

*Anja URŠIČ****EMPLOYMENT IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES WITHIN THE TYPOLOGY OF EMPLOYMENT MODELS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Abstract. On the basis of a systematic review of the literature, this article addresses the issue of employment of people with disabilities and analyzes current trends in disability employment to classify employment in social enterprises in the typology of employment models for people with disabilities. For the purpose of classification, the article also identifies individual models of disability which coincide with the characteristics of employment in social enterprises. The upgraded typology is the main contribution of the article; it could serve as an important classification tool for individual approaches to this issue, and thus help to develop appropriate policies for the employment of people with disabilities through a comparative analysis of individual countries.

Keywords: *employment, typology of employment models, people with disabilities, social enterprises, work-integration social enterprises, models of disability*

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Introduction

In modern society, employment is an indispensable element of active participation in various spheres of society, as paid work is an important category ensuring an individual's well-being and a certain level of social security (Filipovič Hrast and Rakar, 2019). Many authors note that having a job has positive effects on an individual's health and psychological state, and decisively contributes to a sense of fulfilment and positive mental health (van der Noord et al., 2013; Vargas Jimenez and Perez Ramos, 2019). Kroflič and Uršič (1999) point out that a job is in fact the main driver of economic integration, which is key to the participation of people with disabilities in all areas of social life. However, despite a job being such an essential factor, many individuals in society suffer long-term exclusion from the labour market. These include people with disabilities who, despite the implementation

* *Anja Uršič, PhD Student, Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme The Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.*

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of numerous international and national laws and regulations over the past few decades, still face a high level of unemployment (van der Zwaan and de Beer, 2021). According to the latest EU-SILC¹ data, the unemployment rate of people with disabilities aged 20–64 in the EU is 18.6%, which is considerably higher than the 8.8% unemployment rate of people without disabilities. The proportion of people with disabilities active in the labour market (both employed and unemployed) in the EU is about 62.4%, compared to 82.2% of those without disabilities (European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 2021). The disparity between these two categories of labour market participants in Europe, i.e. the disability employment gap, ranges between 10–20% on average. The issue of high unemployment of people with disabilities reveals a gap between the *de jure* and *de facto* implementation of policies concerning the employment of people with disabilities (ibid.).

The range of disability employment policies in Europe and globally shows a variety of approaches, such as sheltered, supported and customized employment, which enable individuals with disabilities to integrate into the labour market through various formally established arrangements. Among the contemporary trends of disability employment, many authors highlight employment in social enterprises, which significantly contribute to reducing unemployment among people with disabilities within the framework of social action and (re)integration of individuals into the labour market (Defourny et al., 2014; Gottlieb et al., 2010).

With an intersectional approach (i.e. studies on disability and employment policies) and a systematic review of the existing literature on employment of people with disabilities, we will try to answer the central research question: whether and how the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities reflects current employment trends that can be identified in disability employment. As a key methodological tool, we will use the typology of employment models which encompasses three different employment models for people with disabilities (sheltered, supported and customized). It is a theoretical framework based on different categories of conceptualizing disability, which significantly contributes to a more comprehensive treatment of the issue of employment of people with disabilities (Gottlieb et al., 2010).

The article is divided into three main parts. In the first part, we present the conceptual differences between the sheltered, supported and customized employment models, based on the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities. We also take into account the different

¹ Compared to the LFS (Labour Force Survey) used by Eurostat, the EU-SILC survey includes more detailed determinants such as status, degree of disability, etc.

categories of perceiving disability and discuss them in more detail in order to further address the issue of employment of people with disabilities. The second, central part focuses on the validation of the established typology of employment models for people with disabilities; based on the literature review, we try to determine whether the existing typology reflects the current trends in employment of people with disabilities, especially with regard to social enterprises. In conclusion, we summarize the key findings and present the article's contribution to the studied scientific field and future research.

