Social entrepreneurs in Catalonia: a critical approach using Social Network Analysis.

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CREOLE Intensive Program 2014 - Anthropology in Public
NUI Maynooth. Ireland 1st July 2014
Egolab-GRAFO

Main research topics of Egolab:

- Social Network Analysis
- Economic Anthropology
- New socioeconomic phenomena as a Response to the Economic Crisis in Southern Europe.
  - Austerity policies, Welfare State debilitation, new forms of poverty.
  - New strategies of provisioning – consumption, distribution and production.
    - Social currencies, time banks, collaborative consumption...
- The emergence of Social Economy and Social Enterprises from 2008
A Social Enterprise

A social enterprise is an organization that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements in human and environmental well-being, rather than maximizing profits for external shareholders.

Social entrepreneurship is the process of pursuing innovative solutions to social problems. More specifically, social entrepreneurs adopt a mission to create and sustain social value.
Some social enterprises
Mixed-methods approach
Respondent Driven Sampling websurvey

- **RDS Websurvey** will allow to estimate the number of “social entrepreneurs” in Catalonia.

- **Snowball method**: Selection of “seeds” → they send 3 invitations to **participate** → … until having about 850 responses.
Social Capital Companion

- Android app ...
  - Personal network survey (smart-phone).
  - Self-management of communication activities.
  - Basic feedback is provided (compared with a “successful” social entrepreneur.)
- Anonymous information

http://www.inf.uni-konstanz.de/algo/software/scc/
Networks and qualitative data

- Personal Network Analysis (>15 alters).
  - Egonet (open-access software).
  - 50 cases in Catalonia.
- Qualitative interviews + fieldwork
Examples of personal networks
A mix of actors ...

- Clustered graphs is a methodology for summarizing and comparing personal networks (Brandes et al. 2008, Lerner et al. 2007, 2008)
“Displaced” (5 cases)

Resto de la red personal

Lazos débiles que han apoyado la iniciativa

Lazos fuertes que han apoyado la iniciativa
“Re-invented” (5 cases)
"Awarded" (5 cases)

Resto de la red personal

Lazos débiles que han apoyado la iniciativa

Lazos fuertes que han apoyado la iniciativa
PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Social Enterprises: New Values or neoliberal marketing?
**Downward Mobility**

- **New markets**
  - *Middle Class with resources*: Social Entrepreneurs, relocated through new market opportunities. Personal savings, social capital, family or association resources

- **Social Exclusion Risk**
  - *More precarious middle class*: Depending on State pensions, social services, family support. Informal Economy in some cases

- **Social Exclusion and Poverty**
  - Long-term unemployed, immigrants within the informal sector, large families, dispossessed. Relying on informal economy and no family support. Food from banks and charity
  - Poor before and after the crisis
New actors and old ones meet in the new scenario: “displaced”, “re-invented”, and “awarded”.

- NGOs, cooperatives…
- Social workers (health services, aging people, minorities, migrants…)
- New so-called social entrepreneurs (consulters, etc.)
Pervasive top-down policies fostering social entrepreneurship.

- Huge rates of unemployment.
- Big banks such as “La Caixa” and “BBVA”, in collaboration with Business Schools (ESADE in Catalonia) are taking over.
Present definitions of social entrepreneurship are tautological ("a social entrepreneurship is about entrepreneurs socially oriented").

- We need a positive, not prescriptive, definition: what a S.E. really is, and not what it should be.
- No clear idea of what a social value is. No clear idea of how to measure the social impacts created by social enterprises.
Thank you!