

National School of Political Science and Public Administration

Multidisciplinary Doctoral School

Doctoral Field: Administrative Sciences

DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT

Social Innovation in Local Public Administration

Advisor: Prof. Univ. Dr. Ani Matei

Ph.D. Candidate: Cipere Andrei-Bogdan

Bucharest, 2024

National School of Political Science and Public Administration

Multidisciplinary Doctoral School

Doctoral Field: Administrative Sciences

ABSTRACT

**SOCIAL INNOVATION IN LOCAL PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION**

Advisor: Prof. Univ. Dr. Ani Matei

Ph.D. Candidate: Cipere Andrei-Bogdan

Bucharest, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
Chapter I. Social Innovation: General and Specific Characteristics	15
I.1. The General Framework of Social Innovation	15
I.1.1. Measuring Social Innovation	26
I.1.2. Evaluating the Impact of Social Innovation	32
I.2. Typology of Social Innovation	38
I.3. Attributes of Social Innovation in Local Public Administration	42
I.4. The Power and Capacity for Innovation in Local Public Administration	44
I.5. Objectives of Social Innovation in Local Public Administration	47
I.6. Drivers and Barriers of Social Innovation in Local Public Administration	58
I.6.1. SWOT Analysis of the Social Innovation Process in Public Administration	71
I.6.2. Specifics of Innovation in Public Administration: The OECD Approach	73
I.7. Conclusions	79
Chapter II. Innovation and Development: A Specific Binomial in Local Public Administration	80
II.1. The Association between Social Innovation and Various Types of Development	80
II.1.1. Social Innovation and Urban Development	81
II.1.2. Social Innovation and Economic Development	86
II.1.3. Social Innovation and Local Development	89
II.1.4. Social Innovation and Technical Development	93
II.1.5. Social Innovation and Sustainable Development	96
II.1.6. Social Innovation and Territorial Development	98
II.1.7. Social Innovation and Regional Development	101
II.2. Innovation in Europe	106
II.2.1. Innovation Models in Europe	109
II.2.2. Innovation in Romania	112
II.3. Conclusions	119

Chapter III. The Dashboard of Social Innovation in Local Public Administration	121
III.1. The Concept of a Dashboard	122
III.2. Premises of a Dashboard for Social Innovation in the Local Public Sector	130
III.2.1. Concepts and Tools for Regional Innovation	130
III.2.1.1. A Trans-Regional Approach for Romania	134
III.2.2. Innovation and Reform in Local Public Administration	148
III.2.2.1. Associated Concepts: Social Innovation and Public Reform	148
III.2.2.2. Innovation-Reform Interaction in the Public Administration Consolidation Strategy 2014-2020	154
III.2.3. The Influence of Public Procurement on Social Innovation	160
III.2.4. Determinants and Barriers Regarding the Use of Public Procurement as Support for Innovation	173
III.3. A Support Framework for the Dashboard of Social Innovation in Romanian Local Administration	189
III.4. Conclusions	198
Chapter IV. Social Innovation in Local Public Administration – The State of Affairs	200
IV.1. Typology of Social Innovation in Romanian Local Public Administration	201
IV.1.1. An Integrated Comparative Framework	209
IV.1.2. SWOT Analyses of Various Types of Social Innovation	216
IV.2. Support Initiatives for Social Innovation in Administration	221
IV.3. Public Procurement - Support for Social Innovation	227
IV.3.1. The Contribution of Public Procurement to Social Innovation	227
IV.3.2. Findings on Innovation in Public Procurement at the Local Level in Romania – An Exploratory Study	232
IV.3.3. Innovation in Public Procurement – Proposal for a Software Application	235
IV.4. Determinants and Barriers	241
IV.5. Conclusions	251
V. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS	254
BIBLIOGRAPHY	276
APPENDIX	333

TABLE OF CONTENTS OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION	6
1. Structure of the Doctoral Thesis	7
2. Aims of the Doctoral Work	11
3. Research Objectives	11
4. Research Hypotheses and Questions	12
5. Research Methodology	13
6. Thesis Synthesis	13
6.1 Chapter I. Social Innovation: General and Specific Characteristics	13
6.2 Chapter II. Innovation and Development: A Specific Binomial in Local Public Administration	22
6.3 Chapter III. The Dashboard of Social Innovation in Local Public Administration.....	30
6.4 Chapter IV. Social Innovation in Local Public Administration – The State of Affairs.....	42
7. Main Conclusions of the Doctoral Thesis	49
SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY	50

INTRODUCTION

Social innovation in local public administration is crucial for the development and modernization of public services, improving their operational efficiency, transparency, and quality. In the current context, marked by rapid changes and diverse challenges, social innovation ensures efficient and participatory governance. The paper discusses the implementation and development of social innovation in local public administration, analyzing existing opportunities and barriers.

Arguments for researching social innovation in local public administration: a) The need for modernization: Local administrations are under pressure to adopt innovations to improve services and meet citizens' expectations (Osborne & Brown, 2011). Social innovation is essential for reforming public services, leading to significant improvements in efficiency and effectiveness (Mulgan et al., 2007).

b) Increasing citizen participation: Promoting social innovation can enhance citizen involvement in public decisions, improving the transparency and accountability of local administration (Fung, 2015). This contributes to the development of social capital and the strengthening of community cohesion (Bovaird & Löffler, 2012).

c) Addressing social challenges: Social innovation provides solutions for pressing social issues, such as social exclusion, poverty, and economic inequalities. It is essential for addressing the complex challenges of contemporary society (Nicholls & Murdock, 2012; Westley & Antadze, 2010).

d) Specific Romanian context: The lack of detailed studies in Romania necessitates research on social innovation in local public administration. The unique socio-economic and cultural context of Romania influences the implementation and adoption of social innovation (Matei, 2009; Popescu et al., 2017).

e) International comparability: Research contributions can enrich international knowledge about social innovation, allowing comparisons and the transfer of best practices between countries (OECD, 2011a; BEPA, 2014). Social innovation is promoted by international organizations such as the OECD and the European Commission as an integral part of sustainable development and social inclusion strategies (OECD, 2015a).

Social innovation in local public administration is timely and can become extremely relevant and original in Romania. It contributes to a better understanding of how social innovations

can be implemented and adapted to meet the needs of local communities. Additionally, it provides a solid foundation for international comparisons and best practices.

In the context of the coronavirus pandemic, the efficiency of public administrations and the improvement of service quality become priorities. Change in the public sector is achieved by transitioning from traditional administration to one oriented towards citizens, results, and performance.

Social innovation is a key factor in economic development and social cohesion policies, recognized for its value in improving economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and social solidarity (European Commission, 2010). In Romania, the concept is poorly studied and needs development (Burz, 2020). The OECD was the first international organization to take steps towards social innovation (Colli, 2014).

Social innovation is closely linked to public procurement, which is a driver of innovation in the public sector and a support for social innovation (OECD, 2017; European Commission, 2012). In Europe and other regions, current trends stimulate social innovation through measures and instruments promoting informational and technological support (European Commission, 2012).

1. The structure of the doctoral thesis

The doctoral thesis is structured into four chapters, followed by general conclusions and bibliography. The four chapters follow a logical and coherent deductive approach, starting from the general framework provided by the current state of research in the field of social innovation and progressing towards the reality in Romania regarding social innovation in local public administration.

Chapter I: Social Innovation. General and Specific Characteristics introduces the concept of social innovation in local public administration, emphasizing its importance in the current context of community development. The general framework of social innovation is discussed, including the measurement and evaluation of its impact, and a typology of social innovation is presented, highlighting the various forms it can take. Additionally, the specific attributes of innovation in local public administration, the power and capacity for innovation within the administration, and the objectives of innovation are analyzed. The chapter concludes with a SWOT analysis of the social innovation process and the identification of stimuli and obstacles

encountered in this process. Chapter I provides a detailed understanding of the concept of social innovation and its application in local public administration. It establishes a theoretical foundation for the rest of the work, where the impact of social innovation on the development of local communities will be analyzed in depth and the proposed research hypotheses will be tested.

Chapter II: Innovation and Development: A Specific Binomial of Local Public Administration explores in depth the concept of social innovation and its association with various types of development. This chapter provides a theoretical and methodological framework for understanding and applying social innovation in local public administration in Romania.

The chapter begins by defining social innovation according to legislation and specialized literature, highlighting its multiple dimensions, from providing solutions for unmet social needs to creating new forms of organization and enterprises. The importance of alliances and partnerships between local actors for common territorial development is emphasized. Social innovation is analyzed in the context of urban development, being considered a driver of economic prosperity and social well-being. The role of local public administration in ensuring the leadership and financing of urban development processes and the involvement of the private sector and civil society are discussed.

The chapter examines how social innovation can contribute to economic development, especially through job creation and support for social entrepreneurial initiatives. The role of social innovation in local development through the mobilization of endogenous resources and the involvement of local actors is emphasized. Technical innovation is also discussed, particularly the impact of ICT on reducing communication barriers and scaling social innovation, as well as the similarities and interconnections between social and technical innovation. The relationship between social innovation and sustainable development is addressed, discussing the role of digital innovation in achieving sustainable development goals. The importance of blockchain and other digital technologies in promoting sustainable social innovation is also identified.

The correlation between social innovation and territorial development is further discussed, identifying the necessity of social innovation for territorial development. Models of territorial innovation and development, as well as the importance of networks and intersectoral collaboration in territorial development processes, are presented. Lastly, the chapter analyzes social innovation in the context of regional development, discussing the importance of regional policies and European funding in promoting social innovation and emphasizing the need for a coordinated

regional approach to stimulate innovation and sustainable development.

The chapter concludes with an analysis of innovation in Europe, particularly in Romania. At the European level, the analysis of the regional innovation scoreboard and the determinants of regional innovation strategies, the role of mixed policies, and the use of strategic information in evaluating innovation effectiveness are performed. At the Romanian level, the situation of social and economic innovation, the impact of legislation and public policies on social innovation, and successful social innovation projects and existing challenges are presented.

National research, development, and innovation strategies and regional innovation performance are also discussed. In conclusion, this chapter provides a detailed theoretical framework and a comprehensive analysis of social innovation in various development contexts. It emphasizes the importance of social innovation for urban, economic, local, technical, sustainable, territorial, and regional development, correlating these aspects with the research hypotheses proposed in the work.

Chapter III: The Social Innovation Dashboard in Local Public Administration delves deeply into the concept and applicability of the dashboard in stimulating and monitoring social innovation initiatives in local public administration. It offers a comprehensive analysis of how a dashboard can become an essential managerial tool for public sector leaders and managers, facilitating decision-making and promoting transparency and efficiency. The chapter begins with the definition and contextualization of the dashboard, a managerial tool that collects and presents critical information in a concise and intelligent manner.

Various definitions and approaches from the specialized literature are presented, highlighting the extensive use of dashboards in various fields, including healthcare and public management. The chapter addresses the interdependence between innovation and administrative reform, highlighting how a dashboard can contribute to structural reforms and the improvement of local public administration performance. The "Public Administration Strengthening Strategy 2016-2020," especially pillar V related to local public administration, is analyzed. Mechanisms and strategies supporting regional innovation are detailed, including the use of statistical data and graphics to highlight the degree of innovation.

The influence of public procurement on social innovation is discussed, integrating recent sources and reports to illustrate the dynamics of this interaction. The determinants and barriers regarding the use of public procurement as support for innovation are also presented.

Finally, the chapter proposes an innovative support framework for the dashboard, integrating perspectives from public procurement and other relevant initiatives. The main findings are summarized, and directions for further development of the social innovation dashboard in local public administration are proposed. In conclusion, Chapter III offers an exhaustive analysis of how dashboards can serve as pivotal tools in local social innovation, highlighting their contribution to improving governance and enhancing the quality of life for citizens.

Chapter IV: Social Innovation in Local Public Administration – The Current State represents a detailed analysis of how social innovation is integrated and implemented within local public administration in Romania. This chapter examines the current state of social innovation, its typology, comparative framework, supporting initiatives, public perception, and the determinants and barriers encountered. The chapter begins with a general presentation of the importance of social innovation in the context of local public administration, emphasizing its necessity for improving citizens' quality of life and sustainable community development. It highlights the fact that local authorities must respond promptly and efficiently to citizens' needs by promoting innovative solutions.

The chapter defines and classifies social innovation in Romanian local public administration into several types, each with specific characteristics and contributing distinctly to community development. Various forms of innovation, such as technological innovation, innovation in public services, innovation in participation, governance, and inclusion, are presented. A comparative framework that allows for the analysis and understanding of how each type of innovation contributes to the development of local public administration is detailed. This framework includes the evaluation of definitions, implementation methods, benefits, and challenges of each type of innovation. SWOT analyses for various types of innovation are included, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of each form of innovation.

These analyses provide a solid basis for developing effective strategies to promote innovation and meet local community needs. Supporting initiatives for social innovation in local public administration, such as the Annual Work Plan of the Adjud Local Council, the KAIZEN integrated management system model, and the "Bacău Smart County" project, are discussed. These initiatives are presented in detail, highlighting their implementation methodologies and impact on social innovation. The role of public procurement in stimulating social innovation is analyzed, emphasizing how it can become a catalyst for positive changes in communities.

The chapter presents findings from exploratory research and proposes an innovative software application for public procurement in Romania. The chapter concludes that social innovation is essential for modernizing local public administration and improving services offered to citizens. The success of initiatives largely depends on the local authorities' ability to collaborate effectively with private and civil sector partners, adopt new technologies, and ensure adequate political support.