Employment models for people with disabilities

One of the major tasks of a welfare state is to promote the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market through formally established social policy programmes and various measures and regulations (Filipovič Hrast and Rakar, 2019). Three categories of interventions in the labour market can be distinguished (Uršič and Drobnič, 1995). First, interventions that affect employers via binding and procedural regulations. Employment of people with disabilities under a quota system is a characteristic example of this type of intervention. Second, interventions via counterbalances, which improve the situation of people with disabilities in the open labour market through the transfer of funds. This category includes workplace and working environment adaptations, wage subsidies, and vocational and employment rehabilitation measures. The third and last form of state interventions are substitutions, which include such measures as creating special jobs in the public sector or in social enterprises (*ibid.*). It is crucial to try to understand the approaches to the employment of people with disabilities not only in terms of individual interventions, but also from a more holistic perspective. This can be achieved with the help of the typology of employment models for people with disabilities (Gottlieb et al., 2010). The typology, which can currently be found mainly in the American literature on the topic, is based on previous models of segregation and integration, developed by Kregel and Dean in 2002. It is a basic classification, where the model of segregation represents settings where only people with disabilities are employed, whereas the model of integration refers to a mixed environment of employees largely without disabilities (Kregel and Dean, 2002). These two models were developed on the basis of the studied characteristics and employment outcome in the context of sheltered and supported employment, with the authors mainly focusing on an analysis of long-term earnings of people with disabilities included in the employment settings discussed (*ibid.*).

The final outcomes of employment approaches are strongly influenced by individual conceptual models of disability, which also underlie the

typology of employment models for people with disabilities. It is especially important to know and understand the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities when discussing actors in the field of employment, such as employers, service providers and policymakers. These actors, through their actions and perceptions of disability, can have a decisive influence on the improvement or deterioration of the situation of people with disabilities in the labour market (Gottlieb et al., 2010). Models of disability as different perceptions of disability serve as an important theoretical and conceptual tool to define a certain physical or psychological impairment, and play a decisive role in the design of strategies introduced by state institutions and society in order to address the needs of people with disabilities (Shapiro, 1994). To begin with, we examine individual employment models for people with disabilities, referring in more detail to different conceptualizations of disability, which correlate with the characteristics of these employment models for people with disabilities.

The sheltered employment model

The sheltered employment model for people with disabilities is characterized by a safe and protected work environment, with work activities adapted to the needs and abilities of a person with disabilities who is not employable in the open labour market (Kregel and Dean, 2002). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed four models of sheltered employment based on a study of sheltered employment in twenty countries, reflecting the integral role of the employing organizations (Visier, 1998). The first is the therapeutic model of employment, mainly applied in organizations that employ people with a mental disability. The primary task of these organizations is the protection of their protégés, who do not have concluded employment contracts and do not receive remuneration for their work. The second, intermediate model, includes institutions that, in addition to the therapeutic approach, also provide services aimed at regular employment. As a more employment-oriented approach, this model is characterized by contractually regulated employment relationships on the basis of which individuals receive remuneration. The third, mixed (dual) model, is found in countries where two or more types of sheltered employment organizations coexist. Some may be oriented towards regular employment, while others specialize only in the therapeutic aspect. The fourth, wage employment model, is essentially a regular job, tailored to the individual. It involves a contract of employment and productive work for which the individual receives a wage (ibid.). Kregel and Dean (2002) also distinguish two subtypes of sheltered employment: transitional employment and extended employment. In transitional employment people with disabilities acquire

new skills and competences to become competitive in the open labour market, whereas extended employment represents permanent and long-term segregated programmes, in which individuals apply their previously acquired skills (ibid.).

Despite the organizational diversity of sheltered employment, Gottlieb et al. (2010) identify vocational rehabilitation programmes as typical of the sheltered employment model, highlighting a very low level of social inclusion, which corresponds to the high level of segregation of people with disabilities in organizations where they are mostly separated from employees without disabilities. The authors further explain that the sheltered employment model is based on the medical model of disability, which has prevailed for many centuries in the formulation of policies concerning people with disabilities (Gottlieb et al., 2010; Myhill and Blanck, 2009). The main assumption of the medical model is that disability is the result of physical and/or mental impairments and limitations of the individual, and that the social environment has no impact on the individual's experience with disability (Shapiro, 1994). Health services and disability policies designed on the basis of the medical model of disability are therefore exclusively focused on the physical impairments of individuals (ibid.). The authors claim that due to such a perception of disability, vocational rehabilitation is based on the medical model of disability and provided as a form of "treatment". Perceptions stemming from the assumptions of the medical model of disability, which puts an emphasis on treatment and care, fuel discrimination and stigma: people with disabilities are viewed as incapable of performing work, which justifies their exclusion from the labour market (Myhill and Blanck, 2009; Blanck, 2008).

