SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN THE AGE OF PERMANENT CRISIS - THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

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THINK OUT OF THE BOX

CREATIVE MINDS ARE RARELY TIDY

- Constant crisis?
- In his book published in 1986 (in Hungarian in 2003), Ulrich Beck suggests that in modern industrial societies **risks arise** that are no longer local, cannot be linked to time and space, so they are difficult to predic, they are not subject to causality and a question of responsibility.
- Modern consumer societies also mean that there are more and more **new types of stressors** in the life of human communities that they have to deal with in one way or another. According to Pikó (2002), one of the most common coping strategies of our time **is to deal with the stress situation as quickly as possible** and with as little effort as possible – in many cases this can lead to the development of various addictions.
- **Learned helplessness** (Kopp, Hankiss)
- It would take **learned ingenuity** and wealth of resources!
- **Personal effectiveness**: our belief in how well we can handle difficult situations
- Low level of **trust**
- Feeling out of control
- Sense of incoherence
- Chronic stress
- Feeling vulnerable
- Life grows beyond us
- Avoiding uncertainty
- Diverse communities, but rapidly changing
- Flâneur mentality
- **Crisis and coping strategies** (Erikson, Caplan, Lazarus and Folkman, etc.)
- Permanent Crisis. The Humanities in a Disenchanted Age - Paul Reitter and Chad Wellmon, 2021

CHALLENGES

- Buildling from the „lack"
- Sustainability
- „Small is beautiful!"
- Resistancy and resiliency
- Integration - powerty
- Areas: environment, deep adaptation, social enterprises, aging society

In recent years, novel solutions have been developed to catch up underdeveloped regions, which can be interpreted as social innovation.

In addition, an increasing number of social enterprises are registered as building blocks of solidarity and the social economy..

To sum up

WHAT IS SOCIAL INNOVATION ?

A new combination of social practices that can lead to a higher level of satisfaction for social needs. (Howaldt et al., 2014).

