# The territorial dimension in social innovation

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**Abstract:** We are witnessing a new movement already in full swing: Social Innovation (SI). The progression of this movement not only provides a challenge for the existence of a standardized SI definition, but also for the consolidation of the new paradigm in it; which has been progressively emerging since the beginning of the 21st century. The difficulty with which this new paradigm is met stems from it coexisting in practice with a previous paradigm that is already outdated due to its limitations. This new paradigm brings, among other significant advances, a consideration for the relevant human and community factors that underlie all SI activity in a territory. The influence of these factors on the successful or unsuccessful outcome of a social project in a territory is evident. It is with this considered that we address the investigation into the historical and cultural factors that allow for a territory's particularity. Our goal is to develop this new SI paradigm by establishing guidelines for a regional SI model, whilst also identifying the particularities of the Extremadura (Spain) region by applying a methodology for monitoring social networks and media. The SI spatial model must be adapted to the *particularities of this territory* in order to be effective.

Keywords: social innovation, territory, model, social networks, Extremadura, adapting

#### 1. Introduction

If we consider, in principle, Social Innovation (SI) to be the development and implementation of new ideas which meet social needs (Simón, 2020), then we are able to therefore estimate the impact of its influence. This is especially the case when considering also that global citizens demand a new development model that finds a social and environmental balance and is one that is based on investment in social capital and SI and increases welfare (Ibarretxe, 2011). This is why SI, although recent, is becoming, in a progressive but unstoppable way, a powerful and disruptive movement (Durán, 2019).

In this way, the European Union makes advances after the European Commission established its 2019-2024 priorities. These priorities are: the implementation of the Green Deal (with which the EU intends on becoming the first climate-neutral continent), developing an economy based on servicing people, and adapting Europe to the digital era. (UE, 2019-2024).

We are observing how the world of SI is gaining more followers every day. It is evolving at such a rapid pace that we are witnessing an unprecedented boom in SI, which we note in two ways (Goodman & Murillo, 2011):

- The number of initiatives: from grassroots community projects to large national companies and global networks that are bringing about a paradigm shift.
- A variety of approaches, such as open social innovation or the so-called innovation centers or hubs, whose aim is to promote and support such innovations. These are academic centers, institutions, foundations, governments, and international participation platforms that offer new support systems for social entrepreneurs and new innovations.

In summary, it is a sector that is in full expansion all over the world, so much so that it has become a new, dynamic, and evolving discipline due to its characteristics. However, it is affected by the following significant barriers that hinder the success of its initiatives:

- 1. The inhibitor of a natural resistance to change (expressed through multiple impediments from traditional culture) which can even lead to conflicts arising due to different ways of thinking and due to varying degrees of cognitive proximity (Boschma, 2005).
  - 2. Management. Collaborations extend beyond the boundaries of a particular organization.
  - 3. The limited agreement on how to measure SI, how to define social impact, and the issue of heterogeneity regarding the appropriate indicators and methodologies used in the reports.

With this considered, we should ask ourselves about the impact SI has had until present. Regarding SI, we can assert that the implementation of theoretical frameworks and methodologies from business innovation in the social field has generated projects with interesting results and future potential, but which are also ultimately limited. Most small-scale SI models have not yet achieved the beneficial results they forecasted. We are facing failure or opportunity loss that the scientific community must address.

There is, in the background of this failure, a traditional theoretical framework that already has serious limitations and is making way for the need for a new paradigm, one which has already made serious headway.

In this new conceptual SI framework, there is a certain absence regarding the necessary connection between the initiatives and the territory in which they are developed. There is also an ignorance towards the cultural dynamics of a space caused by said absence. (Leubolt, 2007; Ibarretxe, 2011; Espiau, 2017; DSI Manifesto, 2017; Stokes et al., 2017; Stokes & Baeck, 2017; García & Palma, 2019).

A reworked vision of SI, therefore, would need to improve knowledge about the cultural dimensions of a place in order to address innovation processes. What's more, it is necessary to also consider the territorial element and to condition SIs to it. This is due to the empirical literature having consistently shown effectiveness in the implementation of this type of innovation for achieving a more inclusive and sustainable region for the population living there (Calzada, 2013; Subirats & García-Bernardos, 2015).

We propose to advance the real application of this new SI paradigm by establishing the broad guidelines required to guide a regional SI model. Once done, we intend to identify the particularities of the Extremadura (Spain) region as an outstanding component of the model applied to the region.

This work begins by highlighting the paradigm shift in the research and in approach to SI. An SI territorial model is then proposed for the territory of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura. This is followed by methodology and the model's application in the search for the territory's particularities. We close the work by outlining the most significant final considerations.

#### 2. Conceptual framework

#### 2.1. Initial Social Innovation Paradigm

Studies on innovation have undergone a substantial change during the last two decades with the introduction of the notion of social innovation. The 21st century began with the extrapolation of Schumpeterian innovation logic to the social sphere. This translated into a framework based on two major bases.

On the one hand, there was the economic paradigm, based on two principles:

- Creating value is about generating economic value
- Companies are the ones that take care of this activity

In this way, innovation became an instrument for improving the productivity and competitiveness of companies (Manual de Oslo, 2007).

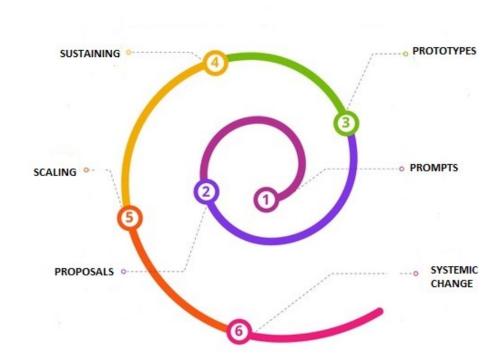
On the other hand, there was the acceptance of a linear model, expressed by the acronym R&D&I, which referred to the fact that innovation starts with scientific research. Scientists thus found themselves at the core of all innovation.

