# Introduction to the "SE field"

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Many journal articles, books and publications on social enterprise and social entrepreneurship start by arguing that the field is dominated by confusion and the lack of rigorous definitions and of conceptual clarity. This may have been the case in the late 1990s and early years of the 21st Century. However, today we are moving towards a situation of advanced analytical insights in the specificities of organisations and enterprises that do not belong to the private-for-profit sector or to the public sector, defined in conventional ways. Many of the concepts used to analyse them have been shaped in specific national contexts and thus may be difficult to translate in other languages. Some of them have reached an international recognition and a more or less homogenous understanding, but they generally designate specific subsets of organisations; this is the case of terms such as cooperatives, foundations and associations.

The interest in those "other" forms of organisations has grown a lot in the last four decades as a result of the limits or failures of the two other major sectors to solve various problems which have become increasingly severe in today's societies at the local, national and global levels. The current, very fast-growing interest in social enterprises can also be placed in the same perspective.

When scientists from various disciplines gathered in the United States in the 1970s to foster research, meetings and publications on those matters, they often referred to voluntary action and, later on, to non-profit organisations.[1] However, when a world-wide association was created to promote exchanges at the global level, in the mid-1990s, founders finally came to an agreement on the term "third sector"—a rather new concept, more likely to allow various interpretations, reflecting the existing and growing diversity of approaches.[2]

Under the "third sector" umbrella, and sometimes beyond the alleged frontiers of this umbrella, one can find today a wide range of concepts, sometimes in tough competition; this clearly represents a challenge to many people trying to understand and explain the very identity and "raison-d'être" of those alternative forms of organisations, be they field workers, policy-makers, students, young researchers or even experienced scholars.

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[1] They first gathered around the *Journal of Voluntary Action Research*; today, they form the "Association for Research on Nonprofit and Voluntary Action", or ARNOVA (www.arnova.org).

[2] This world-wide association, founded in 1992, was thus named the "International Society for Third Sector Research" (www.istr.org).

Neither this introduction nor the remainder of this book has the ambition to fully clarify this complex conceptual landscape. However, relying on the EMES European Research Network's long experience of multi-disciplinary and cross-national dialogue among all its members, who come from various parts of Europe, as well as with other scientific networks and communities in other regions of the world, we would like to open this volume with an attempt to guide the volume in the midst of that shifting landscape, which we sometimes name the "SE field", thereby referring to notions as varied as social entrepreneur, social entrepreneurship, social enterprise, social economy and solidarity economy.

**The "SE field" as a range of mountains**

It may be useful to start with a rather broad image of those realities that attract our interest. More specifically, let us imagine that the SE field looks like a whole chain of mountains, whose size, profile and situation in the overall landscape may vary significantly according to the territory considered (country, region, locality, community). Let us note that such a chain of mountains does not have very clear borders: the overall territory generally includes other distinct chains (representing the private for-profit and the public fields/sectors), and smaller-size mountains surrounding the various chains suggest there are no very neat borders between chains in such hilly landscapes.

On the basis of such an allegory, we can identify a first category of concepts, which clearly try to offer overall views of the "SE" entire mountain range. In this category, the "third sector" concept, as already stressed, has been chosen in a rather "ecumenical" perspective to propose the broadest view. This concept certainly allows us to identify a whole mountain chain that is distinct from the other two major chains. We could say that it offers an overall picture, such as those taken from a plane: it certainly embraces the whole chain and therefore gives an idea of its length and its breadth; it also suggests that there are various parts in the chain; but it fails to show precisely the differences among these parts, the height of the various peaks, and so on.

The concept of the "non-profit sector" is often seen as the most common way to take a more or less similar picture of the whole chain. Through various criteria such as those defined by worldwide research projects on the non-profit sector[3], this concept offers a quite interesting view and provides a picture showing a variety of features shared by a large group

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[3] For example, the Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (CNP), led by the Johns Hopkins University, is based on five criteria, among which the central one is the prohibition to distribute profits to those who control the organisation.

of mountains making up the chain. However, such a view entails the obligation for the plane to fly closer to the chain; some parts of the whole range (such as the "cooperative" part of the chain) may therefore now be hidden in a way or another and thus disappear from the picture of the "non-profit" mountains.

