The Creative Process for Digital Social Innovation in the Context of Migrant Integration
Master Thesis in Business Administration

Title: The Creative Process for Digital Social Innovation in the Context of Migrant Integration

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Key terms: social innovation; digital social innovation; social innovation process; migrant integration; Sweden; Germany

Abstract

**Background:** Existing literature has declared migrant integration as social stress putting communities under pressure. Dynamics of social innovations and digital technologies can provide solutions to the pressing matter of migrant integration, yet the academic literature is obscure about processes that organisations employ in this matter.

**Purpose:** This study aims to investigate how the process of digital social innovation unfolds in organisations. The main purpose of this study seeks to answer the research question: *How do organisations undertake the process of digital social innovations in relation to migrant integration?*

**Method:** To answer the research question, a qualitative research approach was chosen. Multiple case study was carried out, and the empirical data was gathered through semi-structured interviews. The content of the company websites, and other additional material were used as a complementary source of information. The scope of participants was delimited to Sweden and Germany due to a high level of immigration in these countries. After data collection, the analysis was carried out in an abductive manner.

**Conclusion:** The findings showed that the social innovation process is intertwined with the context where the actor acts as a mediator between the two. Two models were combined to gain both theoretical and practical insights without excluding one another. A suggested digital social innovation process model was then introduced in pursuit of providing a model that could be used in academia to annex scattered literature and to use the model in practice as a foundation for the innovation process.
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List of Abbreviations

DSI  Digital Social Innovation
ESG  Environment, Society and Governance (criteria that is used to measure the ethical and sustainable impact of an investment)
IC   Institutional Context
ICT  Information and Communication Technologies
IS   Institutional Support
IV   Institutional Void
NGO  Non-Governmental Organisation
SI   Social Innovation
SIP  Social Innovation Process
1. Introduction

The introductory chapter familiarises the reader with the topic of digital social innovation and raises the research problem. That is followed by presenting the purpose of this study and the research question it aims to answer. Finally, the delimitations and thesis structure are presented.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

– Margaret Mead

1.1 Background

“Innovation is the engine of change for societies and companies” and it aims to generate benefits and value to stakeholders (Dreyer, Chefneux, Goldberg, Von Heimburg, Patrignani, Schofield, & Shilling, 2017, p. 9). Innovation is an essential driver of economic growth and competitiveness and it can be characterised as the development of creative and new ideas to produce added value (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). To blend in different stakeholders into the innovation process, social innovations can be used as a tool to approach both social threats and public needs (European Commission, 2013).

Social innovations (SIs) can be described as activities, attitudes, and ways of working that help contribute to social change. They shall be used in a way that social welfare, justice, inclusion, and input in environmental problems would be equal or pivotal to aim for profits (Mulgan, 2006; European Commission, 2013; Dreyer et al., 2017). Social innovation as a concept has been always present in the society, however, the phenomenon has been developing over decades in order to comply with the changing needs of the public (Mulgan 2006; Boelman, Kwan, Lauritzen, Millard & Schon, 2014; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). In the past social innovations were mainly linked to organisations such as cooperatives, trade unions and clubs (Mulgan, 2006). Even money, laws and freedom to vote have been regarded as institutions of social innovation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014).
Viltard (2016) claims that there are five factors influencing new ways of doing business and new value creation patterns: globalisation, connectivity, digital technology, convergence of technologies, and social networks. As a result, digitalisation is becoming a part of peoples’ lives in different ways, which might have seemed astonishing some years ago. For instance, within the last decade, mobile technology has progressed from being accessible only for the elite crowd to technology that is indispensable and mainstream (Mavropoulos, Tsakona & Anthouli, 2015). A smart mobile device of today is capable of enriching lives by offering entertainments, companionship, free time activities and much more (Viltard, 2016).

Existing social innovations can be supported by fast developing digital technologies. Due to this possibly powerful connection between the two (Boelman et al., 2014), new benefits can be brought to society to improve the quality of lives. Alongside the advanced technology such as mobile Internet and the capability of computerised knowledge work, the process of social innovation becomes more simplified and the accessibility to innovations increases (Viltard, 2016; Jabłoński, 2018).

The 17 United Nations sustainable development goals include, among others, the annihilation of poverty, fight against diseases, access to education and principal rights to social inclusion (Gulliksen, 2017). Furthermore, The European Commission (2013) has listed recent and future areas that need the most attention and urges developers of social projects’ to foremost concentrate on nine challenges. These areas are migration, social inclusion, urban regeneration, the social economy, microfinance, health and aging, incubation, workplace innovation, and lastly, regional strategies.

Migration specifically has put pressure on the harmony of communities. In some circumstances, it has also pressed local services with increased demands. In addressing these newly emerged challenges, social innovation has the feasibility of making a real difference. Dynamic and new approaches are a source of mobilisation and building the resilience of communities. The solutions can come from anyone who innovatively wants to respond to the pressing challenges (Boelman et al., 2014).
1.2 Research Problem

There is growing pressure to do things differently. Companies are facing a movement towards the necessity of being more socially and environmentally responsible. Additionally, the understanding of innovations is developing (Boelman et al., 2014; Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). Due to that, there is a demand to move the research focus away from who engages in social innovations to how to undertake social innovations. The authors motivate to study the processes of social innovation in order to comprehend the concept more thoroughly (Phillips, Lee, Ghobadian, Regan & James, 2015; Sørensen & Torfing, 2016).

The recent surge of digital technologies is modifying and escalating innovation flow (Viltard, 2016). It can be claimed that innovations based on digital technology play a major role in any industry (Dreyer et al., 2017). Jabłoński (2018) claims that areas of peoples’ lives will be influenced by digitalisation and for this reason reciprocal learning will take an important place in the development of the social phenomenon. It can be assumed that fast-growing digitalisation will have a high influence on the most vibrant social challenges.

Along with the previously presented, nine social challenges, migration and immensely diverse communities have pressurised the unity of local communities. As a result, the demand for more socially oriented services has risen during the past decade. Social innovations are needed to make a difference and boost the coherence of communities. Regardless whether the innovation would assist in reducing unemployment of newcomers, help with the inclusion into a new society or would touch upon any other challenge migrants are confronting, digital social innovations can significantly change the current status (Boelman et al., 2014). Consequently, integrating migrants into a new environment is among one of the most often addressed challenges by social innovations (European Commission, 2013).

Germany and Sweden have attracted masses of migrants as a destination country. According to UN estimations from 2017, there were more than 10 million international migrants in Germany, whilst nearly 2 million in Sweden ("International migrant stock 2017", 2017). Additionally, in the past decade, Germany has accepted the largest and
Sweden the second largest number of asylum seekers from active warzones. The debate around integrating migrants into the workforce and society circles around the questions on “[how to] ensure they have equal rights” and “how to provide them with opportunities” ("Sweden and migration", 2018).

1.3 Research Purpose and Research Question

Two main themes were identified in the problem discussion. First, there is a need to move the research focus of the social innovation process to practice. Second, attention must be drawn to digital technology as it is becoming an inseparable part of innovations. Due to the evident relevance and interconnectivity between social innovation and digitalisation, the area to be researched was identified. Hence, the main purpose of this study is to examine how the process of digital social innovations for integration of migrants unfolds in organisations.

The research question was derived from the purpose. The following chapters of this study aim to answer the question:

➢ *How do organisations undertake the process of digital social innovations in relation to migrant integration?*

1.4 Delimitations of the Study

This study has been delimited in some respects in order to address the problem and answer the research question. Authors limited this study to digital social innovations trying to solve integration challenges of migrants within Sweden and Germany. This decision was made due to the high number of immigrants’ acceptance in these two countries. Additionally, both countries are showing exceptional examples in integrating migrants and can be considered as role models for the rest of Europe. Authors are aware of possible slight distinctness in findings if the focus would be shifted to different countries or areas. Moreover, this study focused on integration-related challenges such as language, employment, and culture.
1.5 Thesis Structure

This study starts with the introductory chapter which presents the background of the topic on social innovation, digital technologies for social purposes and central social challenges of the 21st century. Based on the explored history of the topic, the aim is to explain a problem which from the purpose of this study is derived. The second chapter of this study is the theoretical background which presents relevant literature and theories within the key fields of digital social innovation processes. This starts with the definition of the key concepts, followed by an examination of the existing body of literature on digital social innovation processes. The third chapter presents the methodology of the carried-out study, where the detailed explanation of how it was conducted is presented. The fourth chapter demonstrates all data collected through interviews as well as the reports of the target companies. The analysis, comparison of collected empirical data and findings from the theoretical framework are combined in the fifth chapter in order to produce in-depth analysis and discussion of the results. This study will finally result in generalised conclusion, theoretical and practical implications, limitations of the research process and findings. In addition, potential fields for future research linked to the findings and limitations are introduced.
2. Theoretical Background

This chapter provides a definition of social and digital innovation. Then, both theoretical and practical models for the social innovation process are presented. That is followed by an introduction to creativity and innovation process risks. Finally, migrant integration has been explained as the context for this study.

2.1 Social Innovation

To this date, there still are several definitions and interpretations of the term social innovation. Cajaiba-Santana (2014) clarifies that even though the concept is nothing new, it has only recently entered the social sciences whilst the literature remains disconnected and scattered. In short, SIs represent new reactions to social demands where social, cultural, administrative and economic traditions play a role in defining the concept. European Commission (2013, p. 5) characterises them as “[...] innovations that are both social in their ends and in their means, remaining open to the territorial, cultural, etc. variations it might take.” Other scholars have presented social innovation similarly stating that they aim to address social needs (e.g. Viltard, 2016; Dreyer et al., 2017; Jabłoński, 2018) to bring social change (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). Cajaiba-Santana (2014) and Boelman and colleagues (2015) go further with the definition by claiming that since social innovations are engaged meeting a specific need, they are different from innovations that have a social impact. They stress that social innovations are particularly designed to empower a specific target group. Based on the multiple definitions in the literature, a general definition of SI can be simplified as presented by Cajaiba-Santana (2014, p. 44):

“[...] what is meant by ‘social’ does not relate only to the behavioural practices or the human relationship involved in the process of innovation creation and diffusion, it has a larger meaning based on the creation of a greater common good.”