At the beginning of the century, a systemic vision of innovation was introduced upon the consideration that the linear model was the starting point for R&D policies to become a systemic

model. This arose from the fact that innovation came from complicated interactions between individuals, organizations, and their respective environments (CE, 2003).

This conceptual framework asserted that innovation also had a social component because it encompassed both the economic and social dimensions. However, the prevailing theoretical and institutional logic meant that the term SI did not, or hardly ever even, appeared. Despite the linear model and the systemic definition of innovation, the necessary conceptual gears for SI did not exist because innovation continued to be assigned par excellence to companies due to the economic paradigm.

From this business vision also came project management logic being applied to social initiatives in the final years of this seminal paradigm. This has even lasted until today as one of the operational axes for SI projects. Its maximum exponent is represented by the Spiral model (Scheme 1), embedded in the Theory of Change, and slightly adapted to the social sphere by considering Systemic Change as the end of its phases. This model is based on specialized knowledge, individual talent, and business innovation.



Scheme 1. Social Innovation Process: Spiral model

Source: Murray et al. (2010)

# 2.2. The new Social Innovation paradigm. The particularity of a territory.

Despite the established paradigm's modifications and expansions, in certain developed countries (especially the UK and Canada due to their extensive activity) an alternative paradigm has been progressively emerging since the beginning of the century (Echeverría & Merino, 2011) and is now the one at the forefront. It was around 2004 when it can be said that there was a social turnaround in innovation policies for both countries and, with it, came the beginnings of people paying attention to SI and the start of its promotion.

The main developed countries have been gradually assuming these initial conceptual and methodological changes, and are even integrating them into their SI policies. This new paradigm is based on several pillars, two of which are notable:

• The linear or R&D&I model is called into question as innovation is now being considered as a multidimensional process (NESTA, 2007).

• SIs first arise from civil society, but can also be promoted and carried out by the public sector (supporting and carrying out this type of project) and by the private sector (inclusive businesses and corporate social responsibility) (De la Mata, 2018). In this regard, everything depends on the ends and the means. Therefore, all three dimensions can create value and can specifically create social value.

As for the systemic perspective of the SI, the most recent advances in systems theory are incorporated into the perspective of the initial paradigm when interactions between agents and the environment are generated. This would indicate that the system seeks to address social problems through substantial and lasting changes in said system in which problems are located. This is work that requires choosing the causal architecture (Seelos & Mair, 2018): to strengthen a system. For this, it is necessary to understand and then transform the causal processes that form systems (Seelos, 2020). Of the architectures proposed, a (a) soft/critical and (b) organic system perspective would be the best fit for this new vision of SI; that is:

- It considers that systems represent dynamic and multidimensional situations which are impossible to understand by mere observation
- It encompasses social agglomerates; people who share a space and interact as a result of informal social and historical processes. This is in such a way that the concept of SI can be two-fold: the satisfaction of basic human needs and the innovation in social relations between individuals and groups of human beings in communities (Moulaert & Nussbaumer, 2005).

The axes of this current paradigm prepare the way for the introduction of a new factor in analysis whose relevance is beginning to stand out in the field of SI: the cultural particularities of the territory in which the SI project takes place. It is worth noting that this factor leads in what could be regarded as new trends in SI (Espiau, 2017). These trends are deduced from successful SI practices and are subsequently integrated into the new paradigm:

- 1. Spatial or cultural dimension. These are the new transformative narratives that self-define a territorial community based on shared values and beliefs. This is because all spaces, like human groups, share a common or super-narrative history that distinguishes them from others (Dunstan & Sarkissian, 1994). We know that SI decisions that are based on values and beliefs generate better results in terms of medium- and long-term impact. This moves in the direction of the intended systemic or structural change pursued by any SI process.
  - So noted is this dimension that even the cultural characteristics of a place defy previous models (including Spiral). Hence, research must be situated in local residents and citizen researchers, as well as be engaged with them (Moore & Woodcraft, 2019).
  - The novelty of this element can be seen through the scarcity of studies aimed at exploring social relations in the innovation system (Sotarauta, 2009, 2010, 2012).
- 2. Social movement perspective. This refers to the fact that the SI process acts as a social movement of transformation, which emerges naturally as a response to a situation of injustice that allows for connecting many public and private actions with a common vision. This shared vision requires an in-depth knowledge of the values and narratives that exist on a given problem in a space, from which the social objectives are set. We again return to the cultural dimension.
  - These approaches of spatial particularity and social movement allow for the completion of the Spiral model, reconciling in some way with it.
- 3. Community-based participatory model. The idea is to invite people from all walks of life to participate in community change projects. It is not based, to the contrary of the logic employed by other SI projects, on resorting to specific knowledge and personal talent, but rather to the participation of all people and organizations in the community as an instrument for the structural improvement of an area: the empowerment of the community so that all people/organizations can act as innovators.
- 4. Project competitiveness. SI initiatives are required to be competitive for their long-term sustainability: here, the social and economic dimensions come together.

5. Not to tackle specific projects, but rather those based in SI platforms. Platforms should be created that bring together citizens and organizations, public and private, in the same area, that share objectives and collaborative working methodology in order to co-create: thus, an ecosystem of SI emerges instead of isolated projects. These SI platforms combine tools for community monitoring of problems, a co-creation and prototyping lab, a project accelerator, new investment tools and evaluation, and external communication systems.