Still in the first category of concepts, another view is offered by the concept of the "social economy", which was first adopted in various parts of Europe, Canada and Latin America.[4] The features which are common to all mountains in this picture may sometimes appear a bit less clearly, but the advantage here is that the "cooperative" part of the chain, which was hidden with the previous view, now comes into focus. Some would argue that this part forms a quite distinct chain from the non-profit chain. However, from a distance, one realizes that, historically, both parts belong to the same geological formation, which emerged in the 19th century. Even though various phenomena such as soil erosion may have shaped some diverging profiles over time, the picture suggests that the overall chain kept some distinctive common characteristics.[5]

A second category of concepts provides a rather different type of picture, which can best be taken from the ground. These concepts focus on the groups of people who are walking along trails or pathways or even climbing on particular mountains. Such pictures may be taken in any part of the chain: what is important here is to depict (preferably with a video camera) the movements of the groups on the mountains. The "solidarity economy" concept belongs to this second category; it allows us to capture particularly well the internal dynamics of groups of walkers. It highlights the "reciprocity impulse" that drives the group at the start, the deliberation processes ("public spaces of proximity") and the collective decisions which orientate the group as well as the various types of equipment ("resources") being used, depending on the stage of the journey (see Laville 1994).

In the same category, another rather recent set of concepts—namely those of "social entrepreneur", "social entrepreneurship" and "social enterprise"—focuses on climbers who clearly seek to reach specific objectives, i.e. some particular peaks, generally named after a social or societal challenge. What the pictures or the videos show here is that these climbers do not hesitate to take risks and to open new tracks across faces that may be quite steep. This is why they often rope up, relying on a leader or a group of leaders—the today famous "social entrepreneur(s)"—who is supposed to be the best or most experienced climber(s) for such an

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[4]     See for instance Defourny *et al.* (2009).
[5]     A similar historical allegory can be made of the workers' and peasants' movements to improve their living conditions throughout the 19th Century, the social economy concept stresses specific governance models, inspired by a search for economic democracy.

undertaking.[6] By focusing on social enterprises the EMES Network provides a useful compass, in addition to a video camera. As we will see in the first chapter, such a compass does not indicate one single "right" way but it allows to design a map on which it is possible to locate social enterprises with respect to the various pathways they can choose and therefore with respect to each other.[7]

We are fully aware of the fact that our "mountain chain" allegory does have clear limits. Among other things, it makes the first category of concepts too static. However, it may help to underline the fact that most conceptual approaches may be considered as complementary to each other. While some might see disciplinary or even ideological competition among them, we, as members of the EMES inter-disciplinary research network, firmly choose to bring with us all those conceptual devices.

**A time of changing landscapes**

In times of dramatic changes in the social and economic structures, academia is called upon not only to try to grasp the new realities but also to question its own presumptions and "dogmas". Occasionally, the landscape shifts, and not even the chains of mountains are left untouched: "[There] comes a moment when the atmosphere changes. The significance of the unreflectively utilised viewpoints becomes uncertain and the road is lost in the twilight. The light of the great cultural problems moves on. Then science too prepares to change its standpoint and its thinking apparatus and to view the streams of events from the heights of thought. It follows those stars which alone are able to give meaning and directions to its labours".[8]

There are several indicators of such historic changes taking place in contemporary society, calling for researchers to prepare themselves to critically review their standpoints and thinking apparatus for the sake of being able to grasp the new realities. The rationale of this book has been to ask faculty members of EMES to reflect on current changes within their areas of specialisation and on the impact of such changes on the "SE field". Allow us here to turn more directly to some current societal changes and their relation not only to the emergence of social enterprise, but also to the possibility for the whole SE field to make an important contribution to the further development of a sustainable and just society.

One reason for emphasising the issue of social change is based upon the assumption that

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[6]     There are several schools of thought about those three concepts. See Defourny and Nyssens (2010) or chapter 2 in this book for a conceptual comparisons.

[7]     See Borzaga and Defourny (2001) and chapter 1 in the present volume.

