PROFILE OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR IN SERBIA: MOTIVATION AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the traits of social entrepreneurship in Serbia by addressing the role of motivation, education, personal experience, gender and age in developing social enterprises. The research done so far has not directly addressed the issue of characteristics of individuals who bring social innovation in Serbia and in that manner our research contributes to the existing body of knowledge. The data for this study were drawn from field research that started in June 2014, combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Our research suggests that social entrepreneurs in Serbia usually enter this venture without previous experience in founding a social enterprise or managing one. Education plays an important role in motivation to work for or establish a social enterprise: founders are by large people with higher education interested in continuous education and often engaged in some vocational education or training. Disparities in motivation to work in (or establish) a social enterprise are prominently different depending on the respondents’ ages younger respondents are motivated primarily to address a specific social problem, while the older ones are motivated mainly to create a personal employment opportunity.

KEY WORDS: social entrepreneurship, social enterprises, personal traits, Serbia

APSTRAKT: U ovom radu istražuju se svojstva socijalnih preduzetnika u Srbiji kroz analizu uloge koju motivacija, obrazovanje, lično iskustvo, pol i starost imaju u razvoju socijalnih preduzeća. Dosadašnja istraživanja se nisu neposredno bavila pitanjem karakteristika pojedinaca koji su nosioci socijanih inovacija u Srbiji te na taj način ovo istraživanje dopunjava postojeći fond znanja u ovoj oblasti. Podaci na

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Social entrepreneurship is increasingly attracting the interest of both academia and practice. While practitioners are recognizing social enterprises as organizational type able to meet the needs of contemporary complexity, academics are appreciating them for their orientation towards innovative problem-solving (Monzon, Chaves, 2012; Leadbeater, 1997), new models in delivering public and social services (Brandsen et al., 2005; Defourny, Nyssens, 2010) and the ability to produce small changes in the short term that reverberate through existing systems to catalyze large changes in the longer term (Alvord, Brown and Letts, 2004).

Academic interest and awareness about the importance of social enterprises (SE) and social entrepreneurship in Serbia revived after the mapping of social enterprises was done in 2007 (Cvejić, Babović, Vuković, 2008). Further research on SE sector has shed light onto the role and development factors of social enterprises, the main types of social enterprises, the role of civil society and the development of public policies to support SEs in Serbia (Cvejić, Babović, Vuković, 2008, Shrestha, 2013, Babović et al, 2008, Kolin, 2013, Vuković, 2013, Aleksić Mirić, Lebedinski, 2015). However, far less attention has been given to social entrepreneurs themselves and we still lack knowledge about the characteristics of individuals who bring social innovation in Serbia. Based on a field research started in 2014, this paper explores the traits of social entrepreneurship in Serbia by addressing the role of motivation, education, personal experience, gender and age in developing social enterprises.

The paper is structured as follows: the first part of the paper presents the main conceptual and theoretical issues related to social entrepreneurship; after that we briefly explain the data and methodology for the empirical study; the next section addresses the main characteristics of social enterprises and entrepreneurs in Serbia. We proceed with the outline of the profile of social entrepreneurs in Serbia and finish with a discussion of research results and major conclusions.
Theoretical Background

Social innovation and social needs, no matter if in private, public or a third sector, are in focus of one group of authors in social enterprises literature. (Monzon, Chaves, 2012: 33). According to these authors, the welfare state retreat contributed to the increase of the role and visibility, particularly in the fields of social services and maintenance of social cohesion. According to Defourny and Nyssens (2010: 34) the increasing role of the third sector is closely connected to the need for reduction in state budget deficits, intensified activities in the field of integration policies and persistence of structural unemployment in the majority of European countries. The lack of public policy schemes made it difficult for social actors, such as social workers and associative militants, to deal with the increasing exclusion of certain groups successfully (namely, the long-term unemployed, the low-qualified, etc...). Depending on the specific features of the different European model, there were various approaches to these emerging challenges in each country. In the countries with a Bismarckian tradition, which assumed a strong role of state in regulating social protection, non-profit organizations mostly financed by public bodies played an important role in provision of social care services.