Social innovations can be defined in five criteria: they are new to the context, meet a social need, are put into practice, mobilise and engage beneficiaries, and they transform
Social innovations can also be characterised by several aspects which do not inevitably have to be present: bottom up vs. top down, high level of uncertainty, embedded in routines, structures and norms, and unintended consequences (Boelman et al., 2015). Social innovation tends to emerge from informal processes and bottom-up approach, compared to rigid, top-down manners (European Commission, 2013; Boelman et al., 2015) and they often are marked by a high level of uncertainty (Boelman et al., 2015; Teberga & Oliva, 2018). Due to the newness factor, it is not possible to claim that social innovation is ‘better’ or ‘more effective’ than the alternatives (Boelman et al., 2015) but in this case ‘more socially desirable’ in a normative sense (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). At the beginning of the innovation lifecycle, social innovation is likely different from mainstream practices. Once it becomes embedded in routines, structures and norms, it may become an institutionalised practice which again leads to the new need for social innovation (Boelman et al., 2015). Shorter product lifecycles have driven innovation to become multiplayer ventures that have increased a constant need for venture capital (Oeij Van der Torre, Vaas & Dhondt, 2018). Regardless of good intentions, social innovations might end up with unintended consequences, negative social effects or being socially disruptive. For instance, they might exclude vulnerable groups affected by the
innovation (Boelman et al., 2015) or can be seen as regression by the public (Cajaiba- Santana, 2014).

Social innovation refers to a broad range of activity. According to Boelman et al. (2015), there are five types of social innovation: new services and products (new programmes to meet social needs), new practices (new services requiring new professional relationships), new processes (co-producing new services), new rules and regulations (creating new laws) and new organisational forms (hybrid organisational forms, e.g. social enterprise). Majority of the scholars seem to demonstrate social innovation as new approaches, such as the development and implementation of ideas in the shape of new models, services, and products (e.g. Mulgan, 2006; European Commission, 2013; Teberga & Oliva, 2018). It can do so by integrating various stakeholders and creating new social collaborations and relationships to find new ways of involving users and working together. Social innovations can stem from private, public and third sector organisations. They rely on businesses, local communities, civil society organisations, public servants and individuals (European Commission, 2013; Oeij et al., 2018) and their ability and eagerness to innovate. For that reason, social innovators can operate at all levels from idea development to policymaking. It is stated by the European Commission (2013), that collaborations across sectors usually produce more beneficial sources for new ideas.

Business innovation and SIs differ from each other. Social innovation addresses meeting public demands and fulfilling social needs (European Commission, 2013; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Dreyer et al., 2017; Oeij et al., 2018) while innovation for business is more linked with market demands, commercialisation and profitability (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014; Goduscheit & Faullant, 2018). Furthermore, they likely have different motives regarding compassion, care, identity, and autonomy. Social organisations do not necessarily grow as fast as private organisations, but they bound to be more resilient. Business innovations tend to be more scalable and capture a larger part of a market share. Also, judging success differs between the business and social innovations since social innovation is more concerned with a contained need as opposed to scaling or market share (Mulgan, 2006). Goduscheit and Faullant (2018) indicate that profit-oriented companies often choose to incorporate radical, new knowledge requiring innovations. Social
innovations instead are more often guided by incremental approach and building on existing knowledge.

2.2 Digital Innovation

Digitalisation is challenging traditional businesses. Digitalisation helps to create network effects, replicating and storing data and minimising transportation costs. Consumers search for experiences rather than products, which makes digital products, customer experience, and channel management relevant. Integration of physical experiences with digital ones creates new ways for interaction (Viltard, 2016). Digital technology can be defined as a tool to elevate connectivity and communication between different parties or institutions in order to improve services and trades between people and/or organisations (Carrasco-Sáez, Careaga Butter & Graciela Badilla-Quintana, 2017; Dell’Era, Altuna & Verganti, 2018; Linkov, Trump, Poinsatte-Jones & Florin, 2018; Russo, 2018). Additionally, digital technologies and the increased connectivity is stimulating the growing needs of people, therefore, the transition to digitalisation is an inevitable factor influencing emerging lifestyles of the society (Dreyer et al., 2017; Dell’Era et al., 2018). All in all, digital technology generally stands for computerised solutions whether used in processes of innovations or as an end-product or service (Sugiyama, Deguchi, Ema, Kishimoto, Mori, Shiroyama & Scholz, 2017).

The new era of digitalisation has started changing the way organisations create their success and that is oftentimes done with the assistance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (Viltard, 2016). Information and Communication Technologies, also known as ICTs, cannot be described in a single definition. Gulliksen (2017) explains that ICTs together with digitalisation increase the accessibility of information for both organisations and people. Similarly, Carrasco-Sáez et al. (2017) define ICTs as a tool to connect and access information sources in the digital space through telecommunications. In the past few decades, Information and Communication Technologies have become an inseparable part of innovations for social purposes. This means that people are enabled to communicate with one another all over the world and share information in a more efficient way (Gulliksen, 2017; Angelidou, Psaltoglou, Komninos, Kakderi, Tsarchopoulos & Panori, 2018). Additionally, Dreyer at al. (2017)
state that ICTs have significantly influenced the growing life expectancy which resulted in improved quality of life. ICTs have provided entirely novel methods of approaching social and environmental challenges and is becoming inseparable from all aspects of peoples’ lives (Gulliksen, 2017). ICTs have the power to affect attitudes of people related to participation, education, employment, mobility, etc. (Carrasco-Sáez et al., 2017). Moreover, looking at the ICTs from the organisational perspective, it helps businesses to be more alert and act upon social and environmental challenges more efficiently (Gulliksen, 2017; Angelidou et al., 2018).

After the invention of the Internet, computers and mobile phones have changed their purpose significantly. The exchange of information and goods became a phenomenon of daily lives. Sometimes even without peoples’ mediation, such technologies can interact and maintain the transformation of the environment (Russo, 2018). Mobile phones are an important part of ICTs and highly contributes to the existence of social innovations. The invention of the mobile phone has started changing the ways people communicate. The mobile phone has become an essential invention enabling a faster information exchange (Russo, 2018) due to its multifunctionality and affordability (Viltard, 2016). Mobile phones and mobile Internet are now used as one of the main transmitters of social benefits. Social well-being nowadays is oftentimes associated with the accessibility of information, media, and services online. Therefore, mobile phones and their capabilities are a principal topic of discussions regarding the fight against social challenges (Mavropoulos et al., 2015). For example, Viltard (2016) names mobile phones and Internet as technologies that are and will continue influencing the better variety of products and services, affordable prices, a cleaner environment and better accessibility to social benefits. Mobile phones can register human activities and attitudes that can later be used by organisations to accumulate knowledge about behaviours and use it for digital social innovations’ development (Mavropoulos et al., 2015; Dell'Era et al., 2018; Linkov et al., 2018). Moreover, this method and initiatives allow to focus on large public communities and deal with widely spread social challenges rather than concentrate on small groups of individuals and their concrete, less publicly spread stresses (Dell'Era et al., 2018). Mavropoulos et al. (2015) have explained the new society’s perception of well-being. Today, the welfare is evaluated based on the accessibility of information, goods,
and services online and in most cases on mobile phones. That becomes one of the reasons why smartphones are often a topic of attention when talking about social changes.

The rising era of digitalisation and adaptation of technology have fostered new ways for organisations to connect with society and different stakeholders. Digital technology now is considered to be a modern pattern of doing social innovations. Policy makers and Governments are acknowledging the impact of digital technologies for social innovations and therefore are starting to support the combined framework of the two matters (Boelman et al., 2014). Digitalised innovations are increasing connectivity and improving communication, services, and trade. This is building outstanding opportunities and affecting social welfare and living standards for todays as well as future generations (Dell’Era et al., 2018; Linkov et al., 2018).

### 2.3 Creativity in Innovation Process

Due to connectivity between creativity and innovation, creativity is often understood as novel ideas that serve a solution to a specific problem (Paulus, 2000; Paletz, Peng & Li, 2011). Guilford (1967) has presented four categories for divergent thinking: fluency, as generating large number of ideas, flexibility, as generating a wide variety of ideas, originality, as the production of unusual ideas, and elaboration, as developing on others’ ideas. Mulgan (2006) has stated in a simpler way, that a common trait between good idea generators is their ability to understand dissatisfactions and needs for improvement.

There are several differences that help to distinguish creative thinking from non-creative. First, problems that creative thinking tends to solve are not to be easily and clearly identified. Second, the creative solutions are often described to be a pioneer by its nature, requiring both divergent and convergent thinking. Third, creativity contains many layers of re-evaluations, re-interpretations while non-creative thinking involves less divergent thinking and rather undertakes a direct path of a process. Fourth differentiation between the two is that, in standard problem solving, existing category structures are used as they are. In the creative process, the information is reorganised and combined (Lubart, 2001).
Creativity can take place individually or stem from groups (Mulgan, 2006). According to Sawyer (2007), networks bring people together. This is an essential realisation since regular interaction among teams and multiple discoveries are characteristics for ‘collaborative webs’. Specifically, knowledge and information exchange on groups is growing in importance in innovation development (Paulus, 2000). Von Oech (2008), however, has explained that knowledge only does not define creativity. According to him, to boost ones’ creativity, innovators must be able to reflect and apply knowledge and experience in practice. Morris, Kuratko and Covin (2011) have specified, that creativity comes from obtaining new knowledge or, in other words, gathering the information that can be later used in a process of innovation development.

According to Mulgan (2006), new ideas can also originate internally or externally. From the organisational (internal) perspective, factors influencing creativity compose of individual characteristics, e.g. knowledge, abilities, group characteristics, e.g cohesion, diversity, norms, and organisational characteristics, e.g resources, culture. Creativity and innovation processes are affected by leadership and the environment that can either enhance or inhibit the process. Critical factors in creative accomplishments are autonomy, support, freedom of choice and challenge (Paulus, 2000). In case the manager fails to stimulate creativity within the team, the outcome will not reach its’ full potential (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). According to Sawyer (2007), another stimulus to enhance creativity is empowering external networks to take part in. Various stakeholders are invited to be a part of the innovation process to support and increase creativity.