A novel combination of social practices, a higher level of cooperation, which can help increase the willingness of different groups in society to cooperate. The latter can contribute to reducing social disparities and meeting needs that cannot be met by the market. (Rehfeld et al., 2015).
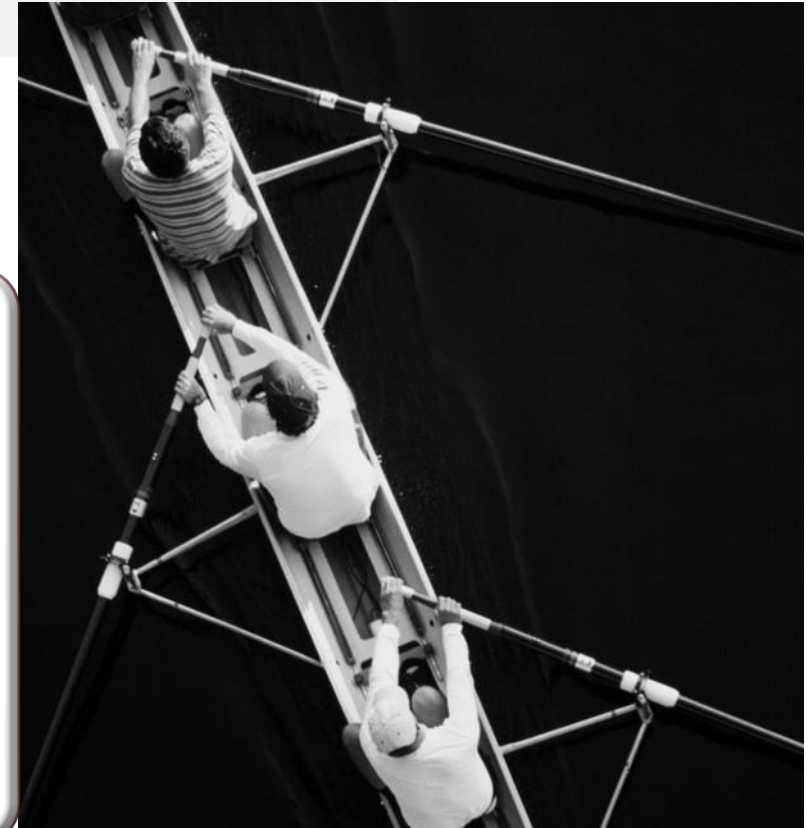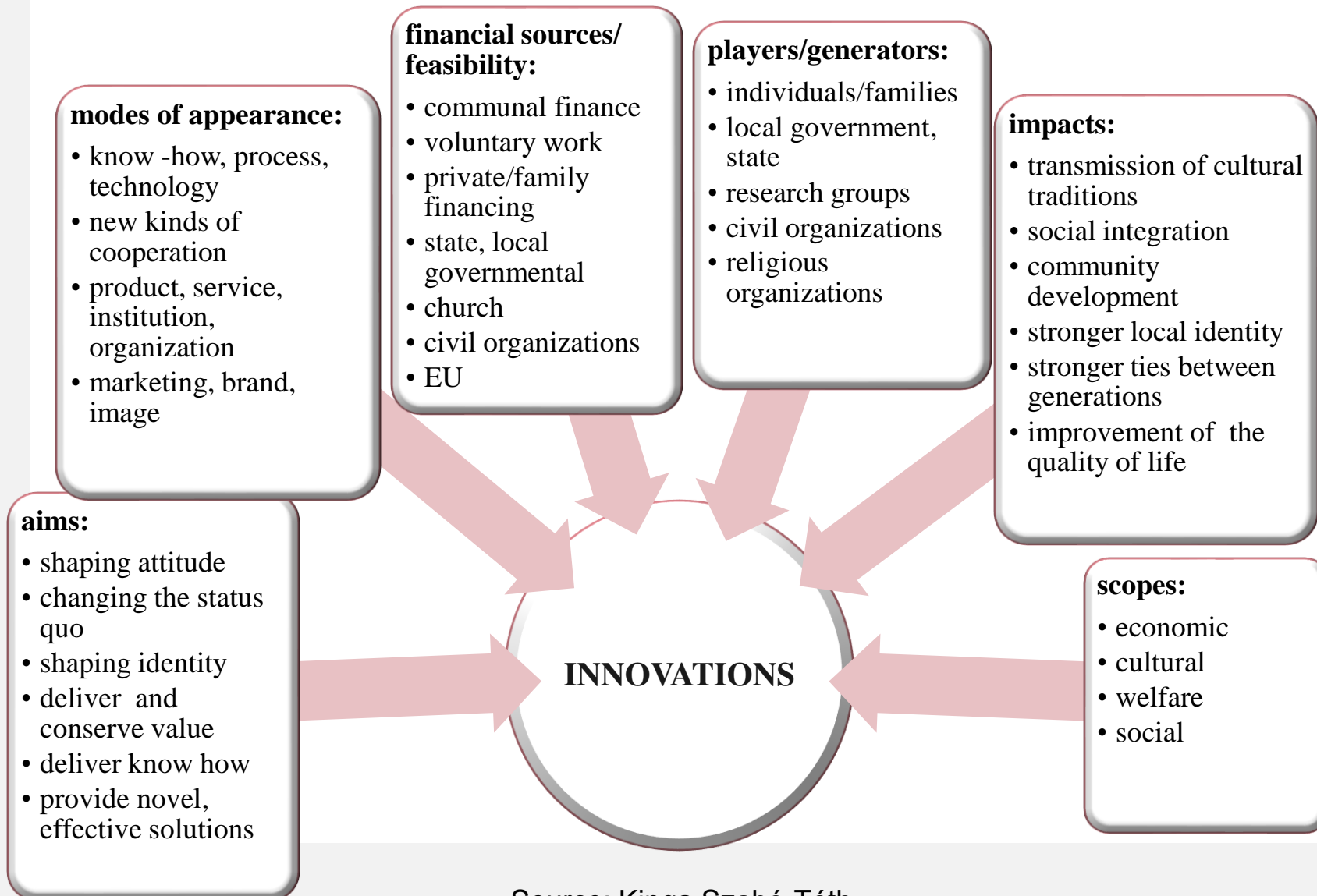
Social innovations are also micro-regional organizations
that emerged as a bottom-up initiative in the first half of the 1990s and became part of the implementation of regional innovations. (Éva G. Fekete, 2001).