Social entrepreneurs (in early works also referred as “public entrepreneurs”) can be defined as individuals who are able to bring about social innovation in various fields. Leadbeater argues that “social entrepreneurs identify under-utilised resources – people, buildings, equipment – and find ways of putting them to use to satisfy unmet social needs. They innovate new welfare services and new ways of delivering existing services” (1997: 2). Social entrepreneurs who engage entrepreneurial skills to solve social problems could be found in parts of the traditional public sector, some large private sector corporations and in the innovative third sector organizations.

However, social entrepreneurship is multi-faceted phenomenon that strongly depends on social and economic context (usually named “eco-system”). This context brings to the foreground different aspects of social entrepreneurship. As Alvord, Brown and Letts describe in their paper on social entrepreneurship and societal transformation (2004: 262), there are several aspects of social entrepreneurship emphasized by different approaches. They recognize three major approaches to social entrepreneurship: the one that combines commercial approach of doing business with a need for social impact; the second one which views social entrepreneurship as innovating for social impact; and the third one which argues that “social entrepreneurship can produce small changes in the short term that reverberate through existing systems to catalyze large changes in the longer term” (Alvord et al., 2004: 262).

Research Background

In Serbia, number of papers have address the issue of social policy reforms in the last two decades, mainly arguing that the aim of the reforms was to increase the responsibility of the individuals for their own welfare and reduce reliance on the state (Vuković 2013, Matković and Simić, 2005). Principles of
decentralization of service provision and inclusion of private sector providers showed to be important for more dynamic development of social enterprises (SE)\(^4\). Multilateral donor organisations have generously supported social enterprises through project grants, and, together with the positive attitude of the Serbian government, proved to be a very important source of funding (Shrestha, 2013). Most of the social enterprises emerged as non-governmental organisations active in social service provision.

Recently government introduced a set of fiscal consolidation measures likely to be practiced until 2018. Although the level of spending on social welfare benefits was promised to be preserved, the cut in public sector employment could put a burden on the already stretched system of social service provision. Employment reduction in education and health will create a new pool of the unemployed. These changes in the welfare system could present new challenges for social enterprises. They could engage more deeply into the area of social service provision or increase their role in the educational and health sector, as social enterprise in Western economies do. But before considering the directions of changes, we should take a closer look at the state of the art of the social economy sector in Serbia.

The mapping of social enterprises in Serbia (Cvejić, Babović, Vuković, 2008) suggested that Serbia was in the initial stage of social enterprises development: the legal framework was not established, the financial institutions did not recognize social enterprises as such and did not have developed financial instruments to support SEs in doing business, the awareness of the social entrepreneurship was very low, the key actors were just starting to appear without developed capacity for networking and inter-organizational partnerships (Shrestha, 2013). However, since then, the whole SE sector has developed with reputable dynamics. Important academic contributions have been given to the roles of social enterprises in Serbia (Babović et al, 2008), factors of development of social enterprises (Shrestha, 2013), main types of social enterprises (Kolin, 2013), the role of civil society in development of SEs (Vuković, 2013) and the development of public policies to support SEs in Serbia (Cvejić, 2013). However, much less attention has been given to social entrepreneurs themselves.

Knowing the origins of social entrepreneurship in Serbia (Cvejić, Babović, Vuković, 2008) and its current condition (SORS, 2014) we believe that there are not enough systemic parameters and strategic thinking to talk about the third aspect of social entrepreneurship explained in theoretical part. What is at stake is a combination of the first two aspects of social enterprises: businesses with strong social orientation and non-profit organizations performing economic activities in order to solve social problems. With this in mind, we want to investigate if the profile of social entrepreneurs in Serbia is characterized by social innovation, or

\(^{4}\) The most frequently used definition of social enterprises is the one suggested by the European research network for social economy (EMES) which says that “Social enterprises are non-profit private organizations dealing with producing of goods and rendering of services, which is directly linked with their clear objective that the community should benefit from their activity. They rely on collective dynamics, while involving different types of stakeholders into their management bodies; they highly value their autonomy and take the economic risk associated with their activities.”

rather, if social entrepreneurs in Serbia have predispositions to grow into sustainable innovative sector that can contribute to solution to different social problems.