2. What does the thesis propose?

The research aims to investigate and analyze the ways in which social innovation can be implemented and developed in local public administration in Romania, considering existing opportunities and barriers. The goal is to improve the efficiency, transparency, and quality of public services, enhance citizen involvement in decision-making processes, and address pressing social challenges, within the specific Romanian context and in comparison with international best practices.

3. Research objectives

The thesis aims to explore how social innovation can be implemented and developed in local public administration in Romania, with the goal of:

1. Improving operational efficiency;
2. Enhancing transparency and quality of public services;
3. Promoting citizen participation;
4. Addressing pressing social challenges such as social exclusion, poverty, and economic inequalities.

4. Hypotheses and research questions

The doctoral thesis proposes a research approach based on four hypotheses:

- a) Social innovation in local public administration improves operational efficiency and reduces administrative costs.
- b) The implementation of digital technologies in local administration increases transparency and citizen participation.
- c) There is a positive correlation between the degree of social innovation and citizen satisfaction with local public services.
- d) Cultural and organizational barriers are the main obstacles to the adoption of social innovation in local public administration.

To achieve these objectives, the thesis formulates five research questions:

- a) What innovative technologies and practices are currently being used in local public administration in Romania?
- b) What are the main benefits of social innovation for local public administration?
- c) To what extent does social innovation contribute to increased transparency and citizen participation?
- d) What obstacles do local public administrations encounter in the process of implementing social innovation?
- e) How can the impact of social innovation on the performance of local public administration be measured?

This research framework will guide the structure and content of the thesis, the results and conclusions drawn, hypothesis validation, and the projection of future research.

5. Research methodology

To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the thesis employs a mixed methodology, combining quantitative and qualitative methods as follows:

a) *Systematic Literature Review*: A detailed analysis of the specialized literature will be conducted to identify existing theories and practices in the field of social innovation in local public administration.

b) *Empirical Research*: This involves conceptualizing an application for integrating social innovation within the context of public procurement in Romania.

c) *Case Studies*: Several local administrations that have implemented social innovation initiatives will be selected. These case studies will provide an in-depth perspective on how these initiatives were implemented and the outcomes achieved.

d) *Interviews*: Interviews will be conducted with public officials to gather relevant data on their perceptions and the impact of innovation in local public administration.

e) *Data Analysis*: Collected data will be analyzed using statistical techniques to identify relevant trends and correlations. Qualitative analysis will be employed to interpret responses from the interviews.

f) *SWOT Analysis*: A SWOT analysis will be performed for types of social innovation specific to Romanian local public administration, based on relevant literature and the specific realities of Romania.

6. Synthesis of the doctoral thesis

6.1 Chapter I. Social Innovation: General and Specific Characteristics

This section aims to identify existing and relevant research on the specifics of social innovation in public administration, with a focus on local administration. Additionally, it examines the concept of social innovation and explores how this concept can support the development of local public administration. A framework for social innovation is a set of principles, methods, and tools that guide organizations in developing and delivering solutions for positive social change (Chatterjee, 2023). Various types of social innovation frameworks include the social lean canvas,

social business model canvas, and impact gap canvas, which help organizations define the problem, solution, value proposition, impact, customer segments, revenue streams, cost structure, key resources, and key partners. This framework serves as a guide for the entire process of planning, implementing, and monitoring development initiatives, ensuring effective development and use of indicators, maintaining a shared understanding among stakeholders, and adjusting course to achieve initiative objectives.

Studies in anthropology and sociology by founders such as Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber have contributed to understanding social dynamics and developing a healthy society (Nisbet, 1966 apud Dawson & Daniel, 2010). For example, Durkheim analyzed suicide rates to reflect social conditions, Marx investigated the transition of socio-political-economic structures, and Weber focused on creating a meritocratic system (Dawson & Daniel, 2010).

Social innovation, a relatively new field, focuses on developing approaches that support planned social development, dissemination of knowledge, and autonomous organization of communities to propose innovative solutions to social challenges. It is seen as a response to a new social problem, an unsatisfactory approach to an existing problem, or an improvement of current solutions (Matei, 2009). Social innovation is influenced by the social, cultural, economic, and environmental context, being socially and politically constructed, and is not value-neutral (Cloutier, 2003). The European Commission has included social innovation in its reform agenda, defining it as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services, and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations (European Commission, 2013a). Social innovation is essential in the Europe 2020 Strategy for economic growth and employment, promoting smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth, addressing social challenges, social and territorial cohesion, and partnerships and collaboration (European Commission, 2010a). EU structural funds, particularly the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), play an important role in supporting social innovation initiatives, promoting balanced economic, social, and territorial development (MIPE, n.d.; European Commission, 2015a; European Commission, 2015b; European Commission, 2016). The OECD defines social innovation as different from economic innovation, focusing on meeting new social needs and creating more satisfying ways to integrate into production. A supportive policy framework is necessary to assist public, non-profit, and private actors in co-creating and

implementing socially innovative solutions (OECD, 2011b). The first researcher to use the concept of social innovation was Taylor (1970 apud Cloutier, 2003), who defined it as a new way of doing things to meet a social need. Social innovation is described by Bessant & Tidd (2007 apud Dawson & Daniel, 2010) and Mulgan et al. (2007) as a complex process of transforming ideas into new products or services that improve social well-being. It is also a collective process of generating, selecting, and implementing ideas by individuals collaborating to solve social challenges (Dawson & Daniel, 2010).

Social innovation can occur at various levels, from societies and communities to organizations and families, contributing to social well-being and enhancing social capital (Dawson & Daniel, 2010). It involves the innovative use of existing technologies and knowledge to address social issues and improve social, economic, and environmental conditions.

Social innovation has become a central element in public policies, being integrated into municipal, regional, national, and supranational agendas, including those of the European Commission and OECD. For instance, the German Federal Government's High-Tech Strategy for 2025 emphasizes the importance of promoting both technological and non-technological innovations, including social innovations, focused on benefiting people (BMBF, 2018, p. 4).

Social innovation extends beyond scientific and technological advancements, often focusing on services and new forms of cooperation and governance (Terstriep et al., 2022). An example is the “Society of Ideas” initiative launched by the German Ministry of Science and Education (BMBF) in 2020, which aims to stimulate social innovation and highlights its importance in political decisions (Terstriep et al., 2022, p. 2).

Specialized literature reveals various approaches for measuring social innovation. Bund et al. (2015) proposed a methodological framework that combines "top-down" theoretical strategies with "bottom-up" empirical approaches. This includes evaluating technical-economic innovation indicators and case studies in four German cities, analyzing the integrity and relevance of social innovation measurement dimensions at national and local levels (Bund et al., 2015, p. 3).

Reeder et al. (2012) and other researchers highlighted the iterative nature of developing metrics for social innovation. The “top-down” approach assessed existing measurement methods and presented macro-level dimensions, while the “bottom-up” approach analyzed local social innovation processes using qualitative interviews (Bund et al., 2015). The Oslo Manual recommends a thematic approach to more directly reflect the innovation process (OECD &

EUROSTAT, 2005).

The TEPSIE project emphasized the need to address the complexity of measuring social innovation due to emerging social issues and the competitive potential of social innovation in Europe. It highlighted that social innovation can bring significant economic and social benefits to European societies (Schmitz et al., 2013, p. 10).

The IndiSI project, funded by BMBF, developed a social innovation assessment tool tested in the Rhine-Ruhr region, generating new data sources and providing a solid basis for tailored funding policies. The IndiSI+ project extends this approach to analyze and compare social innovation capacities at larger geographical levels (Terstriep et al., 2022, p. 6).

In conclusion, specialized literature indicates that measuring social innovation involves identifying relevant criteria, developing a coherent measurement model, collecting and analyzing relevant data, and using results to inform policy decisions. These steps are essential for promoting and supporting social innovation across various fields and contexts.

Social innovations are complex and trans-sectoral, making them difficult to measure (Nicholls, 2015; Baturina & Bezovan, 2015). Metrics used for social innovation are underdeveloped compared to those for technological or economic innovation (Bund et al., 2015). Indicators are crucial for guiding investment decisions and public policies in social innovation (Baturina & Bezovan, 2015). The lack of clear metrics can limit the ability to assess the social impact of social innovation (Antadze & Westley, 2012). Various approaches and methods have been proposed for evaluating the impact of social innovation, but their diversity makes comparing results challenging (Krlev et al., 2014). Developing effective metrics is crucial for directing resources to initiatives with the highest social impact (Joy & Shields, 2013).

The RurAction project by ENRD provides a methodological framework for assessing the impact of social innovation in rural areas (ENRD, 2021). Universities play a crucial role in promoting social innovation at local and regional levels (Cunha & Benneworth, 2019).

Evaluating the impact of social innovation faces challenges related to the intangible nature of social changes and limited available data (Preskill & Beer, 2012). Evaluating the impact of social innovation is essential for demonstrating the effectiveness and sustainability of social initiatives (BEPA, 2014). Mixed approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, are needed to capture the complexity of social innovation impact (European Commission & OECD, 2015). Ultimately, literature indicates that measuring and evaluating the impact of social innovation

remains a major but essential challenge for guiding investments and public policies toward initiatives that can bring significant societal changes.

In local public administration, social innovation focuses on delivering services with social impact, unlike the private sector where profit and market are predominant. In the public sector, services are considered the main product and are marketed through information about availability, accessibility, and reporting successes. Innovation in the public sector has unique aspects and is influenced by five attributes: cost reduction, observability, relevant advantage over previous ideas, testability, and compatibility with local values.

Cost reduction is a crucial motivation, especially in the context of constrained budgets. The observability of innovation and visible benefits to the public increase the chances of success. Relevant advantage refers to improvements made compared to previous alternatives. Testability allows for evaluating interventions before large-scale implementation. Compatibility with local values is crucial for the adoption of innovations, avoiding cultural disapproval. In conclusion, cost savings are particularly important, reflecting the need for innovative thinking to optimize public sector functioning during financial austerity (ARC, 2019).

Public administration plays a crucial role in stimulating economic innovation and its own efficiency, thus increasing public value to address societal challenges. In a knowledge-based society, the ability to innovate and implement new forms of innovation is essential. Public organizations must integrate information, knowledge, and resources, harmonizing the needs of citizens, businesses, and NGOs.

Resources, whether human (knowledge, expertise) or non-human (infrastructure, objects), are sources of power in social interactions. Power is the ability to mobilize resources to achieve objectives and can be ideological, economic, military, or political. There are three types of power: reinforcing (reproducing existing resources), innovative (creating new resources), and transformative (renewing institutions).

The power of social innovation lies in the ability to use innovative ideas and strategies to solve social problems and improve quality of life, promoting inclusion and equity. The transformative capacity of social innovation involves internal and external dynamics of actors, networks, environment, politics, and institutions, fostering sustainable and scalable changes.

The capacity for innovation in public organizations is influenced by organizational characteristics, internal culture, external environment, and institutional framework. It can be

viewed in a pyramidal structure, with contextual and institutional conditions at the top and daily practices at the base. A clear long-term strategy and a working environment that encourages change and feedback stimulate innovation. Public organizations with high innovation capacity leverage modern technologies and research to create improved processes and services, thereby generating public value for society.

In this subchapter, the objectives and motivations of social innovation in the public sector are discussed, highlighting its interaction with public services and policies, co-creation, and collaboration with civil society. The report from the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) outlines four essential reasons for innovation in the public sector: its major contribution to the national economy, its influence on private firms through procurement strategies, addressing complex challenges through public policies, and its role in incubating talent.

Social innovation, defined by Mulgan (2007) as new ideas for social goals, is crucial for developing efficient and cost-effective public services. Engaging civic actors and collaborating with governments to respond to emerging citizen needs are important strategies. Merlin-Brogniart et al. (2022) identify three perspectives on public governance: Traditional Public Administration (TPA), New Public Management (NPM), and New Public Governance (NPG), each having different ways of coordination and performance evaluation.

NPM reforms, which apply private sector principles to public administration, and NPG, which promotes co-creation and citizen involvement, are highlighted as solutions for improving the quality of public services. Collaborative governance and collaborative innovation, involving public, private, and NGO actors, are essential for developing innovative solutions.

Tucker (2014) emphasizes that social innovation brings experimental approaches, distributed networks, and co-production, involving citizens in the provision of public services. Co-production and co-creation are core principles of social innovation, focusing on collaboration and active participation of service users. Studies indicate that these innovation models are critical for responding to social needs and improving the efficiency and quality of public services.

Factors driving social innovations based on information and communication technology (ICT), according to Svidroňová et al. (2015), focus on analyzing second-level factors, divided into external and internal organizational contexts.

Inter-institutional dynamics (external context factor): This is influenced by the presence of similar entities in the same environment. Competition between organizations, also

known as "inter-jurisdictional competition," is crucial for the adoption and expansion of social innovation. Examples include the competitive impact of electronic public procurement and local accounting reforms.

Legislative factors of the external context: Well-articulated legislation can promote the adoption and diffusion of innovation but can also inhibit it in some cases, such as with broad uniform regulations.

Political factors of the external context: Political support is crucial for promoting innovation, while political conflicts can act as barriers to adoption.

Economic factors of the external context: Economic growth and financial resources favor the adoption and diffusion of innovation, but budget constraints can also influence the process.

Social factors of the external context: Education levels and public opinion play key roles in the adoption of ICT-based social innovation.

Organizational factors of the internal context: Organizational capabilities, resources, and management are crucial for adopting innovation within an organization.

Individual factors of the internal context: Employees' ICT skills and their perceptions of the benefits of innovation are essential for adopting and expanding innovation within organizations.

