

SOCIAL ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT. INSIGHTS FROM POLAND

Agnieszka PACUT

Krakow University of Economics; agnieszka.pacut@uek.krakow.pl, ORCID: 0000-0002-3616-8820

Purpose: This study examines the role of social economy entities in Poland's labor market, particularly their efforts to professionally and socially reintegrate individuals at risk of social exclusion. It evaluates their contributions to employment and social inclusion while addressing their challenges.

Design/methodology/approach: A desk research methodology was employed, drawing on secondary data and theoretical frameworks related to social economy.

Findings: The results show that the social economy sector in Poland is experiencing steady growth, including in the area of socio-professional reintegration. However, despite its contribution to employing vulnerable groups and filling gaps in socially relevant sectors, the sector accounts for only 1.5% of total employment in Poland, reflecting the need for increased public policy support and targeted development efforts.

Research limitations/implications: The research is limited by the availability and scope of data, particularly regarding the detailed dynamics of employment in social economy entities and their long-term outcomes. Future studies should focus on expanding the use of satellite accounts and longitudinal analyses to better understand the sector's impact and address its development challenges.

Practical implications: The findings highlight the need for policymakers to strengthen support for social economy entities, particularly in health, education, and social services. Enhancing financial and organizational resources is crucial for these organizations to provide employment opportunities for marginalized individuals effectively.

Social implications: This study underscores the social economy's value in fostering inclusive and equitable economic models, contributing to reduced social inequalities. By supporting social economy entities and promoting volunteering, social cohesion, and well-being can be achieved by integrating individuals facing employment barriers.

Originality/value: This paper advances the understanding of the social economy's role in Poland, focusing on social inclusion and labor market participation. It offers practical insights for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners seeking to enhance the sector's capacity to promote socio-economic development and mitigate social exclusion.

Keywords:

Category of the paper: research paper.

1. Introduction

Labor markets worldwide are undergoing significant changes due to demographic, technological, globalization, and other factors. Solutions are being sought at global and national levels to contribute to sustainable development and equitable transformation (ILO, 2022). In this context, the social economy is attracting increasing attention from public policymakers due to its potential in employment, social inclusion, public service provision, and local development (OECD, 2023a, 2024). The concept encompasses a variety of organizations, including cooperatives, non-profit organizations, mutuals, and social enterprises, which aim to solve social, economic, and environmental problems by combining social objectives with economic activities. For more than two decades, the role of this group of actors in filling the gaps created by both the public and private sectors has been increasing, as recognized in different worlds (Compère et al., 2021; OECD, 2023b, 2024).

The literature identifies various functions that social economy actors play in the economy and society. One of the functions commonly attributed to the social economy is job creation. P. Sałustowicz describes this function as a 'jobmachine' referring to the expectations of social economy actors to create new jobs, especially for groups marginalized or at risk of social marginalization, as well as to provide vocational training services and enable the transition to the so-called 'first labor market' (Sałustowicz, 2007). In turn, Chaves and Monzón (2012), about the socio-economic approach to the social economy, indicate that three functions are realized: labor market regulation, regulation of the supply of goods and services, and capital market regulation. The regulatory function of the social economy in the labor market is to increase the resilience of social enterprises in difficult times, helping to maintain jobs and facilitating the integration of the unemployed and other excluded people. The social economy has also played a key role in mitigating economic crises, such as the 2008 financial crisis in Europe, by providing stable employment opportunities (Lambin, 2014).

The contribution of the social economy to employment is multifaceted. It creates jobs through direct employment in social economy organizations, supporting inclusive labor markets, and promoting the integration of vulnerable groups such as young people, the long-term unemployed, migrants, people with disabilities, and other missing entrepreneurs. Social enterprises, in particular, are increasingly recognized for their ability to offer stable and meaningful employment, prioritizing social benefits over profit maximization, and meeting economic and social needs. In addition, social economy actors often emphasize quality employment practices, such as fair wages, decent working conditions, and worker empowerment, essential to promoting social justice and reducing inequality (Yi et al., 2023). As mentioned above, social economy actors create and sustain employment in traditional sectors and promote decent work by providing quality and stable jobs, facilitating women's access to the labor market, integrating workers from disadvantaged groups, and supporting the transition from informal to formal

work. In this context, social economy entities are seen as a source of new jobs, "employment-oriented" enterprises, and "employment infrastructure" in emerging jobs and sectors (Borzaga et al., 2017).

OECD data indicate that at least 11.5 million people from the European Union, or about 6.3% of the workforce, work in the social economy. The most significant numbers employed in the social economy are Germany (3.4 million), France (almost 2.6 million), Italy (over 1.5 million), and Spain (almost 1.4 million). This is followed by Belgium (over 592,000), Poland (around 250,000), and Portugal (almost 245,000). Among economic actors in the EU, associations are the most employable, employing 6.2 million people (54.1%) and cooperatives (3.3 million; 29%). Social enterprises employ at least 3.9 million people (33.7% of those employed in social economy organizations) (OECD, 2024).