In Serbia today, in fact we do not know much about the individuals that stand behind social enterprises, that initiate the innovation cycle and cope for the survival of the SE sector on everyday basis. Therefore, based on a field research data, this paper explores a profile of social entrepreneurs in Serbia, from the aspects of their motivation for engaging in social entrepreneurship, education, personal experience, gender, and age. Particular focus has been given to a new generation of social enterprises that have emerged in the last ten years. When using a term new generation of social enterprises & entrepreneurs we consider those representatives of SE population that are emerging in sectors like green economy, smart societal solutions and alike, that are striving towards achieving both economic sustainability and social impact, that have been established in the last ten years by the founders younger than 35 years of age at the time of enterprise’s establishment.

4. Data and methodological framework

The data for this study were drawn from field research that started in June 2014, combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques.

Survey of social enterprises was conducted in Serbia from June to October 2015. The sample covered 90 social enterprises (30 from the capital city of Belgrade and 60 from other parts of the country). The respondents were owners or managers of social enterprises aged 18 years and over.

In case when non-founders responded to the questionnaire, they did that in the capacity of a person to whom the owner delegated decision-making rights and authority to manage the organization in owner’s best interest. Non-founders are also considered as social entrepreneurs because they are expected to exercise entrepreneurship in organizational behavior and structuring as they run micro and small enterprises, which must be entrepreneurial in behavior in order to survive, no matter if they are being led by the founder or a manager. What makes them social entrepreneurs is that they are doing a job that brings social innovation. Therefore, the ability to bring social innovation is considered as a defining characteristic of a social entrepreneur, not the fact if a person established a social enterprise or not.

The sampling frame was based on a representative list of 1196 social enterprises in Serbia, established by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia under the project of the European Commission “Economic Impact of Social Enterprises” (SORS, 2014). The definition of social enterprises in the sampling frame is in line with the definition proposed under this project, given that social enterprises are defined following the EMES methodology by indicators relating to the economic, social and management dimension. The initial sample was selected using the simple random sampling method.

Data collection was conducted by e-mail. The questionnaire was sent by e-mail to the selected social enterprises together with an explanation which introduced the purpose of the survey and the benefits gained from their participation in it. The respondents returned completed questionnaires by e-mail.
The questionnaire consists of several modules. The first three modules are designed to capture data on personal characteristics of the respondents (such as gender, age, education, previous experience in founding/managing social enterprise, motivation etc.), as well as on general characteristics of the enterprise (such as its type, size according to the number of employees, ownership structure, year of establishment, sector of economic activity, sales turnover, etc.). The other modules are devoted to the following dimensions of social enterprises: access to financing, main challenges and constraints for social enterprises, the role of innovation during the life-cycle of the enterprise, the influence of different categories of stakeholders on the decision making process of the enterprise and the social capital of entrepreneurs.

Another part of this research followed qualitative approach and applied twenty-four in-depth interviews with stakeholders and experts in the SE sector, one national workshop that communicated the preliminary findings about historical development of social enterprise in Serbia with the key stakeholders, one focus group with the key stakeholders, and one focus group with the representatives of a new generation social enterprises. In order to search for these social entrepreneurs and enterprises, we triangulated data from different sources: existing academic data on social sector in Serbia, publications from Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and other relevant publications and reports, media release, and interviews with key informants. The most valuable inputs, however, came from the interviews with key informants, who were asked to nominate candidates they recognize as true representatives of a new generation SE in Serbia. Through that process we developed a list of potential representative candidates of NGSE in Serbia, which was finally shortened to five representatives. Field research with selected NGSEs started in October 2014 through initial interviews our researchers had with the representatives of these SEs. In this process we collected basic information about the enterprise, and after this initial stage of preparation for the field work, we continued research with these five SEs relying on intensive collaboration between enterprises and the researcher. During data gathering phase for each of the NGSEs case study we relied on the same research procedure. We collected information from secondary sources such as published data about the enterprise, previous studies about the organization, newspaper articles etc. Information about organizational past, developmental challenges, motivation of the founder and people engaged in business to work for the enterprise, and other relevant topics have been gathered through, in-depth individual and group interviews.