The origins of this consideration for spatial or cultural dimensions can be found in a new movement originally from the eighties and early nineties. In an increasingly globalized economy, regional and local levels have become increasingly more important in the literature as well as in governments and institutions seeking to advance development and competitiveness (Oughton et al., 2002). The prominence of this is due to the fact that traditional productive factors, of a tangible nature, no longer provide a lasting competitive advantage for companies because they are imitable. On the contrary, the key factor of competitiveness today is intangible knowledge and the capacity of innovation derived from it (Porter, 1990, 1998; Maskell & Malmberg, 1999). Thus, the literature on clusters and regional innovation systems considers that knowledge, and the learning processes derived from it, are productive factors that are not as mobile as traditional ones. However, they are characterized by a stickiness to the territory, by their local embeddedness, and by their giving space to localized capabilities which are very unequally distributed (Braczyck et al., 1998; Malmberg and Maskell, 1997; Maskell & Malmberg, 1999). This stickiness of knowledge to the territory is explained, fundamentally, by the fact that, contrary to the assumptions of the neoclassical economics knowledge is not simply fully codifiable and explicit information (a fact that would make it possible to transmit it anywhere in the world), but instead has an important component of a tacit nature (Polany, 1966).

It is true that certain authors (Lorentzen, 2008, 2009) consider that the proximity approach is not spatially deterministic and that knowledge sharing for innovation does not require physical proximity; or that, when it does, it can be organized temporarily, for example, by organizing visits or meetings. This is such if we establish three major types of proximity (Lorentzen, 2009): geographic, societal, and cognitive. Some of these categories are subsequently subdivided into other categories, such as societal into institutional, organizational, and social proximity; and cognitive into cultural and technological.

On the contrary, authors who prescribe to the regional innovation systems or localized learning school of thought, continue to consider that knowledge is embedded in people and that this is dependent on a context and is attached to a territory. However, these authors have abandoned the dichotomy between tacit and codified knowledge, do not reduce their analyses of proximity exclusively to that of a geographic nature, and do not proclaim knowledge on a local level to be the only source of tacit knowledge. In short, for them, there continues to be a neighborhood effect in such a way that spatial proximity tends to reinforce the other forms of proximity and gives rise to the existence of localization effects in innovation and learning processes (Maskell et al., 2006; Morgan, 2004a, b). It is this localized character of knowledge, together with the effects derived from the other agglomeration economies (Rosenthal & Strange, 2004), which explains the strong process of decentralization and territorial specialization that has been observed increasingly in the economy since the 1980s (Krugman, 1992,1995; Rodríguez & Gill, 2003; Oughton et al., 2002).

This significant precursory movement considers that localized capacities are developed through the interactions between infrastructures and the constructed environment, accessible natural resources, institutional endowment, and the knowledge and skills available in the territory. These are difficult to imitate and are of a cumulative nature (path dependency), leading to competitive advantages for the territory (Malmberg & Maskell, 1999). Regional or local success stories appear that are considered paradigmatic and whose factors must be understood so that possible knowledge for the development policies of other regions or localities can be drawn. This is accomplished even though it is accepted that one same policy is not valid for all territories and that it is necessary to consider the contexts in which each experience takes place and subsequently adapt measures to them. This need for adaptation is particularly felt by those responsible for industrial,

technological, and regional policies after they noted that the traditional policies which had been followed until the 1990s had not achieved the expected results.

These traditional policies were based on the selection of national champions, on discriminatory support for certain sectors, on the promotion of R&D being based on a linear innovation scheme, and on the transfer of public resources to less developed regions. Due to this recognition, policy makers are becoming more aware that the promotion of competitiveness and innovation (which should be their guiding principles) can mainly be found on the regional and local levels (Oughton et al., 2002); Cooke and Morgan, 1998). Among the many schools of thought that make up this movement (Navarro y Zubiaurre, 2003), two stand out for their numerous literature and the great acceptance they have had by political leaders and international institutions that aim for economic development: regional innovation systems and clusters (Asheim & Coenen, 2004; Cooke et al., 2004).

#### 2.3. Social Innovation Concept

Despite the new SI paradigm (in which we include the concept of SI) and the broad consensus regarding the positive impact that SI provides for territories, there is a general disagreement when it comes to defining it. This, in part, is due to the constant evolution that this field experiences and its complex nature.

The heterogeneity of SI concepts results in it being advisable that we select those which are highly accredited (Table 1) and, if the concepts are not deemed to be complete, that we provide our own SI concept.

Table 1. Core Definitions of Social Innovation

AUTHORS	DEFINITION
BEPA (Bureau of European Policy Advisers, European Commission)	Three key points:  -Innovations that respond to social demands that are not traditionally addressed by the market or by existing institutions and are directed towards vulnerable groups in society.  -The social challenge perspective focuses on innovations for society as a whole through the integration of social, economic, and environmental initiatives.  -The change of systemic approach, the most ambitious of the three, and the one that, to some extent, encompasses the other two, is achieved through an organizational process of development and changes in the relationships between institutions and stakeholders.
Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) and European Commission	The development and implementation of new ideas (products, services, and models) to meet social needs.
Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at the Saïd Business School (Oxford University) (Mulgan et al., 2007) CE (2014-2020)	New ideas that work for the satisfaction of a social need (SI driven by demand and not by supply) and are developed and disseminated mostly through organizations whose main objectives are social: a broad vision of SI is offered by recognizing that it can involve more than one organization.

Stanford Center for Social Innovation (Phills et al., 2008)	A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, and fair than existing solutions and in which the value created mainly benefits society as a whole and not specific individuals.
Young Foundation (In collaboration with NESTA)	They emphasize that multiple actors and cooperation are key factors that allow us to see SI as an activity with which social needs are satisfied and new relationships or social collaborations are created. Therefore, this Foundation focuses on innovations that "are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act" (Murray et al., 2010).

