OVERVIEW
EUROPEAN CHANGEMAKER SUMMIT

SUMMARY

240 participants from **27 countries worldwide** (Armenia, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Chile, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, USA)

36 leading social entrepreneurs from **16 European countries** working on climate and biodiversity, future of work, (un)employment, democracy and protest, digital platforms, housing and urbanity, migrants and refugees, education and public health

20 workshops on **social innovations, system change** and **impact orientation**

INTRODUCTION

The welcome address given by Rainer Höll, Ashoka Europe, focused on how Europe is historically an important place for social innovation, with examples ranging from the kindergarten and the Red Cross to Linux and decentralized energy production. The purpose of the day was to think about social innovation in a pan-European way, to generate exciting conversations and potential partnerships and to trigger challenging exchanges that lead participants to hear and say things that they haven't before.

Natasha Walker, our moderator built upon this through helping us visualize all the regions in Europe represented in the room and to look left and right to connect with people thinking about social innovation and social change throughout Europe.

The first keynote speech given by Verena Pausder, Founder and CEO of Fox&Sheep focused on how entrepreneurs in Europe can learn from social entrepreneurs when thinking holistically about their ventures and their impact on all levels. She understands Europe as also digitally dynamic, with numerous initiatives emerging but also a pressing need for responsibility from the investors' side.

The second keynote speech was given by Caroline Casey, Ashoka Fellow and Founder of Binc. As an Irish social entrepreneur, she has benefited from the cultural diversity of Europe and is focusing on changing the understanding and narratives around disability: as most people do or will suffer from a disability at some point in their lives, disability is actually normality. Caroline is working with companies to expand their approach and horizons into how to be inclusive of a diversity of

people. During her speech she revealed her personal drive as the passion for freedom for all types of people everywhere.

The introductory session concluded with the social entrepreneurs coming on stage in groups and shortly introducing themselves, their work and the questions that they are facing and that they would like to discuss throughout the day. The topics addressed through their activity were climate and biodiversity, future of work and (un)employment, democracy, protest and digital platforms, housing and urbanity, migrants and refugees, changemaker education and public health.

INSPIRING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

The morning plenary session was followed by parallel workshops on social issues where the entrepreneurs could dive deeper into their work and connect with participants from other organizations focusing on the same issues.

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY I: NEW PARADIGMS OF LAND AND FOREST USE

The workshop was centered on new ways of thinking about and using land, while maintaining a focus on sustainability and climate protection. The social entrepreneurs in the workshop have particular approaches of addressing this issue:

- Andreas Eke from Germany works in Panama and has created an everlasting tropical forest that you can invest in without killing our climate.
- Maciej Podyma from Poland is empowering citizens to sow flower meadows all over our cities to recreate our urban biodiversity.
- Oriol Vilalta from Spain brings together firefighters and researchers to make us understand: not all wildfires are bad. Some are actually good because they preserve ecosystems.

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY II: CONSERVATION AS A KEY TO TACKLING SOCIAL ISSUES

The workshop gathered social entrepreneurs that connect environmental and climate solutions to social development:

- Federico Garcea from Italy has built a digital platform so that everybody can help a small farmer in Africa to plant a tree, supporting the farmer's existence on the way.
- Huriye Göncüoglu from Turkey fights for fisherwomen in a sexist industry so that they can better protect coastal ecosystems.
- Florin Stoican from Romania is creating national parks from scratch and proves that they pay for themselves because they let tourism expand.
- Wietse van der Werf from the Netherlands runs an innovative sea ranger service to protect maritime resources, and he does it entirely based on unemployed youth and veterans that he reintegrates in society.

Some of the take-aways from the conversations were that social entrepreneurs discovered that in order to attract companies and build business partnerships they need to connect their activity to the business model of companies and not simply promote conservation. More broadly, they need to resonate with peoples' passion in general and not only talk about the environment.

FUTURE OF WORK: RETHINKING CAREERS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE

The workshop focused on the way in which the understanding of work and of labor markets is changing nowadays. Starting from the increasing need for flexible and innovation work models, as well as for increasing interest in ensuring purpose and meaning of work, the social entrepreneurs developed the following solutions:

- Anna Kaiser and Jana Tepe from Germany have introduced online dating mechanisms to job sharing. You find a partner online, then you apply together for one job through their initiative Tandemploy.
- Mélanie Marcel from France turns researchers from universities and private companies into social innovators by helping them build social purpose right into their research projects. Through SoScience she is creating a bridge between public research institutions and social entrepreneurs.