5. Research results

5.1. Main characteristics of the social enterprises

This section presents main characteristics of social enterprises such as the year of establishment, the size of the social enterprise, its turnover, the sector of its economic activity and its source of funding.
Regarding the year of establishment, 34% of the social enterprises were established before 2000, while 61% were established in the following years. The social enterprises established after 2005 represent half of the overall sample. According to the number of employees (full-time and part-time), the majority of the sample are micro enterprises having less than 10 employees, 11% are small enterprises with between 10 and 50 employees, and only one enterprise is considered as medium having between 50 and 250 employees (Figure 1). There are no large social enterprises in the sample.

![Figure 1. Size of the SE](image)

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.

The majority of SEs in our research are engaged in a few sectors including “other activities”, agriculture, followed by human health and social work activities, education and other service activities. The high share of social enterprises in agriculture is in line with the importance of the agricultural sector in Serbia, both in terms of gross value added and employment.

![Figure 2. Legal status of the SE](image)

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.
Non-government organizations (NGO) and cooperatives are dominant organizational forms of social enterprises (Figure 2). The relatively large share of cooperatives in the sample explains the significant engagement of social enterprises in the agricultural sector.

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.

The distribution of turnover is skewed to the left, with majority of social enterprises having a relatively low turnover from an international perspective (Figure 3). About one quarter of the respondents even reported that their turnover was lower than EUR 6,250, while only few estimated it between EUR 4 million-8 million.

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.

Concerning the main source of funding, majority of the social enterprises in the sample are totally dependent on grants, donations, bequests or benefactions, while others are fully or partly independent (Figure 4).
5.2. Profile of social entrepreneurs in Serbia

This section explores a profile of social entrepreneurs in Serbia, from the aspects of their education, motivation for engaging in social entrepreneurship, personal labour market experience, gender and age.

5.2.1 Entrepreneurs’ education

Founders of the social enterprises represent almost three thirds of the respondents (64%). Almost half of the founders of social enterprises completed at least university education (Bachelor or Master degree or hold doctorates (Figure 5)). In addition, over half of the founders are engaged in some vocational education or training (Figure 6).

When it comes to non-founders, data say that they are even better educated than the founders. Similarly, over half of non-founders attend some kind of vocational education or training.

![Figure 5. Comparison between founders/non-founders. Educational attainment](image-url)

**Source:** Own calculations from the survey data.

In summary, over half of the respondents have at least university education (31% have a Bachelor degree, while 22% have a Master degree and 3% hold
doctorates), which suggests that the respondents from social enterprises are much better educated than the overall Serbian population. They are also better educated than employees of social enterprises in the national representative survey of social enterprises carried out by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia in 2014 (SORS, 2014). This is due to overrepresentation of social enterprises from Belgrade in our sample.

5.2.2 Entrepreneurs’ experience

Regarding previous labour market experience, only 15% of respondents have had previous experience in founding a social enterprise (Figure 7), which is not surprising given that most of the social enterprises in Serbia only started to develop after 2000. Only a small number of respondents have managed a social enterprise before the one they currently work in, which is similar to the small group of those with previous experience in founding a social enterprise.

![Figure 7. Interviewees having past experience in founding/managing SEs](image)

Source: Own calculations from survey data.

Majority of those who have already established a social enterprise earlier in their career are founders, while among those who have managed a social enterprise, founders and non-founders are equally represented (Figure 8).