[8]     Weber (1904). Authors' own translation.

we have reached a historic juncture where we have to choose between a greater role for civil society and the third sector/social economy as providers of welfare[9], on the one hand, or unregulated privatisation, on the other hand. But citizen participation and greater participation of the third sector in welfare provision remain unlikely without a concerted effort on the part of progressive forces in advanced countries to democratise the welfare state itself (Pestoff 2008). Only with massive investment from citizens and governments in the capacity of civil society can uncontrolled privatisation be avoided, and SE organizations become a promising instrument for the realisation of the other scenario.

But is it a state responsibility to support the development of the third sector, and help the latter blossom and deliver on its promises? Or is the third sector a genuine sphere that must be looked upon as separated and isolated from the state? The answers to these questions have profound consequences for the conceptualisation of the relationship and the links between institutions that we normally consider as being part of civil society and institutions belonging to the public sector. There is more to this question than just a pure negation or a simple confirmation of a close relationship. Battles are still fought over the theme: has the state any role to play in civil society-based initiatives, or should "big government" stay out of sectors and situations where civil society can do better?[10]

**Civil society and the state in an historical perspective**
The concept of civil society appeared in history at a time marked by comprehensive "crisis in the social order and a breakdown of existing paradigms of the idea of order" (Seligman 1992: 15). Societies in the late 17th and 18th centuries were confronted with a tremendous break from the traditions and customs of the past "as the binding forces of society" (Seligman 1992: 16). Some argue that the citizens in contemporary liberal democracies are facing the same kind of problems. We are confronted with a breakdown not only in the steering capacity of the modern state, but also in the moral forces of Modernity. Should we, in this situation, follow the Hegelian tradition and look upon the state (or today, maybe, upon supranational political organisations) as the highest possible achievement in tying the individual to the community, or will we look in the direction of contract and communitarian theories? Or, perhaps, will the current interest in the third sector, social enterprise and civil society reveal new possibilities,

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[9]    In the following pages, we most often use the term "third sector" because of its wide acceptance, but we take it as another name of the social economy.
[10]    See for instance the intense discussions initiated in the United States by the National Commission on Civic Renewal (see Fullinwider 1999) and The Brookings Review. See also Rifkin (1996), Taylor (2003) and Pestoff (2009).

and maybe even a third way, when seeking to reformulate social solidarity – a process that seems to be more necessary than ever?

The third sector can increase its impact and size either by a simple withdrawal of the welfare state or through investment of time, energy and resources from citizens and the public sector. Within the latter approach, the third sector and the state are not engaging in an oppositional relationship. Skocpol (1996, 2003) argues against the idea that civic responsibility and participation are something opposed to public (state) activity. She rejects the conception that the transactions in society can be seen in the light of zero-sum, i.e. that when the state and institutions related to the public sector grow in number and importance, it necessarily leads to the diminishing of the voluntary sector or civil society and civic responsibility. Based on extensive research on the United States, she argues that "popular voluntary associations and the welfare state have operated in close symbiosis". This observation is also relevant for the situation in various Western European countries, where the third sector also grew in the decades of welfare state expansion.

Today most European governments are searching for new ways to involve citizens and the third sector in the provision and governance of publicly financed welfare services. At a general level, the reasons are similar throughout Europe: first is the challenge of an aging population, second is the growing democracy deficit at all levels—local, regional, national and European—and third is the semi-permanent austerity in public finances, made more acute by the recent global economic crisis. The response to these three challenges varies, of course, between countries and across sectors of service provision, but five general trends are nevertheless observable:

- the growth of new and different ways to involve users of welfare services as co-producers of their own services[11];
- the spread of new techniques of co-management and co-governance of social services in various European countries;
- the development of user councils at the local level, with a view to engaging users in a dialogue about public services and to facilitating user participation both in the provision and in the governance of such services;
- the gradual development of a functional representation of users alongside territorial channels of representative democracy in some European countries, like elections to local school boards, elder councils, etc.; and

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[11]    See Pestoff, *et al.* (2012) for a discussion of co-production, co-management and co-governance.