Social innovation is any new approach, paradigm and related product, process, practice, network that differs from the previous practice, which aims to solve the problems and needs that arise in society, while creating new values, attitudes, new social relations, possibly new structures will be created. (Nemes – Varga, 2015).

Social innovation is the development and implementation of new ideas (product, service, model) that meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. In this way, it can provide a solution to problems that affect social processes and, as an ultimate goal, improve the well-being of a given area. (European Commission, 2013).
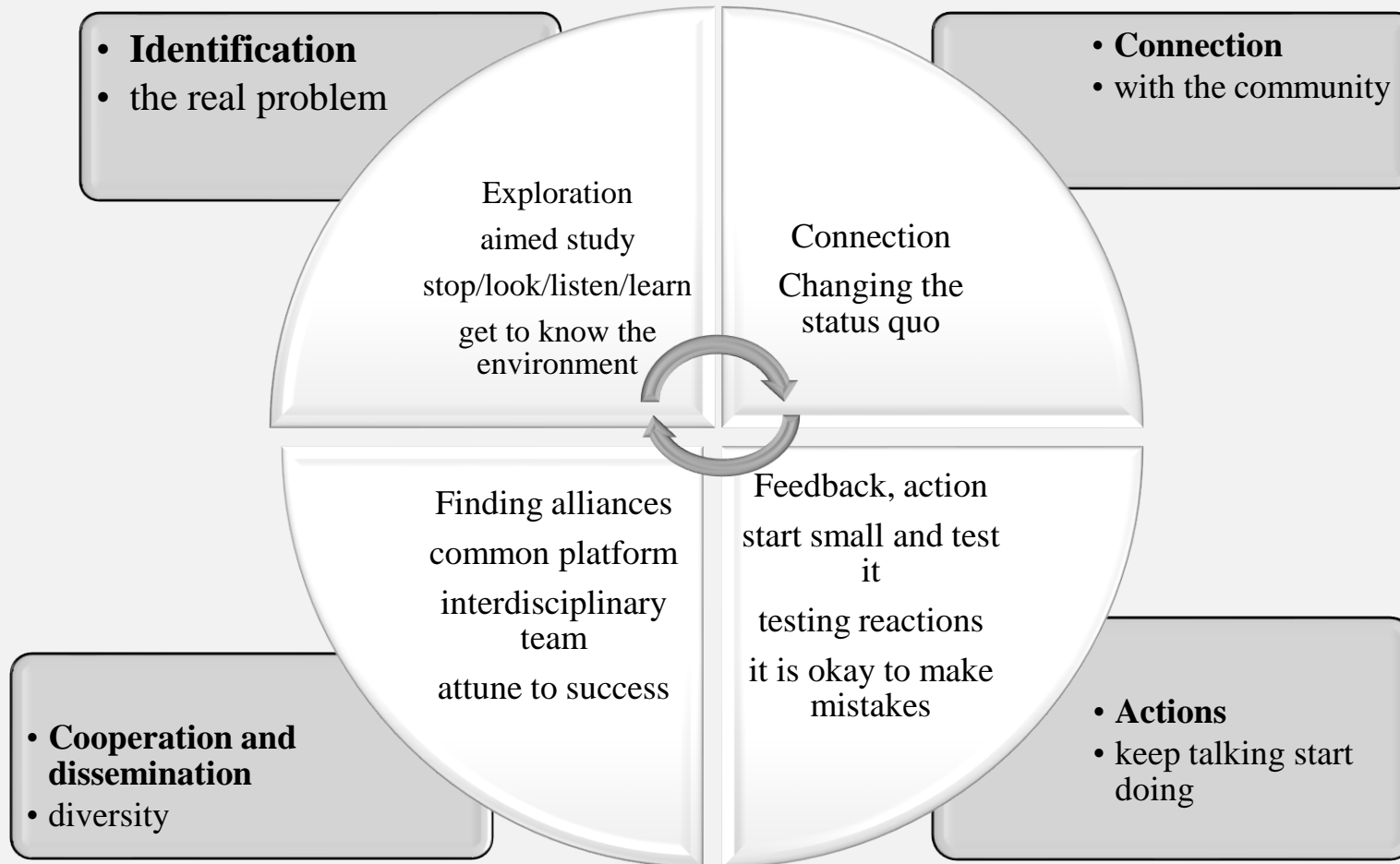
THE „MAP" OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