![Figure 8. Comparison between founders/non-founders. Past experience in founding/managing SEs](image)

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.
5.2.3 Entrepreneurs’ motivation

In order to understand mission of social enterprises, the survey asked about the respondents’ motivation to work in or to establish a social enterprise (Figure 9). The two most important motives can be distinguished: a desire to address a social challenge and to create a personal employment opportunity, followed by a desire to address a social problem which they have personally experienced, and to set up a particular practice. Only small number of respondents was driven by inadequacy of the existing social services or was engaged in this activity in order to address environmental challenges. Similarly, the results of the 2014 national survey of social enterprises in Serbia show that the main objective for 62% of social enterprises was economic empowerment and employment, while the focus on environmental challenges was poor (SORS, 2014).

Field reflection 2: Addressing a social challenge – Lice ulice

When starting-up Lice ulice, the founders were faced with a challenge to achieve simultaneously two major objectives: to strengthen both economically and socially the most vulnerable citizen groups and at the same time to develop, position and regularly publish an attractive and a well-read magazine. Speaking of these days, the generator of this idea of the street newspapers in Serbia says:

When we launched the magazine Lice ulice, the basic idea was to move some people from the streets, to give them a chance and hope that they can be come apart of the system, no matter how ugly it may sound. We did not have any great ideas or ambitions, except the fact that we wanted from the very beginning to directly help people. You know, all these actions which are aimed at help in got her people, are, in a way, selfish. People generally do this to think of themselves better. To be honest, there were probably such things among our motives, as well, but then again, when you see that you helped a particular person, you want to do this in the long run…

Lice ulice today is more than a street magazine. It has become an open media/activist space dedicated to a better communication and affirmation of civic activism and civil society values.

Source: Individual interviews and company’s data

Source: Own calculations from survey data.
Field reflection 3: Addressing environmental challenges – Strawberry Energy

People live in the digitally connected world where, not only communication, but their whole “digital lives” depend on smartphones and portable communication devices of all sorts, and the quality of this “digital life” depends on availability of chargers for mobile devices. The energy of the Sun, which is available everywhere, can be used to help people to recharge their portable devices. Thinking back about this early discovery, Miloš says:

I thought of a device, which can be installed in public places like squares or parks, where people can sit and recharge their “digital life”. While they sit and recharge their phones or use free Wi-Fi internet installed in the solar charger, they will see the Sun and solar panels above their heads. This gives them a feeling of what it means to use clean and free solar energy, therefore it would be a great educational tool, available to the general public.

…Today, our vision is to make a network of solar-powered benches that will transform a city’s public spaces into social urban hubs where people can feel comfortable and cared for. Imagine a city which understands your needs and provides infrastructure in order to assist every citizen to be more productive, efficient and, above all, happy, while using that public space. Our wish is to provide that kind of infrastructure and make the smart city environment an integral part of our everyday life.

Source: Individual interviews and company’s data

5.2.4 Age and Gender

Some 53% of the respondents are females and 47% are males and 85% are of Serbian nationality. Most of the respondents are prime age adults – 79% of them are between 30–60 years of age, or more specifically, approximately one quarter of the sample in each age group. The youngest represent 11% of respondents, while the oldest 9%. Over one third of respondents are older than 50 years of age, which is the category most difficult to employ, being particularly vulnerable during economic crises (Krstić et al. 2010).

Considering the respondents with previous experience in founding a social enterprise, results suggest that males dominate this group (Figure 10) and those aged 41–50, while the share of respondents in other age groups (18–30, 31–40 and 51–60) is equal (Figure 11).

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.
The gender gap in motivation to work is pronounced (Figure 12). Creating a personal employment opportunity is slightly more important motive for men than for women. Males are also more motivated to address social challenges and by a need to set up particular practices than females.

Females are also concerned with social challenges, but they are more oriented towards specific aspects stating that they are motivated to address specific social problems than males and also to deal with the inadequacy of existing social services than males. Addressing environmental challenges plays a role only for females.

