

SIE Country Summary Poland

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What is the history of social innovation in your country - what has been happening in the last 10 years?

The concept of social innovation has not been widely used under such a term in Poland until the beginning of the 21st century. In 1990s in the relation to the new social solutions, we mainly used phrases such as “social change” and “institutionalization of change.” The term “innovation” was used primarily in the context of new technologies, market products, and services. The discussion of the concept of “social innovation” in Poland is still at an early stage. Researchers and organizations dealing with this topic mainly use the general definition, which assumes that social innovation is an action based on both social ends and social means, which include new ideas (products, services, and models) that meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations.¹

This does not mean that the Polish society has no experience in the creation and dissemination of social innovation. Until recently, they have been recognized in Poland mainly as a part of the social entrepreneurship due to the high promotion and development of new forms of social economy at the beginning of the 21st century. However, the first publications focused on the social innovation have been already prepared in recent years. They use this term to refer to the processes of institutionalization and social changes,² changes in commercial organizations in the context of the implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) solutions,³ and in reference to the dissemination and adaptation of best practices and social solutions from other countries.⁴

¹ Robin Murray, Julie Caulier-Grice and Geoff Mulgan, *The Open Book of Social Innovation* (London: NESTA, 2010).

² Piotr Sztompka, *Socjologia: Analiza społeczeństwa* (Kraków: Znak, 2002); Paulina Zadura-Lichota, ed., *Świt innowacyjnego społeczeństwa: Trendy na najbliższe lata* (Warsaw: Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości, 2013); Anna Olejniczuk-Merta, ed., *Innowacje społeczne: Od idei do upowszechniania efektu* (Warsaw: Instytut Badań Rynku, Konsumpcji i Koniunktur, 2014).

³ Elżbieta Jędrzych, *Inwestowanie w innowacje społeczne w organizacjach gospodarczych* (PWN: Warsaw, 2013).

⁴ Ilkka Taipale, *100 fińskich innowacji społecznych* (Katowice, Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Szara Godzina; Ambasada Finlandii, 2013); Marta Małecka-Dobrogowska i Magdalena Skup, *Franczyza społeczna. Europa-Polska-województwo podlaskie* (Fundacja Forum Inicjatyw Rozwojowych: Białystok, 2012); Michael Berriman i

At this point, relationship of social innovation with a social entrepreneurship should be considered as the most important. It is believed that this type of entrepreneurship will provide new solutions to deal with the wider issues of social mobilization and social inclusion. Social entrepreneurs in Poland are seen as innovators and local leaders who discover and implement new ways to manage resources and activities in relation to areas such as unemployment, social exclusion, environmental protection, and employment of people with disabilities.

In the last decade, a number of projects aimed at the revival of Polish tradition of social entrepreneurship have been implemented. These initiatives tried to rediscover grassroots of social initiatives of the 19th century and early 20th century. The social economy in Poland has been discontinued during the period of real socialism (1945-1989) due to the dominance of a model of centrally organized economy. After 1989 in the period of socioeconomic transition, many social economy entities have been privatized or liquidated. Renewal of the social economy began with the Poland accession to the European Union (EU) in 2004 and with the changes in the law such as the introduction of new laws on labor market institutions,⁵ social employment,⁶ public benefit and voluntary activities,⁷ public-private partnerships,⁸ and on social cooperatives.⁹ This new legal framework has regulated ways to create and establish new entities such as social associations, foundations, social cooperatives, social integration centers, professional activity centers, social inclusion clubs. This framework also established the principles of cooperation between the public sector, the commercial sector, the non-governmental (NGO) sector, and the social economy.

In the past decade, projects for social economy in Poland, in particular, focused on the theme of the cooperative movement, mutual insurance companies, public companies, etc.¹⁰ In addition, a postgraduate study in the field of the management of social economy has been established at the University of Warsaw and at the Malopolska School of Public Administration (department of the Cracow University of Economics).¹¹ During these projects, also handbooks in the field of social economy and social entrepreneurship have been prepared.¹²

Guy Turnbull, *Franczyza społeczna – dobre praktyki europejskie - kompendium* (Fundacja Forum Inicjatyw Rozwojowych: Białystok, 2013); Dominik Sołowiej, *Kompendium innowacji społecznych* (Fundacja Forum Inicjatyw Rozwojowych: Białystok, 2014).

⁵ *Act of 20 April 2004 on the promotion of employment and labour market institutions* (Warsaw: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2012).

⁶ *Ustawa z dnia 13 czerwca 2003 r. o zatrudnieniu socjalnym*, Dz.U. 2003, nr 122 poz. 1143.

⁷ *Ustawa z dnia 24 kwietnia 2003 r. o działalności pożytku publicznego i o wolontariacie*, Dz.U. 2003, nr 96 poz. 873.

⁸ *Ustawa z dnia 28 lipca 2005 r. o partnerstwie publiczno-prywatnym*, Dz.U. 2005, nr 169 poz. 1420.

⁹ *Ustawa z dnia 27 kwietnia 2006 r. o spółdzielniach socjalnych*, Dz.U. 2006, nr 94 poz. 651.

¹⁰ Krzysztof Wittels, "Socjal ery kapitału. Zapomniany dorobek warszawskich przedsiębiorstw 1864-1939," accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/wiadomosc/1278569.html; "W stronę polskiego modelu gospodarki społecznej - budujemy nowy Lisków," accessed February 9, 2015, www.isp.org.pl/site.php?id=398; Anna Szustek, *Polski sektor społeczny*, Wyd. 2 uzup (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR, 2009); Mirosław Wawrzyński, *Samopomoc i samoorganizacja Polaków od XIX do XXI wieku* (Toruń: Dom Wydawniczy Duet, 2007).