Source: own contribution

This selection of notable references allows us to consider a wide range of interpretations regarding the three common features: the innovative fight against a social problem (social, environmental, economic, and ethical challenges) not solved or not satisfactorily solved by the existing framework and that generates social value instead of individual value (Buckland & Murillo, 2013). Thus, we consider the SI in its broadest form (Goodman & Murillo, 2011).

The simplified notion that we have deduced needs to be completed with a range of characteristics (Table 2) that we consider fundamental and that mark the SI profiles with greater clarity (Mulgan et al., 2007; Enkel et al., 2009; Phills et al., 2008; Goodman & Murillo, 2011; CE, 2014-2020).

Table 2. Fundamental characteristics of Social Innovation

#### **CHARACTERISTICS**

SI as a hybrid (innovations group already existing elements but in a new way): new products, new processes, and new forms of collaboration.

SI that crosses borders, limits and is based on new relationships.

SI as a process of open innovation: distribution and exchange of knowledge between individuals, departments, and organizations. In addition, not only the experts of the team or organization working can be used, but also external experts. In short, an exchange of ideas can bring great benefits to social innovators.

Participation and increase of power in citizens and users, supervised by experts: bottom-up process and not vice versa.

The sustainability of SI as a means of enabling its long-term operation. This, in turn, makes it possible to increase the scope of the social problem.

Financing is fundamental for sustainability, which is an essential factor for the success of SI: it can be achieved through new business models and the combination of different sources

of income.

The social impact and the global potential of SI. While some social projects are local in scope, to address a specific local need, others are intended to be more global in scope. As such, it is likely that SIs whose geographical destination can be expanded will contribute to broader social change.

This results in two important characteristics of SIs: their scalability and their replicability. The scaling up of local SIs has opened up the debate on which elements should be scaled up. Key elements of scalability are actual demand, growth capacity, management, governance, and financing.

We affirm in general that SIs present a reduced cost. This is necessary because they are often directed at a wide group of users or because they are oriented to those with low income. A transcendental issue: although SIs can be profitable, the main objective of these projects is the social value they generate and not the maximization of profit, that is, the value created is transferred to society as a whole (Phills et al., 2008).

Since SIs are aimed at social problems and society is constantly transforming, as social needs change, so must their solutions. By considering this adaptation and updating of their solutions, they are granted maximum potential.

Source: own contribution using Mulgan et al. (2007); Enkel et al. (2009); Phills et al. (2008); Goodman & Murillo (2011); CE (2014-2020).

#### 2.4. Applied territorial perspective: Territorial model proposal

Places achieve and reproduce the character that distinguishes them, and this is because personality and tradition are the result of an interaction that has been successful (Molotoch et al., 2000).

In fact, if it is true that knowledge has been generated according to approaching social projects from the perspective of project management (an initial paradigm), it is no less true that we have forgotten that these projects are developed in a human and community-based environment that acts as a basis for these initiatives.

Applied in terms of SI, the movement that we referred to as its spatial or cultural dimension is thus established. Among other reasons, this is because innovators can appear wherever the social need is, and normally the SIs are based on local knowledge, that is, they are based more frequently on knowledge that is passed down through generations than on studies and methodologies about how to solve problems. Therefore, solutions to local problems arise more easily in the place itself (Jardon & Gierhake, 2019).

Hence, there are two key players in the development of SI (Rodríguez & Alvarado, 2008) which facilitate community participation, empowerment, and autonomy:

- Integrity, which includes actual participation. This recognizes that social agents play a decisive role in the solution of social problems.
- Wholeness, that is, unifying technological resources with local knowledge. This means improving management technology, information technology, project development technology, and impact evaluation technology, and systematizing experiences. This being so, they are adapted to the culture and needs of the population(s) involved.

All this allows us to understand that local innovation systems are based on the cultural characteristics of the territory (Yoguel et al., 2009).

Indeed, the spatial component occupies the first place among the five determining factors which regard the degree and quality of SI in the territories that García and Palma (2019) show for

Spain (Table 3). As such, they demonstrate the power of social and cultural elements as facilitators (or not) in the successful impact of the project. This is due to territory being the natural field of action of the SI: most SIs are carried out and are conditioned by these cultural elements (MacCallum, 2009; Van Dyck & Van Den Broeck, 2013).

**Table 3.** Determining factors for the emergence of Social Innovation in the territories (pillars ordered by relevance)

#### **FACTORS**

## Social and cultural elements of the population. Specified in the factors:

- Existence of social concern
- Cultural propensity to change
- Propensity to participate
- Propensity to collaborate
- Existence of a creative class
- Ability and availability to work with different economic agents and generate collective action
- Existence of an associative culture of individuals

#### Political and institutional support

# Knowledge and facilitating mechanisms

### Spatial components

# Entities and mechanisms that determine the productive business and social structures

Source: García & Palma (2019)

Based on this evidence, a model for the spatial development of SI is proposed, which is embedded in the new SI paradigm and is built on four central axes (Scheme 2).

Scheme 2. Key elements of a new territorial Social Innovation Model

# The particularity of the territory

Most social initiatives are created resulting from a set of historical variables from that territory.

# A collective effort using SI platforms

- Innovative social initiatives require collective involvement to achieve a positive impact.
- •This collective effort must be managed through a joint participation platform which includes all citizens/organizations in that area. This acts as an innovation ecosystem.

# Competitive social initiatives

• In an SI project, social aspects must coexist with profitability.