The four-stage model for the creative process and its’ variations are a base for many of the creative process models found from the literature. The four main steps are preparation, incubation, illumination, and elaboration (Lubart, 2001; Morris et al., 2011). At the Preparation stage, defining the problem and gathering information to find answers takes place. At the Incubation stage, some of the key blocks might unconsciously be removed with non-intentionally working on the problem with one’s own field of expertise, even if it is far away from the problem. At the Illumination stage, one may come out with a creative outline of an answer that still needs refining, adaptation, testing, and revision. The last stage, Elaboration, is achieved through refining and adaptation. In contradict to how the process is explained in the literature, it most often is not undertaken in such a
linear manner (Morris et al., 2011). It can be, however, summarised that innovation tends to emerge from a string of small ideas (Sawyer, 2007) that are needed to create an applicable solution (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Even their usefulness is not necessarily clear at the beginning, successful innovation emerges from a synergy between different ideas (Sawyer, 2007).

2.4 Model for Social Innovation Process

Innovation culminates in the process of converting an invention or idea into a product or service (Dreyer et al., 2017). Since social innovations are responses to meet social challenges, their central role in a global society is enhanced. Therefore, there is a growing need to understand the nature of Social innovations (SI) and what stimulates it (Turker & Vural, 2017). Studying the concept of the social innovation process (SIP) in social sciences has specifically proven to be a difficult task due to complexity and difficulty to identify origins and implementation of new ideas (Mumford & Moertl 2003). To this date, there are no widely accepted models (Dreyer et al., 2017) but there have been research efforts aimed to explain SI (Mulgan, 2006). One of the more recent contributions to academia is the combination of existing models 1) triple logics of social welfare (Pache & Chowdbury, 2012), 2) The PCPG model (Dawson & Daniel, 2012), and 3) three levels of SIs (Nicholls & Murdock, 2012), refined by Turker and Vural (2017). This twofold model (Figure 1) is used in this study to explain the process of social innovation.

![Figure 1: Research Model (Turker & Vural, 2017, p. 101)](image-url)
The model has two main sections; 1) Institutional Context (IC) and 2) Social Innovation Process (SIP). The first section is based on two concepts; Institutional Voids (IVs) and Institutional Supports (ISs) which are embedded in three institutional logics that are commercial, public-sector and social-welfare. The second section is based on the actor, challenge, goal and process that form the SIP. This is not a sequential process, therefore, and is indicated by the double arrows. The components are executed simultaneously and can be reconstructed at any time of the process. Many SI's goal is to meet the institutional voids, so the link is represented in the model with a loop from SI to IC (Turker & Vural, 2017).

2.4.1 Institutional Context

The voids in the institutional context indicate the weakness or lack of institutional systems, either formal or informal, that support the market. Market functions are based on cultural and local understanding, laws and the government that brings the sellers and the buyers together (Fligstein & Calder, 2015). According to Khanna and Palepu (2006), IVs are specifically addressed in the management literature in developing country context, but it is an emerging topic also in contexts that have no short of institutional arrangements. By using existing arrangements, there is a chance of finding new innovative ways to address the voids that usually emerge from cultural, environmental or socioeconomic problems. Actors might be stimulated by the challenges and solving them with available resources. The first step for the actor is to recognise opportunities regarding capital, strengths, and weaknesses, then involving strategic partners and expanding the stakeholder base (VanSandt, Sud, & Marmé, 2009).

As a contradictory view, institutional supports mean that social innovation strongly identifies with supportive institutional mechanisms. Scholars tend to concentrate on the role of the government for identifying cooperation for development between public agencies and individuals. For individuals to create social innovation, government support is inevitable (Stephan, Uhlaner & Stride, 2015). Similarly, support from the local authorities not only increases the awareness but helps in obtaining networks and funds among other organisations (Korosec & Berman, 2006). Social innovation, however, is not
limited only with formal regulations and arrangements but can be supported by partnerships, social networks, and social capital. Informal support mechanisms have a possibility to “...initiate and sustain socially innovative models” (Turker & Vural, 2017, p. 101).

Voids and supports are framed by three logics: commercial, public-sector and social-welfare. Traditional entrepreneurs tend to operate in the commercial logic, but social entrepreneurs are oftentimes simultaneously embedded within the different logics of commercial, public and social sectors. According to commercial logic, the main organisational goal is to sell goods and services in a lucrative manner and enhances the interaction with commercial stakeholders such as investors, clients, and business partners. Following the public-sector logic, the focus lies in ensuring fairness and equality. The actor interacts with public-sector stakeholders such as funding agencies, regulators and governmental organisations. According to social-welfare logic, organisations have a socially beneficial role in the solution to a growing societal challenge. Web of relationships is required to mobilise essential resources such as expertise, networks, and funding. The three diverse logics shape the behaviours and to reach sustainable innovation (Pache & Chowdhury, 2012) and the actors need to identify the interrelatedness to capture the voids and supports. The degree of heterogeneity and institutionalisation should be taken into consideration since these two field-level conditions can both enable and constrain the whole social innovation process. For example, low level of heterogeneity allows the actor to focus on providing a single product for a single location whereas a high level of institutionalisation decrease the level of uncertainty which might lead to incremental innovation (Turker & Vural, 2017).

2.4.2 Social Innovation Process
In accordance with the PCPG model, the social innovation process has been divided into four components; actor, challenge, goal, and process. Each of the components has its own sources of complexity (Dawson & Daniel, 2012). These four elements are explained under their own sections.
2.4.2.1 Actor

The first component of the process is the actor, or the change agent, that facilitates social innovation. The actor can either be an organisation and individual or (Turker & Vural, 2017) a formal, informal or spontaneous team that is linked by common goals or shared agenda (Dawson & Daniel, 2012). Two different perspectives, agentic (or individual) and structural have dominated the research of SI which continues to cause a disconnection between the subject. According to the individualistic perspective, SI is being determined by an individual actor’s values and attributes. The perspective usually paints a picture of visionaries finding innovative solutions to social problems that have not been met by the local system within their community. The structural perspective puts more focus on the context being the causation factor for innovation to occur. Both perspectives have received critique for neglecting one another since innovation exist both in agentic and structural positions. The ideal situation would be for both perspectives to simultaneously and interactively co-evolve in the process of SI creation. Thus, a third, combining perspective was created causing the agent to either be constrained or enabled by structures but also leaving room for the change agents’ own position and personal attributes to act as constraining or enabling factors (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). According to Turker and Vural (2017), actors are affected but also affect the institutional context and help to shape their environment. The actor might be influenced by an institutional void and tries to fill it with the help of available mechanisms. The new idea is then bridged together with the underlying logics of innovation context.

2.4.2.2 Challenge

Innovation starts from an idea of a need that should be met, together with an idea of how the need could be met (Mulgan, 2006). Henceforth, at the second component of the model, the actor translates a new idea into a social challenge, that can be an opportunity or a problem arising from the context the actor is embedded into (Dawson & Daniel, 2012). The challenge is the motivator that is used to construct the aim of the SI and how it is translated into an operational goal (Turker & Vural, 2017) and it can be either internal or external to the change agent. Given that the proposal to the challenge is ambiguous, new tools, strategies or concepts are required to support clarification and prioritisation. The
challenge itself might be radical, disruptive, incidental, intractable or dynamic (Dawson & Daniel, 2012).

2.4.2.3 Goal

The goal component determines how the challenge is to be solved (Turker & Vural, 2017) and the dominance of voids or supports might change the whole nature of it (Pache & Chowdhury, 2012). Even though social innovation process generally is not concerned with breakthrough technological change but rather advancing social well-being through finding solutions to social challenges (Dawson & Daniel, 2012), technological change might appear on the process as a side-effect (Turker & Vural, 2017).

2.4.2.4 Process

The SIPs are inevitably complex. The processes are affected by the voids and supports prevalent in that specific environment which makes social innovation dependable in the context, politics and culture it operates in. Moreover, they are cofounded and carried out according to the relational interests of the change agent which makes it unique regardless whether they occur spontaneously, radically, fragmented or emergent (Dawson & Daniel, 2012). Turker and Vural (2017) have divided the process into stakeholders, actions, output, partners and resources (tangible and intangible). Other categories may interfere, depending on the context the SI operates in.

2.4.3 Three Levels of Social Innovation

According to the three levels of SIs presented by Nicholls and Murdock (2012), social innovation can take place in three different levels; incremental, institutional and system-level change. At the first level, social innovation aims to provide new services or products that meet the social demands in an effective way. The second level takes place at the market level by reconfiguring existing market relationships and structures. Integration with economic issues might result in a relocation of intellectual capital or technological innovation as a resource for social innovation rather than to business goals. The final level aims to change power relations, reframe issues to benefit vulnerable groups or alter social hierarchies as a disruptive innovation (Turker & Vural, 2017).
2.5 Design Thinking Process

In order to extend the understanding and explore different approaches to DSIs processes undertaken by organisations, a more practical model for Design Thinking, presented in the research of Geissdoerfer, Bocken, and Hultink (2016), is introduced. The aim is to support the theoretical model for social innovation by Turker and Vural (2017) to be able to gain both perspectives.

Any type of social innovation is primarily created to meet yet not unfulfilled customers’ needs in order to overcome social challenges. Therefore, scholars often parallel social innovations with Design Thinking to meet social needs (Dell'Era et al., 2018). Design Thinking is a method to appeal to the complex challenges of specific groups of people and their claims. Also, it mainly tries to recognise users’ or customers’ requirement and this way create suitable resolutions (Brown & Wyatt, 2010; Gulliksen, 2017). Generally, the aim of Design Thinking is to focus on requirements of people who will be using the product or service (Brown & Wyatt, 2010), because users play an essential role in stimulating social innovations (Dell'Era et al., 2018).

With the help of ICTs and Design Thinking, companies are now able to learn from the behaviours of users and from ways that people give meaning to things (Dell'Era et al., 2018). This way they can develop more competent and less risky innovations (Mavropoulos et al., 2015). Including customers in the decision-making means working hand-in-hand with people and ensuring that these decisions are coming from the bottom rather than the top (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). In order to incorporate the Design Thinking in a company’s innovation process, different stakeholders are required to work in collaboration to stimulate creativity and divergent thinking (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). Similarly, Brown and Wyatt (2010) have emphasised that the Design Thinking process simply would not be applicable in a non-creative environment. They stressed that steps of Design Thinking process are clearly linked to creativeness and helps to make a social innovation development process faster and cheaper.