The challenges that the social entrepreneurs are facing is reaching out to a variety of people that are not that comfortable with digital tools in the case of Tandemploy and in the case of SoScience better connecting research and CSR departments in companies for more relevant and purpose-oriented research.

(UN)EMPLOYMENT: MENTORING YOUTH AND CREATING PURPOSEFUL JOBS

Especially after the financial crisis of 2008 unemployment has become a pressing European issue that social entrepreneurs have been working on:

- Matthieu Le Grelle and Frederic Simonart from Belgium mobilize experienced professionals and retirees to serve as mentors for young refugees and help them into employment. They manage to do this with double the success rate of conventional approaches.
- Émilie Schmitt from France has created self-organized groups for unemployed people in several countries, turning them into facilitators of their own personal development. Her main goal is to reduce the negative consequences of unemployment which helps people in their private life, in their job search, as well as in their future job.

The discussion revealed some of the challenges that the social entrepreneurs face in expanding to different countries and communities: raising more funds, building up the structure and capacity to manage such programs, and maintaining the necessary control, quality and spirit of the programs.

DEMOCRACY & PROTEST: ENABLING EVERYONE TO TAKE ACTION

Civic engagement has also been a topic strongly represented among the social entrepreneurs at the Summit who work on increasing participation and support democratic structures and processes:

- Sarah Corbett from the UK has shown that a softer form of activism, called craftivism, can be more powerful than confrontational methods.
- Helena Puig Larrauri from Spain has democratized peace processes in conflict zones. She is not leaving them to governments alone but finds smart ways to ask people on the ground which kind of peace they really want.
- Paul Radu from Romania has built a wildly successful anti-corruption organization that has already uncovered billions of corrupted funds. He is now building a platform democratizing investigative journalism and making everyone an investigator.

- Jakub Wygnański from Poland has built the biggest hub and information center for civil society in his country. He is by many regarded as one of the protectors of Polish democracy in times of distress.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS: USING DATA TO CONNECT THE UNCONNECTED

The influence of technology in our personal and professional lives is continuously increasing and it becomes a powerful tool for social entrepreneurs to address societal issues:
- Zafer Elçik from Turkey has built the country's biggest digital education platform for families and children with autism.
- Radek Hábl from the Czech Republic has created the first interactive map of debt executions. He makes transparent to government and media how many families are in financial trouble and where, leading already to a legislative change.
- Nicolas Huchet from France, who had built his own bionic hand, is now building Humanlabs so that others can do the same and learn how to repair themselves.
- Mesut Keskin from Turkey has set up the country's first online scholarship platform where donors and students can meet directly, eliminating bureaucracy and nepotism.

The discussion during the workshop led to identifying the needs of the social entrepreneurs for taking the next steps in their ventures. Some aspects mentioned were partnerships development, social media competencies, developing appropriate scaling strategies and business models that don't always rely on fundraising, gaining access to the right data and tech tools. The conversation naturally developed also towards the personal needs of the social entrepreneurs, thus touching upon the topic of well-being more broadly. The social entrepreneurs mentioned building support structures, getting help to manage conflicts in the team, learning how to slow down, delegating, recognizing the importance of celebration and trust.

HOUSING & URBANITY: DESIGNING EMPOWERING SPACES OF DIGNITY

A large number of social problems incorporate also a space dimension that contributes to their complexity. The social entrepreneurs in this workshop focus on improving public and private spaces to respond to people's social needs:
- António Bello from Portugal has developed an early-detection system for housing poverty and has mobilizes thousands of volunteers to refurbish houses. Antonio understood that people don't want houses with pools, but what they need is a home that supports their life. The question emerging is why the government currently provides social housing but does not cater to social rehabilitation. The current social housing system focuses just on the physical house but does not view the beneficiaries as persons on the whole. This is what differentiates Antonio's approach from existing public solutions.
- Nicolas Detrie from France works with municipalities to build new types of public spaces that invite everybody to civic engagement. One of their biggest contributions is maintaining the trust of the land owners of the spaces they use by sticking to the contractual time period and reducing the mistrust amongst the owners and the beneficiaries or subtenants of these spaces for the period of the project.
- Carlene Firmin from UK redesigns environments so that children and youth are much better protected from abuse, for example in schools, public transport or sports clubs. The protection of children comes therefore from understating the potential of abuse of each different type of location and from creating increasingly collective and innovative efforts of preventing this abuse by engaging and training different stakeholders in the community.