modes of appearance:
- know -how, process, technology
- new kinds of cooperation
- product, service, institution, organization
- marketing, brand, image

financial sources/ feasibility:
- communal finance
- voluntary work
- private/family financing
- state, local governmental
- church
- civil organizations
- EU

players/generators:
- individuals/families
- local government, state
- research groups
- civil organizations
- religious organizations

impacts:
- transmission of cultural traditions
- social integration
- community development
- stronger local identity
- stronger ties between generations
- improvement of the quality of life

aims:
- shaping attitude
- changing the status quo
- shaping identity
- deliver and conserve value
- deliver know how
- provide novel, effective solutions

INNOVATIONS

scopes:
- economic
- cultural
- welfare
- social

Source: Kinga Szabó-Tóth

STEPS FOR GENERATING SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- **Identification**
- the real problem

- **Connection**
- with the community

Exploration
aimed study
stop/look/listen/learn
get to know the environment

Connection
Changing the status quo

Finding alliances
common platform
interdisciplinary team
attune to success

Feedback, action
start small and test it
testing reactions
it is okay to make mistakes

- **Cooperation and dissemination**
- diversity

- **Actions**
- keep talking start doing

Source: Kinga Szabó-Tóth

UNIVERSITIES AND SOCIAL INNOVATIONS
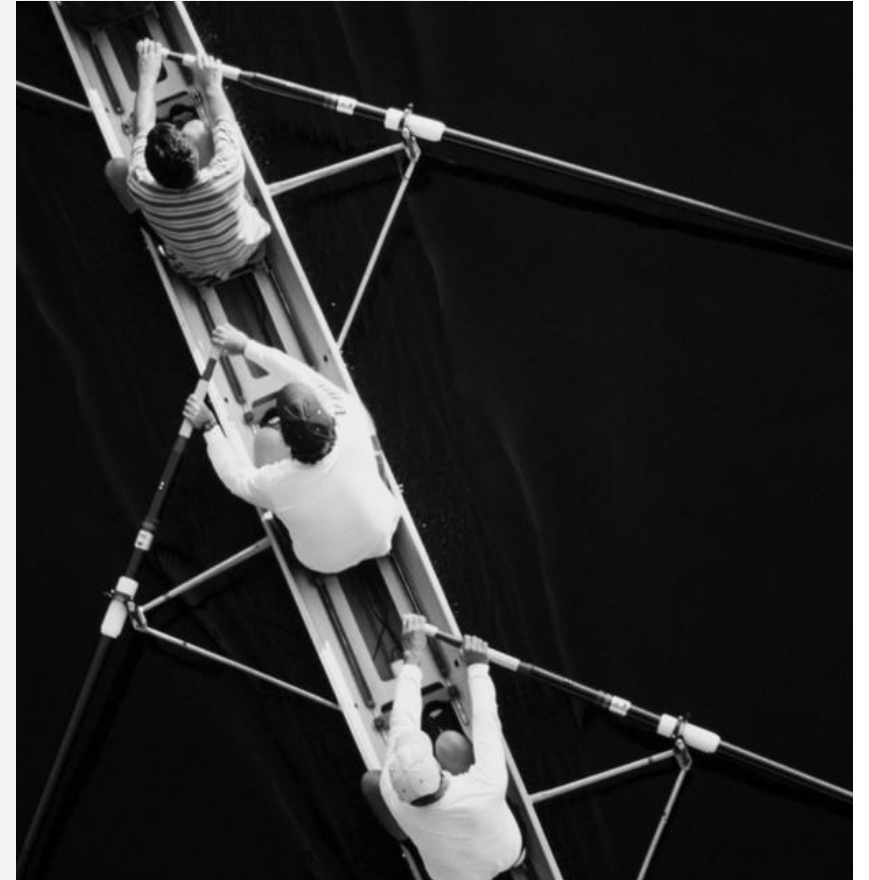
- By the end of the 20th century**, higher education institutions were faced with many new challenges,** mainly with the fact that in addition to their traditional activities - such as education and research - additional functions were created in accordance with changing socio-economic expectations.