The supported employment model

By contrast, the model of supported employment is based on the social model of disability, which perceives disability as a social construct and the product of barriers in society (Blanck et al., 2009; Gottlieb et al., 2010). The concept of supported employment² is defined as employment in a regular job, where a person with disabilities is offered certain professional and technical support due to physical, mental, sensory, cognitive or hidden issues and obstacles (Rusch and Hughes, 1989). Similarly, Drobnič (2002) defines supported employment as a way of providing a job on the regular market to individuals even with severe forms of disability, with the integral element

² *Supported employment has been reconceptualized over time. Originally, supported employment concerned training and work with people with mental disorders who were placed in segregated institutions (Rusch and Hughes, 1989).*

of assistance at work playing an important role. According to Rusch and Hughes (1989), supported employment is paid employment for people with disabilities for whom employment in a regular job with a minimum or higher salary is not possible. People with disabilities acquire, with the help of a recruitment professional, the specific knowledge and skills necessary for the effective performance of their work. The support provided by the recruitment professional may include various training courses, skills acquisition and assistance in facilitating integration into the work environment. The primary purpose of supported employment is therefore to ensure social integration for people with disabilities and to reduce their dependence on social transfers (ibid.). The elimination of physical and behavioural barriers in the environment assumed by the social model of disability would therefore lead to better social integration into the work environment and into society in general (Gottlieb et al., 2010). Numerous studies have shown that the social model of disability has had positive effects on the employment of people with disabilities in those countries where the competitive and customized employment model prevails (ibid.). These findings and a focus on the social model of disability allow for a change in the negative attitude of employers towards the employment of people with disabilities, contributing to a more inclusive working environment (Shapiro, 1994).

The customized employment model

The customized employment model, also called competitive integration employment, is a strategy which, taking into account the individual's potentials and competences, enables people with disabilities to find competitive employment (Riesen et al., 2015). The initial idea of the customized employment model emphasized the importance of individualizing the employer-employee relationship and striving to meet the needs of both parties. The definition of this model is also based on the process of individual determination of the potentials, needs and interests of people with disabilities. It is designed to match the specific capabilities of people with disabilities and the business needs of the employers (ibid.). Specific strategies for the implementation of integration employment have been devised (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2014), including:

1. Job exploration by the individual and finding a specific job;
2. Establishing a relationship with the employer in order to facilitate the adaptation of the workplace and to obtain a description of the required competences based on the current and unmet needs of the employer;
3. Workplace arrangements, developing a set of job duties, a work schedule and job arrangement, and the specifics of supervision including performance evaluation methods;

4. Representation by a professional chosen by the individual, or self-representation of the individual in the employee-employer relationship;
5. Provision of appropriate services and support on the job.

In addition to the regulatory framework governing such employment, it is important that modern discourse also increasingly emphasizes that integration employment should become the first employment option for people with disabilities, including those with severe forms (Hoff, 2013). Many authors highlight the role of the customized employment model in the transition of young people from the education system to the labour market, with strategies aimed primarily at designing individualized schemes for the employment of people with disabilities (Brown, 2009; Condon and Callahan, 2008; Certo and Luecking, 2006). In this context, it is crucial for the effective implementation of the customized employment model that the relationship between the educational or vocational institutions and employers is established at an early stage, while people with disabilities are pursuing their educational path (Certo and Luecking, 2006). Research has shown that informed choice based on the career options examined has a positive impact on the transition from segregated employment programmes to integrated programmes where people with disabilities are fully included (Inge and Targett, 2008).

In terms of its implementation in practice, two subtypes of the customized employment model can be distinguished: 'job carving' and 'job crafting' (European Commission, 2019). These concepts are not often found in literature; the customized employment model is still being developed in Europe, and there are not many examples of its actual implementation (*ibid.*). Griffin and Targett (2001) define 'job carving' as the process of dividing tasks into components of the individual work duties assigned, so that people with disabilities can successfully accomplish them. It is an effective top-down approach of adapting the job for people with disabilities (Griffin et al., 2007). In contrast, the bottom-up approach of 'job crafting' is a process where the employees themselves control the design of their work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). They redefine and structure their work tasks and the social relationships these entail through cognitive (interpreting work in a meaningful manner) and physical (modifying the scope, type, and number of work tasks) changes. The approach therefore implies the individuals' revision of the importance of their work and their working identity, based on motivation and competences (*ibid.*).