- the encouragement of volunteering.

**Changing relations between citizens and the state**

Given the major institutional changes that have taken place in Europe, particularly the growth of the welfare state at the end of WWII, the very state that citizens interact with has changed significantly. In the immediate post-WWII period, citizens faced a rapidly expanding, yet basically traditional public administration, with its Weberian hierarchical chain of command, where citizens were primarily viewed as passive clients of mostly public services. This was followed in the 1980s by a long period of introducing new forms of providing services, including privatization, contracting out, internal contracts, systematic performance measurement, benchmarking, that eventually became known as New Public Management (NPM). NPM supplemented and even transformed key aspects of the classical Weberian public administration (Hood 1991). Citizens were expected to become active consumers and exercise more choice between various providers of publicly financed services. Under such circumstances, the market replaced the state as the main governing mechanism for the expression of citizens' preferences.

However, Osborne *et al.* (2013) recently discussed a broader framework, which provides a new theory for public service management—a "service-dominant" approach, by contrast to the "manufacturing-dominant" approach of NPM. The latter is based on a "fatal theoretical flaw" which views public services as manufacturing rather than as service processes. According to Osborne and his co-authors, public service needs to be understood from a broader framework, which they call New Public Governance (NPG). Services differ from manufacturing in three major ways: a) they are intangible, b) their production logics differ, and c) the role of the user is qualitatively different in manufacturing and services, since the latter are co-produced by their providers and their users *(ibid.)*. Thus, in a service-dominant approach, co-production becomes a core component of public service delivery, one which places the experiences and knowledge of the service users at the center of effective public service design and delivery *(ibid.*: 146).

Not surprisingly, therefore, some authors have noted that the relationship between citizens and the state has also changed dramatically in recent decades (Ostrom 1999; Ostrom 2000; Fung 2004; Pestoff 2008). Citizens moved from merely being passive recipients or "clients" in traditional public administration to being alert "customers" in NPM and now active "co-producers". Thus, the spread of the "network society" (Hartley 2005) and of New Public Governance (NPG) (Osborne 2006, 2010) implies a more plural and pluralist model of

governance and provision of welfare services, based on public-private networks. Now citizens play a more active role as the co-producers of some or many of the services they expect, demand and even depend upon in order to fulfil some of the most important roles in their daily lives.

Third sector organisations are important intermediaries in these extensive changes. Co-production is a core aspect of NPG and it not only implies greater citizen participation in the provision of public services, but also greater third sector provision of public services. Third sector provision of public services can, in turn, promote greater citizen participation, greater user and staff influence, and better service quality (Vamstad 2012). It helps to breach the "glass ceiling" for citizen participation that otherwise exists in public and traditional for-profit services (Pestoff 2009). Thus, co-production and NPG both have clear implications for citizen participation and the third sector provision of welfare services in Europe.

However, both the shifting roles that citizens play in their daily life and the changing context within which they play these roles place complex demands on the concepts and methods needed to study and understand such far-reaching changes. It is necessary to explore both individual and collective aspects of these changing roles for citizens. First, as individual clients, consumers and co-producers of publicly financed services, how do citizens interact with the public sector, the market and the third sector to express and satisfy their needs and to promote their interests? Second, as members of third sector organizations, particularly of social enterprises as service providers, how do they best promote their needs and interests to obtain the services that they and others like them not only need, but may even depend upon in their daily lives?

Thus, it seems important for researchers to consider more explicitly questions about the changing relationship between the third sector and the state in Europe, but also to try to learn from other areas of the SE field, such as the solidarity economy in Latin America, and from the way in which this field relates to issues of participation, civil society and self-management. Can different perspectives on these changes be captured by different approaches to the study of public administration and management? What role is attributed by traditional public administration, NPM and NPG to citizen participation and social enterprise in the provision of public services? What is co-production and what role does it play in the different perspectives and regions of the world?