- Eszter Harsányi from Hungary is redesigning playgrounds in cities so that they become truly accessible for disabled children. Apart from moving the recovery process of children from indoor physical therapy centers outdoors, Eszter is focusing on the development of the whole family and its reconnection with the community.
- Dagmar Kotzmuth from Austria is rethinking property management, for example by not just kicking out refugees when they cannot pay their rent but by finding out why and building a better financial arrangement for both sides. They are this working on changing the mindset of landlords towards tenants, they help create a bond of trust between them and encourage landlords to care more about the tenant than the house.

MIGRANTS & REFUGEES: EMPOWERING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Social entrepreneurs see people on the move as changemakers that need to be empowered, not as someone that needs help:
- Hugo Menino Aguiar from Portugal combines language learning for migrants and cultural exchange on an online platform, now identified as a best practice by the Portuguese government.
- Ebba Åkerman from Sweden brings together refugees and locals through home-cooked dinners all over Europe. Her initiative started from noticing and highlighting that migrants were welcome in the country but not in the Swedish society.
- Sonia Ben Ali from France works with the leaders of informal refugee communities in cities, which are usually unreachable for humanitarian aid, and turns them into the key drivers for improvement. Sonia realized that refugee self-help groups exist everywhere, but they are not recognized, registered or legal, so Urban Refugees was created to train these groups using a specific methodology.

All the entrepreneurs signaled that their biggest challenges at the moment are developing appropriate organizational structures that can also ensure some flexibility and the quality of the programs while scaling to different cultures, diversifying funding sources, and improving the evaluation tools for the programs.

The conclusion of the discussion was that in order to empower refugees, social entrepreneurs must take bigger steps and formalize the informal structures that emerge naturally in refugee communities, they must generate empathy, equally empower the host community and involve various stakeholders in the process.

CHANGEMAKER EDUCATION: PUTTING THE YOUNG GENERATION IN CHARGE

The focus of this workshop was on discussing ways of putting children in power and equipping them with the skills of directly generating change:
- Mine Ekinci from Turkey is reinventing village schools in rural areas by focusing on student empowerment.
- Rosie Linder from Sweden has built a web-based platform that helps parents and teachers train the emotional intelligence of children.
- Alexandra Machado from Portugal has developed a mentorship program that aims to end child marriage and child pregnancy in developing countries.
- Vernon Ringland from Northern Ireland has created a grantmaking organizations where young people decide themselves how much money is given to support local programs.

PUBLIC HEALTH: BREAKING SILOS TO PUT PATIENTS AT THE CENTER

The social entrepreneurs working on public health issues make use of technology and also engage a variety of stakeholders in their solutions:

- Oskar Blakstad from Norway has built a self-help web platform for mental diseases, where those suffering from depression, anxiety and sleeping disorders can treat themselves.
- Dorica Dan from Romania has built a unique information and reference center and the first-ever helpline for rare diseases in her country. Patients thus have free and equal access to timely diagnosed information and are provided with a tailored set of integrated services and therapies.
- Nolwenn Febvre from France is helping doctors and nurses start and join innovative health projects in their hospital, benefitting both the patients and their own wellbeing.

The challenges that the social entrepreneurs face are dealing with strong hierarchic systems such as hospitals, barriers in spreading ideas throughout Europe because of different health systems, and reaching people in rural areas who often don't get access to the healthcare system. The solutions that they find focus though on empowering people, putting the patient in the circle of stakeholders rather than the center, using bottom-up organizational models and promoting activities as treatment instead of drugs.

TRENDS AND TOOLS

SOCIAL INNOVATION TRENDS IN EUROPE

The afternoon of the Summit day was focused on support, on each participant giving and taking what is useful for them from the conversations developing.