According to Petasis (2019) the customized model of employment of people with disabilities is characterized by an understanding of disability that incorporates the previous models of disability typical of the sheltered and supportive employment models. This biopsychosocial model

of disability addresses disability through an interconnection of physical (gender, age), psychological (behaviour), and social (socio-cultural environment) factors that either encourage or hinder people with disabilities (Bath et al., 2014; Penney, 2013). Shakespeare et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of applying this integrated disability model in research, as it allows the identification of internal (personal) and external (social) factors – the latter including, in particular, the working environment. The biopsychosocial model offers a concept of disability that allows the design and implementation of inclusive policies and infrastructure in the field of employment of people with disabilities (ibid.). However, it being a relatively new model, its positive effects on the employment of people with disabilities are yet to be properly evaluated (Petasis, 2019).

Employment of people with disabilities in social enterprises

Social entrepreneurship in Europe and the wider international arena features entities active in the field of employment of people with disabilities. These social enterprises come in a wide range of organizational forms, and their primary purpose is to act for the benefit of the community and society (Defourny et al., 2014). Parker Harris et al. (2014) emphasized that the study of the role of social enterprises in the context of disability studies is of paramount importance for the intersectional approach to research, as it offers new and deeper insights into the problem of disability employment. Chui et al. (2021) outlined three primary reasons for the intersectional study of the role of social enterprises. Firstly, because employment is regarded as the key mechanism in the social integration of individuals from disadvantaged groups, and because the results of numerous surveys demonstrate a positive correlation between paid work and life satisfaction of people with disabilities. Secondly, despite the momentum gained by social enterprises that employ people with disabilities, there is still a shortage of empirical data in this area of research. As the third reason, the authors mention the limited number of studies with a comprehensive approach to the research into social enterprises that focus on the institutional context and its impact (ibid.). The literature review also shows that employment within social enterprises has not yet been included in the typology of employment models for people with disabilities (see also Gottlieb et al., 2010). Therefore, for the central purpose of this article, i.e. the categorization of employment in social enterprises, let us first look at the definitions of social enterprises and their role in the participation and integration of people with disabilities in the labour market. In order for the study of the role of social enterprises and their classification to match the theoretical framework of the existing typology, we will address the various perceptions of disability, which expressly

or implicitly influence the approach towards the employment of people with disabilities in social enterprises. A comprehensive conceptual and theoretical upgrade of the typology of the employment models for people with disabilities and the analytical criteria for classification (i.e. the employment approach and the model of disability) is presented in the Figure 1.

Figure 1: SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TYPOLOGY OF EMPLOYMENT MODELS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Source: Author's compilation.

Definition of social enterprises and their institutionalization

The European Research Network EMES defines social enterprises on the basis of four economic and five social criteria. The economic criteria are: a continuous activity producing goods and/or providing services; a high degree of autonomy; a significant level of economic risk; and a minimum required number of salaried workers. The social criteria are: the primary aim of the enterprise is to benefit the community; it is launched as a citizens' initiative; it has a participatory nature; its decision-making power is not based on capital ownership; and it has a limited profit distribution (Defourny and

Nyssens, 2014). Tortia (2010) notes that social enterprises are characterized by non-profit activities that support new distribution and allocation modalities and have a significant impact on social prosperity, as production and employment increase through this new innovative organizational form, which contributes to the reduction of poverty and marginality in society. Mustafa et al. (2020) state that finding solutions to pressing social issues is central to the innovative functioning of social enterprises.