**Two possible future scenarios**

The issues and alternatives of reconfiguration between old sectors and institutions taking place in contemporary society are putting the third sector and the whole SE field high on the agenda. The way in which the third sector can deliver services and have an impact on society is related both to the global forces of marketisation and privatisation, on the one hand, and to the experimentation of new forms of citizen participation and co-production. on the other. In Europe many welfare states experienced extensive change, from in the early 1980s onward, in terms of providing welfare services, and they will probably face even greater changes in the next 10 to 20 years. The growing division between financing and delivering welfare services is becoming more apparent. Ideological clashes over the future of the welfare state began in the 1980s, with the appearance of neo-liberalism and New Public Management (NPM). At that time alternative provision of welfare services was marginal and usually confined to specialised niches, particularly in Scandinavia, while it was much greater in some continental countries. However, by the early years of the 2000s, it had grown considerably, with a varying mix of for-profit firms and third sector providers in different social service areas and countries (see Figure 1).

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Figure 1 - Development of the European Welfare State, ca. 1980 - 2030
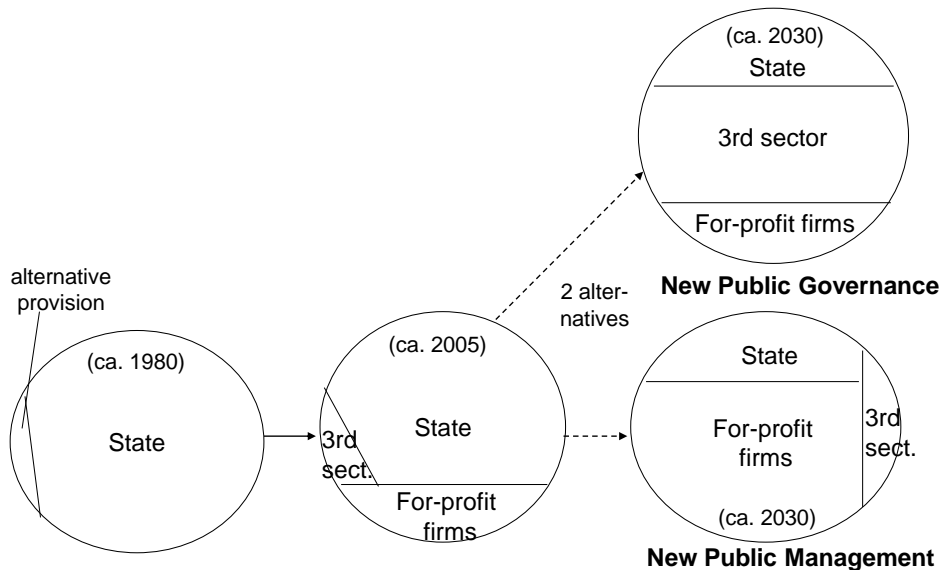


Source: modified from Pestoff, 2008

In the future, a continued public monopoly of the provision of welfare services, such as it existed in some countries, especially in Scandinavian, is now clearly ruled out. However, there appears to be two starkly different alternative scenarios for the future of the welfare state and the provision of welfare services in Europe: either accelerated NPM, with unregulated privatisation, or the growth of New Public Governance (NPG), with greater welfare pluralism.

The latter scenario would include a major role for the third sector and the social economy, as alternatives to both public and private for-profit providers of welfare services. The development of these two alternative scenarios, NPM and NPG, is sketched in Figure 1. They are clearly related to and reflect the changing relations between citizens and the state.

**The role of governance**

Citizens are not only consumers and co-producers of public services, but they are also members of the social enterprises, voluntary organisations and social cooperatives that provide such services. This brings issues of governance into central focus, and the governance of social enterprise is clearly a key issue in the European discussion. However, this is sometimes lamented by non-European scholars. Young and Salamon state that "…in Europe the notion of social enterprise focuses more heavily on the way an organization is governed and what its purpose is rather than on whether it strictly adheres to the non-distribution constraint of a formal non-profit organization." (2002: 433). However, this is not merely a normative approach. Defourny and Nyssens (2012) argue that the European approaches to social enterprise highlight the central place of governance mechanisms in order to guarantee an organization's social mission, whereas the American social enterprise schools of thought do not emphasize organizational features as a key tool for guaranteeing the primacy of the social mission. Thus, the central and growing importance attributed to participatory governance by the EMES network can be explained by several interrelated factors. First, it is a key issue in relation to keeping the economic activity in line with an enterprise's social activity. It can help to avoid or limit the mission drift observed in so many established consumer cooperatives in Europe. Second, stakeholder participation in the deliberations of a social enterprise can make a crucial contribution to social innovation. Third, social ownership is becoming recognized as an important aspect of entrepreneurship in itself. Fourth, governance is also coming increasingly under scrutiny in many social science disciplines.