Since social innovations are mostly dedicated to large communities dealing with major issues (Dell'Era et al., 2018), there is a need of responsible Design Thinking process that
involves an understanding of local cultures and traditions to learn about potential approaches. Digital technologies are still not yet available in some parts of the world (Gulliksen, 2017). For example, mobile voting to involve people in the decision-making process suggested by Mavropoulos et al. (2015) can be used only by people with access to ICTs. This is where pivoting of innovations steps in because needs expressed by people might differ and this would help to find a balance (D’Auria et al., 2018). Finally, Dell’Era et al. (2018) explain the compatibility of Design Thinking and social innovations, saying that Design Thinking as well as social innovations, are concentrating on new purposes and try to answer the question ‘why’ - why people use and buy things and what emotional and social benefits it brings to people.

Figure 2 by Geissdoerfer et al. (2016) presents the steps of the Design Thinking process. However, these steps are rarely seen as an approach that can be undertaken in succession. The order of the steps is not set in stone allowing innovators to explore new directions by always returning to previous steps. This way innovations are explored more in depth before it is being introduced to customers (Brown & Wyatt, 2010).

![Process for Design Thinking](image)

Figure 2: *Process for Design Thinking* (Geissdoerfer et al., 2016, p. 1221)

The first step is Understand. At the very beginning, innovators must carry out secondary research. In this step, they are looking for general inspiration, an overall problem or a social need that potentially could be developed into a product or service (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). This phase helps to define overall social needs that are not yet sufficiently
addressed. The most challenging part is to acknowledge which problems are worth taking to the next stage (European Commission, 2013). Once the secondary problem research is done, it undertakes the second step in the process.

The second step in the process is to Observe. In this phase, innovators must learn about their audience and their needs. They are encouraged to observe actual experiences and behaviours of potential customers. Sometimes the problems that need to be attended are not easily recognisable, thus, it requires up-close observations and customer research to make sure that the solution is applicable (Mulgan, 2006). The evolution of a new idea is supported when different perspectives and opinions sharpen ideas through cooperation with different stakeholders (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016; Dell'Era et al., 2018). Collaboration helps to bring up divergent thinking and find the core of a problem, which later is translated to solutions that aim to meet the needs of these stakeholders (Boelman et al., 2014; Dougherty, 2018).

The third step is called Define. At this point findings from secondary data and observations are being processed and formulated into a narrower potential solution (Mulgan, 2006). Innovators must process their knowledge and look at the problem from the users’ perspective in order to understand the urgency of a new product or service regarding the problem (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Generally, in the Define stage, the situation is seen more clearly, and the problem is defined in a more explicit manner helping to move on to the next phase (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016).

The fourth step in the process is called Ideate. Here the identified problem is turned into actual ideas of products or services. Additionally, in this step, ideas are compared with each other and the best ones are chosen to proceed with further on (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Teberga and Oliva (2018) state that ideas do not come from an isolated environment, on the contrary, innovators must learn and observe before developing innovative ideas. For this reason, Ideation step comes only in the middle of the Design Thinking process.

The fifth step is Prototype. This phase is dedicated to building an early stage product or a pilot version of a service (Mulgan, 2006). Digital technology can be employed in this
stage to achieve better results. This is a stage that might need to be undertaken several times, however, this is considered to be less costly and more time-saving (Nambisan, Lyytinen, Majchrzak & Song, 2017). Not all ideas can be evaluated through in-depth analysis, progress can be better achieved through turning ideas into prototypes or trial version of services (Mulgan, 2006).

The sixth and final step in the process is Test. This might be considered one of the most important phases deciding whether the idea will be developed to a finished product or service. Testing ideas in practice help to separate the ones that are not working as expected to the others that with some improvements would be a potential success (Mulgan, 2006). Testing assists in finding possible challenges and consequences that might occur along the way after implementation. It also allows seeing whether there is a need to go a few steps back in the process and make some changes (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). In this phase, best solutions will be improved if people with different backgrounds are involved and are allowed to make an impact on the final decision whether the tested product or service should be implemented (Sørensen, & Torfing, 2016).

The process may loop back through some steps more than once as a team keep on elaborating and perfectionating the idea by exploring different directions (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Following this process model helps to be more resistant to risks that can be met along the way (Teberga & Oliva, 2018).

2.6 Risks and Challenges in DSI Process

Mulgan (2006) and Veselovsky, Pogodina, Ilyukhina, Sigunova, and Kuzovleva (2018) explain that many innovations are destined to fail whether during the process or after the establishment. Social innovations are not an exception. More particularly seven out of ten efforts fail, meaning that the chosen process does not lead to the expected outcome. Seemingly, the process is hard to be predicted because it is not undertaken in a linear approach and can get disorganised. Four main areas for social innovation to fail are insufficient skills, missing networks, access to finance and availability of scaling models (Oeij et al., 2018). Furthermore, DSIs specifically face risks of failing to leverage the
promised benefit (Dreyer et al., 2017) and safety and security risks imposed by digital technologies (Sugiyama et al., 2017).

One of the risks that can be faced at a very early stage of the process is knowledge barriers. It might be difficult to acquire needed information, or the existing information can appear inapplicable in specific cases (Lavikka et al., 2018). Dreyer et al. (2017) even suggest that researchers might distribute deceptive information due to inadequate practices or deceit. Therefore, this might cause a failure if innovators or researchers do not understand the importance of learning and knowledge obtainment in the process (Teberga & Oliva, 2018). Additionally, Teberga and Oliva (2018) emphasise on learning in the later stages of the innovation process. They stress the necessity of learning by trying out several different solutions to solve social challenges in order to be able to pick a better fitting one later. Ignorance of new flows of information throughout the process might lead to failure eventually. As an addition to the knowledge barrier, the lack of qualified and driven people involved in the process is seen as another potential setback which is faced by one out of three innovations (Oeij et al., 2018).

Another most often mention risks for innovation in the academic literature are the financing (Mavropoulos et al., 2015; Lavikka et al., 2018; Oeij et al., 2018; Teberga & Oliva, 2018; Veselovsky et al., 2018) and legal aspects (Oeij et al., 2018; Veselovsky et al., 2018). According to Oeij et al. (2018) funding is the biggest barrier to more than half innovations. It becomes difficult to attract funding due to uncertainty and high costs of commercialisation. On top of that, the payback time is hard to foresee (Veselovsky et al., 2018). However, Sustainable Finance and Investment is an emerging concept. The criteria that are used to select responsible innovation that does not differ considerably from the criteria that are used to select sustainable or responsible investment. For that reason, responsible innovation ought to comply with the rules of responsible investment. The investment must ensure that ESG criteria are met when selecting the portfolio (Dreyer et al., 2017). Oeij at al. (2018) explains that due to legal constraints and lack of political assistance regarding these constraints over one-quarter of innovations to experience failure. Whilst Veselovsky et al. (2018) agree that there is a lack of legislation that would assist companies in undertaking innovations. In this case big innovative organisations
would be able to help by sharing their experience and activities; however, these organisations hesitate to mentor new innovators.

Deyer et al. (2017) and Teberga and Oliva (2018) explain that a critical point, especially for social innovation is the failure to deliver value to society. This risk can occur if researchers or innovators provide misleading information of the findings, misinformation about advantages, or ignore external knowledge flows that would benefit society (Deyer et al., 2017). Additionally, in some cases, it is important to consider the level of literacy of the people that digital innovation is dedicated to (Mavropoulos et al., 2015) and the complexity of use of such digital social innovations (Mavropoulos et al., 2015; Sugiyama et al., 2017).

Sugiyama et al. (2017) explain that most often risks involving digital technologies are ensuring safety and security of private information. Speaking more specifically, users of digitalised innovations are at risk to become victims of hackers, cyber-attacks, and terrorism. Linkov et al. (2018) and Sugiyama et al. (2017) suggest that the use of private and even sensitive information should be carefully governed and regulated. Companies are more than ever vulnerable and exposed to potential unlawful activities. Additionally, Mavropoulos et al. (2015) have looked at digitalisation of innovations through a slightly different perspective emphasising on the accessibility of these technologies. There are still areas or particular status people remaining that are less familiar with ICTs and might not have access to social innovations that in fact are dedicated to meet their needs. Which brings the topic back to the importance of relevant knowledge acquisition in order to avoid this risk (Mavropoulos et al., 2015).

Social innovations may lack proper infrastructure and organisational leadership or capabilities which can act as barriers for expanding and sustaining such initiatives. Complexity in innovations also set challenges for upscaling (Oeij et al., 2018). Each of the risks mentioned at any stage might constrain innovation from possibilities to scale up (Mulgan 2006; Veselovsky et al., 2018).
2.7 The Context: Migrant Integration

Integration of migrants has been noted by European Commission (2013) as one of the most challenging issues that social innovations often address. Considering an early stage of integration, its challenges might interfere with the wholeness of the society if not being taken seriously (Boelman et al., 2015). Davy (2005) has explained the integration of migrants as a course that with no doubt should include both sides – immigrants and locals of the area. It embraces immigrants’ willingness and openness to learn and adjust to the new environment, on the other hand, natives are expected to accept the idea of diverse society by being open to changes and collaborative when welcoming immigrants. There are several measurements mentioned in the literature that play a major part when referring to migrants’ integration (Davy, 2005; Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2010). For instance, it can be measured by the proficiency of the local language, social inter-ethnic relationships such as friendships or marriage and an overall feeling of comfort and emotional tranquillity towards the new environment and culture (Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2010). Davy (2005) adds that private housing and inclusion in public establishments (i.e. schools, medical institutions, and employment) are equally important. He stresses that all these aspects of integration are not there to make immigrants and natives the same, but to encourage unity and coherence while embracing differences. Due to these concerns of migrant integration, social innovations are developed to make a difference (European Commission, 2013) by mobilising societies and breaking borders between these two entities (Boelman et al., 2015).

More attention is drawn to digital social innovations and ICTs as presented by Codagnone and Kluzer (2011). They emphasise that digital technologies are viable solutions to address the integration measures and are an essential tool to stimulate positive outcomes of the integration process. For instance, several general existing tools are mentioned: the online job search engines, platforms matching skills with potential employers, online websites helping to build or improve personal CVs, digital tools helping to learn about skills needed to succeed in an interview etc. Additionally, with the help of ICTs, newcomers have a greater access to online language learning engines, health-related services or obtaining any instrumental information needed to feel more included in the new environment. Since there is a growing need for social inclusion of migrants and the
growing importance of new technologies, DSIs are becoming a powerful tool in migrant integration (Boelman et al., 2015).
3. Methodology

This chapter starts by demonstrating the research purpose, followed by a research philosophy, approach, and strategy which were used to guide this study. Then, theoretical and empirical data collection strategy, together with means of data analysis, are illustrated. Finally, the quality of the study and the ethical considerations are discussed.