These factors are essential for understanding the process of adopting and expanding ICT-based social innovation in different organizational and social contexts.

A SWOT analysis of the social innovation process in public administration reveals the following key aspects:

Strengths:

Creativity and new solutions: The ability to bring innovative solutions to existing social problems.

Community involvement: The capacity to involve the community and citizens in decision-making and the provision of public services.

Flexibility: The ability to respond quickly and adapt policies and programs to emerging societal needs.

Improving efficiency: The potential to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public services through technological or administrative innovations.

Weaknesses:

Resistance to change: Opposition from bureaucratic structures or a conservative organizational culture towards change.

Budget limitations: Insufficient financial resources that may slow down or restrict the scale of innovation implementation.

Lack of expertise: Some organizations or departments within public administration may lack sufficient expertise in social innovation.

Inadequate involvement: The risk of not adequately involving all stakeholders or not addressing the real needs of the community.

Opportunities:

Increased global support: Growing awareness and global support for social innovation.

Intersectoral collaboration: The opportunity to collaborate with NGOs, the academic sector, and the private sector to share resources and expertise.

Use of new technologies: Utilizing digital platforms to facilitate communication and citizen participation in the social innovation process.

Political and legislative support: Political and legislative backing for promoting social innovation and creating a conducive environment for implementation.

Threats:

Lack of political and financial support: The risk of not obtaining the necessary political support and funding for social innovation projects.

Resistance and legislative obstacles: The possibility of facing resistance from interest groups or encountering legislative obstacles.

Competition for limited resources: Competition for resources and public attention in a constantly changing political and social environment.

Long-term sustainability: The danger of failing to maintain the sustainability and long-term impact of social innovation due to inadequate planning and resources.

This SWOT analysis provides a solid foundation for assessing the current situation and identifying strategic directions necessary for the development and implementation of social innovation in public administration. It is essential for decision-makers to use this information to maximize opportunities and effectively manage identified threats and weaknesses.

Social innovation has a deeply localized nature, often being responses to concrete

community problems. It is perceived as an extremely powerful contextual phenomenon, influenced by the geographical and cultural specificities of each region (European Commission, 2007; Sgaragli, 2014). However, despite its localized nature, social innovation can have extensive impact and can be connected to other places, although global scaling may be challenging due to the diversity of local conditions.

The involvement of public administration in supporting social innovation is considered essential (OECD, 2021). National and local governments play a crucial role in creating a favorable environment for the exchange of ideas and practices among various public and private actors, facilitating the implementation of social innovation initiatives through public policies and strategies (OECD, 2021).

To maximize the impact of social innovation, the OECD recommends developing an ecosystem that encourages, promotes, and scales these initiatives (OECD, 2021). It is recognized that individual social innovations are not sufficient to bring about lasting systemic change, and adequate infrastructure and policy support are needed to initiate and develop them. Social innovation ecosystems develop differently in various countries and regions (Boelman & Heales, 2015), reflecting significant variations in local capacities to stimulate social innovation (Baturina, 2014). Even in rural areas, social innovation has gained traction, influenced by the adoption of bottom-up solutions and technological advancements (Neumeier, 2016). The OECD identifies several critical factors that support a favorable environment for social innovation, including adequate funding, widespread recognition of the term "social innovation" in policies, and the availability of supporting infrastructure (OECD, 2021). In contrast, lack of funding, volunteer culture, and effective governance are considered major obstacles (Boelman & Heales, 2015). Local decision-makers need to be equipped with the necessary tools and framework to develop supportive policies for social innovation (OECD, 2021). The OECD proposes a methodological framework for analyzing the social innovation ecosystem, including framework conditions, policy measures, and progress monitoring (OECD, 2021). For the successful implementation of social innovation, the OECD suggests an effective combination of available local resources and political priorities (OECD, 2021). Implementation can begin even without a dedicated strategy, considering initial actions that policymakers can undertake to support social innovation locally (OECD, 2021). Regarding policy implementation tools, the OECD categorizes measures into those that support demand and those that support supply (OECD, 2021). Demand-side policies, such as public

procurement and regulations, are essential for stimulating social innovation, although their implementation can be complex at the local level (OECD, 2014). On the other hand, supply-side measures, such as financial support, infrastructure development, and skill development, are critical for the growth and quality of social innovation (OECD, 2021).

In conclusion, social innovation is not just a localized phenomenon but requires support and collaboration among various actors, including local and national governments, to encourage and sustain initiatives that bring lasting social and economic value to communities.

6.2 Chapter II. Innovation and Development: A Specific Binomial in Local Public Administration

Addressing social needs during periods of economic and social crisis is an increasingly significant challenge (Supporting Social Innovations at Local Level: The Role of Local Authorities, n.d.). The article emphasizes the rapid expansion of the concept of social innovation beyond the research domain, focusing on improving and transcending a predominantly technological perspective.

In accordance with the French 2014 law on social and solidarity economy, social innovation is defined through a dual approach: responding to inadequately met social needs through markets or public policies, and adopting an innovative approach in the production of goods and services or organizing work (Supporting Social Innovations at Local Level: The Role of Local Authorities, n.d.). Territories aim to enhance their capacity to support and develop social innovation by addressing everyday community needs such as health, food, housing, mobility, and the environment. One of the central pillars of territorial development is forming alliances and partnerships among associations, companies, research institutions, and public actors, followed by the development of a common territorial development plan (Supporting Social Innovations at Local Level: The Role of Local Authorities, n.d.). The literature highlights a dual approach to social innovation and development, reflected in the multiple definitions of the concept. In the current context, the definition provided by the OECD indicates that social innovation involves implementing new solutions that bring about conceptual, process, product, or organizational changes aimed at improving the well-being of individuals and communities (Social Innovation, n.d.).

Development is considered a consequence of decentralization, representing the

diversification and enrichment of economic, social, and cultural activities through a collective effort of the local population (Frege, 1991, p.57).

In the literature, a significant association between social innovation and urban development is highlighted. According to Dincă (2008, p. 9), urban development focuses on the city as a center of technological innovation and scientific research, serving as an economic catalyst and a process aimed at improving residents' quality of life. Dincă (2008) defines urban development as a complex process of increasing well-being through coordinated actions by local, regional, and national actors, addressing environmental protection, social and economic development, land planning, and more. Additionally, Dumitrică & Dincă (2020) emphasize that urban development is not limited to economic aspects but also includes social and cultural dimensions, affected by uncertainties in a changing society (von Schnurbein et al., 2021).

In this context, local public administration plays a crucial role in managing and financing the urban development process (Dumitrică & Dincă, 2020). The private sector, through investment and job creation, and civil society, through involvement in identifying and solving problems, complement the roles of the administration.

A critical component of urban development is the social dimension, which involves managing health, human settlements, and ensuring individual and collective safety (Dumitrică & Dincă, 2020). Addressing poverty and promoting identity diversity are priorities in creating an equitable urban environment. Social innovation, defined as implementing new solutions that enhance community life, is often vital in addressing complex urban issues (Cattacin & Zimmer, 2016; Sotarauta et al., 2012). Studies highlight that the success of social innovation in urban development depends on collaboration among various stakeholders (von Schnurbein et al., 2021). Recent literature connects smart urban development and social innovation, with the potential to improve residents' lives by adopting innovative technologies and practices (Szendi, 2021). These concepts involve collaboration among different societal sectors, including public, private, academic, and civil society, to create more competitive and sustainable cities (Husar & Ondrejicka, 2019).

In conclusion, social innovation and urban development mutually support each other, contributing to improving the quality of life in urban areas by addressing complex social and economic issues and creating more inclusive and sustainable cities (Kim et al., 2021; Calzada, 2020). These aspects underscore the importance of an integrated and collaborative approach in

managing urban and social changes in the current global context.

This chapter also focuses on the relationship between social innovation and economic development, highlighting how the two are often interdependent and can mutually support each other in promoting social and economic progress. Social innovation is recognized for its transformational and collaborative approach in addressing complex social problems such as unemployment, inequality, or demographic changes. It is often associated with social entrepreneurship and collective actions, characterized by its decentralized and distributed nature. Social innovations can significantly contribute to meeting human needs, social inclusion, and local economic growth by mobilizing endogenous resources and stimulating collaboration among various stakeholders (Sousa & Ferreiro, 2020).

The impact of social innovation can be observed in various communities and regions through sustainable local economic development. A relevant example is the Terra Chã Cooperative in Portugal, which has managed to leverage local traditions and natural resources to create decent jobs and income in a rural village. Through economic activities such as honey production, grazing, handicrafts, and tourism, the cooperative has attracted tourists and stimulated the local economy, demonstrating how social innovation can transform territorial problems into opportunities for sustainable and social development (Bernardino & Santos, 2017). Integrating social innovation into economic development strategies can contribute to building fairer, more inclusive, and prosperous societies. Recognizing the complex interactions between social innovation and economic development can guide policies and initiatives to maximize the positive impact on communities and regions affected by various social and economic challenges.

Matei (2009, p.14) defines local development as a process of diversifying and developing activities in a territory by mobilizing and coordinating existing resources. This process involves collaboration among all actors in economic and social life to initiate projects that contribute to local development. Authors emphasize that the partnership between local authorities, the business environment, and NGOs is essential for stimulating investments and generating sustainable development (Matei, 2005).

In local development, social innovation plays a crucial role. Moulaert (2009) highlights the role of social innovation in the integrated development of communities, emphasizing the need to create new social relationships and institutions to address inequalities and social exclusion. He argues that these innovative processes depend on creating new forms of governance and proximity

to institutional and economic arenas.

The concept of "neo-endogenous" rural development (Copus et al., 2017) rejects traditional "top-down" policies, promoting local initiatives and dynamic interactions between local communities and their broader environments. This development model involves a balance between local resources and initiatives and access to capital, expertise, and innovation from external networks (Gkartzios & Lowe, 2019). In the context of rural development, Neumeier (2011) emphasizes the importance of social innovation for the sustainable success of neo-endogenous development. Bock (2016) introduces the concept of "nexogenous growth," highlighting the need to connect marginalized rural areas and facilitate social innovation through adequate support from national and regional institutions.

In conclusion, social innovation and local development are closely interconnected and vary depending on the socio-economic and political context of each country. In Nordic countries, government policies and a favorable climate for social entrepreneurship facilitate the development of innovative initiatives at the local level, contrasting with other European states where support for social innovation may be more limited (Copus et al., 2017). According to TEPSIE, "digital technology in social innovation" involves the use of online networks and other digital tools to support, promote, or enable social innovation (Millard & Carpenter, 2014, p. 4). This includes the use of ICTs to significantly enhance existing social innovations or to create new types of social innovation that would not be possible without these technologies.

The rapid evolution of accessible, omnipresent, and powerful technologies such as the internet, the World Wide Web, and social networks has opened new possibilities for social innovation. The concept of the "sharing economy" is one example, where people can share resources such as cars, accommodation, and skills, transforming how society interacts with and utilizes available resources (Millard & Carpenter, 2014). The use of digital technologies can be transformative, opening new perspectives in social innovation. For instance, through the use of "big data," data about social needs can be collected and analyzed, facilitating the development of specifically tailored products or services. Additionally, digital tools enable the development of innovative models in areas such as health and education, such as the prototyping and local production of affordable prosthetic limbs (Millard & Carpenter, 2014).

TEPSIE identifies two main ways in which digital technology contributes to social innovation. First, ICTs support existing social innovations, such as online job search platforms.

Second, ICTs enable social innovations that would not otherwise be possible, paving the way for new social, business, and governance models that reduce unnecessary intermediaries and facilitate access to opportunities for everyone (Millard & Carpenter, 2014).

It is important to note that the use of digital technologies in social innovation often focuses on standard, user-friendly, and widely accessible ICTs. This reduces the entry barrier for beneficiaries with limited technological skills and can be adapted to various social and economic contexts (Millard & Carpenter, 2014).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the search for solutions to social issues associated with sustainable development goals (Dionisio et al., 2023). The authors argue that key actors are turning to digital social innovations, defined as collaborative innovations where businesses, users, and communities work together using digital technologies to promote large-scale and rapid solutions, connecting innovation, the social world, and digital ecosystems to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The authors define digital social innovation as collaborative, involving businesses, users, and communities using digital technologies to co-create large-scale and rapid solutions. This approach connects social innovation with digital ecosystems, facilitating rapid and effective collaboration to address complex social challenges (Dionisio et al., 2023).

Digital transformation is seen as a driving force for digital social innovation, with the potential to revolutionize how social issues are addressed. The study highlights that this combination is essential for stimulating economic and social development, requiring increased commitment from governments, entrepreneurs, and society to optimize the positive impact of digital technologies in solving social problems (Carayannis & Morawska-Jancelewicz, 2022; Schwab & Malleret, 2020). An important aspect highlighted is the potential of blockchain technology in supporting sustainable development goals. This technology is considered suitable in the social economy, providing features such as security, transparency, and disintermediation, which are essential for enhancing the capacity to generate positive social impact and promoting social innovation (Sempere & Moreno, 2021). Social innovation addresses local development challenges, such as skill dispersion and inefficient integration between national, regional, and local levels (Moulaert, 2000). This aspect places social innovation in the context of place-based organizational forms, such as local governance (Monardo & Massari, 2021). Additionally, social innovation transforms social relationships by improving governance systems and establishing new

mechanisms for resource allocation (Moulaert, 2009).