Rainer Höll from Ashoka Germany started by providing an overview of the three main trends that he sees in Europe in regard to social entrepreneurship:

1. The **refugee challenge was a boost for European social entrepreneurs** through the urgency of the issue.
   - The crisis led to "refugee mainstreaming": existing NGOs/social initiatives in all fields (i.e. education, health, unemployment) adapted their programs for refugees. Additionally, big welfare organizations in all sectors (state, companies, etc.) were suddenly interested in social entrepreneurs because they needed new solutions for the crisis. The situation became more about changing a whole system together through open sourcing, collaboration, alliances, and coordinating with others who work towards the same goals.
   - The audience also engaged by signaling coming issues that are going to be of importance in Europe and that can trigger similar collaboration patterns: democracy with its populist challenges and polarization within civil society, social inequality, climate change, etc.
2. There is an increasing move in the field **from heropreneurship to systems entrepreneurship.**
   - The heropreneur is understood as a person who starts an organization and who overemphasizes their role as founder, overshadowing teams, collective impact, and building upon the ideas of others. There is increasing awareness that this

leadership model is not the most effective or sustainable in the long-run for organizations to reach their potential.

3. There is increased awareness of the **need for wellbeing and personal sustainability**.
   - People working in social entrepreneurship need personal sustainability and they need to learn to ask for help. It is time to talk more and more openly about mental health in this field.

Continuing from the trends at European level, Rainer introduced the five important dimensions in social entrepreneurship that Ashoka is working on:

1. Impact Orientation: Empowered to plan and act impact oriented
2. System change: Equipped to capture impact change
3. Scaling: Aware about how to scale impact
4. New leadership: Inspired to lead collectively
5. Wellbeing: Aware about the importance of wellbeing

The first two points were also the focus of the expert workshops conducted in the afternoon.

EXPERT WORKSHOPS ON METHODS AND KNOW-HOW

 SYSTEM CHANGE

The workshops on the topic of systems change has introduced the Ashoka approach to systems change. The social entrepreneurs need to choose specific goals to achieve in a lifetime. They can't change the whole world, but they can change specific parts within the system. For this, an understanding of resources, roles, relations, rules and results in the system are essential.

The social entrepreneurs should focus on a useful model of generating change, rather than on a "correct" model, they should look at the system, rather than only their own idea and they should choose the smallest range to be effective, rather than chasing broad and abstract intentions.

The social entrepreneurs were introduced to the iceberg model that differentiates between:
- Symptoms (which are the social problems, for instance homelessness, poverty, etc.)
- Systems and Patterns (which are the structural issues that are actually causing those problems)
- Mindsets (which raise the question of how to you create change from a coordinated mental/cultural model)

Starting from the deep understanding of these elements, the social entrepreneurs should answer the following two questions when working on a systemic change:
- What is my vision/goal on a system level?
- What is the contribution of my organization?

IMPACT ORIENTATION

The aim of these workshops was to present the impact model methodology and to present impact orientation as an overall communication tool, planning tool, and learning model.

The impact model is at the center of Ashoka's work. There is a perceived conflict between the focus on the business model in social entrepreneurship and the focus on impact. However, this is a continuous negotiation, it is not always one or the other. The idea is to build market-based income models and combining them with impact-oriented elements.

The expertise of Ashoka is to focus on the impact model and refine it *before* there is something to measure, it should be at the core of the venture from the beginning. The development of an enterprise is adjusted according to what the enterprise wants to achieve. Hence, the impact model and vision come before the business model. In practice, social entrepreneurs use the impact reporting as a communication tool. Ultimately, having a clear impact orientation should also prevent entrepreneurs from burnout, because they keep the purpose alive and use it as a guiding "North star".

The impact model focuses on:
- Problem (& causes)
- Target Groups
- Output (Activities)
- Outcome
- Vision

The challenges in implementing this model are related to quality vs. quantity (in which greater numbers don't necessarily mean greater quality and impact in the field), as well as to accuracy of results reported (organizations are twisting their numbers or losing sight of their actual impact because it's expected of them to give good impact numbers to donors, the public, etc.)

The experience of participants in the workshop was that it is difficult to differentiate between impact and outcomes, as well as between intended and non-intended outcomes. The level at which you define the problem also strongly influences the use of the tool.

ASHOKA WISHES TO THANK ALL THE PARTNERS OF THE EUROPEAN CHANGEMAKER SUMMIT!

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accenture   **Boehringer Ingelheim**   **Correos**   **Deloitte.**

HANIEL Stiftung

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