Recent research has shown that the European model of social enterprises is characterized by a wide range of activities carried out to integrate individuals from vulnerable groups into the labour market (Defourny et al., 2014; Mustafa et al., 2020). The role of social enterprises as we know it today has been determined by a number of factors, most notably the decades-long structural unemployment of certain groups of individuals, including people with disabilities. The limitations of the traditional active public employment policies and the need to formulate new activation and innovation policies to improve integration into the labour market and other areas of social life have also contributed to labour integration becoming the predominant role of social enterprises (Nyssens, 2014). Defourny et al. (2014) found that it was the gradual institutionalization³ of social enterprises in the 1980s that led to the formulation of public policies addressing the problem of unemployment and exclusion from the labour market. Whereas passive public policies merely provide income security for individuals, active public policies seek to address certain labour market dysfunctions through integration (ibid.). Various training programmes, employment rehabilitation and other schemes that encourage people with disabilities to integrate into the labour market can be highlighted as the main mechanisms of integration (Lemaître, 2009). The establishment of these schemes significantly contributed to the legitimization of work-integration social enterprises (WISEs) as entities with the performative role of integrating individuals from vulnerable groups into the labour market. Their primary objective is to help low-skilled individuals who face unemployment and are at risk of permanent exclusion from the labour market (Nyssens, 2014). Through various activities and enhancing labour productivity, WISEs strive to integrate these individuals into the labour market and society in general (ibid.). Across many European countries, the development of special public schemes brought about a reconceptualization of social enterprises, which are now viewed at a systemic level as organizations for creating employment initiatives and opportunities (Borzaga and Santuari, 1998; Defourny et al., 2014). Nyssens

³ *The first initiatives were based on social activism, independent from the state domain. The initiatives were designed and managed by members of civil society, social workers, trade unionists, people with disabilities, etc.*

(2006) confirms that WISEs are increasingly recognized as an instrument or tool for the implementation of active public employment policies in the labour market.

The role of social enterprises in the employment of people with disabilities

Increasingly, more social enterprises are working to co-create general public benefit for individuals who are often shunted to the margins of society. This can be defined as creating added social value (Mustaffa et al., 2020). By creating employment opportunities, social enterprises pursue their goal of improving the living standards of people with disabilities (Lysaght et al., 2018). Social enterprises contribute greatly to generating social value, as they noticeably reduce costs for society through efforts to address social needs and problems in ways that go beyond the general benefits of market activity (Phills et al., 2008). Mustaffa et al. (2020) noted that the approach taken by social enterprises to address the problem of unemployment among individuals from disadvantaged groups persistently transforms the landscape of people with disabilities.

In Europe, WISEs can be categorized into four main groups in terms of integration approach (Nyssens, 2014). The first group includes WISEs that employ people with disabilities on the basis of long-term subsidies from the state. Such enterprises are present in most European countries, and their main role (most often in the form of sheltered employment) is to compensate for the gap between the conventional labour market and the actual capacities of people with disabilities. The second group includes WISEs that enable the creation of jobs based on self-financing. At the initial stage of employment, enterprises are often provided with subsidies, which are then phased out over time. In this case, the employment of a person with a disability depends to a large extent on the profitability of the enterprise and its marketing and commercial channels. The third group are enterprises whose main role is the resocialization of individuals through engagement in various productive activities. The work offered by these WISEs to people with disabilities is partly informal, which means that such employment is not regulated by an employment contract. Volunteerism is one of the major components in this case, due to limited market resources. The largest number of WISEs in Europe belong to the fourth group; their aim is to provide transitional employment for people with disabilities. These enterprises provide training and skill development workshops, with a view to integrating individuals into the conventional labour market (ibid.).

The opportunities offered by WISEs to people with disabilities allow them to create both social and economic value. In addition to identifying