European regional policy emphasizes territorial, economic, and social cohesion, using innovation models as a driving force for regional development and economic growth (de Silva et al., 2022). These models include regional industrial clusters and integrated development of areas, which are critical for explaining territorial evolution at the subnational level (Moulaert & Sekia, 2003). Studies recognize that social innovation plays a crucial role in addressing territorial issues through social networks and local communities. These are essential for reconfiguring spatial relationships and leveraging local social and cultural assets (MacCallum et al., 2009). Social innovation in territorial development has a threefold focus: addressing stakeholders' needs, empowering local actors, and transforming social relationships within communities (Estensoro, 2015). It involves spatial negotiation and incorporation of contextual specifics, transforming how local actors interact and influence development directions (Sousa & Ferreiro, 2020).

In conclusion, social innovation and territorial development are interdependent, contributing to the economic, social, and environmental progress of communities and regions. Integrating social innovation into local and regional policies and practices can support sustainable and balanced growth, responding to the specific needs of each region and promoting common well-being.

This chapter also explores the theme of social innovation and regional development, highlighting the complex and interdependent interactions between these fields. In the past two decades, regions and cities have become active centers for developing their own innovation policies, reflecting the global economic transformations towards knowledge-based capitalism. Florida (1995) emphasizes that, despite predictions of geographical decline, regions have become crucial nodes for economic and technological organization.

Literature on regional innovation systems highlights the essential role of governments in coordinating and stimulating the innovative activities of regional actors. These systems are viewed as networks of complex and dynamic interactions between organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders, facilitating knowledge exchange and promoting adaptability and innovation in regions. The concept of social innovation, relatively new in the academic and political landscape, draws attention to the need for extensive empirical and theoretical studies to understand the mechanisms underlying inclusive social change. In the European context, the European Union encourages social innovation through its cohesion and regional development policies, using the

Regional Development Fund as the main channel for financing growth and innovation initiatives at the subnational level. Studies on regional social innovation emphasize the importance of recognizing and addressing power imbalances in identifying social issues and developing appropriate solutions. They highlight the crucial involvement of civil society and various interest groups in the social innovation process, thus contributing to more equitable and sustainable regional development.

In conclusion, social innovation and regional development are interconnected and can collaborate effectively to address the social and economic challenges of regions, promoting social and economic inclusion and fostering sustainable and equitable economic growth.

Experiences in conceptualizing and using regional innovation dashboards have highlighted essential features for establishing an operational framework. The OECD (2013 apud Matei et al., 2015, p. 11) identifies four key characteristics for such a dashboard:

a) Working with “policy-mix” approaches is essential for stimulating knowledge-based activities and attracting talent, going beyond mere research and innovation policies. This aspect underscores the importance of the institutional framework and political governance at the regional level.

b) Utilizing strategic information for effectiveness assessment is crucial as innovation involves short product life cycles and multidisciplinary collaboration. The dashboard must be dynamic, adaptable, and allow for experience sharing with other regions and countries.

c) Ensuring linkages for growth strategies of innovation hubs is another essential feature. This involves strengthening innovation networks and inter-institutional interactions to leverage knowledge sources at both local and global levels.

d) Recognizing the diversity of regional pathways highlights the importance of socio-cultural and regional context in developing regional competitive advantages.

To effectively implement a regional innovation dashboard, the OECD (2013 apud Matei et al., 2015, p. 11) suggests the following steps:

a) Initiate a regional dialogue on innovation to align the strategic objectives of local stakeholders.

b) Analyze regional needs and capacities in innovation to identify each region's strengths and weaknesses.

c) Develop the innovation strategy with the active participation of all stakeholders to

ensure proper implementation.

d) Select innovation support priorities based on the potential and needs identified in the initial analysis.

e) Implement the innovation strategy to support identified projects and initiatives.

f) Establish and utilize a monitoring and evaluation system to measure the impact and effectiveness of the strategy in real-time.

The regional innovation dashboard is an adaptation of the European dashboard, providing a comparative assessment of innovation performance for regions in the EU, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Indicators include digital skills, innovation expenditure, ICT specialists, and industrial air emissions (European Commission, 2021a).

Despite progress in innovation, disparities persist between regions, highlighting the need for stronger cohesion policies to promote equitable and sustainable growth (European Commission, 2023a).

Innovation in Europe is shaped by various sectors and initiatives, with a focus on sustainable economic growth and solutions to contemporary social and economic challenges. European innovation policy promotes transnational collaboration and supports innovative ecosystems to enhance Europe's competitiveness (European Commission, 2021b).

In conclusion, territorial innovation models play a crucial role in defining regional research and development policies, reflecting the diversity and specificity of local contexts in innovative processes (Camagni & Capello, 2013).

Currently, social innovation plays a central role in discussions about state reform and improving well-being in Europe. It is promoted as a crucial tool for reducing poverty and stimulating economic development by better integrating vulnerable groups into the labor market (Prodan, 2024). In Romania, social innovation is integrated into social assistance legislation and public policies, with a focus on reforming the social protection system and social assistance to support the social and professional integration of beneficiaries (Prodan, 2024).

Prodan (2024) identifies two disruptive innovations in Romania's social services sector: "social services for children with parents working abroad" and "the minimum package of social services for vulnerable children and their families." These initiatives have led to legislative changes and new practices, facilitating social and professional integration (Prodan, 2024).

The author argues that social innovation in social services involves continuous

interaction between various public and private entities, supported by international organizations and partnerships with regulatory authorities (Prodan, 2024). In Romania, organizations involved in social innovations are those with extensive experience, considerable resources, and access to diverse funding (Prodan, 2024). However, social enterprises and protected units are not major players in social innovation in Romania's social services sector, with only 8% of social enterprises and 3% of protected units providing social services (Prodan, 2024).

This situation reflects the broader context of Romania's conservative-corporatist welfare regime, characterized by limited state involvement and a predominant role of the family in providing social services (Lambriu & Petrescu, 2017). Within public policy, it is essential for the Romanian state to increase funding and enhance planning and monitoring capacities for social services to support the sustainable development of social innovation and effective collaboration with the non-governmental sector (Prodan, 2024). Developing social entrepreneurship in the social services sector should become a governmental priority, with adequate financial support to ensure service quality (Prodan, 2024).

In conclusion, social innovation in Romania faces challenges related to institutionalization and insufficient government support, but there are significant opportunities for development through the implementation of effective public policies and strengthening partnerships between the public and private sectors in social services (Prodan, 2024).

6.3. Chapter III. The dashboard of social innovation in local public administration

The concept of a "dashboard" is adapted from the English term "dashboard." In the specialized literature, a dashboard is defined as a data management tool that collects information from various systems and presents it concisely and clearly, based on key performance indicators (Almasi et al., 2023). Its utility extends to various fields, including healthcare, to improve performance and resource management.

Almasi et al. (2023) identified the following essential criteria for evaluating the usability of dashboards:

- a) Utility: The ability to meet users' needs or provide a competitive advantage.
- b) Operability: The ease of controlling and manipulating the dashboard.

- c) Learnability: The ease with which a new user can learn to use the system.
- d) Ease of use: The simplicity of performing tasks without errors.
- e) Task fit: The extent to which the dashboard aligns with users' daily activities.
- f) Improvement of situational awareness: Helps users better understand the context and surrounding events.
- g) Satisfaction: The degree of user satisfaction with the features and ease of use of the dashboard.
- h) User interface: The visual aspects and interactivity of the system.
- i) Content: The quality and quantity of the information presented.
- j) System capabilities: Integration and compatibility with work process requirements.

Martins et al. (2021) emphasize the critical role of design in developing dashboards, which must go beyond aesthetic considerations and focus on functional design principles to facilitate better understanding of data and decision-making processes.

In the specialized literature, I have identified alternative definitions of a dashboard as follows:

- a) A dashboard is a panel that gathers information from different visual resources, facilitating monitoring, analysis, and decision-making at all hierarchical levels of a company (Gröger et al., 2013).
- b) A visual representation of the most important information, organized on a single screen for quick reading and monitoring (Few, 2012).
- c) A management communication environment for company monitoring, intended for interpreting, visualizing, and analyzing data (Tokola et al., 2016).

According to the OECD (2020), the open government dashboard measures and evaluates open government initiatives through 55 indicators in various sections. Dashboards are used to monitor public procurement and key performance indicators, promoting transparency and effectiveness (Rogger & Schuster, 2023).

Almasi et al. (2023) underline that dashboards, although widely used, require rigorous usability evaluation to ensure efficiency and user satisfaction. Martins et al. (2021) and other sources highlight the importance of functional design for effective data presentation. Dashboards are essential in strengthening decision-making processes by presenting critical data in an accessible and actionable manner.

In the last two decades, regions and cities have developed innovation policy agendas to attract investments and stimulate sustainable economic growth. Florida (1995) emphasizes that despite predictions about the "end of geography," regions are becoming important nodes of economic and technological organization in global knowledge-based capitalism.

The specialized literature on regional innovation systems highlights the important role of governments as catalysts of innovative activities (Cooke, 2001). Regional innovation systems draw on theories of industrial sectors and clusters, promoting agglomeration effects and interactive learning to bring scientific knowledge closer to local industrial needs (Koschatzky & Kroll, 2009).

The following characteristics of regional innovation systems have been identified: a) Persistent differences: Differences in the ability to absorb, create, and diffuse knowledge among regional innovation systems tend to persist over time (OECD, 2011a). b) Emergence of clusters: Regional innovation systems are influenced by regional clusters of industrial activity and regional development policies, such as the European Cohesion Policy (McCann & Ortega-Argiles, 2013; OECD, 2001, 2007).

Asheim (2009) and Asheim & Gertler (2005) define the Regional Innovation System as a broad context of organizations and institutions that affect and support learning and innovation in a region, including two subsystems:

a) Regional production structure: The knowledge exploitation subsystem (firms, clusters).

b) Regional supportive infrastructure: The knowledge generation subsystem (research institutions, universities).

Regarding the distribution and concentration of innovative activity, the specialized literature reveals that innovative activity is not evenly distributed among regions and tends to be spatially concentrated, despite the spread of information technologies and globalization (Kourtit et al., 2011; Asheim & Gertler, 2005). The European Union and OECD have promoted initiatives for regional development through strategies such as RITTS, RTP, and RIS. These recognize innovation as the main driver for sustainable economic development (De Bruijn & Legendijk, 2005).

Regional development in Romania is regulated by Law No. 151/1998, amended by Law No. 315/2004 and Regulation EC No. 1059/2003, organizing Romania into eight development regions. Each region comprises between 4 and 7 counties and is classified at NUTS II level according to Eurostat. These regions serve as the framework for collecting statistical data and for

the development, implementation, and evaluation of regional development policies, including innovation strategies.

Development Regions in Romania:

- a) North-East Region: Bacău, Botoșani, Iași, Neamț, Suceava, Vaslui;
- b) South-East Region: Brăila, Buzău, Constanța, Galați, Tulcea, Vrancea;
- c) South - Muntenia Region: Argeș, Călărași, Dâmbovița, Giurgiu, Ialomița, Prahova, Teleorman;
- d) South-West Oltenia Region: Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt, Vâlcea;
- e) West Region: Arad, Caraș-Severin, Hunedoara, Timiș;
- f) North-West Region: Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureș, Satu Mare, Sălaj;
- g) Center Region: Alba, Brașov, Covasna, Harghita, Mureș, Sibiu;
- h) Bucharest – Ilfov Region: Bucharest Municipality and Ilfov County.

According to the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) 2023, Romania is a modest innovator, with performance at 33.1% of the EU average, an increase of 1.4 percentage points from 2016 to 2023. In 2022, performance decreased by 2.4 percentage points compared to 2023.

Relevant indicators include:

- a) Population with tertiary education: 64%;
- b) Participation in lifelong learning: 41%;
- c) International scientific co-publications: 33%;
- d) Highly cited scientific publications: 63%;
- e) Non-R&D innovation expenditures: 13.8%.

Romania performs below the EU average in all dimensions and indicators, with weaknesses in tertiary education and SME collaboration in innovation. Bucharest-Ilfov is the highest-performing region, with an RII of 180 compared to the national average and 59.5 compared to the EU average, followed by the North-West and South-West Oltenia regions. Significant regional disparities exist, with the South-East region performing the weakest.

Strategies for the 2021-2027 period have been developed in collaboration with the Romanian Government, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), and the European Commission, covering various essential areas for regional development (ADR - Autoritatea Pentru Digitalizarea Romaniei, 2024):

a) Cohesion Policy: A budget of 31.5 billion euros for economic, social, and territorial cohesion.

b) Regional programs: Adapted to local needs and priorities, managed by RDAs.

c) National programs: Modernizing the health system, developing sustainable transport, promoting social inclusion.

The Inobarometer examines and classifies the capacity of regions to create and maintain an innovation-friendly environment (MCID, 2021). The degree of innovation is measured through four main factors:

a) Human resources: Level of education, staff involved in R&D;

b) Innovation expenditures: Expenditures on research and development, technology, and ICT;

c) Innovative enterprises: Economic effects of innovations;

d) Intellectual property: Patents, industrial designs.

The Bucharest-Ilfov region leads in innovation, followed by the North-West, West, and Center regions. Statistical data for innovation in services (2014-2020) show that Bucharest-Ilfov is a consistent leader. The North-West and West regions have high innovation percentages, while the South-West and South have lower percentages, indicating an unequal distribution of innovative activities.

For over fifty years, researchers have investigated the innovation process, focusing on various aspects such as process innovation, service innovation, and strategic innovation to understand how they are managed and their contribution to long-term success (Matei & Bujac, 2016). Social innovation is defined as the use of new ideas (products, services, and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations (BEPA, 2010).