- This activity is matched by **the third mission activity of higher education institutions**, otherwise known as the **"service university" concept.**

- According to some ideas, the ideal type of university at the end of the 20th century is the so-called **"third generation" university**, which realizes the synergy of education, research and social involvement.

- According to others, the so-called **"fourth generation" universities** are already appearing in the 21st century higher education, which not only respond to their socio-economic environment, but also actively shape it themselves.

- The so-called "third mission" summarizes **the connections** between higher education institutions and their environment, the **activities and their effects on their social and economic environment** (even through its formation and shaping) and means that all **institutionalized relationships** maintained with partners in the non-academic world comply with the principles of sustainability and environmental protection keeping in mind.

- The important elements of the concept are the **active dialogue with society**, the accountability of the higher education institution towards the actors of social and economic life and keeping in mind the **principles of sustainable human development** (Larrán - Andrades, 2013, cited by Jorge - Peña, 2017).

SOME EXAMPLES

FROM OUR PRACTICE

HANDS - Cooperation between higher education institutions in Northern Hungary (2014)

- Social innovations in the service of social catching up:
- Social Innovation Cluster
- Mentors for social innovations
- Training of social innovation for professionals
- Workshops of regional actors

Generating social innovations in BAZ county (2015) T-modell

- General goal:
- To use the training and research experience accumulated in higher education in the development of rural areas struggling with persistent crisis problems, thus ensuring direct knowledge transfer between higher education and regional development practice
- Circles of innovation

TÉRERŐ Community Foundation (2016)

- Designed to pool donations into a coordinated investment and grant making facility dedicated primarily to the social improvement of a given place.
- Act as grant-making foundations – give grants to support development local projects
- Helps in the development of local innovative initiatives

Creative Region (2018-)

- Institutional Excellence Program for Higher Education
- Social and cultural innovations for regional economic development and catching up
- ˙"Abaúji App"
- Cultural values of the region
- Disseminating the idea of SI
- Helping setlements to be more visible (wikipedia articles)

SOME EXAMPLES
FROM OUR PRACTICE

(Active Aging project 2022)

- Interreg V-A Slovakia-Hungary Cooperation Funded by the program "Active Aging - Improving the quality of life of the elderly in Slovakia and Hungary" project (project number: SKHU 1902/4.1/101) represents an innovative approach, the aim of which is primarily improving the quality of life of the elderly through practicies..

(Firelife project 2017-2019)

- A comparative study of the sociological background of forest fires in
- B-A-Z counties on behalf of the Forestry Directorate of the National Food Chain Safety Office.
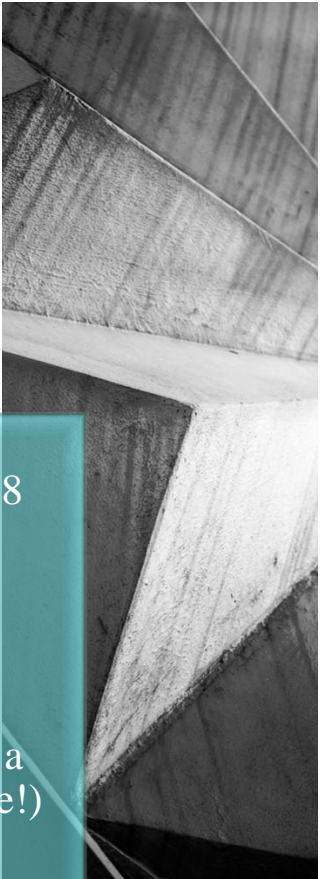
(Biomass project 2011-2012)