In Poland, the social economy has become an important element of social and labor market policies, a factor of social development, including a source of innovation, fostering the achievement of strategic goals (Krajowy Program..., 2022; Małecka-Łyszczek, 2017). The activity of social economy organizations is placed in the context of public policies on sustainable and balanced development, socio-economic cohesion, combating social exclusion, and, in particular, job creation.

The main objective of this article is to analyze the role of social economy actors in the labor market in Poland. The study highlights the employment function of social economy entities as a key aspect, underlining their impact on socio-economic development and the inclusion of marginalized groups. By examining the participation of social economy organizations in the Polish labor market, this research offers valuable insights into their contributions to social cohesion and the measurable outcomes of reintegration initiatives of social economy.

The article is structured into four parts. The first section offers a comprehensive review of the literature on the social economy, emphasizing its employment function. The second part details the data sources and research methodology employed. The third section presents an analysis of findings based on data from Statistics Poland. Finally, the conclusion synthesizes the results, offers policy recommendations, and identifies avenues for future research on the role of the social economy in Poland.

2. Literature review

2.1. Social economy – conceptual frameworks

The social economy (SE) is a global phenomenon recognized under various names and definitions (OECD, 2023c). The literature on SE presents different approaches to understanding it, including normative, institutional and legal perspectives (Defourny, Develtere, 1999). There

are also different views on the scope of the social economy, with some taking a narrow and others a broader perspective (Moulaert, Ailenei, 2005). The bibliometric review by Macías Ruano et al. (2021) offers a comprehensive analysis of the topic, integrating various terms and perspectives related to SE. Broadly, the social economy is an umbrella term encompassing diverse concepts that prioritize social and environmental needs over profit and wealth generation, adhering to principles that diverge from those associated with capitalist and individualistic ideologies (Macías Ruano et al., 2021; Utting, 2023; Yi et al., 2023).

SE is defined by a range of non-market (redistribution) and non-monetary (reciprocity) initiatives, which emphasize a diverse set of market behaviors that extend beyond the mere maximization of individual utility (Moulaert, Ailenei, 2005). SE organizations are established for the collective or general interest. They are guided by principles such as the primacy of social purpose over capital, voluntary and open membership, democratic control by members, independence and autonomy, and limited or prohibited distribution of profits (Social Economy Charter, 2015). The values espoused by this organization prioritize care for people and the planet, promote equality and justice, emphasize interdependence, uphold self-governance, and ensure transparency and accountability. The objective is to achieve decent work and sustainable livelihoods. These include using diverse resources, sustainable practices, inclusive governance, local engagement, and cooperation (OECD, 2020).

The term SE is also interpreted as a constellation of diverse organizations united by common attribute, that distinguishes them from the traditional private and public sectors. Although the concept of the social economy is new, it encompasses a wide range of pre-existing organizations that have been regulated for a long time. The family of organizations recognized as SEs is large and includes: cooperatives, mutual societies, associations and foundations (Defourny, Monzón, 1992). Social enterprises are also considered an integral part of the social economy (Borzaga, Defourny, 2004). Following the specific circumstances prevailing in each national context, the SE may encompass other informal or registered entities that comply with the relevant statutes or laws and the SE values and principles set forth above (Bouchard, 2023). Hence, SE organizations are characterized by considerable diversity in terms of their legal status, size, scope, sectors, and roles (OECD, 2020). This approach to the social economy is of considerable utility in the design and implementation of policies, the collection of statistics and the conduct of research (Compère et al., 2021).

Social economy terminology and explanations can vary according to national traditions and cultural norms (OECD, 2023b, 2024). From a global perspective, SE is a multifaceted concept encompassing many practices and ideas. However, the concept is widely recognized and understood globally and in society. The growing interest in the term 'social economy' is evidenced by data from the Internet using Google Trends (Figure 1).

Google Trends is a novel big data source that analyzes user interests across various fields. It is an open online tool that examines the popularity of search terms on Google over time, offering insights into public interest and search behavior (Mavragani et al., 2018). A study by

Jun et al. (2018) revealed that the utilization of Google Trends has increased over the past decade among academics specializing in various subjects. Furthermore, there has been a notable shift in how this tool is employed, moving from a descriptive and diagnostic approach to one that enables forecasting changes. The methodological framework established by Mavragani et al. (2018) was utilized with Google Trends to present global interest in social economy. The results demonstrate a growing trend in interest in social economy, indicating the presence of this topic on all continents in the last five years.