Innovation and reform in public administration are closely linked. Osborne (2015) emphasizes that public policy seeks innovation to address major societal issues, especially in times of resource constraints. Innovation is essential for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration and its legitimacy (Bekkers et al., 2011).

The Oslo Manual (OECD & EUROSTAT, 2005) identifies four types of innovation:

a) Product innovation: Introduction of a new or significantly improved good or service.

b) Process innovation: Implementation of a significantly improved production or delivery method.

c) Marketing innovation: Implementation of a new marketing method.

d) Organizational innovation: Implementation of a new organizational method.

The link between reform and innovation in the public sector is often poorly conceptualized. Administrative innovation must be properly managed to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Government policies can support innovation by reforming the regulatory and institutional framework (Matei & Bujac, 2016).

Change and innovation are distinct; to be considered innovation, change must have desire and intentionality and bring a positive impact on the organization (West & Farr, 1990). Innovation contributes to improving life and economic growth, being essential for competitiveness and attracting investments.

Brandsen (2014) emphasizes the importance of local public administrations in facilitating the diffusion of social innovations. Social innovation involves ongoing relationships and outcomes, unlike the discrete transactions of technological innovations. The diffusion of social innovations requires adaptation to the local context and building effective collaborations between governments and citizens.

Brandsen (2014) uses the concept of the innovation cycle, which includes five essential phases:

- a) Recognition of an unmet need;
- b) Formation of a concrete idea;
- c) Collaboration to consolidate the innovation;
- d) Recognition of value by other networks;
- e) Integration into the broader social system.

The Strategy for Strengthening Public Administration (SCAP) 2014-2020, approved by Government Decision no. 909/2014, emphasizes the use of electronic services to facilitate interaction with the administration and provide integrated and personalized public services. The strategy highlights monitoring user experience to improve service quality and integrate new technological solutions. It promotes reducing bureaucracy and accountability through institutional coordination and collaboration mechanisms. Public administration must be open to innovative

solutions, involving citizens and other social actors in the service delivery process, and develop a culture of anticipatory knowledge, promoting accessibility and transparency of public information.

In decision-making and human resources, the need for evidence-based public policy planning and recruitment of personnel based on professional and transparent criteria is highlighted, promoting a modern organizational culture and career development. Regarding financial management, efficient management of public funds and promoting transparency and predictability in their expenditure are emphasized.

SCAP 2014-2020 is structured on five pillars:

- a) Public policies and regulation;
- b) Public services and infrastructure;
- c) Human resources;
- d) Financial management;
- e) Local public administration.

Pillar V, which focuses on local public administration, aims to strengthen the capacity of local administrations to provide quality public services and respond effectively to citizens' needs. The evaluation of the implementation of measures from Pillar V shows that 17% of the measures were fully implemented, 72% partially or in progress, and 11% not started. The measures included developing coordination mechanisms for managing decentralized competencies, financial and fiscal decentralization, and improving the quality of the decision-making process at the local level. Delays in implementation and insufficient resources were notable issues.

Recommendations include accelerating implementation, creating support mechanisms, and using advanced technologies for monitoring and evaluation. Proposed forms of innovation for Pillar V include:

- a) New flexible administrative structures;
- b) Change management tools;
- c) Inter-institutional collaboration networks;
- d) Digital platforms for competency management;
- e) Training and certification platforms;
- f) Virtual communities of practice;
- g) Digital public consultations;
- h) Decision support systems;

- i) Interactive dashboards for monitoring;
- j) Machine learning algorithms for data analysis;
- k) Automatic feedback collection technologies;
- l) Participatory budgeting platforms;
- m) Blockchain for fund transparency;
- n) Energy audit programs;
- o) Crowdfunding for community project financing.

These measures are essential for improving the quality of the decision-making process and strengthening the capacity of the associative structures of local public authorities, contributing to the creation of more efficient, transparent, and citizen-oriented local public administrations.

The document provides a detailed analysis of the role of public procurement in stimulating innovation and sustainable economic development. According to the European Commission (2023d), public procurement regulations no longer focus solely on "how to buy" but also on "what to buy," emphasizing the efficient use of public funds to deliver added value in terms of quality, cost efficiency, environmental and social impact, and opportunities for economic operators.

These investments are essential to address post-pandemic challenges, green and digital transitions, and to create a more resilient economy in the EU. Uyarra (2022) highlights that the public sector is an extremely influential buyer in the market, with the ability to shape markets and promote innovative technologies and practices. Government policies are aimed at maximizing the impact of public procurement and leveraging the benefits of various advantages. It is vital to develop the capacities to identify and express the needs of society and the public sector and to interact effectively with the market.

According to the OECD (2015a), public procurement represents a significant percentage of GDP and government expenditure in member countries, illustrating their importance to the overall economy. Governments are focusing their innovation policies not only on the supply side of the private sector but also on creating a demand for innovation, recognizing that it materializes when there is demand.

Public procurement for innovation can improve productivity and inclusion if used strategically, anticipating future investments and allowing innovative solutions to enter the market. The strategic use of public procurement to stimulate innovation is closely linked to the

government's ability to shape and create market conditions. Fragmentation of public demand at local, regional, and national levels can limit the attraction of demand, requiring better coordination between governments and responsible agencies. The EU Directive on public procurement ensures compliance with environmental, social, and labor law obligations. The OECD (2017) defines the strategic use of public procurement for innovation as any practice that stimulates innovation through research and development and the market adoption of innovative products and services.

The European Commission (n.d.-a) describes the public procurement of innovative solutions (PPI) as a process whereby the public sector acts as an early adopter of innovative solutions, thus stimulating their widespread commercialization. The process involves forming a critical mass of purchasing power, early announcement of innovation needs, and actual procurement of innovative solutions.

Uyarra (2022) mentions the importance of co-creating innovative solutions with citizens and the private sector to address local challenges and improve public services. It also emphasizes the need for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of public procurement practices and their impact on innovation and productivity. The UK Innovation Strategy (BEIS, 2021) states that the public sector can be a driver of new innovative ideas by purchasing more innovative solutions, thus stimulating the ecosystem for scaling and wide adoption of new technological services.

In conclusion, the document emphasizes that the strategic use of public procurement to encourage innovation and address challenges works at both national and sub-national levels, being essential for modernizing public services and stimulating the market for innovative solutions.

Currently, public procurement is no longer focused solely on the technical aspects of the procurement process but places special emphasis on the added value these procurements can bring in terms of quality, cost efficiency, environmental and social impact, and creating opportunities for economic operators (European Commission, 2023d). These regulations are essential to face post-pandemic challenges, green and digital transitions, and to create a more resilient economy in the European Union.

The public sector is an extremely influential buyer in the market, with the ability to shape markets and promote innovative technologies and practices (Uyarra, 2022). Government policies are aimed at maximizing the impact of public procurement and leveraging the benefits of various advantages. It is vital to develop the capacities to identify and express the needs of society and the public sector and to interact effectively with the market.

Public procurement represents a significant percentage of GDP and government expenditure in member countries, illustrating their importance to the overall economy (OECD, 2015a). Governments are focusing their innovation policies not only on the supply side of the private sector but also on creating a demand for innovation, recognizing that it materializes when there is demand. Public procurement for innovation can improve productivity and inclusion if used strategically, anticipating future investments and allowing innovative solutions to enter the market.

The strategic use of public procurement to stimulate innovation is closely linked to the government's ability to shape and create market conditions. Fragmentation of public demand at local, regional, and national levels can limit the attraction of demand, requiring better coordination between governments and responsible agencies. The EU Directive on public procurement ensures compliance with environmental, social, and labor law obligations. The OECD (2017) defines the strategic use of public procurement for innovation as any practice that stimulates innovation through research and development and the market adoption of innovative products and services.

Public procurement of innovative solutions (PPI) is described as a process whereby the public sector acts as an early adopter of innovative solutions, thus stimulating their widespread commercialization (European Commission, n.d.-a). The process involves forming a critical mass of purchasing power, early announcement of innovation needs, and actual procurement of innovative solutions.

The importance of co-creating innovative solutions with citizens and the private sector is highlighted to address local challenges and improve public services (Uyarra, 2022). It is also mentioned that there is a need for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of public procurement practices and their impact on innovation and productivity. The UK Innovation Strategy states that the public sector can be a driver of new innovative ideas by purchasing more innovative solutions, thus stimulating the ecosystem for scaling and wide adoption of new technological services (BEIS, 2021).

In conclusion, the document emphasizes that the strategic use of public procurement to encourage innovation and address challenges works at both national and sub-national levels, being essential for modernizing public services and stimulating the market for innovative solutions.

In the final part of the chapter, the authors develop a support framework for implementing the social innovation dashboard in local administration in Romania. This framework is based on Pillar V of the Public Administration Strengthening Strategy (SCAP) and integrates

key aspects of public procurement as well as previous sub-chapters of the work.

The support framework for the dashboard should be logically structured and provide a clear view of progress and challenges. The structure we propose would include the following sections:

A. Introduction and context

Social innovation in Romanian local administration is essential for adapting to contemporary demands and improving the quality of life for citizens. This includes adopting new technologies and management methods for better community engagement and quick response to citizens' needs (Nicolescu, 2022). The digitalization of public services also plays a crucial role in this process, reducing bureaucracy and improving citizens' access to information and services (Cazacu, 2021).

B. Performance indicators

To effectively monitor social innovation in local administration, several performance indicators are identified and detailed:

a) Number of social innovation initiatives implemented: Measures the number of social innovation projects successfully launched and completed within the local administration.

- Objective: Increase the number of social innovation projects.
- KPI: Number of initiatives per quarter.
- Visualization: Bar chart to visualize the number of initiatives per quarter.

b) Degree of citizen involvement in the decision-making process: Percentage of citizens actively participating in public consultations and decision-making.

- Objective: Improve citizen involvement in the decision-making process.
- KPI: Percentage of citizens participating in public consultations.
- Visualization: Pie or bar chart to highlight the percentage of involved citizens.

c) Citizen satisfaction with public services: Percentage of citizens who declare themselves satisfied or very satisfied with local public services.

- Objective: Increase citizen satisfaction with public services.
- KPI: Average satisfaction score (on a scale of 1 to 5).
- Visualization: Chart showing the evolution of satisfaction over time (e.g., line chart).

C. Methodology, results, and analyses

Data for performance indicators will be collected quarterly through surveys, activity reports, citizen feedback, and electronic procurement platforms. Data analysis will highlight trends and opportunities for improvement, with graphical representations for easy interpretation. The results will be integrated into a quarterly report published on the local administration's website.

D. Recommendations for implementation

For the effective implementation of the social innovation dashboard, the following recommendations are made:

- a) Creating a dedicated team: Form a specialized working group in social innovation and efficient public procurement.
- b) Strategic partnerships: Collaborate with NGOs, academic institutions, and the private sector to develop and implement social innovation initiatives.
- c) Education and training: Organize continuous training sessions for public officials to develop the necessary skills in innovation management and public procurement.

These recommendations are intended to strengthen the capacity of local public administration to implement and monitor social innovations, thus contributing to improved governance and the quality of life for citizens. By applying this support framework, local administrations in Romania will benefit from an essential tool for efficiently managing social innovation and evaluating the impact of measures implemented within SCAP and other local initiatives.

6.4 Chapter IV. Social Innovation in Local Public Administration – The State of Affairs

In the last decade, interest in social innovation has increased in both the public and academic spheres, but attempts to classify different social innovation initiatives have been rare and fragmented. A clear definition of the concept of social innovation is necessary to develop a clear typology (Proffitt, 2022).

Proffitt (2022) distinguishes between classification and typology:

- a) Classification involves defining a phenomenon in mutually exclusive and exhaustive sets, based on specific rules.
- b) Typology is a multidimensional conceptual form of classification, used in social sciences.

Social innovation in local public administration can be classified into:

- a) *Technological innovation*: The use of modern technologies to streamline administrative processes and improve citizens' access to public services (Hinkley, 2022).
- b) *Innovation in public services*: Creating new services or improving existing ones to better meet citizens' needs (OECD, 2019).
- c) *Innovation in participation and governance*: Promoting citizen involvement in decision-making processes, increasing transparency and accountability in administration (OECD, 2019).
- d) *Social innovation and inclusion*: Reducing inequalities and promoting social inclusion through various programs and initiatives (OECD, 2019).

Technological innovation in local public administration involves:

- Implementing new technologies to improve the efficiency and quality of public services (OECD, 2019).
- Using data and data management technologies for evidence-based policy development (Hinkley, 2022).

Examples from Romania:

- The Cluj-Napoca City Hall has implemented the "MyCluj" application for reporting urban issues (City Hall & Local Council Cluj-Napoca, 2024).
- The city of Alba Iulia has developed the "Alba Iulia Smart City" project for digitalization and city development (Orange Romania, n.d.).

Innovation in public services focuses on:

- Improving the accessibility and quality of services offered to citizens (Osborne & Brown, 2011).
- Efficient use of information technologies and investment in research and development (European Commission, 2023).

Examples from Romania:

- The General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection Bucharest has implemented integrated service centers for vulnerable people (DGASMB, n.d.).
- The city of Oradea has launched the "Oradea City Report" application for citizen reports (Online Services Portals and Applications - Oradea.ro, 2024).

Innovation in participation and governance includes:

- New ways to engage citizens in the public decision-making process (OECD, 2022).
- Democratic reforms that allow citizen involvement in decision-making processes to address complex public issues (Fung & Wright, 2001).

Examples from Romania:

- Participatory budgeting in Oradea and other cities such as Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca (Participatory Budgeting in Oradea, 2017).
- Citizen consultative councils in cities such as Iași and Brașov (Local Council Brașov, n.d.).