# More traditional factors

- The scientific literature offers various contrasting approaches regarding important SI factors. As such, those which empirically affect the area should be selected.
- Using Spain as a recent example, variables relating to the political support, facilitators, and physical
  and socio-economic characteristics of an area, as well as the business and social structure can all be
  initially proposed.

Source: own contribution based on Espiau (2017), García & Palma (2019), MacCallum (2009) and Van Dyck & Van Den Broeck (2013).

#### 3. Materials and Methods

## 3.1. Methodology: theoretical basis

We intend to find a methodological way of identifying and structuring the particular elements regarding the territory; the first of the pillars from the previous model.

Investigating the cultural dimension of the transformation process needs qualitative methodologies. Identifying these methodologies becomes one of the main future challenges in this research agenda. Due to the integral and innovative perspective, and how much it benefits from new digital technologies, we are interested in the methodological model by Woodcraft & Bacon (2013). This model advances the empirical capacity of the theoretical model of "tradition" designed by Molotch et al. (2000) which is based on "place difference" (PD). With this, a framework for the empirical analysis of the cultural characteristics of an area was established.

The PD component comes as a dynamic concept that allows us to understand how places come to acquire distinctive characteristics. It also allows us to understand how differing characters remain in the background of why certain local responses to social change are seen and others not. Although it is not a new concept, the methodological approach aims to make it a practical tool for discovering the complex and interrelated elements that make up the character of a place.

Its methodological contribution is encompassed in a process that consists of three phases (Scheme 3).

**Scheme 3.** Methodology for the analysis of the historical and cultural components of a space: place difference model

Phase I: Identification and mapping of the pillars through social network analysis.

Phase II.1: Qualitative evaluation of the most influential elements in a place regarding answers, experiences and decision making.

Phase II.2: Development of a research tool, in the form of an analysis and set of indicators, to systematize this part of the research process. Aspect still to be resolved.

Phase III: Applying the idea of "tradition" by Molotch et al. (2000) by investigating how the character of a place influences local responses to social initiatives.

Source: own contribution based on Woodcraft & Bacon (2013)

With the goal of reaching our objective, and in order to map this complicated structure (Phase 1), we started by investigating the pillars of PD (Table 4), whose concrete elements and interconnections must be determined through an investigation into social networks (SN).

Table 4. Place difference pillars

CHARACTERISTICS
Social conditions
Cultural systems and assets
Political context
Economic conditions
Environmental conditions

Source: Woodcraft & Bacon (2013)

#### 3.2. Methodology: implementation

A content investigation into SN and media regarding the indicated pillars was carried out when they referred to Extremadura. More specifically, a monitoring of concepts that had appeared in texts published on web platforms has been carried out (Table 4). These concepts (keywords) represent our keywords when monitoring and quantifying how much is spoken about them, in what context, and

if possible, the degree of sentiment with which they are spoken as a superimposed sentiment analysis was used for their reactions.

In order to carry out the study, a process was followed in which in each phase we looked to obtain results that allowed us to fulfill our objectives (Table 5).

Table 5. Phases of the monitoring process

	PHASES	DESCRIPTION
1	Keyword acquisition	To determine which keywords could provide us with the
		most information for analysis, a series of simulations
		were carried out in different web tools and SN platforms
		that provided us with statistics on the volume of
		interactions on this subject. <sup>1</sup>
2	Search for web tools	The searches and monitoring needed to offer us enough
		flexibility to insert different concepts as well as to obtain
		reports for their later analysis.
		These monitoring web tools were not free, although
		sometimes they had trial versions. In the case of SN, they
		were free but generic keyword searches were not
		effective and their results were not exportable.
		Platform choice <sup>2</sup> : BUZZSUMO and AUDIENSE
		CONNECT. Although they are aimed at monitoring
		specific brands and content, they have advanced search
		engines and designs that offered us the results we were
		looking for.
3	Keyword monitoring	Most of the conditional searches (publications) were via
		Facebook and Twitter (to a lesser extent), given their
		functionality and market share, and the rest were on
		other media platforms.
		The searches were based on the following keywords:
		Extremadura: keyword to locate the location of
		the publication or news.
		Our 5 place difference pillars: Social, Culture,

 $^{1}$  The work with keywords was complex as it was very possible that the publications and conversations were somewhat influenced by the COVID-19 situation that intersected part of the sample period. The data and results of the study are reliable,

but we must not forget this reality.

 $<sup>^2</sup>$  Together with these two platforms, the tools analyzed and tested have been HOOTSUITE, TALKWALKER, SOCIAL MENTION, KLOUT, BRANDWATCH, AGORAPULSE, KEYHOLE, OCTOPARSE, HASHTAGIFY, SPROUT SOCIAL, and RAPIDMINER.

		Politics, Economy, and Environment.  • Each pillar's keywords <sup>3</sup> (those which generated the most publications and interactions) were identified and assigned to the corresponding pillar. Once the keywords from SN and media were fixed, we carried out the monitoring. This was carried out with the two tools mentioned.  Sample period: October 2019 - October 2020.
5	Data Extraction  Content analysis and screening	This was done by applying several filters: by volume of interactions, by sentiments found in the reaction, and by date.  From the data extracted from the terms and from the mixture of conditions and filters of the searches, the results were obtained.

Sentiment analysis has not been performed on the total number of interactions due to the functional limitations of the tools. A specific sentiment analysis tool can be applied, and even designed to suit. Even though a complete sentimental analysis would remain pending, the consistency in the results (mainly negative and sad) allows us to give remarkable credibility to the analysis results obtained.

Likewise, the sample period could be substantially extended with the purpose of providing greater validity in the results. However, the subsequent Phase II.1 could counteract this limitation.

