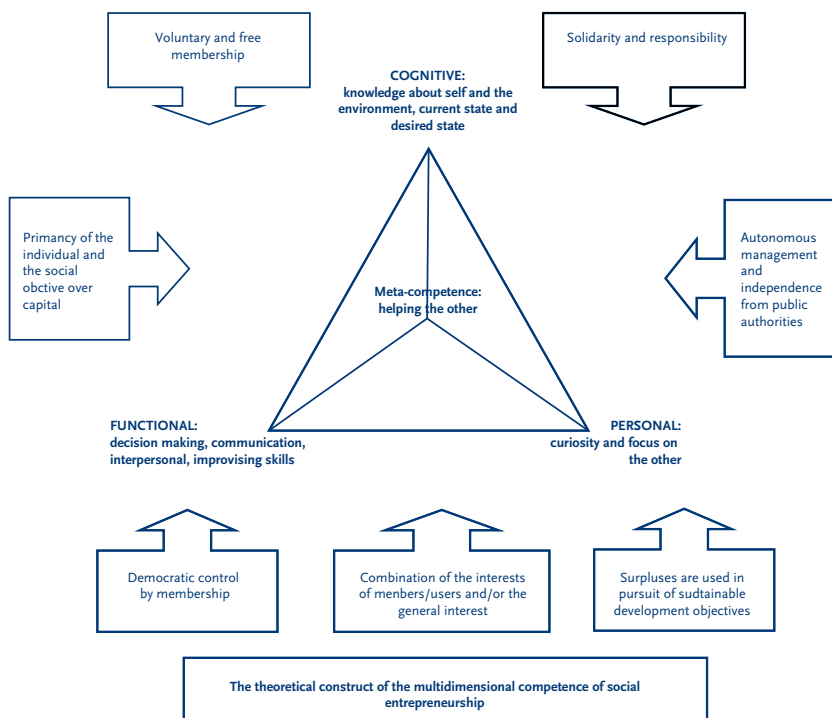


Figure 3 The theoretical construct of the multidimensional competence of social entrepreneurship

Conclusion

The paper followed the theoretical construct of the competence of social entrepreneurship as competence. Using the multidimensional holistic model of Winterton & Delamare-Le (2005) and Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern (2006) definition for the outputs of the competence the following theoretical construct was obtained:

"Social entrepreneurship is a multidimensional competence, the combination of cognitive, functional, personal and meta-competence that creates activities that are innovative, social and (added) value-creating for non profit organizations in the social economy in Europe."

The next step in the research of social entrepreneurship as competence will be the validation of the theoretical construct with key figures in the social economy sector in Romania and The Netherlands. The aim of the validation is to fill in potential gaps that the theoretical construct could have.

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