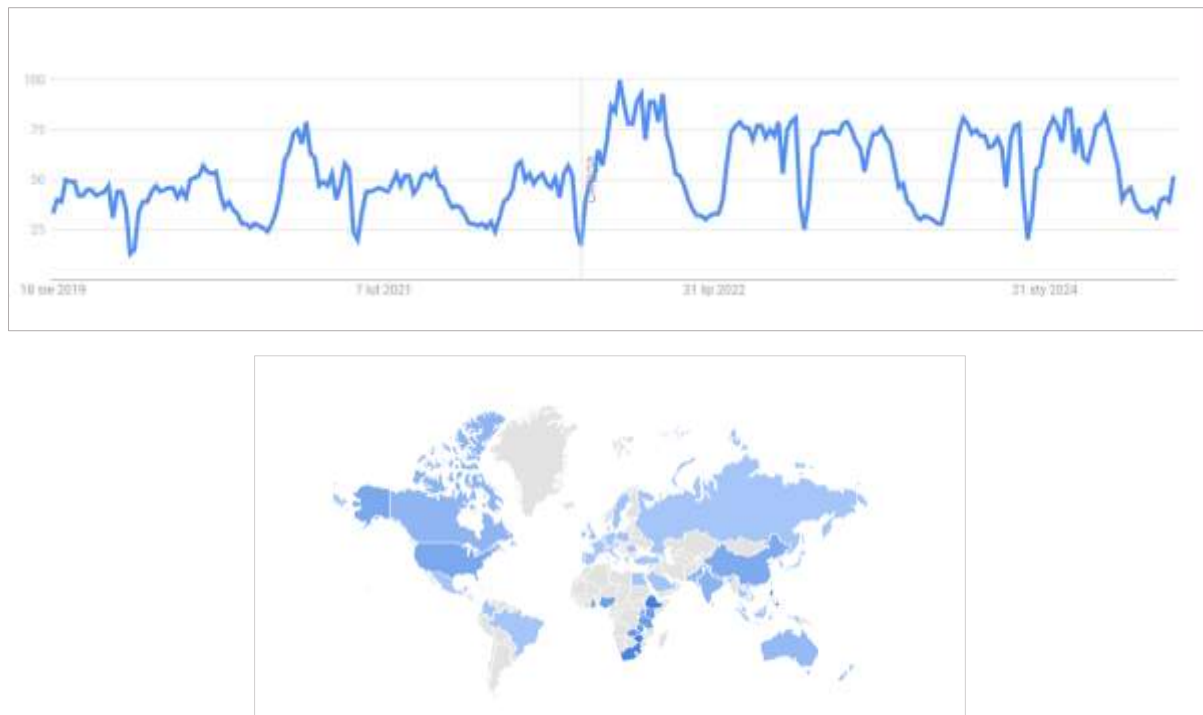


Figure 1. Global interest in the concept of 'social economy'.

Source: own elaboration using Google Trends.

2.2. The employment function of the social economy

The social economy plays an important role in developing the labor market by fostering professional activation and promoting inclusive, stable forms of employment. Its importance lies in its multidimensional approach to employment issues, balancing economic objectives with social needs.

The social economy contributes to job creation directly through social enterprises, cooperatives, and non-profit organizations and indirectly by promoting inclusive labor markets. By tackling structural barriers to employment, these organizations help to integrate socially and professionally excluded people, such as the long-term unemployed, migrants, and young people (ILO, 2017; OECD, 2020, 2024). Their efforts highlight the sector's ability to address systemic inequalities and create opportunities for vulnerable groups.

A distinctive feature of the social economy is its ability to provide stable and meaningful employment that meets economic and social needs. Unlike traditional businesses, which focus

primarily on profit maximization, social economy organizations (including social enterprises) prioritize social benefits. This is evident in their promotion of fair wages, decent working conditions, and worker empowerment. Such practices enhance social justice and contribute to reducing labor market inequalities. In addition, social economy organizations often support gender equality by facilitating women's entry into the labor market, thereby strengthening their economic and social position (ILO, 2017; OECD, 2024).

The social economy demonstrates adaptability to modern labor market challenges such as automation, technological advances, and demographic changes. In sectors that are less susceptible to automation, such as personal services, social economy organizations provide alternative employment models that meet the evolving needs of the workforce. These organizations are critical in emerging areas such as the 'silver economy,' providing secure and stable employment frameworks. This adaptability positions the social economy as a viable response to the growing gig economy and the erosion of traditional employment structures (Borzaga et al., 2017).

Moreover, the social economy contributes to the formalization of work by supporting the transition from informal to formal work arrangements. This stabilizes labor markets and promotes sustainable development by addressing the challenges of precarious employment. In doing so, the social economy promotes inclusiveness, fairness, and resilience in the labor market, making it a cornerstone of equitable economic development.

2.3. Social economy in Poland

The term social economy appeared and gained importance in Poland at the time of accession to the European Union in 2004, even though practices in this area were known earlier (Ciepielewska-Kowalik, 2020). It became the subject of interest of practitioners and theoreticians (Pacut, 2022, pp. 73–87) and public administration, which for ten years processed the issues of regulating this topic in the law (Bohdziewicz-Lulewicz et al., 2022). In 2022, the Act on Social Economy in Poland was adopted (Ustawa, 2022). The social economy has become part of the policy capacity in Poland (Kruk, 2022; Zybala, 2022) and the subject of strategic documents such as the National Program for the Development of the Social Economy (to 2030), the Strategy for the Development of Social Services (to 2030), the National Program for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2021-27) and the Action Plan for Social Inclusion and Integration (2021-2027).

Following the Act, the social economy includes the activities of social economy entities for the benefit of the local community in the field of social and professional reintegration, creating jobs for people at risk of social exclusion and providing social services, carried out in the form of economic activity, public benefit activity and other paid activities. Social economy entities comprise three distinct categories: cooperatives, social and professional reintegration units, non-governmental organizations, and certain related institutions/similar organizations (Table 1) (Małecka-Lyszczek et al., 2023).