Social innovation and inclusion refer to:

- Developing and implementing new ideas to create opportunities and improve social and economic well-being for disadvantaged members of society (Schillo & Robinson, 2017).
- Reducing social and economic exclusion through various programs and initiatives (Patiño-Valencia et al., 2020).

Examples from Romania:

- The "Start Up Plus" program for young entrepreneurs from vulnerable groups (<https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/images/files/comunicate/2016/11.07/Calendar.Romania.Start-Up.Plus.pdf>).
- Social housing construction and renovation projects in Cluj-Napoca (City Hall & Local Council Cluj-Napoca, n.d.).

Social innovation in local public administration in Romania reflects efforts to modernize and streamline public services, increase transparency and citizen participation, and

promote social inclusion. The presented examples demonstrate how different types of innovation are integrated into the local context and contribute to community development.

This chapter also discusses an integrated comparative framework for analyzing and understanding the impact of different types of innovation on local public administration and community development. This includes evaluating definitions, implementation methods, benefits, and challenges of each type of innovation, highlighting the interactions between social innovation and local communities. To understand the impact of each type of social innovation on local public administration, a comparative framework was constructed based on definition, purpose, methods and tools, application examples, benefits, and challenges. For instance, technological innovation involves integrating emerging technologies into administration for increased efficiency and accessibility (Bartlett & Dibben, 2002). In contrast, innovation in public services focuses on improving citizens' quality of life through personalized services and social inclusion (Biljohn, 2018). Innovation in participation and governance brings citizens into the decision-making process through methods such as participatory budgeting and public consultations (Fung & Wright, 2001). At the same time, social innovation and inclusion address social and economic issues through support programs for vulnerable groups (Moulaert et al., 2013). For the integration of these types of innovation into a general framework, it is necessary to assess community needs, develop coherent strategies, foster intersectoral collaboration, continuously monitor and evaluate, and ensure financial and human resources (Biljohn, 2017). The interaction between social innovation and local community development is achieved through citizen involvement and empowerment, creating partnerships and networks, addressing social and economic issues, and implementing pilot projects to test solutions (Nyseth & Hamdouch, 2019).

This integrated framework provides a comprehensive perspective on how different forms of innovation can contribute to creating more efficient, equitable, and participatory local communities (Moulaert et al., 2013; OECD, 2015a). The SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is used to identify critical success factors and potential obstacles associated with each type of innovation.

Social Innovation: Examined through sources like Mulgan et al. (2007), Murray et al. (2010), and Phills et al. (2008), which apply SWOT analysis to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of various social innovation initiatives.

Technological Innovation: Christensen (1997) and Schilling (2020) explore the use of SWOT analysis to discuss strategies for innovation and adaptation to technological changes in the corporate environment.

Innovation in Public Services: Osborne (2011) and Hartley (2010) use SWOT analysis to evaluate the impact of innovation in public services in the UK, highlighting the advantages and challenges of integrating these initiatives.

Participation and Governance: SWOT analysis is applied to examine the efficiency and difficulties of participatory processes in government decision-making, emphasizing the importance of transparency and citizen involvement.

Social Innovation and Inclusion: The benefits and obstacles of social inclusion initiatives are analyzed, highlighting the need for financial resources and international support for their success.

In conclusion, SWOT analysis serves as a critical tool for developing effective strategies in all these areas of innovation, providing a solid foundation for managing the strengths and threats associated with each initiative. These analyses are grounded in the literature and specific case studies for each field, representing a valuable source for understanding and implementing innovations in public administration and the private sector.

This chapter presents several supporting initiatives for promoting social innovation in local public administration in Romania. Three major initiatives are analyzed in detail:

1. Annual Work Plan of the Local Council (PALCL):

- Description: PALCL is the annual planning tool for the actions of the Adjud Municipality Local Council.
- Objectives: Ensures predictability and prioritization of local administrative actions.
- Impact: Increases transparency, efficiency, and community participation in administrative processes.
- References: Adjud Local Council Decision No. 271/2021.

2. “Bacău Smart County” Project:

- Description: Aims at administrative modernization of Bacău County through digitalization and simplification.
- Objectives: Expands online functionalities and enhances administrative capacity.
- Impact: Increases transparency and efficiency in local public administration.

- References: Bacău County Sustainable Development Strategy 2021-2029.

3. **SIM-KAP (Integrated Management System KAIZEN) Model:**

- Description: Implements the Kaizen methodology for continuous improvement of administrative performance.
- Objectives: Enhances process efficiency and improves citizen satisfaction.
- Impact: Improves resource management and attracts investment funds.
- References: Implementation at Buzău Municipality City Hall.

These initiatives are essential for sustainable development and improving service quality in local public administration in Romania. They demonstrate an integrated and methodological approach to resource management and promoting social innovation through transparency, community participation, and efficient use of modern technologies.

Public procurement is a crucial tool in achieving public policy objectives, including social innovation. The Romanian Government (2015) emphasizes that legislation in this area not only ensures efficient management of public funds but also supports the essential role of public procurement in promoting social innovation, environmental protection, and social inclusion. By implementing clear rules and appropriate strategies, public procurement can act as a catalyst for positive societal changes. Romanian public procurement legislation, according to the National Strategy 2015-2020, identifies several ways to promote the stated objectives. These include complying with social and labor norms, stimulating innovation through the procurement of innovative products and services, reserving contracts for social enterprises, and using labels/certifications that attest to the social and environmental characteristics of procured products (Romanian Government, 2015).

At the European level, the European Public Procurement Directives (2014/24/EU) play a crucial role in promoting Socially Responsible Public Procurement (SRPP) and Innovative Public Procurement (IPP). SRPP integrates social and environmental criteria into public procurement processes, supporting social inclusion and sustainability (OECD, 2017). IPP focuses on using public procurement to stimulate innovation and develop new solutions in the public sector, facilitating collaboration between the public and private sectors for implementing advanced technologies and administrative practices. In Romania, SRPP and IPP are regulated by Law No. 98/2016 on public procurement and its implementing regulations (HG 395/2016), which recognize the importance of social and innovative criteria in the procurement process. Concrete examples at

the European and national levels, such as the Barcelona Guide for Social Public Procurement and the Green Procurement Program in Braşov, demonstrate the positive impact of public procurement on social inclusion and environmental protection (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2023; WWF Romania, n.d.).

In conclusion, public procurement not only optimizes the efficiency and quality of public services but also, by integrating social, environmental, and innovative criteria, becomes a driver of social innovation. By promoting responsible and innovative practices, public procurement can generate significant changes in society, contributing to sustainable development and improving the quality of life in communities.

In the context of current profound social and technological transformations, public procurement in Romania, especially at the local level, faces significant challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for digitalization of public services to reduce administrative burdens and optimize procurement processes. In this regard, an exploratory study conducted in several administrative-territorial units (UATs) highlighted the acute need for innovation in the public procurement sector. The study included detailed interviews with representatives from various UAT functions, revealing several major obstacles. These include the lack of personnel in procurement departments, leading to delays and overload, as well as insufficient IT training for staff. Complex procedures and the need for external consultancy were other noted aspects, contributing to bureaucracy and delays in the procurement process.

In light of these findings, participants supported the need for dedicated software to streamline the public procurement process, especially for direct procurements. They saw this as an opportunity to innovate and reduce reliance on laborious manual procedures, facilitating quicker access to public services. These findings underscore the importance of continuing efforts to modernize public procurement in Romania, adapting it to current efficiency, transparency, and digital sustainability requirements.

In the context of the need for modernization and efficiency of processes in the field of public procurement, a tailored and innovative software application can bring multiple benefits at both local and central levels in public administration. Currently, public institutions face challenges related to efficient procurement management and strict compliance with regulations in an increasingly digital and demanding context. In this regard, our proposed application, called the

Public Procurement Management Application (AMAP), represents a comprehensive and customized solution for optimizing these processes.

History and adaptation of the application: The demo version of the application, initially developed by the IT department of the Ministry of Finance, was used only for introducing economic operators into the system and generating reports on the status of public procurements. The lack of interest from officials led to the project's stagnation, remaining just an idea.

Extending application functionalities: Our proposed application significantly extends the functionalities of the demo version, including integration with other existing applications within public institutions, such as accounting software. The main goal is to increase process efficiency, reduce working time, and ensure compliance in carrying out procurement procedures.

Justifying the need for the application: Digital transformation in public procurement is crucial for adapting to modern society's requirements and improving transparency and efficiency in the use of public resources. The AMAP application will support local and central administrations in optimal procurement management, facilitating the generation of necessary documents, contract management, and monitoring their implementation.

Impact of the application at the local and central levels: Implementing the application will significantly reduce repetitive tasks for officials, improve the quality of generated documentation, and ensure compliance with legislative requirements and standards imposed by the Court of Accounts. At the local level, AMAP will support resource-limited teams, while at the central level, it will facilitate integrated monitoring and control of all procurement procedures.

In conclusion, the AMAP application represents a viable and necessary solution for modernizing and optimizing public procurement in Romania, contributing to more transparent, compliant, and efficient administration of public resources.

At the end of the chapter, the determining factors and barriers influencing social innovation in local public administration are analyzed. The determining factors include effective leadership, strategic vision, a favorable legislative framework, adequate funding, and cross-sector collaborations. For example, the “Copenhagen Smart City” and “Amsterdam Smart City” initiatives demonstrate how visionary leadership can transform cities through social innovation (Quélin & Smadja, 2021). Conversely, barriers such as resistance to change, lack of sustainable funding, institutional fragmentation, and complicated bureaucracy hinder the effective

implementation of these initiatives. For instance, in Romania, the "Strategy for Strengthening Public Administration 2014-2020" focuses on simplifying bureaucracy to improve public administration efficiency (SGG, 2019b).

Therefore, the success of social innovation depends on managing these determining factors and overcoming the barriers identified in the analyzed studies (Osborne & Brown, 2011; OECD, 2015c; Uyarra & Flanagan, 2010).

7. Main Conclusions of the Doctoral Thesis

The doctoral thesis titled "SOCIAL INNOVATION IN LOCAL PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION" primarily aimed to explore how social innovation can be implemented and developed in local public administration. The objective was to improve operational efficiency, transparency, and the quality of services offered to citizens through the adoption of new technologies and innovative practices. The study was conducted in the current context characterized by rapid changes and diverse challenges, where social innovation becomes a crucial tool for ensuring efficient and participatory governance. The specific Romanian context, characterized by a lack of detailed studies on social innovation in local public administration, makes this research endeavor original and necessary. Additionally, the importance of international comparability and the transfer of best practices between countries is emphasized. The research was guided by specific hypotheses, objectives, and research questions, aimed at investigating the impact of social innovation on operational efficiency, transparency, and citizen satisfaction in local public administration, identifying barriers, and strategies for implementing these innovations.

The research methodology employs a mixed approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, including the analysis of specialized literature, empirical research, case studies, interviews with public officials, data analysis, and SWOT analysis to answer the questions and test the hypotheses related to social innovation in local public administration in Romania.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achiziții publice verzi | *WWF Romania*. (n.d.). WWF Romania. <https://wwf.ro/ce-facem/achiziii-publice-verzi-hrana/>

Alba Iulia | *Business* | *Orange*. (n.d.-a). Orange Romania. <https://www.orange.ro/business/industrii/smart-city/alba-iulia/>

Applied Research and Communications (ARC) Fund. (2013). *Innovation în the Public Sector*. State-ofthe- Art Report. Part of the project CCIC (Complex Challenges Innovative Cities). Sofia, Bulgaria. <https://arcfund.net/en/uncategorized-en/2013-godishen-otchet/>

Bugetarea participativă în Oradea. (2017). Primăria Oradea. <https://activ.oradea.ro/>

DGASMB | *Direcția Generală de Asistență Socială a Municipiului București*. (n.d.). <https://www.dgas.ro/>

ENRD. (2021). European Network for Rural Development. Accessed in July 6, 2023, at https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/about_en.html

Portaluri și aplicații servicii online - Oradea.ro. (2024). Oradea.ro. <https://oradea.ro/servicii-online/portaluri-si-aplicatii-servicii-online>

Primăria & consiliul local CLUJ-NAPOCA. (2024). Cluj-Napoca. <https://primariaclujnapoca.ro/>

PRIMĂRIA & CONSILIUL LOCAL Cluj-Napoca. (n.d.). Consiliul Local Cluj Napoca. <https://primariaclujnapoca.ro/locuinte/locuinte-sociale>

Social Innovation. (n.d.). OECD. Accessed in July 5, 2023, la <https://www.oecd.org/regional/leed/social-innovation.htm>

Supporting social innovations at local level: the role of local authorities. (n.d.). https://www.socioeco.org/bdf_dossier-29_en.html