¹¹ "Gospodarkaspoleczna.pl," accessed February 9, 2015, www.gospodarkaspoleczna.pl; "MSAP: Studia podyplomowe Ekonomia społeczna," accessed February 9, 2015, www.msap.uek.krakow.pl/index.php?id=tresc&ajdi=25.

¹² Ewa Leś and Małgorzata. Ołdak, eds., *Podstawy kształcenia w zakresie przedsiębiorczości społecznej: Pakiet edukacyjny* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2008); Ewa Leś, ed., *Gospodarka społeczna i przedsiębiorstwo społeczne: Wprowadzenie do problematyki* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego; Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2008); Jerzy Hausner, ed., *Zarządzanie podmiotami ekonomii społecznej* (Kraków: Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego; Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, 2008); Marek Benio and Jerzy Hausner, eds., *Finansowanie i otoczenie prawne podmiotów ekonomii społecznej* (Kraków: Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego; Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, 2008); Konrad Dudzik and Jerzy Hausner, eds.,

In addition, in 2009-2012 there was the Better Future of Social Economy (BFSE) Learning Network led by the Polish Ministry of Regional Development.¹³ It was a Learning Network promoted by managing authorities of the European Social Fund (ESF), which exchanges knowledge and experiences and share best practices, in order to foster the development of the social economy within ESF operational programs. The network members worked through seminars, workshops, and peer reviews on five topics: social franchising, financial instruments specifically for the social economy, tools for measuring social added value, partnerships for socially responsible public procurement, and community law and social services of general interest. The Social Entrepreneurship Network (SEN) was a continuation of this project in 2013-2015. It focused on the cooperation between organizations from nine countries of the EU. SEN was creating a “matrix” of guidance on how governments can create a comprehensive support system to encourage the development of social enterprises.

In the years 2009-2014 work on further changes in the law was undertaken, which led to the creation of a “National Programme for the Development of Social Economy,” which was adopted by the Council of Ministers on August 12, 2014.¹⁴ The programme places the social economy in the context of integrated strategies developed in the framework called as Poland 2030 “Long-term National Development Strategy 2030.”¹⁵ The goal of the implementation of this programme is to make social enterprises more permanent and visible in the socioeconomic development at the local and regional level. The programme provides general support for activities to create innovation in the field of social entrepreneurship. In addition, the work on the law on a social entrepreneurship was undertaken. This law may provide an opportunity to apply for the status of a social entrepreneur, which will confirm that the entity has established not only business activities but also it simultaneously carry out specific social goals. The proposal of this new law also foresees the development and implementation of educational activities on social entrepreneurship, including activities targeted to children and youth that will prepare them for social entrepreneurship and that will promote student cooperatives.

Moreover, in the past decade, much attention dealt with the debate on the social capital in Poland, particularly it focuses on the low level of trust, which significantly blocks the cooperation between citizens and organizations and slows down the development of new initiatives.¹⁶ In recent years, the importance is getting the discussion of the real impact and sustainability of social enterprises and NGOs, which have difficulties in achieving financial self-sufficiency and are dependent on external funding such as the public funds and the European Social Fund.

Przedsiębiorstwa społeczne w Polsce: Teoria i praktyka (Kraków: Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny. Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej; Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, 2008); Jerzy Hausner, ed., *Ekonomia społeczna a rozwój*, (Kraków: Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego, 2008); Jerzy Hausner and Michał Adamczyk, eds., *Wspieranie ekonomii społecznej* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej, 2008); Maciej Frączek, Jerzy Hausner and Stanisław Mazur, eds., *Wokół ekonomii społecznej* (Kraków: Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej. Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny, 2012).

¹³ “Social Entrepreneurship Network,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://socialeconomy.pl>; “Better Future of Social Economy,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/x/879160?projekt=531302.

¹⁴ *Krajowy Program Rozwoju Ekonomii Społecznej* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2014).

¹⁵ *An integrated approach to development in Poland* (Warsaw: Ministry of Regional Development, 2011).

¹⁶ “Diagnoza Społeczna - Warunki i jakość życia Polaków,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.diagnoza.com.

What challenges are being addressed by social innovation?

As already mentioned social innovations in Poland are considered mainly in the context of the social economy and social entrepreneurship. Thus, their development and implementation primarily relate to social work and solving social problems such as unemployment, poverty, integration and employment of people with disabilities, the reduction of the social exclusion, homelessness, and the fight against addiction.

A significant part of the projects that were implemented during the EQUAL Community Initiative, funded by the EU budget for 2004-2006, may be seen as a social innovation in Poland. It was the first programme under which it was possible to implement innovative social projects on a large scale. In this framework, wide-range initiatives for the promotion of the social economy have been launched.¹⁷ The scope of the EQUAL Community Initiative in Poland included five themes:

Theme A: Facilitating access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty in being integrated or reintegrated into a labour market which must be open to everyone.

Theme D: Strengthening the national social economy (the third sector), in particular, the services of interest to the community, with a focus on improving the quality of jobs.

Theme F: Supporting the adaptability of firms and employees to structural economic changes and the use of information technology and other new technologies.

Theme G: Reconciling family and professional life, as well as the reintegration of men and women who have left the labour market, by developing more flexible and effective forms of work organization and support services.

Theme I: Supporting the social and vocational integration of asylum-seekers.¹⁸

Large-scale actions in development and use of social innovation have been also carried out in the 2007-2013 Human Capital Operational Programme (pol. Program Operacyjny Kapitał Ludzki).¹⁹ Its main objective was the increase at the level of employment and social cohesion. The specific objectives were:

- Raising the level of economic activity and employability of the unemployed and economically inactive;
- Reducing areas of social exclusion;
- Improving the adaptability of workers and enterprises to changes in the economy;
- Dissemination of public education at every level of education while increasing the quality of educational services and their stronger correlation with the needs of a knowledge-based economy;
- Strengthening the capacity of public administration in the development of law and policies, the provision of high-quality services, and strengthening partnership mechanisms;
- Increase in territorial cohesion.