Table 1.
Categories of social economy entities in Poland according to the Act on Social Economy

Social economy entities in Poland		
Non-governmental organizations and related institutions	Socio-professional reintegration units	Cooperatives
Association Foundations Non-profit companies Church entities Association of local government units Rural Housewives' Circles	Social Integration Centers Social Integration Clubs Occupational Therapy Workshops Vocational Activity Centers	Workers' cooperatives Cooperatives for the disabled and blind Social cooperatives Agricultural production cooperative

Source: own elaboration.

3. Materials and methods

The article employs desk research analysis, underpinned by secondary data sources, and incorporates a narrative review of pertinent literature. Peer-reviewed texts published in Scopus and bazekon were included in the analysis, and the literature review was used to develop a theoretical introduction. Statistical data on social economy entities from Statistics Poland (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, GUS) was utilised for the analysis. Since 2009, the social economy has been officially included in public statistics and is the subject of regular, cyclical and representative surveys conducted in Poland by the Social Economy Research Centre of Statistics Poland (Ośrodek Badania Gospodarki Społecznej GUS) (Pacut, 2024). These secondary sources of information were used to illustrate the phenomenon under study in Poland.

4. Results

Employment function in the social economy in Poland - selected aspects

4.1. Structure of the Social Economy Sector in Poland

The number of social economy organizations in Poland has grown steadily over the last decade (GUS, 2024)). In 2023, the social economy sector comprised 106.2 thousand organizations (Figure 2), the majority of which were non-profit organizations (105 thousand, 98.8%). Cooperatives meeting the definition of social economy units numbered 1.2 thousand, of which the most significant group was social cooperatives (67.4%), followed by labor cooperatives (24.3%), and the smallest group was cooperatives of the disabled and blind (8.2%) (GUS, 2024a). In 2023, there were 1,246 socio-occupational reintegration units, of which 863 were set

up by non-profit organizations, including associations, foundations, and social-religious entities (GUS, 2024b). In 2023, there were 0.7 thousand social enterprises among the social economy units, of which 47.6% were non-profit organizations and 52.4% were cooperatives (GUS, 2024a).

Statistics Poland data from 2017-2020 show growth in the social economy sector, particularly in non-profit organizations, which increased the number of entities, employment, and revenue. Over the same period, worker cooperatives saw a decrease in the number of active entities and their employment and financial potential, mainly due to the closure of large cooperatives. Although social cooperatives increased their capacity, they did not compensate for the decline in worker cooperatives (GUS, 2021b, 2023).

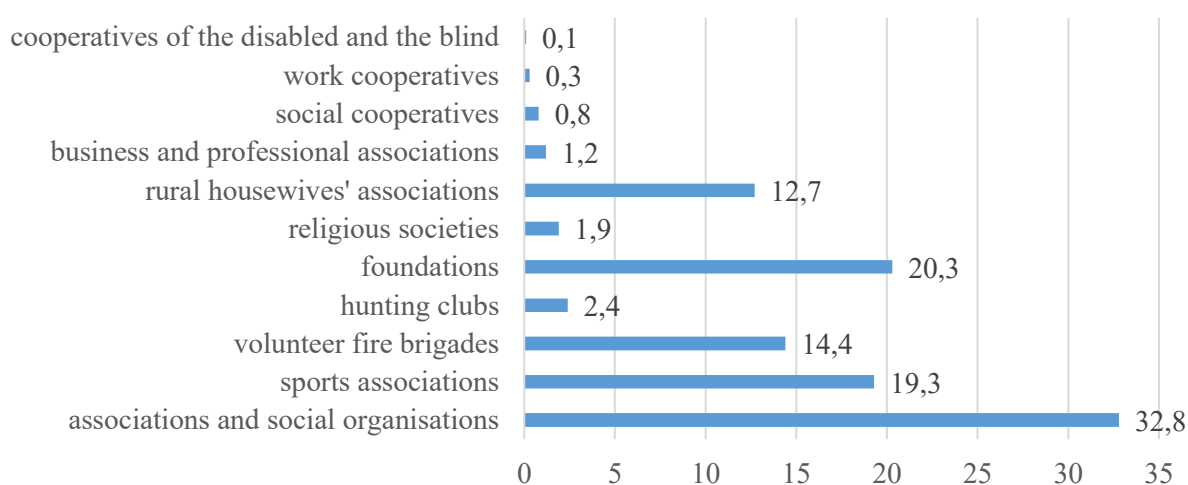


Figure 2. Number of active social economy enterprises by type of organisation in 2023 (in thousands). Source: Author's compilation based on (GUS, 2024a).

4.2. Labour resources in the social economy sector

Social economy enterprises achieve their objectives by using a variety of resources. The labor resources used by the social economy sector consist of workers employed based on civil law contracts and employment relationships and volunteers working on an unpaid basis. In 2018, paid work in the social economy sector corresponded to 323.2 thousand full-time equivalents. On the other hand, considering work performed in the context of volunteering, the dimension of this work increased threefold to 867.9 thousand full-time equivalents. According to the statistics of Poland, direct voluntary work accounted for the largest share of work in the social economy sector (47.6%) (GUS, 2024a).

