

Declaration

I, Kenneth Germaine, hereby declare that:

I have not presented this thesis for submission to this, or any other university, for the purpose or exercise of being awarded a degree.

I furthermore declare, that this thesis is my own original work

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Summary of thesis

The subject of this thesis was community-based social enterprises in Ireland, especially relating to two questions – why were social enterprises established and why did social enterprises continue to exist? The outcomes of the research indicated that social enterprises were established to meet social objectives, primarily the needs of vulnerable groups in society and that the enterprise model was adopted for pragmatic reasons. The research also indicated that as social enterprises became more established the role of economic considerations became more important, predominantly as a result of the increased commitments to staff, customers, suppliers and funding agencies. The research also indicated that the activities of social enterprises were influenced by their location in either an urban or rural location, with the majority of self-sufficient social enterprises being located in urban areas and the majority of demand-deficient social enterprises being located in rural areas.

The research used a methodology based upon a three-step theory generation model. The first step required the collection of preliminary data from a combination of theory and literature review, supported by personal observations as a practitioner within the sector. The second step required a retroductive analysis of the hypothetical model developed relating to what circumstances must be required for this model to exist. The outcome of this retroductive analysis led to the design of field research questions, which were further defined into a four-part format. The first element consisted of an examination of the social enterprises in four municipal authority areas that were members of the European Edge Cities Network. The purpose of this work was to ascertain the differences between the social enterprises in Ireland and other areas in Europe. The second examination required interviews with policy- and decision-makers with responsibility for social enterprises within their ambit. The third element consisted of a survey of several social economy networks, in order to ascertain the opinions of

professional practitioners within the social economy. The final element consisted of an in-depth review of six social enterprises that were selected as case studies. In-depth interviews with board members, managers and in some cases senior staff were undertaken in order to get detailed qualitative data on the social enterprises examined. The third step required a deductive analysis of the field research outcomes to ascertain the main manifestations of social enterprises in Ireland.

Some of the key findings were that the community and voluntary sector is by far the largest influence on the social enterprises examined. The motivation of the community and voluntary sector was to attain primarily social objectives. There was little evidence of a coherent national-policy framework with regard to social enterprises. One finding of note was the consensus amongst policy and decision-makers as to the lack of clarity at national level in respect of the definition, role and extent of the social economy. Other processes and institutions were identified as facilitating, but not motivating, the social economy and these included social partnership and the European Union. It was generally agreed by all parties within the field research that the role of addressing market failure was less important than ascribed to it within the theory and literature review.

The key motivating factors underpinning the social economy appeared to be the achievement of social objectives and the engagement and involvement of individuals, or groups of individuals, in meeting these social objectives. Therefore the role of human agency is strong within the social economy. There is also evidence that the social economy is socially, culturally and historically embedded in the fabric of their national, or regional, contexts. The role of political and institutional factors appeared to be less important as an explanation for the manifestations of the social economy in different countries. However, these embeddedness factors helped explain the manifestation of the social economy, not its motivation. To conclude, it appeared that social enterprises were established to meet the needs of

vulnerable groups in society and although apparently an economic entity, its motivations are social in nature.

Acknowledgements

In the first instance, I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. Andrew MacLaran and Dr. Michael Punch for their patience, diligence and support over the past four years. I would also like to acknowledge the support from the other members of the Geography Department of Trinity College Dublin during my time there. I should also acknowledge the staff of the Library and IT Departments for their courtesy and help over the past four years.

I have received considerable support and consideration from my employers, the Board of the BASE Enterprise Centre, during this work. Several members of staff have also given their assistance. I would like to acknowledge Joe Keogh for his sterling work in proof reading early drafts and Celene Sutton who valiantly chased up questionnaires during the field research. I would like to acknowledge my professional colleagues who gave me access to information, documents and contacts during the research. I would especially like to thank those who completed questionnaires and allowed me to interview them for my field research. A special thanks to the managers of the six case studies examined who facilitated me and allowed me access to board members and secondary documentation.

Finally, my appreciation to my parents and especially my late mother, who instilled the importance of learning and education into me from an early age.

List of Abbreviations

ADM – Area Development Management Ltd. (now renamed POBAL)

APC – Area-based Partnership Companies (RoI)

BAP – Blanchardstown Area Partnership (APC)

BASE – Blanchardstown Area Small Enterprise Centre

BEAT – Balbriggan Enterprise and Training Centre

BEDG – Balbriggan Enterprise Development Group

BESS – Balbriggan Employment Support Service

BMW – Border, midlands and west region (RoI)

BYS – Blanchardstown Youth Service

CAP – the Common Agricultural Policy (EU)

CE – Community Employment – an Irish labour market programme

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

CDP – Community Development Projects (RoI)

CDU – Co-operative Development Unit (FAS)

CIC – a community interest company (UK)

CNM – the Centre for Nonprofit Management in TCD

CNN – Cable Network News (US)

CoI – community of interest

CSP – the Community Services Programme (formerly the NSEP)

CUDA – the Credit Union Development Association

CYTP – Community Youth Training Programme (FAS)

DCRGA – Department of Community, Rural & Gaelteacht Affairs (RoI)

DED – Designated Electoral District (RoI)

DETE – Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (RoI)

DIRT – Deposit Interest Retention Tax (RoI)

EBS – the Educational Building Society

EEC – European Economic Community (later changed to EU)

EES – European Employment Strategy

ECDL – European Computer Driving Licence

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency (RoI)

EU – European Union
EUC – European Union Commission
FAS – Irish national training agency
FAS CDU – FAS Co-operative Development Unit
FAS CSU – FAS Community Services Unit
FDI – foreign direct investment
FTJI – see JI
GAA – Gaelic Athletic Association
GDP – gross domestic product
GNP – gross national product
IAOS – Irish Agricultural Organisation Society (later changed to ICOS)
ICMSA – Irish Creamery Milk Supplier Association
ICOS – Irish Co-operatives Society
ICT – information and communication technology
ILCU – the Irish League of Credit Unions
ILM – an intermediate labour market programme
IT – information technology (see ICT)
JI – Full-time Job Initiative Programme – Irish active labour programme
LD-SIP – Local Development – Social Inclusion Programme (APCs)
LES – Local Employment Service (RoI)
LSEWG – Local Social Economy Working Group (FAS, NSEP)
MEECA – Mid-Eastern Enterprise Centres Association (RoI)
MOUS – Microsoft Office User Specialist
NACEC – National Association of Community Enterprise Centres (RoI)
NAPS – the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (RoI)
NES – new economic sociology
NFRT – North Fingal Rural Transport
NGO – a non-governmental organisation
NIE – new institutional economics
NSEP – the National Social Economy Programme (RoI)
PAYE – Pay-as-you-earn (Irish direct income tax)
PESP – Programme for Economic Success and Prosperity

PLANET – network for APCs
PLC – a public listed company
PNR – Programme for National Recovery
PPP – Public-private partnership
PRSI – Pay related social insurance (RoI)
RoI – Republic of Ireland (EIRE)
RTI – Rural Transport Initiative (RoI)
SEO – Senior Executive Officer
SEP – Social Economy Programme (see NSEP)
SES – Social Employment Scheme (forerunner of CE)
SMS – synchronised messaging system
SME – small to medium-sized enterprise
SPSS – statistical package for social sciences
TCD – the University of Dublin, Trinity College
TCE – transaction cost economics
TSEP – third system and employment pilot action (EUC)
TSO – a third sector organisations (similar to a social enterprise)
UK – United Kingdom
UN – the United Nations
US or USA – United States of America
VFM – value for money

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