The growing importance attributed to the governance dimension by EMES was documented in numerous papers presented by its members at the recent EMES international conference in Liege, Belgium in 2013, including those by Huybrechts, Mertens and Rijpens (2013), Nyssens and Petrella (2013) and Vidal (2013), to mention only a few. They help to highlight factors promoting the development of multi-stakeholder representation and involvement in social enterprises. For example, Huybrechts *et al.* (2013) attempt to explain stakeholder involvement in social enterprise governance in relation to their resources and legitimacy, Nyssens and Petrella (2013) explore the role of multi-stakeholder ownership in

relation to quasi-collective goods, while Vidal (2013) distinguishes between the role of multi-stakeholder dialogue and multi-stakeholder governance in social enterprises that produce public services.

**Concluding remarks and structure of the book**

By including these reflections in the introduction to the present volume, we hope to contribute to a better understanding of the role, size and impact of the third sector. As suggested, these developments are related to the sweeping changes in the relationships between citizens and the state, which take place everywhere in the world today, but also to the more basic institutional reconfigurations between state, market and civil society, which lead to a different positioning of the SE field.

It is important to emphasise the interface between the government, citizens and the third sector and to note that co-production normally takes place in situations that cut across the well-known notions of economic, social and political realities. An individual's decision to become engaged in the broad variety of SE activities is conditioned by the structures of political, social and economic institutions, and can be facilitated by public policy. Moreover, the one-sided emphasis put by many European governments either on the state maintaining most responsibility for providing welfare services or on turning most of them over to the market will hamper the possibility for the SE field to deliver on its promises in the way it otherwise would have been able to do. Indeed, the state can "crowd out" certain behaviours and "crowd in" others in the population (Ostrom, 2000); a favourable regime and favourable legislation are necessary for promoting greater citizen co-production and third sector provision of welfare services.

It is EMES' ambition to promote the systematic study of those issues in its future research projects, as well as to propose such a stance to young researchers and doctoral students, through the EMES PhD Summer Schools and well beyond the latter. It is why this book gathers various pieces of work in which or among which such an interdisciplinary dialogue will be easily found.

The book is divided into two major parts: the first part proposes analytical tools to conceptualize key notions of the SE field from an EMES perspective; the second one deals with key issues such as governance and public policy which are crucial for social enterprise development as well as the third sector as a whole.

The first chapter by Defourny summarizes the founding research projects carried out by EMES from the mid-1990s and the conceptualisation of social enterprise that resulted from

the Network's very first collaborative work. Although attention is also paid to the approach developed by the British Blair's government since 2002, the proposal is to follow the research trajectory of a group of European scholars who all wanted to build bridges between their understanding of the third sector dynamics and the social enterprise phenomenon which was just emerging. Quite in line with this first conceptual construction, the second chapter by Defourny and Nyssens compares the EMES approach with other schools of thought which appeared in the United States around the same period although stressing different driving forces for social enterprise development. What could look as a divide between both sides of the Atlantic no longer exists to the same extent but such comparisons are useful to understand how social enterprise and social entrepreneurship, beyond their current fashionable aspects, are deeply embedded in local or national contexts.

In chapter 3, Hulgard first observes the whole social economy is well positioned as a third sector to play a core role in addressing current social challenges. But how, he asks, does the social economy fit with current strategies in the areas of welfare policies and social service? Is it as a certain type of social entrepreneurship which would be part of a social innovation of the mainstream market economy or is it part of an emerging counter discourse in the sense of a participatory non-capitalist economy?