Statistics Poland compared the labor resources generated by social economy enterprises (excluding volunteering) with the total labor resources in the economy and, on this basis, indicated the sectors in which the social economy plays the most significant role. The analysis, carried out using the Polish Classification of Economic Activities (Polska Klasyfikacja Działalności), allows the activity of social economy entities to be allocated to specific sectors. In 2018,

the largest share of the social economy was in section R - Activities related to culture, entertainment, and recreation, where it generated more than a third (34.2%) of labor resources in relation to the national economy. It also played an important role in section S - Other service activities, accounting for 28.7% of the labor resources, indicating its importance in community support services. Furthermore, in sectors Q - Health and Social Work (12.5%) and P - Education (8.9%), the social economy was an important element in supporting the provision of essential social services such as education and social work (GUS, 2024a).

Gross value added produced by the social economy stood at 1.94% compared to the GDP (GUS, 2021a).

In 2023, non-profit organizations employed 187,600 people, and cooperatives 23,400 (Figure 3). NPOs employed an average of 12 employees, and cooperatives 21 employees. The highest employment rate was characterized by cooperatives for the disabled and blind (91 persons).

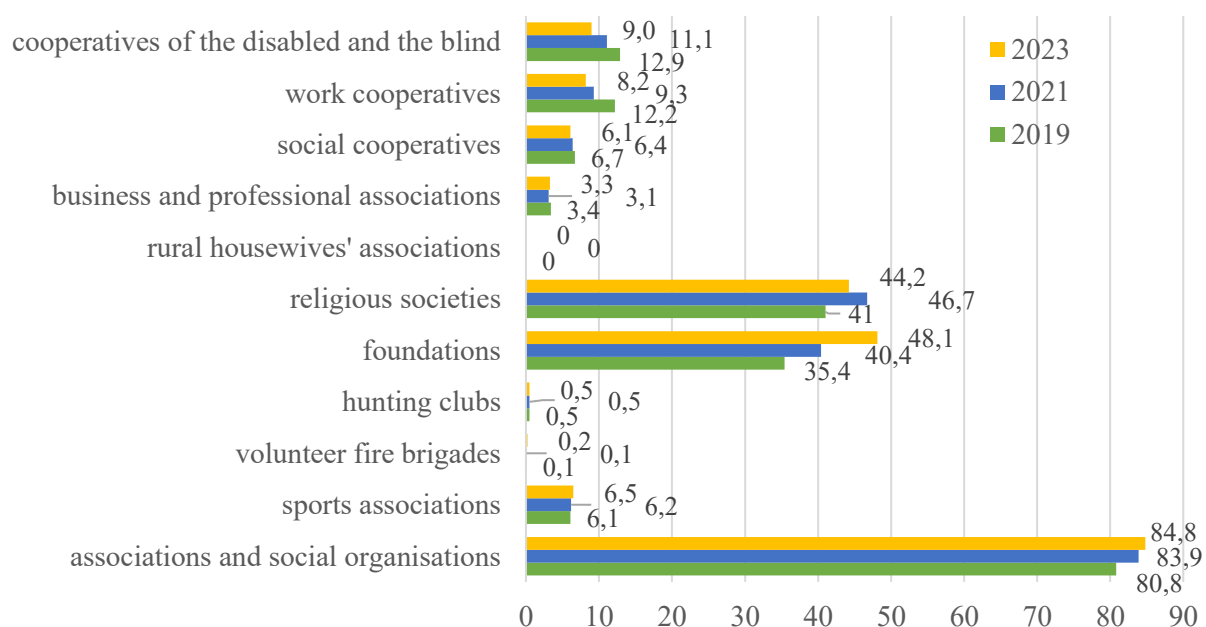


Figure 3. Number of persons employed on a contract of employment in social economy entities (in thousands).

Source: (GUS, 2024a).

The dynamics of change in the number of full-time employees looked different in the communities of non-profit organizations and cooperatives. In all the years analyzed, more than 4/5 of the employees worked in non-profit organizations. The number of people employed in this group increased by 12% in 2023 compared to 2019. In cooperatives, on the other hand, there was a decrease in the number of employees by 26.% from 2023 to 2019. This situation was due to the successive decrease in the number of workers' cooperatives and of invalids and blind people, and therefore, in employment in this group of entities.

Compared to the number of persons employed based on an employment relationship in the national economy, employment in social economy entities in 2023 accounted for 1.5%, and about the total number of employees - 1.2%.

4.3. Reintegration dimension of employment in the social economy

Vocational reintegration is an important objective of social economy entities. In 2023, social economy entities in Poland employed 27.2 thousand persons belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion, which accounted for 12.8% of their total workforce.

Between 2017 and 2023, social cooperatives and cooperatives of the disabled and blind had a much higher proportion of people at risk of social exclusion among full-time employees than non-profit organizations (Figure 4). In the case of cooperative organizations, changes in the percentage of people at risk of social exclusion are relatively small (e.g., in social cooperatives, a change of 2.4% over 6 years). On the other hand, non-profit organizations have an apparent increase in this percentage (e.g., in foundations and sports associations, an increase of several percentage points over 6 years).