3.1 Research Purpose

The purpose of the research should be classified with respect to the research question. The literature of research methods commonly divides the purpose in explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory. It can, however, have one or more purposes simultaneously. The research question of this study aimed to answer the question ‘how’, thereby, the purpose was to seek new insights and to assess the current understanding of the phenomena of digital social innovation processes. Therefore, this takes an exploratory purpose (Saunders et al., 2009).

A qualitative study was conducted in order to fulfil the research purpose. According to Patton (2015), qualitative research allows studying how things work and understand why context matters. This study aimed to analyse how the digital social innovation process is understood and undertaken in organisations. Additionally, it was, then, important to comprehend the impact of the context.

3.2 Research Philosophy

To choose the philosophical standpoint, the ontological and epistemological branches were considered. Ontology is the nature of existence and reality whereas epistemology seeks to find an answer to “[…] what do you know and how do you know it” (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015, p. 51).

Ontological perspective in social sciences has four variations: realism, internal realism, relativism and nominalism (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015) or in different terms positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The topic
of the innovation process itself is subjective and, thereby, this study has taken a relativistic approach indicating that reality depends on the viewpoint of the observer as multiple truths may exist. Thus, the view of the researcher of the nature of reality is socially constructed which might affect the results of the study (Saunders et al., 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

Social scientists have focused on two contrasting views when conducting an epistemological study: positivism and social constructionism. This study has taken a position of social constructionism that puts focus on how people allocate the meaning of their experience in different situations (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). By collecting the perspectives of eight different representatives of social innovations, more insights could be gained on how the innovation process was constructed.

### 3.3 Research Approach

Two predominant research approaches can be found in the literature: deductive and inductive. In a deductive approach, the researcher creates hypotheses from the current knowledge whilst in an inductive approach the researcher aims to create a new theory that results from study findings (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018; Saunders et al., 2009). A third approach, abductive, was created as an alternative that more than combines the two approaches. It is claimed by Dubois and Gabbe (2002) that the abductive approach, in fact, is fruitful when the aim is to make new discoveries in terms of new variables and new relationships.

To complement the qualitative research, an abductive approach was applied as suggested by Bryman (2012). This study was conducted with the intent to develop existing theories about social innovation processes further. The authors of this study were, then, to keep an open mind to whatever findings occur since the academic literature is fragmented in this specific matter. It was essential to have more flexibility and a possibility to shift the focus as the study developed (Saunders et al., 2009). To conclude, the abductive approach allowed to achieve the primary interest by looking for patterns in theoretical data and continually re-examining empirical data to determine the final findings.
3.4 Research Strategy

There are several options to choose a strategy for a qualitative study. The benefit of a case study is the possibility to challenge an existing theory (Dubois & Gadde, 2002; Saunders et al., 2009) which this study aimed to do without having to compromise on discovering new findings. Eight social innovators were interviewed with an exploratory purpose (Yin, 2003), thereof, a multiple case study was chosen as a strategy. According to Saunders et al. (2009), multiple case study serves the purpose of generalising findings by establishing whether the findings of the first case takes place in other cases. Yin (2003) points out that in single case studies, stronger justifications are needed in generalising the results as opposed to making generalisations through evidence from multiple cases. As the purpose of this study was to make vast generalisations, multiple case study allowed to reach the purpose of this study.

3.5 Theoretical Data Collection

The theoretical background was conducted in order to provide the background of the study, set the foundation and this way enrich the thesis project. It is a valuable tool supporting the search for the best fitting method to answer the research question (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Reviewing the literature helped to build the theoretical framework which was employed later again to assist when collecting empirical data and achieving the pre-set purpose of the study.

As the first step of the literature search, the keywords were identified that assisted in finding relevant articles. These keywords included: process, development, social innovation, social entrepreneurship, social purpose, sustainable innovation, digitalisation, digital technology, and digital business. Migrant integration did not appear as a part of the original set of keywords, because the social challenge was identified later, based on the reviewed literature. Different search engines such as Web of Science, Jönköping University online library and Google Scholar were employed to aid in selecting academic articles that were most significant for the topic.

Before starting the analysis of the whole body of an article, abstract, introduction and conclusion, were read. This type of process helped to evaluate the relevance of each
article for this study. Due to the newness of the topic, the authors concluded the highly academic research did not give a comprehensive view of the topic. Thus, the theoretical background was enriched with additional sources of information. Jesson, Matheson, and Lacey (2011) have explained that a traditional literature review might lack transparency, but the supplementary material was used with the aim to unify the scattered literature search.

3.6 Empirical Data Collection

This section illustrates the methods that were used to collect empirical data relevant to this study. The following sections are more explicit about the types of data that were used, the sources and process of the interviewees’ selection and the framework of interviews.

3.6.1 Sources of Data

The main focus was dedicated to gathering primary data through in-depth interviews with the most suitable representatives of digital social innovations. The selection process of respondents played an important role. Purposive sampling (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015) was used to critically evaluate the eligibility of each potential interviewee in order to make sure that they will be able to provide relevant information for this study and this way contribute to final findings. As a complementary source of information, additional material was used. It mainly consisted of annual reports or any other types of documents provided by the interviewees. In addition, authors analysed webpages and other information of the companies that could provide any relevant information. Visual data is becoming a more popular source of information in qualitative studies. Most of which are videos or pictures found on the Internet. Nowadays, social media is a powerful tool for dissemination of information which can provide significant data for analysis (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Therefore, this strategy was employed in this study in order to present as many different or complementary perspectives as possible.
3.6.2 Selection of the Interviewees

A significant amount of research is required to get a clear picture “[…] of whom to contact and how” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, p. 505). In order to boost the credibility of the study, a purposive sampling approach was applied. This means that the authors had a definite vision of what sample of interviewees was needed in order to address the purpose of the study. First, researchers must make sure that the selection of interviewees is not in any way questionable or lacking transparency which could affect the results of the study. Second, the criteria for the selection must be clear and followed throughout the process (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Two sets of criteria were listed that companies and interviewees had to comply with. Three main criteria for companies were 1) The company must have an established social innovation or one that is in a development process, 2) The social innovation must have digital features (e.g. accessible on online platforms), and 3) The digital social innovation has to be purposefully developed to meet the needs of migrants or solve any social mobility problems. Before contacting companies, it was made sure that they meet all of the above-mentioned parameters. Additionally, six main criteria for interviewees were identified, however in this case at least one of them had to be met in order to fulfil the expectations. The representative of innovation had to be: 1) Founder of the venture, 2) Co-Founder of the venture, 3) Product owner, 4) Product manager, 5) Project manager or, 6) Public relations manager.

Following these criteria, a Web search was undertaken in order to gather a list of companies or individuals who then were contacted and offered to participate in this study. Once the initial list was ready, personalised emails with the explanation of the study purpose were sent. The level of involvement was explained (e.g. length of the interview) and in what manner the gathered data was to be used was expressed in the email (Galletta, 2013). The aim was to try to get in touch with people who were potential interviewees directly. Additionally, the snowballing approach was employed. This means that participants were asked to recommend other potentially relevant people from their familiar environment to take part in the study (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).
3.6.3 Framework of Interviews

The preparation for the interviews was started by choosing the type of interviews that would fit the topic best, would help to address the matter, and enable to gain the most insights. There were three main interview types to choose from. In structured interviews, questions are predefined and are followed in a set order during the process, in some cases, answers can even be predefined. However, this implies that collected data might be rather vague and lacking an in-depth understanding of the matter. The second type of interviews is unstructured, which means that preparation is less important, and interviews will be conducted in an open manner, similar to a conversation. Finally, the third type of interviews is the middle ground of the previously mentioned two. In semi-structured interviews interviewer brings a list of questions to guide him or her through the process, however, these questions can be addressed in a more flexible way allowing interviewer add follow-up questions, slightly change set questions or modify the order (Saunders et al., 2009; Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). The authors have chosen to apply semi-structured interviews’ approach as this type brings enough structure not to drift away from the core topic and objectives, but it also allows respondents to be open without limiting the answers.

The list of semi-structured questions consists of three parts (Appendix 1). The first part includes the opening questions in order to learn more about the interviewee and his or her experiences. With the assistance of these questions, the aim was to help respondents open up and feel more comfortable sharing information with the interviewers (Galletta, 2013). The second set of questions was focused on the main topics of the study (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Answers to this part’s questions are generally used to explore the topic in-depth through recorded stories. This part in comparison to the first set of questions is slightly more structured in order to remain consistent throughout the whole phase of data collection (Galletta, 2013). In the concluding part of the questions, interviewees could contribute to the study with additional information (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

There are several types suggested for registering interviews such as – written notes, video record and audio record (Rabionet, 2011). As video records would not serve a good purpose, audio and written notes were chosen as a method. Most relevant ideas were written at the time in order to keep the track of the interview and additionally
all interviews were audio recorded in order to have access to information any time during the analysis phase. All interviews were held in a face-to-face manner through online platforms. Online video meetings allowed the authors to grasp non-verbal communication details, discuss topics in-depth and analyse the context immediately as suggested by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015).

Additionally, secondary data was gathered which mainly composed of annual reports and other publications found on company websites or blogs. Secondary data was added to the analysis to verify the information obtained through interviews, whether these two sources of information comply or conflict with each other. This way allowed to gain better insights and enrich the analysis. Finally, after the completion of each interview, audio records were transcribed and further processed.

3.7 Data Analysis

Transcripts created from the interview audio recordings were the starting point for the data analysis. They were created as single text documents (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015) and transcriptions were divided between the authors of this study. Later they were combined into one folder together with additional material that consists of information from the company websites and other material sent by the interviewees. The interviewees were given letters to ensure anonymity (Saunders et al., 2009). Key takeaways from the interviews were concluded which made the analysis an ongoing process. The aim was to be faithful to respondents' point of view and “[...] to understand the meaning of data fragments in the specific context in which they were created” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, p. 546).

In respect to the abductive research approach, a combination of empirical and theoretical findings was applied (Dubois & Gadde, 2002) to recognise substantial patterns, themes, and relationships. According to Strauss & Corbin (2008), when the results are analysed, the authors can see whether the collected data correlate with existing cases. The analysis started before the actual written analysis took place. Transcribed interviews and additional material were looked through with a pursuit of finding terms or patterns that reoccurred in separate interviews to create codes out of them. The terms were then used
for classifying the data and grouping them into concepts. Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) suggest that organising codes helps the researcher to identify themes, that are important in “[...] understanding what is going on” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, p. 548). The next step was to try to make sense of the data and evaluate it in comparison to existing knowledge which allowed to identify differences and similarities. To grasp a deeper understanding of what is considered important and how to combine the key concepts to one, another cycle of the evaluation was done with a more focused set of coding (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015), this time based on the two models presented in sections 2.4 and 2.5.