# 4. Results obtained

Regarding indicators for the expression of concern, the arrangement of the pillars in Extremadura by a number of publications and interactions (Table 6, Scheme 4) showed Extremadura's population to have a greater interest in issues of a social nature; a pillar with very notable figures with respect to the rest of the pillars.

**Table 6.** Results by keyword and pillar

RESULTS					
Keyword Interaction type No. publications No. interactions					
		Ву	Ву	Ву	Ву
		Keyword	Pillar	Keyword	Pillar
	(Extremadura) AND		SOCIAL		SOCIAL
UNEMPLOYMENT	(Unemployment) 166 864 43,764 152,407				152,407

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Although it limited the study, the keyword "Health" was eliminated in order not to find a bias in the results because of the CIVID situation during part of the sample period.

	(Extremadura) AND				
EMPLOYMENT	(Employment)	455		38,315	
	(Extremadura) AND				
SOCIAL HOUSING	(Social housing)	8		5,241	
	(Extremadura) AND				
SOCIAL WELFARE	(Social welfare)	2		2,100	
	(Extremadura) AND				
IMMIGRATION	(Immigration)	11		32,678	
	(Extremadura) AND				
EDUCATION	(Education)	222		30,309	
	(Extremadura) AND				
ECONOMY	(economy)	56		9,760	
	(Extremadura) AND				
ECONOMIC	Eeconomic		ECONOMY		ECONOMY
SITUATION	situation)	8	64	671	10,431
	(Extremadura) AND				
POLITICS	(Politics)	104		6,081	
	(Extremadura) AND		POLITICS		POLITICS
SOCIAL POLICY	(Social policy)	9	113	30	6,111
	(Extremadura) AND				
ENVIRONMENT	(Environment)	4		110	
COMMON	(Extremadura) AND				
WATER	(Common water				
HYACINTH	hyacinth)	7		1,933	
	(Extremadura) AND				
FIRES	(Fires)	154		11,323	
	(Extremadura) AND		ENVIRONMENT		ENVIRONMENT
AGRICULTURE	(Agriculture)	83	248	1,987	15,353
	(Extremadura) AND				
CULTURE	(Culture)	243		7,049	
	(Extremadura) AND				
CULTURAL	(Cultural)	55		24,987	
	(Extremadura) AND				
CULTURAL ASSET	(Cultural asset)	10		19,607	
	(Extremadura) AND		CULTURE		CULTURE
GASTRONOMY	(Gastronomy)	32	340	4,124	55,767
TOTAL		1,629	1,629	240,069	240,069

Scheme 4. Number of interactions by Keyword

While it is true that, judging by its number of publications and interactions, the Social pillar includes such powerful keywords as Unemployment and Employment, it also integrates another prominent issue: Education. Little is published about Immigration even though it provokes powerful reactions among citizens (even more than Education). This outcome requires further investigation. The Culture pillar not only ranks second, but also contains the fifth and sixth terms with the greatest interaction of all the pillars: Cultural and Cultural Asset. Here we find a situation similar to that of Immigration: strong reaction despite a low number of publications.

The concern for the Environment follows with a special focus on forest fires.

Two highly related pillars (Scheme 4), Economy and Politics, find themselves at the bottom of the pillars (not including Unemployment and Employment which were integrated into the Social pillar).

The analysis of the interactions map (Scheme 5) together with the sentiment analysis (Table 7, Scheme 6), combined in Table 8, offers great benefit for the results.

# SOCIAL PILLAR

- UNEMPLOYMENT. This region is highly concerned about the unemployment it suffers in the territory and that, to a great extent, is linked to the economic and political situation and the decisions made.
- EMPLOYMENT. This is linked to the other extreme, Unemployment, but this time is not linked to Political decisions and situations but only to economic ones. It is aligned with the opposite sentiment: sadness.
- SOCIAL HOUSING. Reactions are essentially negative and exclusively political in nature.
- SOCIAL WELFARE. Reactions are mostly positive and related only to the field of Politics.
- IMMIGRATION. Met with negative sentiments, it is not linked to Politics, rather only to Economy and Culture.
- EDUCATION. The population of Extremadura shows negative sentiments towards
   Education and they relate associations with it to diverse topics as a sign of its
   multidimensional characteristics: Employment, Unemployment, Culture, and Politics.

#### **ECONOMY PILLAR**

- ECONOMY. Surprisingly, it received mostly positive reactions, which may be due to the pre-COVID period. The territory's population considered Economy to be connected to many areas, among which the absence of the Politics is surprising.
- ECONOMIC SITUATION. Here, there is a connection with political decisions. Perhaps
  there is an ironic character that can be inferred from this population regarding their
  feeling of being amused.

#### POLITICS PILLAR

- POLITICS. Along with Culture, Politics is a significant generator of interest if we follow
  its association with many topics in the region. The perception towards it is one of
  sadness.
- SOCIAL POLICY. It is only associated with politics. Being consistent with Politics, the sentiment towards it is also one of sadness.