Human Capital Operational Programme consisted of 10 Priorities, carried out in parallel at the central and regional level.

Centrally implemented Priorities were:

- Priority I. Employment and social inclusion;

¹⁷ Beata Puszczewicz, Marek Maziuk and Ewa Wosik, eds., *Gospodarka społeczna w projektach EQUAL: Partnerstwa na rzecz Rozwoju realizujące projekty w ramach Programu Inicjatywy Wspólnotowej EQUAL w zakresie tematycznym D Wzmocnienie krajowej gospodarki społecznej (trzeciego sektora), a w szczególności usług na rzecz społeczności lokalnych, z akcentem na podnoszenie jakości miejsc pracy* (Warsaw: Biuro Koordynacji Kształcenia Kadr. Fundacja "Fundusz Współpracy"; Fundacja Fundusz Współpracy, 2006).

¹⁸ "About EQUAL," accessed February 9, 2015, www.equal.org.pl/equal.php?lang=en.

¹⁹ *Program Operacyjny Kapitał Ludzki Narodowe Strategiczne Ramy Odniesienia 2007-2013* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju, 2014).

- Priority II. Development of human resources and adaptation of potential of enterprises, and improving the health of workers;
- Priority III. High quality of education;
- Priority IV. Higher education and research;
- Priority V. Good governance.

Priorities implemented at the regional level were:

- Priority VI. The labour market is open to all;
- Priority VII. Promoting social inclusion;
- Priority VIII. A regional human resources;
- Priority IX. Development of education and competence in the regions.

In addition, the Priority X has been implemented as a technical support, which aims to ensure the proper management, implementation, and promotion of the European Social Fund.

In addition, National Supporting Institution in cooperation with the Managing Institution of Human Capital on the basis of completed innovative projects have developed a list of guidelines for the implementation of innovative projects and transnational cooperation in the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme, together with the proposal to continue some of them in the operational programs for 2014-2020.²⁰ Thus, the foundation for the development of social innovation in the new Knowledge Education Development Operational Programme (pol. Programie Operacyjnym Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój; PO WER) and the Regional Operational Programmes (pol. Regionalne Programy Operacyjne; RPO) have been made. The focus is on to “blocks or modules of support,” or grouping of innovative projects in thematic blocks that are identified within the narrower issues within the four main areas or topics of support from the European Social Fund:

Topic: Adaptability (5 blocks, about 56 innovative projects between 2007-2013)

1. Module: Building of adaptive potential of enterprises
2. Module: Employees 50+
3. Module: CSR
4. Module: The concept of flexicurity
5. Module: Academic entrepreneurship and business cooperation with the science sector

Topic: Good governance (2 blocks, about 18 innovative projects)

1. Module: The modernization of public administration
2. Module: Active NGO's—efficient state

Topic: Education and higher education (7 blocks, about 42 innovative projects)

1. Module: Innovative methods of teaching students
2. Module: Vocational and continuing training in conjunction with the labour market
3. Module: Formation of entrepreneurship among students
4. Module: Systems to motivate teachers to innovate
5. Module: Students with particular educational needs
6. Module: Education of adults
7. Module: Monitoring the professional career of graduates

Topic: Employment and social inclusion (9 blocks, about 130 innovative projects)

1. Module: Activation of the unemployed in the age group above 45 years of age
2. Module: Professional activation of people leaving prisons
3. Module: Activities for people with disabilities
4. Module: Measures for entities of the social economy
5. Module: Activities for persons who are in a unique situation on the labour market

²⁰ “Innowacje PO KL 2014-2020,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.kiw-pokl.org.pl/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=1522&Itemid=776&lang=pl.

6. Module: Professional activation of graduates and the unemployed under 25 years of age

7. Module: Reconciliation of work and family roles

8. Module: Instruments of social intervention and equal opportunities

9. Module: The cooperation of labour market institutions, social assistance, social integration, and non-governmental organizations

The Knowledge Education Development Operational Programme for 2014-2020 will be financed by the European Social Fund. The Council of Ministers adopted it on January 8, 2014, and approved by the European Commission on December 17, 2014.²¹ PO WER priorities are:

1. Young people in the labour market: the implementation of measures aimed at unemployed young people aged 15-29, which will contribute to their professional activation and improve the situation on the labour market.

2. Effective public policy for the labour market, the economy, and education: the implementation of reforms and structures in selected areas of public policies, those are key to the Europe 2020 Strategy and the National Reform Programmes.

3. Higher education and economic development: promoting quality, efficiency, and openness of higher education as an instrument for building a knowledge-based economy.

4. Social innovation and transnational cooperation: the implementation of non-standard measures, innovative actions, and transnational initiatives leading to the development of solutions and to test them before proceeding to the implementation stage, which in most cases will take place at the regional level, as well as the implementation of programs in the field of transnational mobility.

5. Support for the health area: among others, implemented activities will include those related to the prevention programs for diseases negatively affecting labor resources, dedicated to people of working age, and the implementation of quality activities and organizational solutions in the healthcare system to facilitate access to affordable, sustainable, and high quality health services;

6. Technical assistance.

As an important source of support for social innovation in recent years can also be considered the Civic Initiatives Fund Operational Programme 2009-2013 (pol. Program Operacyjny Fundusz Inicjatyw Obywatelskich; PO FIO).²² PO FIO is a continuation of the Civil Initiatives Fund, conducted in 2005-2007 as the government program, and in 2008 as an exclusive reserve of the state budget. The main objective of the PO FIO is to enhance the participation of NGOs and religious organizations conducting charitable activities in the implementation of public tasks within public policies that are shaped and maintained on principles of partnership and subsidiarity. PO FIO is the operationalization of the Strategy for the Development of Civil Society 2009-2015.