- Ajuntament de Barcelona. (2023). *Social Public Procurement Guide*. Barcelona City Council.
<https://knowledgecentre.euclidnetwork.eu/2023/02/24/social-public-procurement-guide/>
- Almasi, S., Bahaadinbeigy, K., Ahmadi, H., Sohrabei, S., & Rabiei, R. (2023). Usability Evaluation of Dashboards: A Systematic Literature Review of Tools. *BioMed Research International*, 2023, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/9990933>
- Antadze, N., & Westley, F. R. (2012). Impact Metrics for Social Innovation: Barriers or Bridges to Radical Change? *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*, 3(2), 133–150.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19420676.2012.726005>
- Asheim, B. (2009). Guest Editorial: Introduction to the Creative Class in European City Regions. *Economic Geography*, 85(4), 355–362. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-8287.2009.01046.x>
- Asheim, B., & Gertler, M. (2005). The Geography of Innovation: Regional Innovation Systems. In J. Fagerberg, D. C. Mowery, & R. R. Nelson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Innovation* (pp. 291–317). Oxford University Press.
- Bartlett, D., & Dibben, P. (2002). Public Sector Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Case Studies la Local Government. *Local Government Studies*, 28(4), 107–121.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/714004159>
- Baturina, D. (2014). Frank Moulaert, Diana MacCallum, Abid Mehmood, Abdelillah Hamdouch: The International Handbook on Social Innovation: Collective Action, Social Learning and Transdisciplinary Research. *Revija Za Socijalnu Politiku*, 21(3).
<https://doi.org/10.3935/rsp.v21i3.1225>
- Baturina, D., & Bežovan, G. (2015). *Social Innovation Impact-review No. 9* (Seventh Framework Programme (grant agreement 613034)). European Union.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/313749526_Baturina_D_Bezovan_G_2015_Social_Innovation_Impact-

review_No_9_Seventh_Framework_Programme_grant_agreement_613034_European_Union_Brussels_Third_Sector_Impact

Bekkers, V., Edelenbos, J., & Steijn, B. (2011). *Innovation in the Public Sector*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230307520>

BEPA. (2010). *Empowering people, driving change: Social innovation in the European Union*. Bureau of European Policy Advisors. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/library-document/empowering-people-driving-change-social-innovation-european-union_en

BEPA. (2014). *Social Innovation: A Decade of Changes*. Publications Office of the European Union - Bureau of European Policy Advisors. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la <https://espas.secure.europarl.europa.eu/orbis/document/social-innovation-decade-changes>

BEIS. (2021). *UK Innovation Strategy: leading the future by creating it*. Retrieved June 15, 2024, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-innovation-strategy-leading-the-future-by-creating-it>

Bernardino, S., & Santos, J. F. (2017). Local development through social and territorial innovation: An exploratory case study. *CIRIEC-España, Revista De Economía Pública, Social Y Cooperativa*, 90, 159. <https://doi.org/10.7203/ciriec-e.90.9155>

Bessant, J., & Tidd, J. (2007). *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. Wiley. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=3190147>

Biljohn, M. I. M. (2017). Social Innovation, an Alternative Approach to South African Local Government Service Delivery? *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(7), 53–65. <https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC-89ebb0e7b>

Biljohn, M. I. M. (2018). *Social innovation and service delivery by local government: A comparative perspective (Doctoral dissertation, University of the Free State)*.

<https://scholar.ufs.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11660/8544/BiljohnMIM.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

BMBF. (2018). *The High-Tech Strategy 2025 Progress Report*. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://www.congreso.es/docu/docum/ddocum/dosieres/sleg/legislatura_14/spl_36/pdfs/44.pdf

Boelman, V., & Heales, C. (2015). *Social Innovation Strategies - Regional Report*. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la <https://www.si-drive.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/D3.6-SI-DRIVE-Global-Region-Report-2015.pdf>

Bovaird, T., & Loeffler, E. (2012). From Engagement to Co-production: The Contribution of Users and Communities to Outcomes and Public Value. *Voluntas*, 23(4), 1119–1138. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-012-9309-6>

Bund, E., Gerhard, U., Hoelscher, M., & Mildenerger, G. (2015). A methodological framework for measuring social innovation. *Historical Social Research*, 40(3), 48–78. <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.40.2015.3.48-78>

Burz, G. (2020). Inovare. Ce inseamnă și de ce trebuie să crească capacitatea de inovare a României. *contributors.ro*. <https://www.contributors.ro/inovare-ce-inseamna-%C8%99i-de-ce-trebuie-sa-cresca-capacitatea-de-inovare-a-romaniei/>

Calzada, I. (2020). Democratising Smart Cities? Penta-Helix Multistakeholder Social Innovation Framework. *Smart Cities*, 3(4), 1145–1172. <https://doi.org/10.3390/smartcities3040057>

Camagni, R., & Capello, R. (2013). Regional Innovation Patterns and the EU Regional Policy Reform: Toward Smart Innovation Policies. *Growth and Change*, 44(2), 355–389. <https://doi.org/10.1111/grow.12012>

- Carayannis, E. G., & Morawska-Jancelewicz, J. (2022). The Futures of Europe: Society 5.0 and Industry 5.0 as Driving Forces of Future Universities. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 13(4), 3445–3471. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-021-00854-2>
- Cattacin, S., & Zimmer, A. (2015). Urban Governance and Social Innovations. *Social Innovations in the Urban Context*, 21–44. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21551-8_2
- Cazacu, F. (2021). MODURI DE ABORDARE A PERFORMANȚEI ÎN ADMINISTRAȚIA PUBLICĂ LOCALĂ DIN ROMÂNIA. *Revista Transilvană De Științe Administrative*, 1(48) / 2021, 20–35. <https://rtsa.ro/rtsa/index.php/rtsa/article/view/603/600>
- Chatterjee, S. (2023). How can social innovation frameworks be used to create a sustainable business model? *Linkedin*. Accessed in July 6, 2024, la <https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-can-social-innovation-frameworks-wg4pc>
- Christensen, C. M. (1997). *The Innovator's Dilemma*.
- Cloutier, J. (2003). Qu'est-ce que l'innovation sociale? *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272566640_Qu'est-ce_que_l'innovation_sociale
- Colli, E. (2014). *Processi di innovazione sociale: il caso Pop Hub, la città riprende i suoi spazi*. SlideShare. <https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/processi-di-innovazione-sociale-il-caso-pop-hub-la-citt-riprende-i-suoi-spazi/40397332>
- Comisia Europeană & OECD. (2015). *Policy brief on social impact measurement for social enterprises: policies for social entrepreneurship*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.2767/427680>
- Comisia Europeană. (2007). *Social innovation, governance and community building*. SINGOCOM. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la

https://cordis.europa.eu/docs/projects/files/HPSE/HPSE-CT-2001-00070/100123951-6_en.pdf

Comisia Europeană. (2010a). *Europe 2020 – A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*. European Commission. Accessed in July 3, 2023, la <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:en:PDF>

Comisia Europeană. (2012). *A strategy for e-procurement*. comunicare a Comisiei - COM(2012) 179 final. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0179:FIN:EN:PDF>

Comisia Europeană. (2013a). *GUIDE TO SOCIAL INNOVATION*. European Commission. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/publications/guides/2013/guide-to-social-innovation

Comisia Europeană. (2015a). *Fondul Social European - Instrumente financiare*. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://www.fi-compass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/ESF_The_european_social_fund_RO.pdf

Comisia Europeană. (2015b). *Fondul European de Dezvoltare Regională, Instrumente financiare*. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://www.fi-compass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/ERDF_The_european_regional_development_fund_RO.pdf

Comisia Europeană. (2016). *Combinarea fondurilor structurale și de investiții europene (fondurile ESI) și a Fondului european pentru investiții strategice (FEIS) — întrebări frecvente*. Comisia Europeană, Site-ul Oficial - European Commission. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ro/MEMO_16_313

Comisia Europeană. (2021a). *Regional innovation scoreboard 2021*. Publications Office of the European Union. Accessed in July 3, 2023, la <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/46032>

Comisia Europeană. (2023a). *European innovation scoreboard*. Research and Innovation. https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/statistics/performance-indicators/european-innovation-scoreboard_en

Comisia Europeană. (2023b). *European Innovation Scoreboard 2023*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2777/119961>

Comisia Europeană. (2023d). Public procurement of innovation: how do start-ups fit in - A brochure for public buyers. *Publications Office of the European Union, ET-04-23-058-EN-N*. <https://doi.org/10.2873/422079>

Comisia Europeană. (n.d.-a). *Social innovation*. Site-ul Oficial - European Commission. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/industry/strategy/innovation/social_en

Consiliul Județean Bacău. (2021). *Bacău Smart County*. https://www.csjbacau.ro/dm_cj/portalweb.nsf/F2D1E914C686E7F3C22588D300494CC2/%24FILE/Sectiunea%20B%20-%20Strategia%20de%20dezv%20durabila%20aprobata%20in%20%20sedinta%20de%20CJ%20Bacau.pdf

Consiliul Local Adjud. (2021). *Hotărârea Consiliului Local al Municipiului Adjud nr. 271*. https://www.adjud.ro/assets/media/2022/02/hcl-271_Redacted.pdf

Consiliul Local Brașov. (n.d.). *Statutul Municipiului Brașov*. <https://www.brasovcity.ro/file-zone/regulamente/primarie/Statutul-mun-Brasov.pdf>

- Cooke, P. (2001). Regional Innovation Systems, Clusters, and the Knowledge Economy. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, 10(4), 945–974. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icc/10.4.945>
- Copus, A., Perjo, L., Berlina, A., Jungsberg, L., Randall, L., & Sigurjónsdóttir, H. (2017). *Social innovation in local development: Lessons from the Nordic countries and Scotland* (Nordregio Working Paper 2017:2). Nordregio. <https://nordregio.org/publications/social-innovation-in-local-development-lessons-from-the-nordic-countries-and-scotland-2/>
- Cunha, J., & Benneworth, P. (2019). How to measure the impact of social innovation initiatives? *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing*, 17(1), 59–75. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12208-019-00240-4>
- Dawson, P., & Daniel, L. (2010). Understanding social innovation: a provisional framework. *International Journal of Technology Management*, 51(1), 9. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijtm.2010.033125>
- De Bruijn, P., & Lagendijk, A. (2005). Regional Innovation Systems in the Lisbon strategy. *European Planning Studies*, 13(8), 1153–1172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654310500336519>
- Dincă, D. (2008). *Servicii publice și dezvoltare locală*. Editura Lumina Lex.
- Dionisio, M., De Souza Junior, S. J., Paula, F., & Pellanda, P. C. (2023). The role of digital social innovations to address SDGs: A systematic review. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 26(3), 5709–5734. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-023-03038-x>
- Dumitrică, C., & Dincă, D. (2020). *Dezvoltare și planificare urbană* (2nd ed.). Editura Economică.
- Evers, A., Ewert, B., & Brandsen, T. (2014). Social Innovations for Social Cohesion: Transnational Patterns and Approaches from 20 European cities. *ResearchGate*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/260034982_Social_Innovations_for_Social_Cohesion_Transnational_Patterns_and_Approaches_from_20_European_cities

- Few, S. (2012). *Show Me the Numbers*.
http://books.google.ie/books?id=1xiHLgEACAAJ&dq=978-0970601995&hl=&cd=2&source=gbs_api
- Florida, R. (1995). Toward the learning region. *Futures*, 27(5), 527–536.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-3287\(95\)00021-n](https://doi.org/10.1016/0016-3287(95)00021-n)
- Frege, X. (1991). *DESCENTRALIZAREA*. EDITURA HUMANITAS.
- Fung, A. (2015). Putting the Public Back into Governance: The Challenges of Citizen Participation and Its Future. *PAR. Public Administration Review/Public Administration Review*, 75(4), 513–522. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12361>
- Gkartzios, M., & Lowe, P. (2019). Revisiting neo-endogenous rural development. *The Routledge Companion to Rural Planning*, 159–169. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315102375-17>
- Gröger, C., Hillmann, M., Hahn, F., Mitschang, B., & Westkämper, E. (2013). The Operational Process Dashboard for Manufacturing. *Procedia CIRP*, 7, 205–210.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procir.2013.05.035>
- Guvernul României. (2015). *HOTĂRÂRE nr. 901 din 27 octombrie 2015 privind aprobarea Strategiei naționale în domeniul achizițiilor publice*. Accessed in July 6, 2023, la <https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/173379>
- Hartley, J. (2010). *Innovation in Governance and Public Services: Past and Present*. 25(1), 27–34.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9302.2005.00447.x>
- Husar, M., & Ondrejicka, V. (2019). Social Innovations in Smart Cities – Case of Poprad. *Mobile Networks and Applications*, 24(6), 2043–2049. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11036-018-01209-z>

- Joy, M., & Shields, J. (2013). Social Impact Bonds: The Next Phase of Third Sector Marketization? *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research*, 4(2).
<https://doi.org/10.22230/cjnser.2013v4n2a148>
- Kim, H. M., Sabri, S., & Kent, A. (2021). Smart cities as a platform for technological and social innovation in productivity, sustainability, and livability: A conceptual framework. *Smart Cities for Technological and Social Innovation*, 9–28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-818886-6.00002-2>
- Krlev, G., Bund, E., & Mildemberger, G. (2014). Measuring What Matters—Indicators of Social Innovativeness on the National Level. *Information Systems Management*, 31(3), 200–224.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10580530.2014.923265>
- Lambriu, M., & Petrescu, C. (2017). Romania: Fostering Social Enterprise in a Post-Transitional Context: Caught between Social Enterprise Country Models. *Shaping Social Enterprise*, 109–138. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-78714-250-320171005>
- Maccallum, D., Moulaert, F., Hillier, J., & Vicari, S. (2009). Social Innovation and Territorial Development. *ResearchGate*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44960912_Social_Innovation_and_Territorial_Development
- Malleret, T., & Schwab, K. (2020). *Covid-19: The Great Reset*. ISBN Agentur Schweiz.
http://books.google.ie/books?id=kruwzQEACAAJ&dq=2940631123&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api
- Martins, N., Martins, S., & Brandão, D. (2021). Design Principles in the Development of Dashboards for Business Management. *Perspectives on Design II*, 353–365.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-79879-6_26