#### **ENVIRONMENT PILLAR**

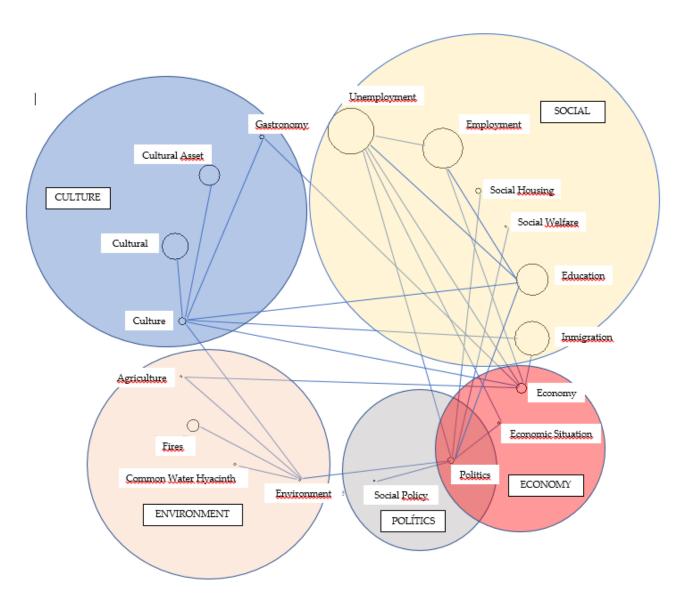
- ENVIRONMENT. Its association with Culture is notable: the population seems to dissociate Environment from the Politics, Economy, and Social. Perhaps the character of the keywords with which it is related (Fires, Common Water Hyacinth, Agriculture) explains the feeling of surprise shown by citizens.
- COMMON WATER HYACINTH AND FIRES. Both are related only to Environment. As such we could apply the same comments from Environment with both Common Water Hyacinth and Fires. Both realities being sad, were subsequently met with feelings of sadness.
- AGRICULTURE. This time it does include connections with Economy, which is in line with the relatively high influence of the economic sector in the region. Perhaps that is why most of the reactions were positive.

#### CULTURE PILLAR

- CULTURE. We ought not to forget that, together with Politics, it is a sector whose
  interest is connected with the most diverse amount of topics in the Autonomous
  Community. However, the cultural sentiment is negative.
- CULTURAL AND CULTURAL ASSET. Both are linked only to Culture, so we can apply the culture commentary here.
- GASTRONOMY. Like Agriculture, it generates reactions that refer to Economy, from which we deduce the link that the population finds between them. Sentiments regarding this issue are mainly positive.

EXTREMADURA. Citizens approach this Autonomous Community with negative sentiment and sadness.

Scheme 5. Results by Keyword and Pillar



#### Notes.

The size of the circles drawn for each pillar is not indicative of the number of interactions: it is only represented for grouping purposes. The circle corresponding to each keyword is represented in proportion to its number of interactions in relation to the total number of interactions.

It has been found that the majority of Economy publications relating to Economy are also directly related to Politics, which is represented here by the intersection zone between the two.

**Table 7.** Percentage of sentiments from the reactions

KEYWORD	SENTIMENT (%)				
	NEGATIVE	SAD	AMUSED	SURPRISED	POSITIVE
-EXTREMADURA	31	30	8	12	19
-UNEMPLOYMENT	46	26	4	19	5
-EMPLOYMENT	34	41	4	15	6
-SOCIAL HOUSING	53	2	3	38	4
-SOCIAL WELFARE	0	0	18	0	82
-IMMIGRATION	85	2	1	3	9
-EDUCATION	72	2	2	16	8
-ECONOMY	9	2	31	8	50
-ECONOMIC					
SITUATION	26	2	69	2	1
-POLITICS	24	63	4	4	5
-SOCIAL POLICY	0	100	0	0	0
-ENVIRONMENT	0	0	0	55	45
-COMMON					
WATER					
HYACINTH	16	44	0	40	0
-FIRES	13	72	1	14	0
-AGRICULTURE	7	11	25	7	50
-CULTURE	66	3	0	3	28
-CULTURAL	66	7	2	0	25
-CULTURAL ASSET	84	9	2	1	4
-GASTRONOMY	3	0	2	2	93