The PO FIO 2009-2013 foresees the implementation of five Priorities:

Priority I. Active, informed citizens, active local communities (projects under this Priority engage citizens in various forms by giving them the opportunity to be active and connect their social activity with learning in the sphere of civil actions).

Priority II. Efficient non-governmental organizations in a better state (projects under this Priority in various forms contribute to strengthen a human and institutional capital of organizations implementing them (in quantitative and / or qualitative perspective)).

²¹ *Program Operacyjny Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój 2014-2020 PO WER 2014-2020* (Warsaw: Ministerstwo Infrastruktury i Rozwoju, 2014).

²² "PO FIO 2009-2013," accessed February 9, 2015, www.pozYTEK.gov.pl/PO.FIO.2009-2013.1127.html.

Priority III. Integration and social activation. Social security (projects under this Priority in various forms should apply to the principle of empowerment, which enable beneficiaries in the actions and decisions taken in the framework of projects).

Priority IV. The development of social entrepreneurship (projects under this Priority in various forms promote the idea of combining economic activity (professional) and social activity).

Priority V. Technical assistance.

The Council of Ministers on November 27, 2013, adopted a Civic Initiatives Fund Operational Programme for 2014-2020. Its main objective is to increase the involvement of citizens and NGOs in public life.²³

Priority 1. Small initiatives (increasing the role of informal initiatives; animating self-help activities; supporting new NGOs).

Priority 2. Active society (activation of citizens in community issues; development of volunteering; to improve the ability of NGOs to mobilize resources; activation of cooperation of local communities and public institutions; to support active forms of social integration and the development of social entrepreneurship; creating conditions for the development of free legal and civil advice).

Priority 3. Active citizens (increasing influence of the citizens on public policy; the development of civic education and social skills; the growing importance of watchdogs and advocacy; support for the creation of partnerships (including public-private partnership) and other forms of cooperation for active citizenship and transfer them to perform public duties).

Priority 4: Strong non-governmental organizations (capacity building of civil society organizations; support the activities on the system level).

Priority 5. Technical assistance.

In each priority from a few to several areas of support have been described, which may be seen as fields to implement new projects.

Who are the key actors? What kind of businesses, what parts/levels of government, which sectors support social innovation if anything? What other organisations are involved in doing social innovation? What about citizens or local communities?

It can be considered that in Poland the main entities that support and promote social innovations in the context of the social economy in recent years have been involved in the project called as the “Integrated support system of social economy” (pol. “Zintegrowany system wsparcia ekonomii społecznej,” ZSWES), which lasted from July 2009 to December 2013.²⁴ The leader of the partnership was The Human Resources Development Centre (Centrum Rozwoju Zasobów Ludzkich; CRZL), while the originator was the Department of Public Benefit, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The partnership included also: Barka Foundation for Mutual Help (Fundacja Pomocy Wzajemnej BARKA);²⁵ Cooperation Fund Foundation (Fundacja Fundusz Współpracy; FFW);²⁶ The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives (Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych; FISE);²⁷ Institute of Public Affairs (Instytut Spraw Publicznych; ISP);²⁸ The Malopolska School of Public

²³ *Program Fundusz Inicjatyw Obywatelskich na lata 2014-2020* (Warsaw: Departament Pożytku Publicznego Ministerstwa Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, 2013).

²⁴ “O projekcie Zintegrowany System Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/x/879362?projekt=543995.

²⁵ “Barka,” accessed March 15, 2015, <http://barka.org.pl>.

²⁶ “Fundacja Fundusz Współpracy,” accessed March 15, 2015, <http://cofund.org.pl>.

²⁷ “Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych (FISE),” accessed March 15, 2015, www.fise.org.pl.

²⁸ “Instytut Spraw Publicznych,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.isp.org.pl.

Administration (Małopolska Szkoła Administracji Publicznej; MSAP);²⁹ UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre;³⁰ and the National Auditing Union of Workers' Co-operatives (Związek Lustracyjny Spółdzielni Pracy; ZLSP).³¹

The main objective of the project was to improve the condition of the social economy in Poland. The project has created permanent, institutionalized mechanisms of substantive support of the social economy organizations and their environment. Specific objectives include, among others, creation and development of quality standards for social services and social inclusion; increase of skills and strengthen the capacity of staff of welfare institutions, social inclusion institutions, and social economy entities through training and courses, counseling and post-graduate studies, as well as study visits and internships; professionalization of activities in support of social economy entities; raise public awareness of the possibilities of solving problems using the tools of the social economy; environment and strengthen the social economy institutions at the local level by the method of building partnerships for social economy.

Another important initiative supporting and promoting social innovation is the “Polish Social Economy Meetings” (pol. “Ogólnopolskie Spotkania Ekonomii Społecznej;” OSES), which started from the “Permanent Social Economy Conference” (pol. “Stała Konferencja Ekonomii Społecznej;” SKES) a meeting for European-wide practitioners, academics, and policy-makers in 2004 in Cracow.³² From 2006, eight annual conferences on the social economy have been organized in cities such as Cracow, Warsaw, Gdańsk, Poznań, and Lublin. These conferences gather social entrepreneurs, practitioners, theorists, representatives of state and local governments, and scientists. The secretariat of the Permanent Social Economy Conference is run by the Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives (FISE).³³ This foundation is also managing the biggest Polish Internet portal for social economy (www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl).

Moreover, in recent years, commercial and public entities began to organize events to promote social innovation. Examples are:

- Magazine “CR Navigator,” the organizer of the conference “Social innovation. New opening” in 2013 in Warsaw;³⁴
- Agency for Development and Innovation and Lower Silesian Association of Employers that within the framework of the project “CSR through innovation” in 2013 organized the Gala of Social Innovation Leaders, during which Social Arinova Open Business certificates have been awarded and some of the best ideas for social innovation in small business have been highlighted;³⁵
- In 2014, the National Supporting Institution - organized the exhibition “In the circle of innovation,” which aimed to promote innovative projects carried out in the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme. During the fair, the prize in the

²⁹ “MSAP,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.msap.uek.krakow.pl.