- Matei, A. (2009). Inovația socială - o hartă tematică. *Revista Inovația Socială*, 2, 86–107.
http://www.inovatiassocila.ro/wp-content/uploads/2009/2/2009_1_2_matei.pdf
- Matei, A., & Bujac, R. (2016). Innovation and Public Reform. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 761–768. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671\(16\)30278-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(16)30278-7)
- Matei, A., Săvulescu, C., & Antonovici, C. G. (2015). Social Innovation in the Local Public Sector: A Cross-Regional Approach for Romania. *Theoretical and Applied Economics*, XXII(4(605)), 5–12. <https://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/69121/>
- Matei, L. (2005). *Dezvoltarea economică locală*. Editura Economică.
- McCann, P., & Ortega-Argilés, R. (2013). Smart Specialization, Regional Growth and Applications to European Union Cohesion Policy. *Regional Studies*, 49(8), 1291–1302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2013.799769>
- Merlin-Brogniart, C., Fuglsang, L., Magnussen, S., Peralta, A., Révész, V., Rønning, R., Rubalcaba, L., & Scupola, A. (2022). Social innovation and public service: A literature review of multi-actor collaborative approaches in five European countries. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change/Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 182, 121826. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.121826>
- Millard, J., & Carpenter, G. (2014). *Digital technology in social innovation: a synopsis: Vol. European Commission – 7th Framework Programme* (A deliverable of the project: “The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe” (TEPSIE)). European Commission, DG Research. <http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/resource-hub/digital-technology-in-social-innovation--synopsis>

- MIPE. (n.d.). *Ce sunt fondurile europene și de câte tipuri sunt acestea?* Ministerul Investițiilor Și Proiectelor Europene. Accessed in July 6, 2024, la <https://mfe.gov.ro/1-ce-sunt-fondurile-europene-si-de-cate-tipuri-sunt-acestea/>
- Monardo, B., & Massari, M. (2021). Emerging Interpretation Models of Social and Institutional Innovation in the City. The Role of ‘Intermediate Places’ Between the USA and Italy. *Smart and Sustainable Planning for Cities and Regions*, 399–410. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-57332-4_28
- Moulaert, F. (2000). *Globalization and Integrated Area Development in European Cities*. OUP Oxford.
http://books.google.ie/books?id=7umgCOBEMgEC&printsec=frontcover&dq=9780199241132&hl=&cd=1&source=gsbs_api
- Moulaert, F. (2009). Social Innovation: Institutionally Embedded, Territorially (Re)Produced. In *Social Innovation and Territorial Development* (1st Edition, pp. 11–25). Ashgate.
- Moulaert, F., & Sekia, F. (2003). Territorial Innovation Models: A Critical Survey. *Regional Studies*, 37(3), 289–302. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0034340032000065442>
- Moulaert, F., MacCallum, D., & Hillier, J. (2013). Social innovation: intuition, precept, concept, theory and practice. *The International Handbook on Social Innovation*, 13–24. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781849809986.00011>
- Mulgan, G., Sanders, B., Tucker, S., & Ali, R. (2007). Social Innovation: What It Is, Why It Matters and How It Can Be Accelerated. *Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277873357_Social_Innovation_What_It_Is_Why_It_Matters_and_How_It_Can_Be_Accelerated

- Murray, R., Caulier-Grice, J., & Mulgan, G. (2010). *The Open Book of Social Innovation*. NESTA & The Young Foundation. <https://www.youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf>
- Neumeier, S. (2011). Why do Social Innovations in Rural Development Matter and Should They be Considered More Seriously in Rural Development Research? – Proposal for a Stronger Focus on Social Innovations in Rural Development Research. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 52(1), 48–69. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9523.2011.00553.x>
- Neumeier, S. (2016). Social innovation in rural development: identifying the key factors of success. *Geographical Journal*, 183(1), 34–46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12180>
- Nicholls, A. (2015). *Synthetic Grid: A critical framework to inform the development of social innovation metrics* (CRESSI Working Papers No. 14/2015). <http://www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/resource-hub/synthetic-grid-a-critical-framework-to-inform-the-development-of-social-innovation-metrics-cressi-working-papers-142015>
- Nicholls, A., & Murdock, A. (2012). *Social Innovation*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nicolescu, C. E. (2022). *Planificarea strategică la nivelul administrației publice locale: provocări și oportunități*. *Administrație Locală*. <https://administratielocala.ro/2022/02/06/planificarea-strategica-la-nivelul-administratiei-publice-locale-provocari-si-oportunitati/>
- Nisbet, R. A. (1966). *The Sociological Tradition*. Transaction Pub.
- Nyseth, T., & Hamdouch, A. (2019). The Transformative Power of Social Innovation in Urban Planning and Local Development. *Urban Planning*, 4(1), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v4i1.1950>

- OECD & EUROSTAT. (2005). The Measurement of Scientific and Technological Activities. In *Oslo Manual. Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Innovation Data, 3rd Edition*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264013100-en>
- OECD. (2011a). *Regions and Innovation Policy* (OECD Reviews of Regional Innovation). OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264097803-en>.
- OECD. (2011b). The essential perspectives of innovation: the oecd leed forum on social innovations. *Fostering Innovation to Address Social Challenges*, 18–24. <https://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/47861327.pdf>
- OECD. (2013). *OECD Innovation Policy Platform* (Online handbook). OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/19934211>
- OECD. (2014). *Education at a Glance 2014* (OECD Indicators). OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2014-en>
- OECD. (2015a). Government at a Glance 2015. In *Government at a glance*. https://doi.org/10.1787/gov_glance-2015-en
- OECD. (2017). Public Procurement for Innovation: Good Practices and Strategies. *OECD Public Governance Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264265820-en>
- OECD. (2019). Enhancing Innovation Capacity in City Government. In *OECD eBooks*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/f10c96e5-en>
- OECD. (2020). *OECD Open Government dashboard* - OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/governance/open-government-dashboard/>
- OECD. (2021). *Building local ecosystems for social innovation: A methodological framework* (OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Papers, Vol. 2021/06). OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/bef867cd-en>

- OECD. (2022). OECD Guidelines for Citizen Participation Processes. In *OECD public governance reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1787/f765caf6-en>
- Osborne, S. P., & Brown, L. (2011). INNOVATION, PUBLIC POLICY AND PUBLIC SERVICES DELIVERY IN THE UK. THE WORD THAT WOULD BE KING? *Public Administration*, 89(4), 1335–1350. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9299.2011.01932.x>
- Patiño-Valencia, B., Villalba-Morales, M. L., Acosta-Amaya, M., Villegas-Arboleda, C., & Calderón-Sanín, E. (2020). Towards the conceptual understanding of social innovation and inclusive innovation: a literature review. *Innovation and Development*, 12(3), 437–458. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2157930x.2020.1859215>
- Pérez Sempere, S., & Sajardo Moreno, A. (2021). La tecnología Blockchain en la construcción de espacios económicos de impacto social positivo. *REVESCO. Revista De Estudios Cooperativos*, 138, e73867. <https://doi.org/10.5209/reve.73867>
- Phills, J., Deiglmeier, K., & Miller, D. T. (2008). Rediscovering Social Innovation. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 6(4), 34–43. <https://doi.org/10.48558/GBJY-GJ47>
- Popescu, C. R. G., Popescu, G. N., & Popescu, V. a. a. V. (2017). Sustainability Leadership, the Key to a Better World – A Case Study on Romania’s Situation. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336737542_Sustainability_Leadership_the_Key_to_a_Better_World_-_A_Case_Study_on_Romania's_Situation
- Preskill, H., & Beer, T. (2012). Evaluating Social Innovation. *Center for Evaluation Innovation*. <https://evaluationinnovation.org/publication/evaluating-social-innovation/>
- Prodan, I. (2024). *Procesul de inovare socială și antreprenoriat social în România. Inovații în domeniul serviciilor sociale*. Accessed in March 3, 2024, la <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/events/prodan-ioana/>

- Proffitt, A. (2022). *SI-DRIVE: Towards a general theory and typology of Social Innovation*. SIX | Social Innovation Exchange. <https://socialinnovationexchange.org/si-drive-final-report/>
- Quélin, B., & Smadja, I. (2021). *Smart cities: The Sustainable Program of Six Leading Cities*. HEC Paris. <https://www.hec.edu/en/smart-cities-sustainable-program-six-leading-cities>
- Reeder, N., O' Sullivan, C., Tucker, S., Ramsden, P., & Mulgan, G. (2012). *Strengthening social innovation in Europe - Journey to effective assessment and metrics*. European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2769/53098>
- Rogger, D., & Schuster, C. (2023). *The Government Analytics Handbook*. World Bank Publications. http://books.google.ie/books?id=AcjfEAAAQBAJ&pg=PA1980&dq=978-1-4648-1981-0&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api
- Schilling, M. A. (2020). *Strategic Management of Technological Innovation*.
- Schillo, R. S., & Robinson, R. M. (2017). Inclusive Innovation in Developed Countries: The Who, What, Why, and How. *Technology Innovation Management Review*, 7(7), 34–46. <https://doi.org/10.22215/timreview/1089>
- Schmitz, B., Krlev, G., Mildemberger, G., Bund, E., & Hubrich, D. (2013). Paving the way to measurement – a blueprint for social innovation metrics: a short guide to the research for policy makers. In *A deliverable of the project: The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe (TEPSIE): Vol. European Commission – 7th Framework Programme. DG Research*. <https://socialinnovationexchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/TEPSIE-Policy-Paper-Measurement-Blueprint-WP2.pdf>
- Sgaragli, F. (2014). *Enabling social innovation ecosystems for community-led territorial development*. Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini. https://www.fondazionebrodolini.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/file/q49_0.pdf.

- SGG. (2014). *SCAP*. <http://scap.gov.ro/welcome/page/scap>
- SGG. (2019b). *Raport de evaluare a impactului măsurilor implementate în cadrul SCAP 2014-2020 Pilonul V – Administrație publică locală*. scap.gov.ro. Accessed in May 23, 2024, la <http://scap.gov.ro/appadm/uploads/doc/1555525609-Raport%20Pilon%205.pdf>
- Silva, P., Pires, S. M., Teles, F., Polido, A., & Rodrigues, C. (2022). Pre-conditions and barriers for territorial innovation through smart specialization strategies: the case of the lagging Centro region of Portugal. *Urban Research & Practice*, 17(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17535069.2022.2103447>
- Sotarauta, M., Horlings, I., & Liddle, J. (2012). *Leadership and Change in Sustainable Regional Development*. Routledge. http://books.google.ie/books?id=K_d7CfQtNyIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=9780203107058&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api
- Sousa, C., & Ferreira, M. (2020). *Innovation and Development: The Role of Social Innovation*. ResearchGate. <https://doi.org/10.34190/EIE.20.177>
- Svidroňová, M., Nasi, G., Cucciniello, M., Cucciniello, V., Valotti, G., Bazurli, R., De Vries, H., Bekkers, V., Tummers, L., Gascó, M., Ysa, T., Fernández, C., Albareda, A., Matei, A., Savulescu, C., Antonie, C., Balaceanu, E., Nemeč, J., Merickova, B., & Monthubert, E. (2015). *Determinants and Barriers of Adoption, Diffusion and Upscaling of ICT-driven Social Innovation in the Public Sector: A Comparative Study Across 6 EU Countries*. LIPSE. Accessed in July 6, 2022, la https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280881010_Determinants_and_Barriers_of_Adoption_Diffusion_and_Upscaling_of_ICT-driven_Social_Innovation_in_the_Public_Sector_A_Comparative_Study_Across_6_EU_Countries

- Szendi, D. (2021). The connection of smart cities approach and social innovation. *Multidiszciplináris Tudományok*, 11(2), 241–246. <https://doi.org/10.35925/j.multi.2021.2.31>
- Taylor, J. B. (1970). Introducing Social Innovation. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/002188637000600104>
- Terstriep, J., Krlev, G., Mildenerger, G., Strambach, S., Thurmann, J. F., & Wloka, L. F. (2022). *Measuring Social Innovation: A Key Element of Mission-oriented Innovation Policy* (IndiSI+ PolicyBrief #1). Gelsenkirchen: Institute for Work and Technology. https://www.si-metrics.eu/media/indisi_policybrief_1_en.pdf
- Tokola, H., Gröger, C., Järvenpää, E., & Niemi, E. (2016). Designing Manufacturing Dashboards on the Basis of a Key Performance Indicator Survey. *Procedia CIRP*, 57, 619–624. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procir.2016.11.107>
- Toma, C., & Bratu, J. (2024). *Kaizen in administratia publica. O reforma necesara in Romania!* Editura Litera.
- Tucker, S. (2014). *Social Innovation for Public Service Excellence*. UNDP Global Centre for Public Service Excellence. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/GPCSE_Social%20Innovation.pdf
- Uyarra, E. (2022). *How public procurement can influence innovation, productivity and societal challenges*. <https://blog.policy.manchester.ac.uk/posts/2022/08/public-procurements-role-in-innovation-productivity-and-societal-challenges/>
- Uyarra, E., & Flanagan, K. (2010). Understanding the Innovation Impacts of Public Procurement. *European Planning Studies*, 18(1), 123–143. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654310903343567>

Von Schnurbein, G., Potluka, O., & Mayer, A. (2021). Creating social innovation in urban development through collaborative processes. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 36(2), 316–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2021.1910800>

Westley, F., & Antadze, N. (2010). Making a Difference Strategies for Scaling Social Innovation for Greater Impact. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, 15(2) (Article 2). <https://innovation.cc/document/2010-15-2-2-making-a-difference-strategies-for-scaling-social-innovation-for-greater-impact/>