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.
Field reflection 4: Addressing a social problem which they have personally experienced – Our House

The group of parents of children with intellectual disabilities and disabled children has decided to revive the association which was initially founded in 1963, but actually has never truly existed or functioned. The aim of the parents’ association gathered this way was to try to get the children out of self-isolation and to prepare them to live in the society without institutional care. A turning point for the organization was the year 2006, when the conceptual differences among parents of children with intellectual disabilities and disabled children who used the services of day care, arose. The differences occurred with regard to the future vision of the organization and the services they should provide, or the concept in which the day care should be performed. Basically, it can be said that the differences occurred between those with the traditional understanding, according to whom, the organization was to perform the functions of day care centres caring for the children and the general organization of workshops, and those who felt that day care centres should offer much more than that for children with intellectual disabilities and other disabilities, through programs of individualization, development of new social skills and their work engagement. This is how, in 2006, a new association was established, with a different name and at a new address - and this is Our House as we know today.

For these young people, it was the first step into the world of work. It was a rewarding experience. We all thought that the process of creating some kind of work for them would take much longer, and, therefore, it was a big surprise for everybody to see how well those guys performed while preparing for the apprenticeship.

And then, the fact that they were financially rewarded for their work was an important thing for them: they began to appreciate themselves as workers, as persons and to understand how the real world works. They went so far as to start to manipulate with the relation between time and money, to demand more money for their work, stating how many boxes or bags they made. Finally, we changed the system of incentives in order to be able to endure financially. Suddenly, in front of us, there were no longer prisoners of their own disability, but adults who struggled for their status and their money.

Source: Interviews and company’s data

Disparities in motivation to work in (or establish) a social enterprise according to age of respondents are also pronounced (Figure 13). Younger respondents (18–30 and 31–40) are motivated primarily to address a specific social problem, while the older ones (41–50, 50–60 and over 60) are motivated mainly to create a personal employment opportunity.
Field reflection 5: Creating a personal employment opportunity

BIOIDEA as a handicraft workshop was founded in 2011, designed as to produce organic soaps with traditional techniques of hand-made products, with an aim to preserve the tradition of craft production in Serbia.

I have decided to start my own business out of pure existential needs - life made me do this, says the owner of the business at the beginning of her story.

I lost my job at the age of 45 as a rather well-educated person, and at that moment my child also finished school. I worked as a commercial director of a rather big company, and one day I just lost my job, so the whole family stayed without any income. At the job centre, I very quickly realized that nothing can be done or solved there and then I decided to start on my own...

Her son was completing chemical secondary school when his family faced the problem of unemployment. Realizing that he must do something to contribute to the family budget, he started to use the knowledge of soap production, which he acquired in school, combining it with the knowledge and experience his mother had in cosmetics business. The idea was supported by the whole family and they worked together to create and develop Bioidea soaps.

Similar experience comes from a person employed in a social enterprise (non-founder):

I was 47 years old when I lost my job, and that's the age when you do not meet legal requirements for retirement and when you have no hope that someone will hire you, in your profession, or in any other. I didn't allow myself to get depressed, but worked for some time in a private company and was miserably paid. At one point I realized that it was better to sit at home than to go to work to where I was not paid... And then I accidentally heard on television about the training for making eco-bags, I applied for it and now I'm doing the job I like.

Source: Interviews and company's data
There are significant disparities in the motivation to work in (or establish) a social enterprise according to educational attainment of respondents (Figure 14). The most important motivating factor for secondary school (gymnasium or vocational school) graduates is to create a personal employment opportunity, which is expected given that secondary education does not provide immediate employment opportunities. Furthermore, unemployment is most pronounced in Serbia among those with secondary education, as about two thirds of the unemployed in Serbia completed secondary education (SORs, 2016). Similarly, those who have completed college are motivated to create a personal employment opportunity or to address a specific social problem which they have already experienced in the past. Graduates and postgraduates are mainly interested in addressing social challenges, in creating personal employment opportunities and in setting up specific practices.