³⁰ “UNDP in Europe and Central Asia,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home.html.

³¹ “Związek Lustracyjny Spółdzielni Pracy,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.zlsp.org.pl.

³² “Stała Konferencja Ekonomii Społecznej,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/skes; “Ogólnopolskie Spotkania Ekonomii Społecznej,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/x/683939?projekt=683939; “Ekonomiaspoleczna.pl: Current events,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/x/678296; “Ekonomiaspoleczna.pl: Past events,” accessed February 9, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/x/436301.

³³ “Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives: About us (en),” accessed March 2, 2015, www.fise.org.pl/x/17043.

³⁴ “Kierunek innowacje społeczne - zaproszenie na konferencję,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/wiadomosc/933243.html?ci=es_komentarze&resid=933243&state=am.

³⁵ Rafał Smotrzyk, “Małe firmy – Duża sprawa. CSR drogą do innowacji,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.pi.gov.pl/PARP/chapter_86197.asp?soid=EEC952DEF0304EB6BEFE8F423C769579; “CSR drogą do innowacji,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.innowacjecs.eu.

“Regatta of Development: Leaders of Innovation and Transnational Cooperation in Human Capital Operational Programme were awarded;³⁶

- In June 2014, the International Conference of Social Innovation as part of the European project TEPSIE was organized by the Lodz University of Technology and the University of Wrocław. Conference focused on a dialogue between international experts and their Eastern counter parts and on the investigation of differences and common challenges and solutions.³⁷

In addition, under the Knowledge Education Development Operational Programme for 2014-2020 Polish government and local governments intend to promote social innovation in the context of systemic and local projects.³⁸ It is worth to note a broad view of the target groups to which the activities will be addressed in these projects:

- Young people, including disabled, aged 15-29 years (NEET category: “Not in employment, education or training”),
- Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises and their employees,
- Social economy entities, social enterprises, and their support centers,
- Public administration employees,
- The judiciary and prosecution staff,
- Local governments and their employees,
- Labour market institutions,
- Public and private employment services,
- Voluntary Labour Corps,
- The social partners,
- Schools and educational institutions of various types, including those conducting training and learning and their leading organizations,
- Graduates of schools and education system of vocational education,
- Employees of the education system,
- Providers of educational services,
- Universities and research institutions,
- Persons involved in the tertiary education (including students with disabilities),
- Persons of working age, most of the groups identified as in the particular risk in the labour market,
- Service providers in the field of primary health care and their employees,
- Medical staff,
- Imprisoned persons,
- Roma community.

³⁶ “II edycja konkursu “Regaty rozwoju: liderzy innowacji i współpracy ponadnarodowej PO KL 2007-2013” rozstrzygnięta!,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.kiw-pokl.org.pl/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1527:ii-edycja-konkursu-regaty-rozwoju-rozstrzygni%C4%99cie&Itemid=193&lang=pl.

³⁷ “International Conference of Social Innovation,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.socialinnovation.pl/about-the-conference/.

³⁸ “Program Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój: Dla kogo jest Program?,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.power.gov.pl/strony/o-programie/zasady/dla_kogo_jest_program/.

Who is promoting social innovation?

As already mentioned social innovation were not directly promoted widely in Poland in recent years. According to the Kuba Wygnański, there are many different obstacles to social innovations in Poland.³⁹ Namely:

- Low level of social capital (particularly “linking” dimension),
- High level of individualism-smart, educated people not translated to smart institutions,
- State “bulimia” and regulatory approach to public policy, adversarial concept of state and civil society,
- Lack of evidence-based policy,
- Market “proselytism”-deeply believe that competition is the primary source of innovation and optimal configuration of needs and solutions,
- Innovation subordinated to institutional domains of academia and enterprises-not so much to governance and social processes,
- Weak meta-competencies, for example, “How to learn from own mistakes,” “How to learn from others,”
- Lack of proper “distillations” of good practices-problem of self-selection of innovation-lack of proper validation / fake evaluations,
- Lack of scaling and convergence mechanism for good practices,
- Lack of institutional space for social innovation - incubators, hubs, centers for excellence, etc.,
- Patenting, patenting, patenting - lack of a culture of “open code,”
- Outgrown technical infrastructures of information and training (ESF type),
- Not enough “structural holes” - bridging sectors, industries, and groups.

Nevertheless, one can point to the entities and initiatives, which in recent years take action directly aimed at the promotion of social innovation.

Social innovation and the generator of further innovations in Poland is the idea of medialabs and fablabs. Poland's first Medialab was organized under the theme “Culture Camp 2.0” during the project Culture 2.0 in 2010 in the village of Chrzelice near Opole.⁴⁰ It was an attempt to create a sustainable platform for cooperation of people working in the fields of education, activism, art, and technology. MediaLab Chrzelice was organized at the initiative of the Ortus Foundation and project partners included the National Audiovisual Institute (Narodowy Instytut Audiowizualny), Creative Commons Poland, and the Commission of History and Tradition of Chrzelice (Komisja History i Tradycji Ziemi Chrzelickiej). In 2012, Medialab Gdańsk⁴¹ and Medialab Katowice⁴² were formed. They tend to focus on interdisciplinary activities trying to find new uses for digital technologies and innovative ways to employ new media to promote sustainable urban transformation. Medialab is a meeting place for all those interested in sharing ideas, meeting inspirational artists and designers, as well as a useful platform for collaboration with international artists and institutions.

