



ESID – is it useful?

- Is there a need?
- Is the approach adequate?
- Is the coverage satisfactory?
- Is the quality adequate?
- Conclusion

Is there a need for a database on social innovation projects?

Some (selective) facts:

- Social innovation (SI), as a concept, is quite old
 - ❖ ZSI – Centre for Social Innovation – itself has been around for 30+ years
- Significantly increased interest from R&I policy and research in the last decade
- Significantly increased number of publications

Is there a need for a database on social innovation projects?

Yet:

- No coherent definition/understanding of SI
- Many different (often local) contexts within which SI is interpreted
- Limited understanding how to “generate” SI
- Lack of (ongoing) observation of SI activities, incl. projects



Is there a need for a database on social innovation projects?

Yes, if we want to ...

- better understand where social innovation occurs;
- better understand the factors that lead to SI;
- improve the framework conditions for SI; or
- better link SI with other types of innovations.

RISIS ESID – is the approach adequate?



Is the ESID approach adequate?

- The question is compared to what?
- Example of “human” vs. ML approaches:
 - SI-Drive project “manually” mapped SI project in Europe (identifying projects through human expertise)
 - KNOWMAK project created a ML-based system, using human expertise to annotate scraped projects

RISIS ESID – is the approach adequate?



Is the ESID approach adequate?

- Comparison of approaches:
 - “manual” approach:
 - +: “manual” mapping created solid results
 - : costly; each update requires similar effort
 - ML approach:
 - +: effort decreases with each iteration (diminishing return)
 - o: needs constant improvement and human involvement
(yet: resources < “manual” approach)
 - : takes time to get quality of results to a satisfactory level

RISIS ESID – is the approach adequate?



Is the ESID approach adequate?

- Yes, compared to “human” approach
- Remains to be seen with respect to other ML/AI-based approaches (rapid progress in the field)
 - so far not challenged yet (as far as we know)

RISIS ESID – is the coverage satisfactory?



Is the ESID coverage satisfactory?

- Short answer: we do not know
- No one knows the entirety of SI projects in Europe (or elsewhere)

Modified question:

Is there a database that offers a better coverage?

- Not to our knowledge
- Answer: yes (as long as ESID remains ambitious)

RISIS ESID – is the quality adequate?



Is the quality adequate?

- Yes, given the approach taken and quality control in place but ...
 - lack of benchmarks
 - may fluctuate, depending on addition of new data sources
 - depends also on allocation to R&I topics (additional dependency)

Conclusion: Is the ESID useful?

- Yes (there is a need, approach is adequate, coverage is satisfactory, quality is adequate)
... provided that ...
- Coverage and quality keep getting improved
- Human expertise keeps playing a key role
- ESID keeps building its user base



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