3.8 Quality of the Research

There are several issues that can be identified in relation to the trustworthiness of a study (Saunders et al., 2009). As presented by Guba (1981), the naturalistic terms for these principles are; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These four principles were followed in aims to guarantee the integrity of the study.

Credibility is concerned with testing how to establish confidence in the credibility of one’s findings. This can be done by “[...] testing the data with members of the relevant human data source groups” to test the overall report before giving it the final form (Guba, 1981, p. 80). To ensure the credibility of the study, interviewees have been selected applying explicit criteria making sure, that their job positions and responsibilities are closely linked to the innovation process. Additionally, the results were sent to the participants, which allowed them to audit the collected data.

Transferability is concerned with the fact that the behaviour of individuals tends to be connected to the surrounding contexts. To achieve external validity, the researcher should make sure their findings are applicable in similar situations. This can be achieved through generalisation that “[...] makes [...] situational variations irrelevant to the findings” (Guba, 1981, p. 80). To make sure the findings of this study are transferrable, the authors aimed to analyse rich data that can be used in a different context.
Even if the study would be replicated with similar subjects in a similar context, dependability addresses the possibility of different social realities. Dependability audits are done by external auditors that are “[…] competent to examine the audit trail […]” (Guba, 1981, p. 86). Since the authors used their own consideration regarding the search results, the replicability of the study degenerated. However, during the master thesis process, other student groups analysed and evaluated the written material. Additionally, the writing process was conducted with the help of the supervisor that was informed about the content. This allows the authors to claim that this study has gone through a sufficient level of dependability audits.

Conformability comprehends the personal bias or perception of the researcher on the study outcomes (Guba, 1981, p. 81). The risk for personal perception influencing the study was minimised. First, the study was conducted by two people. Critical evaluation of the data collection and analysis from both authors ensured the interference for the possible personal bias of one or another. Second, student groups and thesis supervisor evaluating this study were potential in acknowledging personal perceptions. Finally, the participants evaluated the empirical findings to avoid misinterpretations.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Qualitative data can cause a number of ethical issues that cannot fully be avoided. To meet the ethical expectations, ten key principles in ethics research were used as presented by Easterby-Smith et al. (2015, p. 122). The principles' initial aim is to ensure the integrity of the research community.

Key principle one involves ensuring that no harm comes to participants. Key principles two and three contain respecting the dignity of the interviewed and providing informed consent (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). To avoid any harm, the authors transparently informed about the topic and the purpose of the study throughout the process, starting from the very first contact via email. When the agreement to participate in the study was received, a date and time were proposed for the interview and an appointment was agreed upon. The form of consent (Appendix 2) was attached to the meeting confirmation mail
that included the summary of the personal contribution of the interviewee, the goals of the study and permission for audio recording.

The following three key principles are concerned about protecting the anonymity of the participants and confidential dealing of the data (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). Anonymity was ensured for all the possible participants and therefore nameless aliases were used. This included the exclusion of company names and detailed company descriptions. Following the strategy of a case study, additional material about the innovation process was collected from the interviewees. Due to confidentiality reasons, this material is not being referred to in the findings nor in the references. The audio transcripts were only accessible for the authors of the study, and on demand for the thesis supervisor at Jönköping International Business School, and participants were informed of this.

The last four ethical principles aim to protect the research community by avoiding deception, stating conflicts of interest, being transparent and avoiding misleading or false reporting (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015). A detailed description of the execution and aim of the study was provided for the interviewees. Empirical results from the interview sessions were presented to the participants, which helped to secure the transparency of this study. Additionally, this strategy prohibited personal interests to affect the results.
4. Empirical Findings

This chapter presents the empirical findings from the interviews and additional material used. The findings are assorted in themes to aid the reader in categorising the results.

Categorising the findings somewhat follow the vocabulary and structure presented in two models from sections 2.4 (Research Model, Turker & Vural, 2017) and 2.5 (Design Thinking, Geissdoerfer et al., 2016). Due to having separate models, the themes are generalised to avoid contradictions or misunderstandings. The themes are presented in Table 1 where it is illustrated which section relates to which model.

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Table 1: The Structure for Empirical Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction of the Innovations

Table 2 gives an overview of the participants and innovations. All eight innovations fill in the criteria for innovation as being new service or new practice. All of them are created to further migrant integration and they operate in at least one of the geographical areas: Sweden or Germany. Four innovations are operating in Sweden and the other four in Germany. This division helped the authors to comprehend the two markets equally.
Table 2: Introduction of the Participants and Innovations (information gathered from the interviews and company websites)

The legal entities of the companies vary between public-sector agency, non-profit, NGO, social organisation and humanitarian organisation. Two of the innovations (B, C) target newcomers through free online language learning. Two (A, H) focus on facilitating job search by offering mentoring, counselling or certified online tests of expertise throughout the process. One of the innovation services (G) is engaged in online counselling through cultural dialogue between the counsellors and people from conflict areas. The remaining three (D, E, F) provide everyday information for migrants.

4.2 Innovation Idea

4.2.1 Idea Creation
All eight innovations originated from a willingness to help newcomer’s cultural transfer from one society to another in terms of language learning and job search but also providing general information about the country and its’ culture.

For six of the innovations (A, C, D, E, F, G), the innovation idea emerged from personal values of the social innovator. Interviewee A shed some light on how the idea got started:
“I myself had problems finding a job in [location] so I can recognise myself having that feeling.” (Interviewee A)

Seven of the innovation ideas (A, B, C, D, E, G, H) partly or entirely emerged after the social innovator was on alert on their surroundings and, thereby, noticed a social need. For instance, ‘European refugee crisis’ caused an influx of migrants in 2014-2015, that had an impact on many of the innovators to come up with a solution, as expressed by Interviewee C:

“We understood that there was a market for the solution [language learning application], there was a need for the solution, so that’s why we gave it [the service] away for free.” (Interviewee C)

The idea of a digital solution started to formulate as a way to reach the target group or newcomers. The importance of mobile phones was emphasised by Interviewee B:

“At that particular time there were a lot of people coming and we thought that could provide help to many people to get started like the integration process [...] So that’s when we said it’s a shame that we have this great content [website] that we spent a lot of time building and then people can’t use it properly. So why don’t we find a way to make it mobile accessible.” (Interviewee B)

4.2.2 Relevant Experience
Some of the interviewees have not been part of the organisation at the ideation stage and therefore, the relevant experience is understood from an individual perspective as opposed to organisational experience.

Six out of eight participants (A, B, E, F, G, H) have previously been part of integration initiatives. Interviewee B pointed that out in the following way:
“We’ve never actually made like a service function like this is before but have a lot of communication channels. But nothing that actually serves to solve a problem directly as this does.” (Interviewee B)

Five of the interviewees (A, C, D, E, H) have experience in creating digital solutions. However, as mentioned by Interviewee D, it is not only about the skills you possess, but about the collaborations:

“I think it was about bringing together the experts of the selective fields. So, we have integration experts, social workers, the municipalities that we had on board could pitch in their expertise and then we brought in the expertise on developing an app basically. So really getting them all together was the key, so we had experience building digital tools at that time, but there was no experience in the founding of enterprises among the founding team of innovation D.” (Interviewee D)

4.2.3 Research

Regarding the research, all eight interviewees mostly conducted research relying on the feedback from their target group, mostly migrants and newcomers, to various extents. An example is provided by Interviewee F:

“So, we run questionnaires around every 3 months, and we ask questions that come from our needs and we go to these events and then we say, okay, now we need to understand the demographics [the newcomers] […]” (Interviewee F)

Additional forms of research included competitor analysis (Interviewees B, C, E) and analysing statistics (Interviewees A, B, C). Only two interviewees (A, C) used academic literature to, for example, identify market gaps or to make use of existing innovation models. Interviewee C reckons extensive research is necessary:

“Yeah, you do a lot of research. […] I mean we looked at what solutions were already on the market […] We also looked into the research, of course, like in the academic world
and we found out that our method had some basic research like they had a research gap they would question […]” (Interviewee C)

4.3 External Environment

4.3.1 Public-Sector

Relations with public-sector are mainly used to obtain public funding or cooperation with governmental organisations.

Five of eight innovations either rely on or use public funding as a supplementary source of funding (B, C, D, G, H). However, the views of interviewees regarding public funding differ slightly.

Interviewee G emphasised that the image of an organisation plays a major role in obtaining the funding:

“[…] the organisation established a very good reputation over time and that makes it easier to acquire funds in the public sector.” (Interviewee G)

Interviewees A and F, however, pointed out the difficulty to gain public-sector funding. This is elaborated by Interviewee A:

“I think that there is a great potential for innovation in that sector [public-sector], but it feels like there is no really good interface between the entrepreneurs doing the social impact and the people that are sitting there with like multi-billion budgets” (Interviewee A)

Six (B, C, D, E, G, H) of the interviewees mentioned cooperation with public-sector agents. Innovation B originates from a public-sector agency which makes the relationship fundamental. Organisation C has cooperated with universities and other associations working with immigrants and refugees which helped to get in touch with users at the beginning in order to collect feedback about the solution. In the case of organisation D, public-sector partners differ in each municipality. Organisation E has been collaborating
with public organisations that offer services to immigrants. Innovation H has a very broad list of public-sector and commercial partners. To briefly mention their public partners, they include professional schools, governmental organisations, job agencies and other organisations which are involved in the professional education field.

None of the interviewees deal with public regulators or elected officials directly and the legal activities are mostly handled by external entities.