the social challenges of people with disabilities, social enterprises also promote their self-employment, the development of entrepreneurship, and innovative business ideas (Mustaffa et al., 2020). Discussing the role of social enterprises in the employment of people with disabilities, special mention must be made of the opportunities for self-employment and carving out a market niche. As it is of the utmost importance for social entrepreneurs to understand particular social needs and address them, people with disabilities become a great asset as social entrepreneurs due to their personal insight and involvement in the issues and clear understanding of the specific needs of disadvantaged individuals (Zahra, 2009). Although the literature on entrepreneurship still tends to uphold ableism by favouring people without disabilities, numerous studies have shown that entrepreneurship is a feasible and beneficial employment option for people with disabilities (Parker Harris et al., 2014). It is important to ensure that people with disabilities who wish to pursue any form of entrepreneurship have equal access to information, resources and services, and are not deprived in any way in the implementation of their activities. The integration of people with disabilities through entrepreneurship is not only subject to the issue of equal access, but is also affected by political, financial and socio-cultural obstacles. The first two include significant asset limitations and financial disincentives due to a lack of sufficient work history, risks involving healthcare benefits, and the reduction of social security by the welfare state. The latter include stigma and stereotypes, discriminatory practices, and other negative attitudes towards people with disabilities (ibid.). Governments and educational institutions must also ensure non-discriminatory integration of people with disabilities in the field of entrepreneurship by encouraging and promoting measures for inclusion and participation (Mustaffa et al., 2020; Parker Harris et al., 2014). Sefotho (2017) introduced the term 'hephapreneurship'⁴ in the field of entrepreneurship for people with disabilities; this is a model that aims to fill the sustainable development gap within the multi-sectoral context of career guidance for people with disability. Sefotho interprets it as a process of fostering a positive and meaningful existence of people with disabilities in the field of entrepreneurship, where people of different abilities operate. This model is founded on the vision that every individual, disadvantaged or underprivileged, should have a career choice, which would mean transformative social justice for one and all (ibid.).

Another important role of WISEs, in addition to self-employment and vocational guidance, is the conceptualization of employability. Barandica

⁴ A neology in the field of disability, following the philosophy of existentialism with a social constructivist and transformative paradigm, with the concept of assistance for people with disabilities brought to the fore (Sefotho, 2017).

et al. (2018) confirmed that the employment of people with disabilities within social enterprises has contributed to broadening the understanding of employability as a concept of balance between personal and social responsibility, based on the development of competences and an accessible environment. It is therefore a concept of employability that encompasses both a personal and a contextual dimension, which is reflected in WISEs in the individual's internalization of the social processes (development of social responsibility) that take place in the work environment. By improving employability and the accessibility of the market, WISEs enable people with disabilities to build a long-term career path. These enterprises not only improve employability, but also make the recruitment process itself more accessible to people with disabilities, who often face limited opportunities in the open labour market (in psychological terms, it constitutes a corrective experience). In this way WISEs show that employment can be inclusive and accessible, which is what the conventional labour market should strive towards (ibid.). In summary, WISEs are pivotal in designing social support for individuals, and their role as a mediator is of the utmost importance, as they enable people with disabilities to enter the labour market through productive activities. The key to this process is the interaction between the individual (with a certain level of employability) and WISEs (within a specific socio-economic context) which create training programmes and improve the individual's employability (Barandica et al., 2018).

Despite the many significant contributions of social enterprises in the field of disability employment, some authors persistently point to the complexity of measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of these entities. Chiaf and Giacomini (2009) point out that the performance evaluation of social enterprises requires an analysis of parameters completely different from those applied to profit-oriented enterprises. It is often difficult or even altogether impossible to measure the outcomes of WISEs due to their complexity – it means assessing their effectiveness in solving pressing social issues (ibid.). However, recent research shows positive effects mainly on the lives of individuals from vulnerable groups (Ho and Chan, 2010). Some social enterprises measure their social impact on the basis of the number of employed individuals from vulnerable groups, but it is important to keep in mind that many effects go beyond these numerical records (Darby and Jenkins, 2006). Employment through WISEs helps individuals to improve their income security, to acquire new skills and to strengthen their socio-cultural capacities altogether (Pättiniemi, 2004). Ho and Chan (2010) had similar findings, and pointed out the important role of WISEs in poverty alleviation. By employing people with disabilities, they contribute to a paradigmatic shift from a welfare to a workfare state, as also mentioned by Kopač (2005) and Filipovič Hrast and Rakar (2019). In this context, employment

is perceived as a fundamental mechanism for preventing social exclusion, with a tendency towards re-decommodification. The integration of people with disabilities into the labour market further contributes to the reduction of stigma and prejudice on the part of the public. Such patterns of action of social enterprises implicitly affirm the capacities and productivity of people with disabilities as employees and active members of society in general (Ho and Chan, 2010). The positive affirmation is further facilitated by the relationships established between employed people with disabilities and their clients, who recognize their efforts and skills. In this context, the role of WISEs is mainly reflected in the promotion of social integration and the cultivation of social support. Moreover, WISEs are key players in the constitutive construction of social capital, as they enable their employees to expand their social networks and to gain social trust, which fosters cooperation for mutual benefit. Social empowerment allows people with disabilities to recognize their potential and join the process of (re)integration (ibid.).