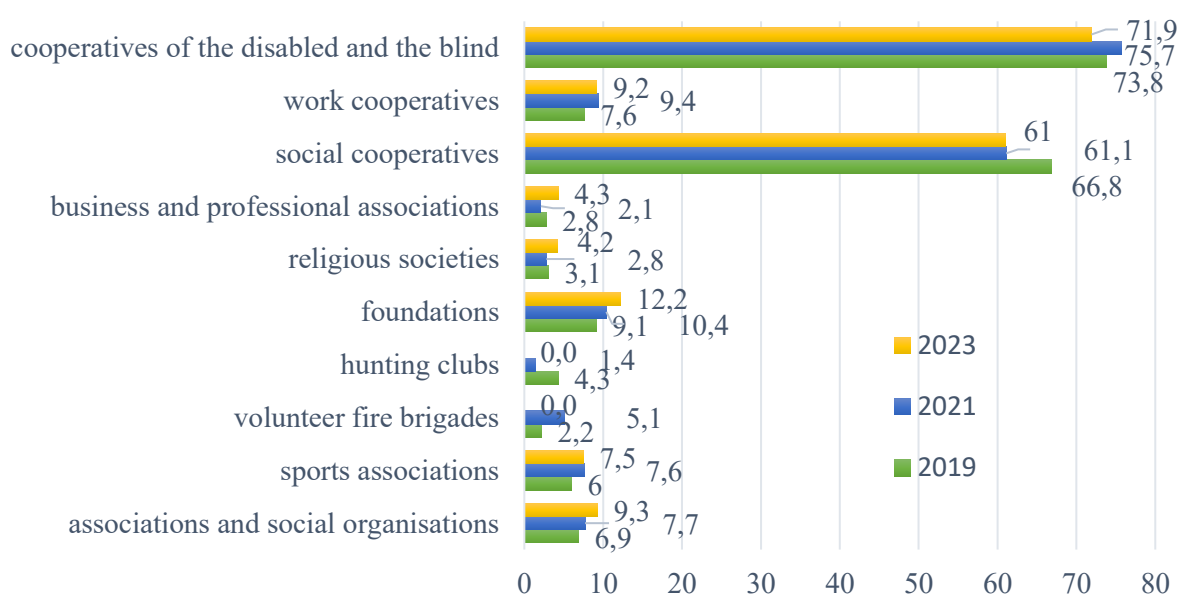


Figure 4. Percentage of people from groups at risk of social exclusion among contracted employees in social economy entities (%).

Source: Own study based on (GUS, 2023, 2024a).

In 2021, the structure of employed persons from groups at risk of social exclusion was dominated by persons with disabilities (81.8%), followed by unemployed persons (12.6%), and other persons at risk of social exclusion (5.6%). Between 2017 and 2022, there is a decrease in the number of people with disabilities (from 86.2% in 2017 to 81.8% in 2021) which can be linked, among other things, to a significant decrease in the number of disability and blind cooperatives (GUS, 2023).

In 2023, employees' social or professional reintegration activities were carried out by 7.9% of employing social economy entities - 4.9% of non-profit organizations, and 49.1% of cooperatives (GUS, 2024a).

5. Discussion

An analysis of selected aspects of the employment function of the social economy in Poland leads to a reflection on its effectiveness.

On the one hand, social economy organizations represent only a fraction of employers of people from excluded groups. Moreover, the employment rate of the social economy sector in Poland (1.5% of total employment) can be considered low compared to countries such as Canada (3%), Belgium (12.1%) or France (10%) (OECD, 2024). However, taking into account the historical and socio-political circumstances of Poland, which has been transforming its social sector since the 1990s, this indicator is similar to the results in other CEE countries such as Latvia (1.6%), Slovenia (2.7%) or Hungary (3%). This points to a specific context for the development of the social economy in the region, as highlighted by numerous studies (Ciepielewska-Kowalik et al., 2021; Defourny, Nyssens, 2021). The social economy sector in Poland is growing, with non-profit organizations playing a dominant role, accounting for more than 98% of the sector's entities. They are the ones that create the most jobs and have a significant impact on the development of reintegration units and social enterprises. At the same time, social cooperatives and cooperatives of disabled and blind people play a key role in the professional reintegration of people at risk of social exclusion, offering employment to people in difficult situations. Despite their importance, the role of these entities is underestimated in public policies, which indicates the need for better support and research on their needs and challenges in the context of further development.

On the other hand, data from the experimental satellite account of the social economy in Poland (GUS, 2021a) show the importance of the activities of social economy entities in areas of high social relevance, such as culture, social services, education, and health care. The social economy plays an important role in filling market gaps and supporting communities, which is crucial for social and economic sustainability. It is worthwhile to continue and develop research on satellite accounts to obtain a more complete picture of the opportunities and outcomes of the social economy sector, which could help support it more effectively.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the social economy sector in Poland, while still developing and shaped by its historical and social context, plays a significant role in job creation, vocational reintegration, and addressing market gaps in socially critical areas. The growth and dominance of non-profit organizations underscore their potential in fostering an inclusive labor market and supporting local community development. Simultaneously, the cooperative sector continues to serve

as a vital mechanism for the professional reintegration of individuals at risk of social exclusion, despite limited institutional support. Research findings and the experimental satellite account of the social economy highlight the sector's importance for sustainable development, emphasizing the need for targeted policies and a deeper understanding of its societal and economic contributions.