4.3.2 Commercial
The commercial environment covers funding, clients, and partners.

Five of the interviewees (A, C, D, E, G) mentioned collaborations with private investors, donors or private funding organisations. Interviewee C acknowledges the difference in being a social rather than a business venture:

“We are a social venture that is run as an association which means that there is no equity to buy into and get profit from. So, it means that we meet many of these social investors.” (Interviewee C)

Interviewees E and G have explained that private donors were one important way of funding at the beginning of the innovation development process. However, both representatives agreed, that there is a need to search for more alternatives to finance the growth of innovations. This is elaborated by Interviewee E:

“I want to have different donors, project funds involved, so I use funding network of organisations we cooperate with, but right now, we try to enlarge it, so it’s not just one source but that we would have different partners.” (Interviewee E)

Interviewee C had a slightly different opinion, saying that funding was not a substantial difficulty:
“One important thing I’ve learned is that if you don’t have a lot of costs then you don’t have to have a lot of revenue. We also had an external project funding at the start and then, we were able to develop a revenue model which we have now.” (Interviewee C)

However, Interviewees A and C stressed that the interface between funding organisations and non-profit organisations, in general, is insufficient. The insufficiencies are elaborated by Interviewee C:

“\textit{I think it would be good if there would be more funding available for non-profits. Because there is a lot of funding available for for-profits.}” (Interviewee C)

The challenge of funding reiterated many times throughout all the interviews. Six interviewees (A, C, E, F, G, H) stated that often the challenges are related to the finances. The main challenges were related to the lack of key donors (Interviewees A, C, E, F) and reliance on the sources of the funding (Interviewee G, H).

Interviewee C provided an example of how innovators could deal with financial risks:

“I would suggest finding a revenue model that works because you cannot rely on donations, you cannot rely on project funding, you cannot rely on anything really, so you have to have a revenue model that works in your case.” (Interviewee C)

Majority of organisations provide their service directly to the users. Three of the innovations (D, E, H), however, have commercial clients through selling licenses, innovation subscriptions or cooperation agreements and that way gain funds for their projects. Interviewee D explains how it works in practice:

“My role involves traveling to interested municipalities all over [the country], explaining the idea of Innovation D, how to implement it, answer all the question in this process, leading to a decision whether yes or not the municipality wants to integrate Innovation D locally.” (Interviewee D)
Commercial partners can provide either their time, money or both for a specific purpose within the innovation. Three main reasons of commercial collaborations emerged from the interviews which are: partners for technical support (B, C, E, F), partners for networks and information exchange (A, C, D, E, F, G H) and partners for gaining funds (A, C, E, G).

4.3.3 Social-Welfare

For the Innovation to have a socially beneficial role, one must also take a look at the underlying social challenges.

Two of the interviewees (A, H) stated that the extended integration process to the job market prolongs the integration to the society. Five of the interviewees (B, C, D, E, H) recognised the lack of local language skills affecting the integration process negatively. Majority of them specifically associated lack of local language skills with restricted access to information. Half of the interviewees (A, F, G, H) stated that newcomers lack support networks.

Interviewee H provided an explanation of why these challenges might occur:

“We have some citizens [...] who lived here for 20 something years carrying a [local] passport, or two different passports, but the proficiency on [local language] is still very poor because maybe they live in their own communities and their own peer groups.”

(Interviewee H)

The innovators aim to provide a solution for these challenges through platforms for language learning (B, C), being an open source of information (D, E, F), providing new approaches to job search (A, H) and offering value-based counselling (G).

A group of collaborators that dedicate their time for the process at this domain, is the users. All of the interviewees have mentioned, that collaborating with the target group throughout the development process was significant and resulted in the better quality of solutions. This is elaborated by Interviewee E:
“We also integrated refugees in the developing process, especially in the translation process so that they could be part of the group and key players in the process.” (Interviewee E)

4.4 Internal Environment

4.4.1 Innovation Team

The teams consist of employees, interns, volunteers and different variations of them. Organisations A, C, D, E, F, and H include volunteers or interns in their team to assist with certain tasks.

Many of the interviewees emphasised that volunteers, interns, and employees bring diverse and valuable knowledge into the teams helping innovations to obtain significantly more different opinions. The benefit of combining many internal stakeholders is demonstrated by Interviewee D:

“Now we have quite a few employees and still a lot of volunteers. So, you don’t have a full-time engagement, but you have a lot of people being constantly there.” (Interviewee D)

Organisations A, E, and F cooperate with immigrants and welcome them in their teams because they have been in the role of a newcomer themselves and, thus, can bring valuable perspectives. For example, Interviewee A indicated that involving interns with the foreign background can help gain practical insights:

“I think that’s a process for me to kind of involve people for instance as interns [...] because they have friends that are having this [integration] problem or are in this [newly arrived] situation themselves.” (Interviewee A)

One of the most repetitive advice for future innovators was related to the teamwork and self-education. Interviewees have explained the necessity of building teams of volunteers
or employees who share the same vision. This can be summarised in a statement by Interviewee F:

“Do it because it brings you learnings and developments as a human being or professional. [...] And find people that are in the same line as you are in terms of motivation.” (Interviewee F)

Additionally, Interviewee D expressed the importance of shared values in the team:

“You need to make sure you have a team where there is a lot of trust in each other and you share the same values.” (Interviewee D)

4.4.2 Creative Environment

 Majority of the interviewees mentioned the environment, in general, is informal, and the team can come up with ideas freely. An example of a creative environment was presented by Interviewee G:

“[...] compared to normal company, we have few meetings and a possibility to test everyone's option [...] and we try to stay creative. Even the counsellors themselves can come up with their own project.” (Interviewee G)

Some level of formality was indicated by Interviewees A and C. The idea screening process is well explained by Interviewee C:

“[...] we sometimes have Workshops where we look at the pipeline of ideas that we want to implement. In the process, we try to ideate new ideas [...] and when you have more time, you discuss it more and you reprioritise that you get the best ideas on top.” (Interviewee C)

All eight innovations rely a lot on the feedback from the users to test that their creative solutions work in practice. This was explained by Interviewee C in more detail:
“I mean it's a matter of listening and again is that I like having new ideas for services or features or whatever. But we always have to bounce them with our users, we always need to validate that these are real needs of the user. I’ve seen through experience that very often you have someone in the team come up with a feature that never gets used by the users.” (Interviewee C)

4.5 Innovation Values

The main value mentioned by the interviewees was generally to help newcomers find either information or a job or to learn the local language, that also served as societal value. Additionally, secondary values were mentioned throughout the interviews.

Interviewees B, C, D, E, and F think that restricting information is the reason for disparities between locals and newcomers. The value lies in dissolving barriers. This was explained by Interviewee D:

“Restricting information, for a certain group of people, really leads to neglecting them in the society, obeying separate societies.” (Interviewee D)

Interviewees B and C have stressed the importance of an introduction to society through local language learning. This was elaborated by Interviewee C:

“[…] if you look at integration and the challenges […] despite whatever country you look at, language is the number one problem to solve.” (Interviewee C)

Interviewees A and F aim to bring value through emotional well-being, as demonstrated by Interviewee A:

“These [emotional well-being and satisfaction] are the values that people are getting from having a job instead of being unemployed.” (Interviewee A)

Interviewee H indicated value constructing through the appreciation toward the newcomers’ previous experience:
“This might be the first time, especially for migrants, when somebody appreciates their lifelong achievements and try to help them to start a new life here.” (Interviewee H)

Majority of the interviewees (A, D, E, F, G) stated their value offering lying in the supportiveness of migrants, as demonstrated by Interviewee E:

“They [refugees] are supported in their daily need they have but it also connects places where people are open to host and connects these refugees.” (Interviewee E)

Finally, Interviewees F and G mentioned the willingness to empower women in their new environment. Interviewee G stated the following:

“They [women] also know that we kind of create a world that is very confidential, very safe, so this way makes a big difference.” (Interviewee G)

4.6 Innovation Process

4.6.1 Process Model

Earlier mentioned research that innovators have undertaken at the early stages of the innovation process has also included the research for an applicable process model that would guide the development of innovations.

However, the majority of the interviewees did not try to apply any particular process models to guide innovation development. On one hand, some of the interviewees admitted, that they have invested time in researching potential tools, on the other hand, others did not dedicate time to that and fully relied on their experience.

Three of the interviewees (A, C, D) researched potential tools. They explained that these tools helped to guide the process and applied them to some extent. Out of these three cases, Interviewee A seemed to be most engaged in invoking existing models:
“For the process I have been using the lean canvas. And then in the developing process, I have always been reading different ideas and used them. Also, design thinking, I have been looking into a bit. [...] So, I really didn’t have any tools except the lean canvas.” (Interviewee A)

However, the research processes do not differ much from the approaches explained by the rest of the interviewees (B, E, F, G, H). Generally, all interviewees agreed that processes were rather built on teams’ experiences and are not pre-defined as summarised by Interviewee E:

“We based it [development process] more on the experience of the project coordinators and the development company. [...] it was our infusion and practical experience from what we have done before.” (Interviewee E)

4.6.2 Digital Development

All the representatives of the innovations have agreed, that digital technology in their cases is an essential part. For instance, Interviewee G has emphasised that even though their service is available online and offline, however, the online service makes it more accessible and more socially purposeful as stated below:

“For example, we have a high percentage of women taking part in it and we believe that many of them wouldn’t dare to go to counselling centres.” (Interviewee G)

Interviewee B had a similar view stating that digital platform complements the service. Interviewees A, D, and F have stressed that their innovations would simply not exist at all if it was not supported by digital technology, as presented by Interviewee A:

“I think the digital part is the whole service. It facilitates the process of job search.” (Interviewee A)

Interviewee D explained that the digital idea of Innovation D was in fact developed from a physical product which was no longer sufficient and needed a better alternative.
Digital development, overall, was a big concern of innovators and therefore often stated as an often-occurring challenge in the process. For instance, Interviewee B has explained, that the technology development phase can be very unpredictable and chaotic:

“We had problems with the development of the technology. We have a platform where you can upload the developed but not published version. And sometimes it seems to get stuck and we don’t get the right version and feedback from the older version.” (Interviewee B)

When developing digital tools, in five out of eight cases innovators outsourced the technology (Innovations A, B, C, E, F) to save costs. Due to technology outsourcing interviewees were not highly familiar with the technology development process. Interviewee C even stated that technology development in the process is not where the focus lies, and it is not considered to be a competitive advantage.

4.6.3 Testing and Prototyping

Prototyping and testing was a phase undertaken in seven out of eight cases. Interviewees have explained the necessity of the testing step allowing to validate the innovations. Interviewee F has explained that, unlike other seven innovations, Innovation F did not have an official prototyping and testing phase, instead, the social project was launched right after the idea generation. Testing and re-evaluation in the case of Innovation F were undertaken when it was already fully used by the target group.