- Development of a biomass-based settlement energy system began its preparation in the town of Csernely in the summer of 2011.

(4IM project 2021-2023)

- VP/2020/003/0218 "Initiative for innovative integrated interventions in Miskolc - 4IM (Miskolc shall be a place for everyone!)
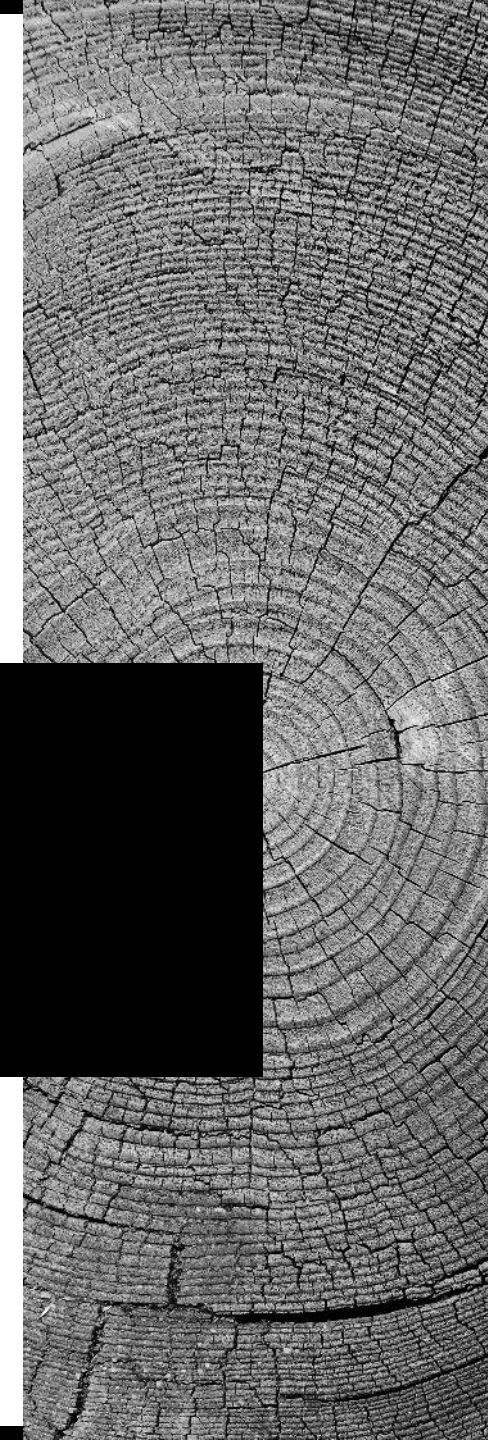
FUTURE

- **New governance** - In this case, the essence of innovation is that self-governance is not carried out by an isolated process separate from citizens, but an attempt to collaborative work. We need a new governance model that is holistic and where the role of citizens in the implementation of social processes increases – **participatory democracy**

- The key question of managing social innovation **is to connect vertically separated networks while securing their autonomy and ability to resist and being resilience.**

- **Learning communities – community-based innovation:**
  building stones (Bradford 2003:9–11):
  - local "racers" (other literature calls them "local heroes");
  - equal and comprehensive participation of local actors;
  - a culture of innovation and creativity (others call it "openness to the new„)
  - sufficient technical and financial resources;
  - accountability to local partners

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !

„a swallow does not make a summer"
....but it can be a starter for a new beginning!

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