In chapter 4, Borzaga, Depedri and Tortia argue the increasing relevance of non-profit organizations, cooperative firms and social enterprises, which can all be grouped under the social economy or third sector umbrella definitions, requires scientists to reflect on a new comprehensive economic approach for explaining the observed organizational variety. Relying mainly on evolutionary and behavioral approaches of economic organizations, they focus on the new emerging mechanisms that allow social economy organizations to pursue social and mutual benefit goals.

Although with different analytical tools, forged by Polanyi, Laville also addresses the fundamental plurality of the economy in chapter 5. His thesis is that economic principles other than the market, i.e. reciprocity and redistribution, should be mobilized to build a substantive approach of the economy. Moreover, the market should be institutionally re-embedded in a perspective of solidarity economy by promoting non-capitalist enterprises, i.e. recognizing diverse forms of property based on social economy and social enterprise legal statutes. In a similar vein, chapter 6 by Gardin analyzes forms of reciprocity found in solidarity-based initiatives, but also tries to assess to what extent reciprocity is capable of playing an integrating role, dominating the behaviors linked to market and redistribution. Such analysis and assessment, he argues, are crucial to understanding the validity of the concept of the

solidarity economy. He also proposes an empirical approach showing the ways in which economic principles are hybridized in various fields such as fair trade, solidarity-based finance, proximity services and work-integration initiatives.

From various facets of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship to alternative conceptions of the third sector as a social and solidarity economy, it is possible to see all chapters of Part one as offering "building blocks" that combine theoretical insights at a micro level with broader perspectives on the whole economy.

The second part of this volume also sheds light on the SE field but from two other perspectives, which prove to be particularly important for European scholars. The first perspective relates to issues of governance of social enterprise and third sector organisations. By contrast with most US approaches, which focus mainly on goals, resources and, increasingly, business-like methods of management, many European scholars underline the need to look more carefully at models of governance that may involve participation of the various stakeholders or even attempts to build some forms of economic democracy. This may be explained, at least partly, by the influence of cooperative models and ideas in the European (and Latin-American) social enterprise and third sector landscapes. The other perspective is the interaction of the SE field with public policy, and it also owes much to European history: overall, public authorities are more involved in the funding and provision of personal and social services in Europe than elsewhere; at the same time, a great diversity of welfare regimes still exist across Europe and, as suggested above, relations between the state and the third sector have undergone major changes during the last two or three decades.

In chapter 7 on governance of social enterprise, Spear, Cornforth and Aiken address the fundamental differences in governance structures between different types of social enterprise, and draws out themes such as multi-stakeholder structures which shape the governance process, whereas chapter 8 by Huybrechts, Mertens and Rijpens examines stakeholder involvement in social enterprise as a particular important governance aspect. Stakeholder involvement is discussed by the use of two theoretical lenses that are both needed to grasp how social enterprises tend to involve multiple types of stakeholders in their governance structure.

In chapter 9, Enjolras enlarges the governance discussion to include a theoretically informed understanding of voluntary and nonprofit organizations that constitute an important part of the third sector. It is argued that these organizations must be able to operate in complex environments, mobilizing resources from market operations, subsidies from government and

from reciprocity related to volunteering and donations. In chapter 10 by Vidal, it is argued that such multi-stakeholder organizations may be an instrument to reduce the inefficiencies that result from asymmetric information. As to Pestoff in chapter 11, he discusses the governance dimension of social enterprises from the perspective of hybridity and co-production, and he argues that co-production is a type of hybridity that calls for a demand to balance the influence of various stakeholders.

Turning more explicitly and empirically to relations between social enterprises and public policies, Nyssens in chapter 12 discusses the possible institutionalization of a specific category of social enterprise as a major societal sphere. In many countries indeed, work integration social enterprises today appear as an important type of organizations that are designed to help disadvantaged unemployed people back into work and society. In chapter 13, Brandsen, Pestoff and Vershuere explore the issue of co-production along three lines of research: what are the motives for engaging in co-production? How can co-production be organized effectively, and how can we understand the effectiveness of co-production? This final chapter ends with a call for methodological diversity, comparative analysis and theoretical advancement, a statement that is not only relevant for the study of co-production but of social enterprise and the third sector in general.

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