**Scheme 6.** Percentage of sentiments from the reactions

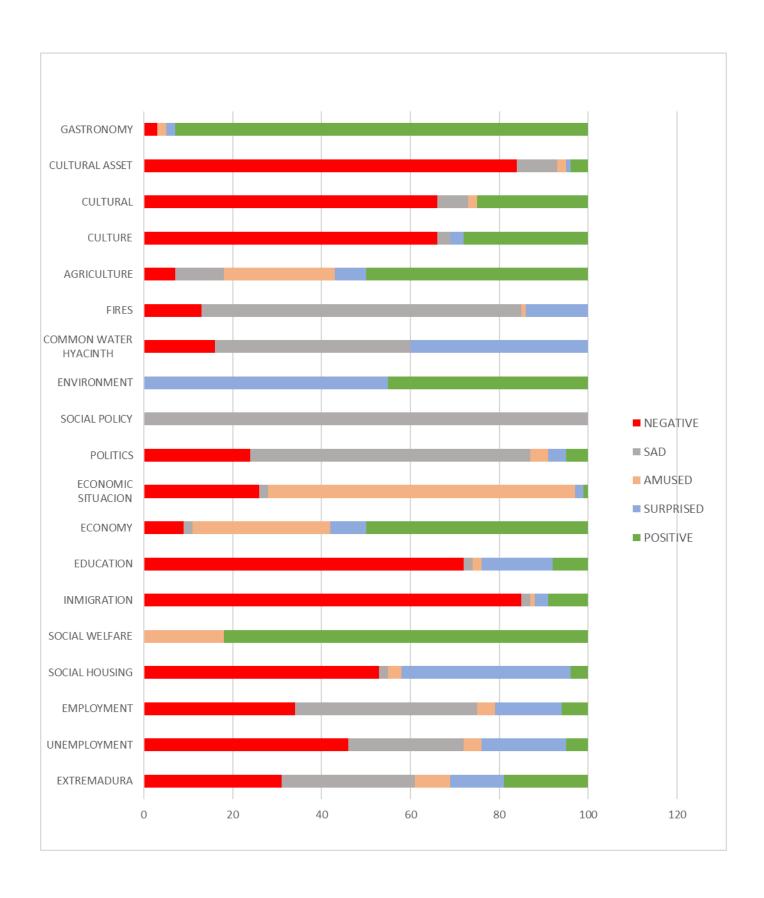


Table 8. Chain of interactions by keyword and sentiment

PILLAR	KEYWORD	INTERACTIONS
SOCIAL	UNEMPLOYMENT	EMPLOYMENT-ECONOMY-ECONOMIC SITUATION-POLITICS
	EMPLOYMENT	UNEMPLOYMENT-ECONOMY
	SOCIAL HOUSING	POLITICS
	SOCIAL WELFARE	POLITICS
	IMMIGRATION	ECONOMY-CULTURE
	EDUCATION	EMPLOYMENT-UNEMPLOYMENT-CULTURE-POLITICS
ECONOMY	ECONOMY	IMMIGRATION-EMPLOYMENT-UNEMPLOYMENT-GASTRONOMY-CULTURE-AGRICULTURE
	ECONOMIC	UNEMPLOYMENT-POLITICS
	SITUATION	
POLITICS	POLITICS	ECONOMIC SITUATION-SOCIAL WELFARE-SOCIAL HOUSING-UNEMPLOYMENT-ENVIRONMENT-SOCIAL POLICY
	SOCIAL POLICY	POLITICS
ENVIRONMENT	ENVIRONMENT	CULTURE-AGRICULTURE-FIRES-COMMON WATER HYACINTH
	COMMON	ENVIRONMENT
	WATER	
	HYACINTH	
	FIRES	ENVIRONMENT
	AGRICULTURE	ENVIRONMENT-ECONOMY
CULTURE	CULTURE	IMMIGRATION-ECONOMY-ENVIRONMENT-CULTURAL-CULTURAL ASSET-GASTRONOMY
	CULTURAL	CULTURE
	CULTURAL ASSET	CULTURE
	GASTRONOMY	CULTURE-ECONOMY

# **EXTREMADURA**

From the analysis, we conclude that there is a great closeness between the signs of identity that represent the particularities of the territory being studied. Thus, taking into account the volume of interactions by keywords, we summarize its profile as the following:

- Main topics of concern in Extremadura: Unemployment, with pessimistic sentiments towards it, and it being associated with Politics and Economy.
- It is closely followed by the negative perception of Immigration: a community that may see immigration as a threat, at least for their jobs as it is a region already suffering from high levels of unemployment.
- Education and Culture (including Cultural and Cultural Asset) would form a
  homogeneous and very active block in terms of interest. They are met with feelings of
  negativity: the citizens criticize the situation of these elements which, for them, are of
  great value. They associated Education and Culture with numerous topics and are
  aware of their universality.
- Economy (not including Unemployment and Employment) attracts some amount of interest, but is overtaken by a somewhat local issue: Forest Fires.
- Our study is based on a territory that finds numerous connections with Politics and other issues such as Unemployment, Social Housing (exclusively here), Social Welfare,

- Education, Economic Situation, and Social Policy. This gives Politics a high burden of responsibility from the citizens of this territory.
- We conclude by highlighting the negativity and feelings of sadness with which
  Extremadura is spoken of. Given that we assume the vast majority of
  publications/interactions to have been created in the territory, one can deduce the
  abysmal and somewhat pessimistic image that citizens themselves have regarding their
  region. Unsurprisingly it is negativity that predominates in the sentiments felt for most
  keywords.

#### 5. Discussion

This evidence allows us to identify the most distinctive features regarding the spatial dimension of the Autonomous Community: this region is characterized today by the main concern for Unemployment and, therefore, for Employment. Moreover, the population perceives upward Cultural possibilities and is very interested in Education—and the training it implies—as a vehicle for labor and, therefore, economic prosperity. The population also holds the political power largely responsible for important deficiencies (structural and conjunctural) and has a low level of awareness regarding the personal and private solutions that this entails. The territory's population visualizes it as an area that is not only negative but also sad—with there also being the nuance of pessimism that this may imply. Beyond being comprehensive and concerning, this finding is highly worrisome in this field; it may be even feeding the power of inertia in a way that the reason for such low SI in this region may be related to it, and also may be adding to the explanatory model of population complaisance as the people do nothing while the intensity of the social problem worsens.

The above creates a particularly strong burden when promoting participation—especially at the citizen level—in the identification and development of the solution to a social problem that afflicts them.

It is only by fully identifying and understanding the particular features of a region that the public authorities can also drive and build successful schemes to guide SI initiatives.

#### 6. Final considerations

In its analysis, the new SI paradigm, which aspires to develop and establish itself, offers the possibility to consider and include the influence of the humans and their community in all aspects of innovative initiatives in the social sphere of said territory. This not only allows for the design of models that include the variable Territory, but also for the application of it as a starting point for SI activity in that space: the characteristics that define and differentiate a space (the particularities of the place) should be explored beforehand as they act as a key indicator regarding the nature of the solutions responding to the social problems of the area. This is especially the case, as in our study, if the intention is to turn a place into a fertile territory for continuous and innovative future social projects.

In order to achieve this, a methodology of monitoring SN and media was implemented with the intention of searching for the characteristics of Extremadura, in order to later act in accordance with SI. The results not only define the character of the region in this area (our objective) but will also be extremely useful as a guideline for a subsequent phase that would be based on interviews and meetings with experts and users who are closely linked to SI in the region.

However, we must consider that it is somewhat reckless to develop a management plan regarding SI in a region without first checking whether there are territories with different particularities within it. A second stage of investigation carried out should identify whether there are different areas of spatial particularity within the region. If this were the case, and taking into account the local character of the social problems, a different strategic planning, and management scheme ought to be designed for each area, that is, segmenting the region into different SI territories.

In any case, the study of this territorial dimension in-depth and with due rigor would require multidisciplinary research teams given its multifaceted nature.

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