Placing social enterprises in the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities

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Based on the study of the role of social enterprises in the employment of people with disabilities, we conclude that this is an important employment trend that can be identified within the framework of modern approaches to disability employment. Through their various roles, most notably work integration, social enterprises contribute to reducing unemployment among people with disabilities and create new employment opportunities for these individuals. We believe that this *de facto* employment approach should be incorporated into the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities. Social enterprises, especially WISEs have become an indispensable element in the range of employment policies, and an important instrument for the implementation of active public employment policies in the labour market. Since the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities is based on the concepts of disability, we have also tried to determine which concept or perception of disability is most reflected in the characteristics of this employment approach.

As presented in the previous chapter, employment in social enterprises takes various forms, which are in fact often hybrid rather than true to type. The isomorphism of these social enterprises makes it difficult to uniquely identify the corresponding model of disability, as we can do for the sheltered, supported and customized employment models (Gottlieb et al., 2010). We proceeded by establishing the correlation between employment in social enterprises and the model of disability pragmatically and gradually. In the first stage, we identified two sub-categories of employment in social

enterprises, and in the second stage, we applied the typology of employment models for people with disabilities to try and determine which concepts/models of disability match these sub-categories.

In the European area, therapeutic and transitional employment in social enterprises is predominant, correlating with the characteristics of the sheltered and supported employment models (Gottlieb et al., 2010; Nysens, 2014). We speak of sheltered employment in social enterprises if employees with disabilities are separated from those without disabilities (Kregel and Dean, 2002). The high degree of segregation of employees with disabilities is based on the medical model of disability, where disability is perceived as abnormal and deviant, and as such those with disabilities are isolated and excluded from the open labour market and regular employment (Myhill and Blanck, 2009). Such sheltered employment views people with disabilities through the prism of physical impairments, and implies that they are unfit for inclusion into the regular working environment. As a result, the degree of their integration is very low, whereas the degree of their institutionalization and social exclusion is very high. This contributes to more stigmatization and discrimination in the broader social environment (Gottlieb et al., 2010). People with disabilities employed in social enterprises through sheltered employment receive low wages for their work, which is also consistent with the medical model of disability as per the typology of employment models for people with disabilities (ibid.). The examination of the characteristics of sheltered employment in social enterprises allows us to conclude that the first sub-category of employment does not correlate with the social or biopsychosocial models of disability, which are underpinned by a concept of disability that is contrary to that of the medical model.

The postulate of the social model of disability, which focuses on the understanding of disability as a social construct, goes beyond the individual's physical or mental limitations and, according to the typology of employment models for people with disabilities, is inherently typical of the second sub-category of supported employment in social enterprises. An inclusive work environment that does not segregate people with disabilities means a higher level of integration and social participation than sheltered employment in social enterprises (Gottlieb et al., 2010). Since social enterprises provide such employment as a bridge to regular open-market employment, all training programmes and work tasks are focused on supporting and assisting the individual, who will eventually move on from this employment scheme. Accordingly, the concept of disability here is more affirmative and the responsibility for promoting the employment of people with disabilities does not lie with the disadvantaged individuals themselves, but is shared by society as a whole (Petasis, 2019). In fact, it is society that either encourages or prevents the employment of people with disabilities.

Social enterprises with the above perception of disability offer supported employment to people with disabilities, creating social value. They address unemployment and other pressing social issues in the field of disability in ways that go beyond the general benefits of market activity. We find that the biopsychosocial model of disability does not correspond to the characteristics of this approach to employment, as the biopsychosocial model involves a personalized approach to employing people with disabilities, which we have not identified in the literature studied.

The incorporation of employment in social enterprises in the existing tripartite typology of employment models for people with disabilities is schematically shown in Table 1.

