

# ***SOCIAL INNOVATION AND INNOVATION PERFORMANCE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION***

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## ***Abstract:***

*Along the last decade, the key role of social innovation in providing answers to intricate and interdependent societal challenges has been an important issue in the literature, as well as in the political discourse. At the EU level, various flagship initiatives within the Europe 2020 strategy integrate and emphasize its potential contribution to the overarching objective of smart and inclusive growth. Yet, the literature on the impulse that social innovation may give to economic growth and, more specific, to innovation performance is rather scarce. In this paper, we attempt to look into the linkages between social innovation and economy, with emphasis on the contribution social innovation may have to higher general innovation performance at national level.*

***Keywords:*** *social innovation, social economy, social entrepreneurship, innovation performance, closing the innovation gap*

***JEL codes::*** *033, 035, 038*