The Institute for Structural Research (IBS) as a non-governmental research organization created in 2014 the Social and Institutional Innovation Programme.⁴³ It deals

³⁹ Kuba Wygnański, “Social Innovations in Poland: Ready or Not?,” accessed March 6, 2015, www.slideshare.net/SIeXchange/kuba-wygna.

⁴⁰ “Wikipedia: Media Lab,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?oldid=41273127>;
“Labkit.pl,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.labkit.pl.

⁴¹ “Medialab Gdańsk,” accessed March 15, 2015, <http://medialabgdansk.pl>.

⁴² “Medialab Katowice,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://medialabkatowice.eu/en/about-medialab/>.

⁴³ “IBS - Research Programs: Social Programme,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ibs.org.pl/en/research/research-programs#1.social-programme>.

with the economics of the public sector, especially the issues of the labour market, health and social policy. Programme focus mainly on empirical micro- and macroeconomic research, combining basic research and applied studies. In recent years, the IBS focused on the series of research “Employment in Poland.” The programme also includes the iSWORD project in which practical economic tools to simplify quantitative impact assessment of the public policy were developed.

Local Activity Support Centre CAL (Centrum Wspierania Aktywności Lokalnej CAL) is a permanent team of researchers and experts associated with the Local Activity Support Centre CAL and the Institute of Public Affairs.⁴⁴ The center was established in 2011 in the framework of the system project called as “Creating and developing standards of welfare and social integration.” The aim of the laboratory is to focus on the development of the activities of social work standards both in terms of qualified social services, as well as widely understood - as a local community organization. “The works of the Social Innovation Lab” (pol. “Prace Laboratorium Innowacji Społecznej”) is a series of publications that describe the extensive diagnostic work, modeling, tests, and dissemination initiatives, which are a long-term process of “action research.”

Among other non-governmental organizations that promote social innovation in Poland are Ashoka's programme in Poland,⁴⁵ the Shipyard Foundation,⁴⁶ the United Nations Development Programme in Poland (the project office finished its operations at the end of 2013),⁴⁷ the Foundation for Social Innovation Workshop (Fundacja Warsztat Innowacji Społecznych),⁴⁸ and the Gdansk Foundation for Social Innovation (Gdańska Fundacja Innowacji Społecznej).⁴⁹

Among commercial entities promoting social innovation clearly leads Orange Poland, which runs the Research and Development Center that carries out projects in the open innovation model and the project “The Test Town.” This project consists of the unpaid provision of broadband infrastructure to conduct research by university students and exchange of experience with the latest trends in science and technology.⁵⁰ In addition, the Orange Foundation in Poland conducts nationwide innovative programs such as an Orange Academy (support for cultural education and new media), Orange Labs (support the use of ICT in a creative way at the community level), an Internet education support programme for libraries, and e-volunteering.⁵¹

We can also specify two programs of universities. The Janusz Korczak Pedagogical University in Warsaw in 2013 founded the Institute for Social Innovation.⁵² The purpose of this organizational unit includes scientific research, the dissemination and promotion of social innovation, development of international cooperation of universities, innovative actions in the area of education, pedagogy, social policy and social work, a support of the process of university teaching.

⁴⁴ “Organizowanie Społeczności Lokalnej - Laboratorium Innowacji Społecznej,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.osl.org.pl/o-lis/.

⁴⁵ “Ashoka Polska,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://poland.ashoka.org>.

⁴⁶ “Pracownia badań i innowacji społecznych Stocznia,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://stocznia.org.pl>.

⁴⁷ “United Nations Development Programme in Poland,” accessed March 2, 2015, <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/socialinnovationeurope/en/directory/organisation/united-nations-development-programme-poland>.

⁴⁸ “Warsztat Innowacji Społecznych,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.facebook.com/WarsztatInnowacjiSpołecznych.

⁴⁹ “Gdańska Fundacja Innowacji Społecznej - O Fundacji,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://gfis.pl/o-fundacji/>.

⁵⁰ Natalia Ćwik, ed., *Wspólna odpowiedzialność. Rola innowacji* (Warsaw: Forum Odpowiedzialnego Biznesu, 2012).

⁵¹ “Fundacja Orange,” accessed March 15, 2015, www.fundacja.orange.pl.

⁵² “WSP - Instytut Innowacji Społecznych,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.wspkorczak.eu/pl/archiwum.Instytut+Innowacji+Społecznych.rid.12784.html.

The second programme is the Center for Business Ethics and Social Innovation that was established by Kozminski University in 2014.⁵³ As part of this center, the university conducts the postgraduate course “Social innovation in the economy” in cooperation with the United Nations Global Compact. The aim of this course is to set up a group of highly skilled professionals who will be able to competently develop, evaluate, and implement innovative solutions and business models aimed at improving the quality of life based on cross-sector cooperation.

In addition, from 2013, the National Centre for Research and Development runs a “Social Innovation” program⁵⁴ It is the programme of support for science sector, the economic environment, and the NGO sector, which focus on making and implementation of innovative activities and social initiatives based on the achievements of science and technology. The programme is addressed to consortia, which includes at least one research unit and at least one entrepreneur or, at least two research units, with the obligatory participation of NGO. The specific objectives of the programme assume an increase in the number of implementations of innovative technical solutions and innovative products, services, and procedures in order to solve complex social problems; and an increase in cross-sectoral cooperation at local, regional, and national levels. It is still too early to describe the effects of projects funded under this program.

In recent years, there is also a local government initiative for social innovation. The City of Lodz as the first city in Poland created the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) in 2013.⁵⁵ This Fund is an additional mechanism intended to co-finance activities of non-governmental organizations focused on promoting sustainable city development. The Fund was created by UNDP, the City of Lodz Office, and Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations in Lodz. SIF supports innovative projects in such areas, as a culture, education, participation or social assistance. The Fund defines innovation as an innovative approach to a social problem that is more effective, efficient and sustainable than existing solutions and whose influence goes beyond the particular target group and embraces the local community. The fund is composed of 60% of the city's financial input and in 40% of the means from the private sector.