Table 1: UPDATED TYPOLOGY OF EMPLOYMENT MODELS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Employment model	Model of disability	Characteristics
Sheltered model	Medical model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of segregation and institutionalization • Subminimum wages • High degree of social exclusion and stigmatization
Supported model	Social model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment in a regular work environment • High level of integration and social inclusion • Competitive wage subsidy • Professional and technical support (adaptation of the workplace) • Low level of stigmatization
Employment in social enterprises	Medical model (sheltered employment subcategory)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more therapy-oriented model • Low wages • High level of segregation and institutionalization • High level of social exclusion • Contributes to stigmatization
	Social model (supported employment subcategory)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more transition-oriented model • High level of integration and social inclusion • Inclusive work environment and support • Low level of stigmatization
Customized model	Biopsychosocial model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological factors • Psychological factors • Social factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of integration • Competitive wages • Focus on individuals • Adapted workplace • Low level of social exclusion and stigmatization

Source: Author, and adapted from Gottlieb et al. (2010).

The employment of people with disabilities in social enterprises is a special and innovative form of employment, which is an inherent part of the efforts of social enterprises to address the social challenges and issues faced by people with disabilities. The (re)integration aspect, based on the legal and institutional frameworks, further contributes to the identification of employment in social enterprises as a new employment model, which,

however, does share some characteristics with the sheltered and supported employment models. Whereas sheltered and supported employment are generally perceived as an alternative to regular employment, social enterprises, especially those with a transitional approach, seek to integrate people with disabilities into the competitive and open labour market. Due to these specifics, we *a priori* place the model of employment in social enterprises within the typology of employment models for people with disabilities as an independent model of employment, rather than a subcategory of the partially sheltered or supported employment models.

Conclusion

The employment of people with disabilities remains a pressing issue, addressed by welfare states in the social policy segment through various formally established employment mechanisms. Based on an analysis of current trends in disability employment, we find that the existing typology does not offer a comprehensive reflection of the current situation. The typology of employment models for people with disabilities is an important conceptual and theoretical framework, but it only covers the sheltered, supported and customized employment models, overlooking employment in social enterprises. Social enterprises, in particular WISEs, create employment opportunities, reducing unemployment among members of vulnerable groups, including people with various disabilities. WISEs promote the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market by enhancing their skills, productivity and overall employability through various training programmes, workshops, and other activities. The gradual institutionalization and legitimation of these enterprises also indicates the importance of their contribution to combating unemployment. They play a multifaceted performative role in the field of employment. WISEs co-create social value by generating new employment opportunities and improving the living standards of people with disabilities. Most notably, WISEs focus on (re)integration into the work and wider social environment, giving even individuals with severe forms of disability the opportunity to benefit from social inclusion and re-socialization programmes. In Europe, the prevalent type of WISEs are those offering bridging/transitional employment, which allows people with disabilities to receive vocational training and guidance and to acquire new skills, enabling them to move on to regular employment. Additionally, social enterprises promote self-employment opportunities and the creation of innovative market niches; they redefine employability as a complex and holistic concept with personal and contextual dimensions.

The broad spectrum of the activities of social enterprises in disability employment thus represents an important current trend, which we have

fitted into the tripartite typology of employment models for people with disabilities. In doing so, we identified the models of disability that match individual sub-categories of employment in social enterprises. Sheltered employment in social enterprises correlates with the medical model of disability, given the low degree of integration and the high degree of institutionalization and social exclusion; and supported employment in social enterprises correlates with the social model of disability. The social model ensures a more inclusive environment where people with disabilities are employed in the same space as those without disabilities. This results in a higher degree of integration and social inclusion and a lower degree of institutionalization. By incorporating employment in social enterprises into the existing typology of employment models for people with disabilities, we are filling the conceptual and theoretical gap in the field of employment and upgrading the typology, which can serve as an important classification tool in future research. For future research on the subject, we propose the application of holistic approaches, which underlie the said typology. Holistic approaches link models of disability to formal and institutionalized employment arrangements, which enables researchers to find cause-and-effect connections when illuminating specific (non-)discriminatory systems (Gottlieb et al., 2010). These models of disability perception can serve as an important conceptual tool in the formulation of political agendas, and their significance for research must not be overlooked, as they allow an in-depth understanding of certain sociological phenomena.

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