Future growth of the social economy sector necessitates a cohesive strategy that prioritizes the inclusion of socially excluded individuals. Tailored support programs, with a focus on financial and organizational assistance, are essential for enhancing initiatives aimed at professional reintegration. Policymakers should focus on strengthening support for social economy entities, particularly in sectors like health, education, and social services, where their impact is most pronounced. Increased collaboration between the social economy and these sectors can improve its capacity to integrate excluded groups into the workforce and broader society. Additionally, expanding and promoting volunteering within the social economy is crucial, as it not only fosters social engagement but also provides pathways for professional development and inclusion for those facing employment barriers. Future policies should place greater emphasis on the value of volunteerism, recognizing its transformative role in advancing social and economic integration.

Future research should focus on examining the specific mechanisms through which social economy entities influence labor market dynamics, including their role in reducing unemployment, fostering vocational reintegration, and creating stable employment opportunities for marginalized groups. Studies should also investigate the long-term economic and social effects of social economy initiatives on workforce inclusion. Additionally, research should explore how policy interventions and financial support can enhance the effectiveness of social economy organizations in addressing labor market challenges and promoting sustainable employment growth.

Acknowledgements

This article presents the results of a scientific study conducted as part of the Potential Programme, Contract No. 037/GAZ/2023/POT, financed by the grant awarded to the Krakow University of Economics.

References

1. Bohdziewicz-Lulewicz, M., Murzyn, D., Pacut, A. (2022). Tworzenie regulacji prawnej dotyczącej przedsiębiorstwa społecznego w Polsce w kontekście teorii demokracji deliberatywnej. *Horyzonty Polityki*, 13(43), 51–71. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.35765/HP.-2237>.
2. Borzaga, C., SALVATORI, G., Bodini, R. (2017). *Social and Solidarity Economy and the Future of Work July*. ILO.
3. Bouchard, M.J. (2023). *Measuring the social and solidarity economy (SSE): A roadmap towards Guidelines concerning statistics of the SSE*. Université du Québec à Montréal and CIRIEC. Retrieved from: <https://www.ilo.org/media/250581/download>.
4. Chaves, R., Monzón, J.L. (2012). Beyond the crisis: The social economy, prop of a new model of sustainable economic development. *Service Business*, 6(1), 5–26. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11628-011-0125-7>.
5. Ciepielewska-Kowalik, A. (2020). *Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe: Country report: Poland*. Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved from: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/449704>.
6. Ciepielewska-Kowalik, A., Starnawska, M., Szymańska, A., Pielński, B. (2021). Social Enterprise in Poland: Institutional and Historical Context. In: Defourny, J., Nyssens, M. (Eds.) *Social Enterprise in Central and Eastern Europe Theory, Models and Practice*, 138–151. Routledge.
7. Compère, C., Sak, B., Schoenmaeckers, J. (2021). *Mapping International SSE. Mapping Exercises* [UNTFSSSE Knowledge Hub Working Paper]. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Retrieved from: <https://knowledgehub.unsse.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/WP-2021-SSE-Stats-Compere-et-at.pdf>.
8. Defourny, J., Develtere, P. (1999). *The Social Economy: The worldwide making of a third sector*. Universite de Liege; Retrieved from: https://emes.net/content/uploads/publications/Defourny.Develtere_SE_NorthSouth_Chap1_EN.pdf.
9. Defourny, J., Monzón, J.L. (Eds.) (1992). *The Third Sector. Cooperative, Mutual and Nonprofit Organizations*. De Boeck-Université/CIRIEC.
10. Defourny, J., Nyssens, M. (Eds.) (2021). *Social enterprise in Central and Eastern Europe: Theory, models and practice* (1 Edition). Routledge.
11. GUS. (2021a). *Rachunek satelitarny gospodarki społecznej dla Polski za 2018 r.* Retrieved from: <https://stat.gov.pl/statystyki-eksperymentalne/gospodarka-spoleczna/rachunek-satelitarny-gospodarki-spolecznej-dla-polski-za-2018-r-,5,1.html#>). GUS.
12. GUS. (2021b). *Spółdzielnie jako podmioty ekonomii społecznej w 2019 r.* Departament Badań Społecznych GUS, Urząd Statystyczny w Krakowie.