Another example is the promotion of social innovation by the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park.⁵⁶ This institution includes a department that is focused on supporting social innovation as new ideas in social activities directed to residents of the city of Gdynia. The department includes a team of several employees and collaborates with more than 100 employees of municipal institutions and non-governmental organizations and local activists, who in various ways support the development of innovative ideas. Department's role is to develop and implement innovative strategies, models, methods, and solutions designed to respond to societal challenges, the design of social services, helping to promote entrepreneurship, and community revitalization in local communities. Examples of activities are the following projects: “Exchanger - an innovative collaboration space for young people;”⁵⁷ “Gdynia Dialogue,” which includes the implementation of public consultation;⁵⁸

⁵³ “Rekrutacja na studia podyplomowe “Innowacje społeczne w gospodarce”,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.ekonomiaspoleczna.pl/wiadomosc/1011829.html?ci=es_komentarze&resid=1011829&state=am.

⁵⁴ “NCBR: Innowacje Społeczne,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.ncbir.pl/programy-krajowe/innowacje-spoleczne/aktualnosci/art.2462.drugi-konkurs-w-ramach-programu-innowacje-spoleczne.html.

⁵⁵ Connor Friesen, “Social Innovation Fund for the City of Lodz,” accessed March 2, 2015, <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/socialinnovationeurope/en/directory/poland/organisation/social-innovation-fund-city-lodz>.

⁵⁶ “Pomorski Park Naukowo-Technologiczny - Innowacje Społeczne,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ppnt.pl/pl/innowacje-spoleczne/innowacje-spoleczne#sthash.VMPq1Eoj.dpuf>.

⁵⁷ “Pomorski Park Naukowo-Technologiczny - Wymiennikownia,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ppnt.pl/pl/innowacje-spoleczne/wymiennikownia-1#sthash.VMPq1Eoj.dpuf>.

“Goal: Participation,” which included reviewing of services related to activation of older adults run by the city;⁵⁹ “Walking research” to better adjustment of public spaces to the needs of the residents.⁶⁰

An example of urban institutions supporting social innovation is also the Warsaw Centre for Educational and Social Innovation and Training (Warszawskie Centrum Innowacji Edukacyjno-Społecznych i Szkoleń).⁶¹ The center was established in 2008 as a municipal institution for teacher training, institution of knowledge and education. Its main objective is to support the educational environment of Warsaw and to enhance the quality of schools and educational institutions of Warsaw by promoting innovation and social learning; preparation and organization of the training offer and various forms of exchange of experience; initiating various forms of work in schools and educational institutions; initiating and establishing international cooperation on training; socialization of Warsaw education by strengthening the influence of parents and students on the functioning of the schools.

Social innovation at regional and local levels was also a major area of research and intervention within the project “Calculator of Costs of Inaction - Implementation of Innovative Solutions in the Area of Cost Analysis of Foregone Supportive and Motivating Measures of Social Policy in the Masovian Voivodeship” under the Human Capital Operational Programme.⁶² The underlying objective of this project led by the Masovian Social Policy Centre was to create conditions for improving the effectiveness and cohesion of the social policy for 100% of local governments in the Masovian region by the end of 2014 as a result of developing and testing an innovative way of implementing social policy - “Costs of inaction” in 25 selected local governments, followed by the dissemination of the model. The project included promotion of innovative social services and projects identified to be the most efficient and useful in resolving 10 selected social issues. It also focuses on the development of the following six instruments: Social Calculator; Diffuser of Social Innovation; Catalogue of Social Innovation; Network of Social Innovation Leaders; 'Strategy of Social Problem Solving' Generator; and Training System.

Please show a few of the key projects that illustrate social innovation in your country

It is very difficult to choose social innovations that were created only in Poland in the last decade. At this point, we may only assume that the worth noting is in the first place the Catalogue of the EQUAL Community Initiative Programme Results. It includes a database of 88 projects, many of which had marked the innovative characteristics and performance standards that were further developed in subsequent projects financed in Poland from the ESF.⁶³ Even richer source of descriptions of innovative projects is carried out in the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme. This database includes 490 projects from the years 2007-2013.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ “Pomorski Park Naukowo-Technologiczny - Gdynski Dialog,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ppnt.pl/pl/innowacje-spoleczne/gdynski-dialog-1#sthash.VMPq1Eoj.dpuf>.

⁵⁹ “Pomorski Park Naukowo-Technologiczny - Kurs Partycypacja,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ppnt.pl/pl/innowacje-spoleczne/kurs-partycypacja#sthash.VMPq1Eoj.dpuf>.

⁶⁰ “Pomorski Park Naukowo-Technologiczny - Spacerzy badawcze,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://ppnt.pl/pl/innowacje-spoleczne/spacery-badawcze#sthash.VMPq1Eoj.dpuf>.

⁶¹ “Warszawskie Centrum Innowacji Edukacyjno-Społecznych i Szkoleń,” accessed March 2, 2015, www.wcies.edu.pl.

⁶² “Kalkulator Kosztów Zaniechania,” accessed March 2, 2015, <http://kkz.mcps-efs.pl/unactive2.html>.

⁶³ “Equal: Results Database - List of Projects,” accessed March 3, 2015, www.equal.org.pl/baza.php?M=3&lang=en.

⁶⁴ “Baza PO KL,” accessed March 3, 2015, www.kiw-pokl.org.pl/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=33&Itemid=297&lang=pl.