![Figure 14. Entrepreneurs' motivation. Educational attainment](image)

Source: Own calculations from the survey data.

Looking at the two dominant motives for employment or self-employment in social enterprises, the majority of those who wanted to deal with a social challenge attended vocational education or training, while this percentage is lower for those who wanted to create a personal employment opportunity.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper was motivated by the need for a deeper insight into the sociodemographic characteristics of social entrepreneurs and exploration of reasons that motivate them to enter this business venture. We believe that these empirical data bring important new knowledge about the characteristics of individuals who bring social innovation in Serbia, in particular about their education, personal experience, gender and age, and advance the existing knowledge about their motivation for the establishment or working for a social enterprise.
Our results can be summarized as follows:

- Social entrepreneurs in Serbia usually enter this venture without previous experience in founding a social enterprise or managing one. Founders of social enterprises in Serbia are by large people with high education level (bachelor and above), who are interested in continuous education and often engaged in some vocational education or training. According to our data, non-founders engaged in managing SEs are even better educated and oriented towards further improvement of their knowledge and skills through vocational education or training than the founders are.

- Education plays an important role in motivation to work for or establish a social enterprise. While those with secondary school diploma are motivated by a chance to create a personal employment opportunity, college graduates are additionally motivated by the need to address a specific social problem which they have already experienced in the past. Graduates and postgraduates are mainly interested in addressing social challenges, in creating personal employment opportunities and in setting up specific practices. Furthermore, addressing social change seems to be important for motivation for further education or training.

- There is no large difference in number of those that founded a social enterprise out of the desire to solve a social challenge and those that wanted to create a personal employment opportunity. Can social enterprise sector increase its capacity to offer employment opportunities to larger number of people? This would certainly be helpful in times of austerity when new pool of the unemployed should emerge due to public sector downsizing. Experience in the European Union suggests that the sector, due to its innovative approach and resilience to the latest economic crisis, is able to respond to the problems of poverty and unemployment (Cvejić, 2016).

- The gender gap in motivation to work is pronounced. Creating a personal employment opportunity is slightly more important for men than for women; males are also more motivated than females to address social challenges and to set up particular practices. Females are more motivated than males to address specific social problems and also to deal with the inadequacy of the existing social services. Disparities in motivation to work in (or establish) a social enterprise according to age of respondents are also pronounced as younger respondents are motivated primarily to address a specific social problem, while the older ones are motivated mainly to create a personal employment opportunity. This could be explained by the fact that older generation has been one of the losers of transition as they were the first one to be made redundant when state-owned firms went under restructuring and privatisation.

Without dispute, the awareness of the importance of social entrepreneurship today in Serbia is much higher than it was a decade ago. The role of social economy in solving social matters has grown over the years and mainly in the
area of service provision, which was one of goals of the welfare reform at the beginning of 2000s. The intention to increase the responsibility of individuals for their own welfare and to reduce reliance on the state, decentralisation of service provision and an increased role of private sector providers prompted the development of social entrepreneurship. Austerity measures could mark the beginning of a new retreat of the state from the social service provision, but also from other parts of the welfare sector such as education or health. This could be an opportunity for social entrepreneurs to spread into new sectors, at the same time offering employment opportunities for those that would be made redundant in the public sector.

Further research should shed light on factors enabling proliferation of these enterprises in health or education sectors by looking at experiences in, for instance, EU countries, where this has already happened. What we can see so far is that the sector is composed of a mixture of social entrepreneurs of lower educational background, limited entrepreneurial experience and primarily oriented towards solving personal social problem (e.g. unemployment), and younger social entrepreneurs with higher education and wider perspective, more orientated towards solving social problems in the community. This could be interpreted as yet another proof that the sector is under the transformation to a higher stage of development, that of more sustainable and effective functioning, the step needed for an adequate response to an increasing demand in the provision of social services. In the meantime, providing a legal framework and expanding the range of financing possibilities would help consolidating the social entrepreneurship sector, that is small, but with the potential to grow over the years.

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