13. GUS. (2023). *Kondycja podmiotów ekonomii społecznej w latach 2017-2021*. Główny Urząd Statystyczny. Retrieved from: <https://bip.stat.gov.pl/dzialalnosc-statystyki-publicznej/projekty-unijne-w-statystyce/zintegrowany-system-monitorowania-sektora-ekonomii-spoleszcznej-zsmses/wyniki-badan/kondycja-podmiotow-ekonomii-spoleszcznej-w-latach-2017-2021/>.
14. GUS. (2024). *Sektor non-profit w 2022 roku*. Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
15. GUS. (2024a). *Podmioty ekonomii społecznej w 2023 r. Informacja sygnalna*. Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
16. GUS. (2024b). *Centra integracji społecznej, kluby integracji społecznej, zakłady aktywności zawodowej, warsztaty terapii zajęciowej w 2023 r. Informacja sygnalna*. Warszawa: Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
17. ILO. (2017). Conceptual Framework for the Purpose of Measurement of Cooperatives and Its Operationalization. Authors: Bouchard, M.J., LeGuernic, M. and Rousselière, D. *Report discussed at the COPAC Technical Working Group on Cooperative Statistics Meeting*. International Labour Organization.
18. ILO. (2022). *Responding to the crisis and fostering inclusive and sustainable development with a new generation of comprehensive employment policies*. Third recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment Fifth item on the agenda. International Labour Office. Retrieved from: https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@_ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_842083.pdf
19. Jun, S.-P., Yoo, H. S., Choi, S. (2018). Ten years of research change using Google Trends: From the perspective of big data utilizations and applications. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 130, 69–87. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.11.009>.
20. Krajowy Program Rozwoju Ekonomii Społecznej. (2022). Uchwała nr 212 Rady Ministrów z dnia 26 października 2022 r. zmieniająca uchwałę w sprawie przyjęcia programu pod nazwą *Krajowy Program Rozwoju Ekonomii Społecznej do 2023 roku*. *Ekonomia Solidarności Społecznej* (M.P. poz. 1171).
21. Kruk, M. (2022). Support for social entrepreneurship in Poland under the European Social Fund – changes and challenges. *Studies of the Industrial Geography Commission of the Polish Geographical Society*, 36(1). Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.24917/20801653.-361.5>.
22. Lambin, J.J. (2014). *A Social Economy*. In J.-J. Lambin, *Rethinking the Market Economy*, 185–196. Palgrave Macmillan UK. Retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137392916_10.
23. Macías Ruano, A.J., Milán-García, J., Marruecos Rumí, M.E., De Pablo Valenciano, J. (2021). Scientific Production on the Social Economy: A Review of Worldwide Research. *VOLUNTAS. International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 32(5), 925–943. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-021-00361-7>.

24. Małecka-Lyszczek, M. (2017). *Współpraca administracji publicznej z podmiotami ekonomii społecznej*. Wolters Kluwer.
25. Małecka-Lyszczek, M., Mędrzycki, R., Barczewska-Dziobek, A., Fill, W., Mędrala, M., Pacut, A., Sylwestrzak, D. (Eds.) (2023). *Ustawa o ekonomii społecznej: Komentarz* (Stan prawny na 1 lipca 2023 r). Wolters Kluwer.
26. Mavragani, A., Ochoa, G., Tsagarakis, K.P. (2018). Assessing the Methods, Tools, and Statistical Approaches in Google Trends Research: Systematic Review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 20(11), e270. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.9366>.
27. Moulaert, F., Ailenei, O. (2005). Social Economy, Third Sector and Solidarity Relations: A Conceptual Synthesis from History to Present. *Urban Studies*, 42(11), 2037–2053. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980500279794>.
28. OECD. (2020). *Social economy and the Covid-19 crisis: Current and future roles*. Retrieved from: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=135_135367-031kjiq7v4&title=Social-economy-and-the-Covid-19-crisis-current-and-future-roles.
29. OECD. (2023a). *Policy Guide on Social Impact Measurement for the Social and Solidarity Economy*. OECD. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1787/270c7194-en>.
30. OECD. (2023b). *Social and solidarity economy around the world*. Country fact sheets. OECD Publishing.
31. OECD. (2023c). *What is the social and solidarity economy?* (OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Papers) [OECD Global Action Promoting Social & Solidarity Economy Ecosystems]. OECD Publishing.
32. OECD. (2024). *Insights from social and solidarity economy data: An international perspective* (OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Papers). OECD. Retrieved from: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/insights-from-social-and-solidarity-economy-data_71d212f3-en.html.
33. Pacut, A. (2022). *Rozwój przedsiębiorczości społecznej w Polsce*. Warszawa: Scholar.
34. Pacut, A. (2024). Measuring Social Economy in Public Statistics: Introduction to the Polish Experience. *Social Entrepreneurship Review*, 1, 123–127. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.15678/SER.2024.001>.
35. Sałustowicz, P. (2007). *Pojęcie, koncepcje i funkcje ekonomii społecznej*, Ekonomia społeczna. Warszawa: FISE.
36. Social Economy Charter. (2015). [Social Economy Europe]. Retrieved from: <https://www.socialeconomy.eu.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-updated-Social-Economy-Charter.pdf>
37. Ustawa. (2022). Ustawa z dnia 5 sierpnia 2022 r o ekonomii społecznej. Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa, dnia 29 sierpnia 2022 r. Poz. 1812.
38. Utting, P. (2023). Contemporary understandings. In: Yi I. (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of the Social and Solidarity Economy* (19–26). Edward Elgar Publishing. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803920924.00015>.

39. Yi, I., Farinelli, F., Landveld, R. (2023). New economics for sustainable development. *United Nations Economist Network*. Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/social_and_solidarity_economy_29_march_2023.pdf.
40. Zybała, A. (2022). Social economy entities in public policy. *Polityka Społeczna*, 574(1), 10–18. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0015.8244>.