At this point, we can cite examples of social innovation implemented by the Foundation Shipyard under the project of “Kolab.” Among them are:

- The development of emissions rules of social campaigns in the public media,⁶⁵
- Quality standards of care in Gdynia,⁶⁶
- Model of the financing civil society projects,⁶⁷
- Model of maintaining the financial liquidity by entities implementing projects of the Human Capital Operational Programme,⁶⁸
- Model of accounting for the results of public tasks outsourced to NGOs.⁶⁹

As part of a WILCO European project in two cities of Poland, several examples of social innovation have been identified and described in the detail. Namely, in Warsaw:

- MaMa Foundation (Fundacja MaMa; The activities are based on the concept that mothers with small children are citizens with full rights like everybody else and that they should not be excluded from participation in the local public life due to cultural stereotypes or architectonic barriers. The ideas and projects of MaMa Foundation are linked to such concepts as social economy and social cooperatives, grass-roots solidarity and mutual help and feminism. It was established by mothers of small children),⁷⁰
- The Foundation for Development Beyond Borders (Fundacja Rozwoju “Oprócz Granic;” was established in 2006 by a group of Poles and Belarusians. The main goal was to develop cooperation between activists from Poland and Belarus, but shortly the organization changed its focus and set up activities to support immigrants in Warsaw, especially from Eastern Europe: Ukraine and Belarus),⁷¹
- Team for Solving Social Problems in the Field of Housing (Zespół Wspólny do Spraw Rozwiązywania Problemów Społecznych w Zakresie Mieszkalnictwa, Reprywatyzacji oraz Walki z Bezdomnością i Wykluczeniem Społecznym na terenie m. st. Warszawy; the undertaking of negotiations between the representatives of the city and the tenant and squatter organizations),
- Project “Become your own Boss in Poland” (Projekt “Zostań w Polsce-swoim szefem!;” the only social project in Poland aimed directly at emigrants, who have decided to get back to the country in order to register their own businesses in the capital city).⁷²

Social innovations identified in Plock were:

- The Plock Council of Seniors (Płocka Rada Seniorów; is a consultative and initiative-forming body of the President of the City of Plock on affairs pertaining to people above 50 years of age. The objective of the operation of the Council is integration,

⁶⁵ “Kolab - Reguły emisji kampanii społecznych w mediach publicznych,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://kolab.pl/przyklady/przyklad/2>.

⁶⁶ “Kolab - Standardy jakości usług opiekuńczych w Gdyni,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://kolab.pl/przyklady/przyklad/3>.

⁶⁷ “Kolab - Model finansowania obywatelskich projektów społecznych,” accessed March 3, 2015, http://kolab.pl/przyklady/przyklad/6/etapy_procesu.

⁶⁸ “Kolab - Płynność finansowa w projektach Programu Operacyjnego Kapitał Ludzki,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://kolab.pl/przyklady/przyklad/11>.

⁶⁹ “Kolab - Rozliczanie za rezultaty zadań publicznych zleczonych organizacjom pozarządowym,” accessed March 3, 2015, <http://kolab.pl/przyklady/przyklad/13>.

⁷⁰ “Fundacja MaMa,” accessed March 19, 2015, <http://fundacjamama.pl>.

⁷¹ “Fundacja Rozwoju Oprócz Granic,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.frog.org.pl.

⁷² “Projekt „Zostań w Polsce - swoim szefem!”,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.zostanszefem.vizja.pl/pl.

supporting and representing the elderly community and influencing affairs that concern all inhabitants of Płock),⁷³

- The Russian Community Association (Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Rosyjska; The organization performs many functions that are of significance for immigrants: it organizes cultural events, preserves the cultural traditions, builds the image of the immigrants from the East and communication with the Poles and other immigrants in Płock, as well as helping newcomers find jobs or apartments. Members of the association have also participated in trips to Russia and Belarus, organized by the central office in Warsaw),⁷⁴
- City Social Housing Societies (Miejskie Towarzystwo Budownictwa Społecznego w Płocku; are social developers appointed by the commune, whose work is focused mainly on construction and renting houses for the purpose of implementation of the housing policy of the commune),⁷⁵
- Project “Together for Revitalization” (Projekt “Razem dla rewitalizacji;” lasted for almost 15 months, encompassing more than 100 inhabitants of the Old Town of Płock. The project, funded mostly from EU funds, has been managed by the City Social Assistance Centre. The aim of the pilot project was to develop a general model to be implemented by other cities and communes. Płock could participate in the contest for funds because it met the key prerequisite - since 2005, it has implemented its own revitalization programme with some social partners),⁷⁶
- Foundation “Grant Fund for Płock” (Fundusz Grantowy dla Płocka; The Foundation announces cyclical contests for NGOs of Płock. According to the statute, it provides financial support for projects on behalf of: a) raising of the level of education of the inhabitants of Płock, b) counteracting social and economic exclusion of persons threatened by such exclusion, c) increasing public security, d) preservation of the historic heritage and development of culture and art, e) increasing the quality of social assistance, f) improvement of the condition of the natural environment and raising awareness of the inhabitants of Płock in this regard, g) increasing the attractiveness of Płock in terms of tourism, social relations and economy, h) popularization of recreation and sports, i) supporting the economic community and undertakings aimed at economic growth of Płock, j) strengthening of European integration and international cooperation; and k) acting on behalf of healthcare and promotion of healthcare).⁷⁷

⁷³ “Portal Integracyjny Płock: Płocka Rada Seniorów,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.plock.eu/pl/plocka_rada_seniorow.html.

⁷⁴ “Stowarzyszenie Wspólnota Rosyjska,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.wspolnota.rosjanie.pl.

⁷⁵ “Miejskie Towarzystwo Budownictwa Społecznego w Płocku,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.mtbs.plock.pl.

⁷⁶ “Razem dla rewitalizacji - O projekcie,” accessed March 19, 2015, <http://mopspl.home.pl/rdr/index.php?page=home>.

⁷⁷ “Fundacja Fundusz Grantowy dla Płocka,” accessed March 19, 2015, www.funduszgrantowy.plock.eu.

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