Generally, prototyping was explained as a step where innovations were evaluated by their direct target group. For instance, Innovation B was tested in an organisation where immigrants were learning the local language, this way innovators were able to receive the direct feedback from people who will be using the innovation in the future. The example of Innovation D presents how closely some of the innovators have been working with the target group:

“There association X was building a café for the neighbourhood, bringing locals and newcomers there, and we have been working there once a week ever since. So, when we
were developing the app the target group was always close. We could always pitch new ideas and ask if the design is understandable.” (Interviewee D)

When asked about the changes made after the prototyping and testing phase, the majority of interviewees agreed, that it helped to spot the needed improvements easier. For example, interviewees B and C have pointed out that the testing phase helped to realise that digital platforms need to be simplified. This is elaborated by Interviewee C:

“One thing is to simplify and remove things. That is the hardest part because usually, developers listen to the users too much, so they add things but with every feature you add - you have to take away two features.” (Interviewee C)

Additionally, Interviewee C has also explained that they had to re-evaluate the way they communicate the features of the application. Based on interviewee’s experience, oftentimes representatives of an innovation sit side-by-side with the user while the application is being tested and try to explain how the features work, which does not help to grasp the real errors that might occur after the launch:

“The problem is that when you launch it, you’re not able to be there to explain how the solution works so it means that you really need to work on how you communicate and teach the user how the application works.” (Interviewee C)

However, it’s not only the technical aspects that need to be improved after running tests. Interviewee H explained, that in their case the technical part was developed to be perfect from the very beginning, however, the content needed to be refined.

As the prototyping and testing phase is accepted to be essential in the majority of cases, it has to be undertaken thoroughly. Based on the experience of Interviewees E and G, this step cannot be ignored and should be undertaken as soon in the process as possible. Interviewee G has advised not to forget about a constant re-evaluation of the project which should be a major focus in social projects. Interviewees A, B and C have all mentioned the importance of cooperating with the users in the testing and the whole development process. For example, Interviewee B has advised
testing the innovation even if it is not done yet. Similarly, Interviewee A emphasised, that the solution might be understood differently by innovators and users:

“The most important thing is to talk to the people that are experiencing the problem. Because coming from the outside and looking into the problem it’s possible to make it seem easier than it is and that automatically reflects on the quality of the product.” (Interviewee A)

4.6.4 Implementation
When asked about the implementation phase all of the interviewees agreed that there is no particular time when the innovation is ready to be launched. More specifically, Interviewee C argued that there is neither right nor wrong time to start running a project like Innovation C:

“Since it was a free app, you don’t have to care if it works perfectly or not.” (Interviewee C)

Interviewees A, B, and D second this idea agreeing that the implementation step does not end with the launch but is rather a more complicated phase, demanding rapid improvements and changes. For instance, Interviewee D stressed that launching the innovation does not mean that the testing phase is over:

“It’s never done, the project is ongoing, and changes are being implemented constantly.” (Interviewee D)

4.6.5 Marketing
Another important step undertaken in the development process is the communication of the new service. In this step, there are mostly three channels mentioned, which do not require additional expenses in order to spread the news. These three approaches are social media (A, B, C, D, E, F, G), word-of-mouth method (A, D, E, F, G) and the help of
partners (B, D, E, G, H). Some of the innovators employ more than one marketing technique like in the case of Innovation F:

“[…] It is mostly about mouth-to-mouth approach, like sharing with friends, etc. Also, the owner created the page on Facebook to spread the word.” (Interviewee F)

Interviewees B, E, and G agreed on the approaches mentioned by Interviewee F and added that in the case of social innovations it is particularly important to try convincing key people to promote the service in their area or organisation. For instance, Interviewee B explained that partners are probably the main channel that helps to spread the word, as in their case:

“I put together a huge list of organisations, municipalities, county councils, etc. that we informed about the app. And they said that it is great to know and that they will tell people when they want to learn the language.” (Interviewee B)

4.6.6 Growth
All the interviewees are considering their innovations to be unique compared to potentially similar solutions in the market. Interviewees saw that the uniqueness lied in the knowledge of the team or the founder (A, F, G), transparency (D), content (B, C, E) and pioneer position in the market (H).

When asked about the future of these innovations, some interviewees (A, B, D, F) have started hesitating. All of them are passionate about the projects they are involved in, however, to some of them the future seemed rather uncertain. As explained by Interviewee A, the innovation does not have good scaling conditions and that it most probably will stagnate eventually. Interviewee F admitted that the idea of closing the project is being considered:

“It might sound weird, but at the beginning of the year we were actually thinking about either selling or closing the project because it is quite demanding.” (Interviewee F)
Innovations D, E, and G see the potential in internationalisation. As explained by Interviewee E, the one way to grow the Innovation E is making sure, that it is accessible in entire Europe:

“We would like to launch the Innovation E in several other countries that we have in mind because they are kind of an entry point where many refugees first come to. Often apps are just used locally, but you don’t know where refugees will go from there, so they have to find the next app and the next country and that’s why we want to be all over Europe.”
(Interviewee E)

On the contrary, based on the findings, Innovation H could easily be fitted in a different setting without any additional financial requirements or legislative barriers, therefore the growth is not a matter of concern.

Even though Interviewee F mentioned the considerations of closing the project, it was indicated that there is a willingness to grow under the status of NGO. If Innovation F was to get public funding, new features and services are to be developed.

However, the majority of interviewees agreed that growth brings up a lot of challenges and uncertainty, therefore it is rather difficult to foresee the future. As explained by Interviewee D, even though they are mostly expanding internally within the country of origins, this still brings up obstacles:

“The hard part to do is to bring the solution to a city that you’ve never been to, where you don’t know anybody and convince a lot of people that they should give it a shot.”
(Interviewee D)

4.7 Summary of the Empirical Findings

To grasp an overview, the main findings have been summarised in Table 3. The table illustrates the insights of interviewees and additional material that will be analysed in-depth in the next chapter.
### Table 3: Summary of Empirical Findings

1) Restricted information 2) Long integration to job market 3) Lack of language skills 4) Missing support networks

2) Emotional well-being 2) Appreciation of professional achievement 3) Support 4) Dissolving information barriers 5) Empowering women 6) Introduction to the society through local language learning

3) Outsourced 2) In-house

4) Time not specified 2) Fast implementation

5) Social media 2) Word-of-mouth 3) Partners

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1) Restricted information 2) Long integration to job market 3) Lack of language skills 4) Missing support networks

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5. Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter, theoretical and empirical findings are interpreted. The analysis follows the same structure as presented in chapter 4. Finally, the adapted model for digital social innovation is introduced.

The purpose of this study was to examine how the process of digital social innovations unfolds in organisations. Conducted interviews and gathered additional material from eight digital social innovations in Germany and Sweden together with theoretical findings from the literature, allowed to carry out a thorough analysis of the matter.

5.1 Innovation Idea

5.1.1 Idea Creation

Sweden and Germany have taken exemplary measures to tackle social inclusion, yet it remains a challenge putting pressure on the coherence of the two societies ("Sweden and migration", 2018). Academics generally agree that a starting point for social innovation indeed is to recognise dissatisfactions and needs for improvement in the local environment (e.g. Mulgan, 2006; Dawson & Daniel, 2017). Majority of the social innovators started to notice challenges specifically brought by ‘refugee crisis’. Even though the crisis itself has passed but the people have remained, which has enhanced integration as a growing social challenge. As presented by Cajaiba-Santana (2014), social innovation is determined by either individual attributes or values (agentic) or by the context (structural). This point of view complies with Mulgan (2006) that ideas can originate internally or externally. Both views were represented in the empirical findings. From the agentic perspective, six of the innovations emerged fully or partially due to personal values and reflections on societal insufficiencies such as difficulties to find a job. From the structural point of view, seven of the innovations were affected by the context but only one of them was established to help cope with the ‘refugee crisis’. It can, however, be stated that the vast majority of the innovations have been affected by an influx of migrants and are driven by personal values. Thus, innovation can include both
agentic and structural perspective without excluding one another, which is also one of the points made by Cajaiba-Santana (2014) in his research.

5.1.2 Relevant Experience

As presented by Turker and Vural (2017) SIs are built on innovative abilities to address social problems. However, Boelman et al. (2016) stated that SI venture should be relatively new to those involved in the implementation in order to have a fresh perspective. The latter can be seen from the interviews as only three of the interviewees had experience in both integration initiatives and building digital platforms for social engagement. Interviewees agreed that experience and existing knowledge helped in the process of innovation to some extent. It was indicated by Morris et. al. (2011), that being able to apply experience and knowledge to practice is needed to be able to come up with creative solutions. The previous experience could then be spotted in cases of innovations C, E, and H that did not face similar challenges as opposed to the ones with less experience. The previous experience thus may have helped to deal with high levels of uncertainty (Boelman et al., 2015; Teberga & Oliva, 2018).

5.1.3 Research

Secondary research is carried out at the very beginning to look for general ideas of a social need that has a possibility to be developed into a product or service (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). All of the innovation ideas originated from insufficiencies in the context and secondary research helped to define a general solution in the form of a service. Three of the organisations conducted secondary research in the form of competitor analysis or generally looking into the existing market and the solutions that are being provided. Three of the organisations conducted secondary research by looking into the statistics regarding migrant movements. Two of the organisations looked into the academic literature to define the need they want to address. In general, half of the organisations reckon research was an important part of the ideation process. The challenge according to the European Commission (2013) is to know which ideas are worth taking to the next level. This was emphasised by the statements of interviewees A and C on how keeping track on the number of ideas and their practicality has great importance.
Following the Design Thinking process, the next step is to learn about the audience and their specific needs (e.g. Boelman et al., 2014; Dougherty, 2018). All eight interviewees have undertaken this step by familiarising themselves with their target groups, (namely, immigrants, and refugees) by being in direct contact with them. Dougherty (2018) points out that close interaction with the target group helps to find the core problem. Majority of the innovators are in constant contact with their users, and few of the social innovators cooperate with the newcomers by employing newcomers to grasp an even better understanding of the demographics. This stage, according to Mulgan (2006), is needed to confirm the applicability of the innovation.

Looking at the problem from the users’ perspective helps to define the problem and to understand the urgency of it (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Majority of the innovations were firmly shaped by the influx of immigrants in 2014-2015. The real urgency was however created after deriving the core need from secondary research and being in contact with potential users. Teberga and Oliva (2018) state in their research that, before developing the idea, the possible solutions must be learned and observed because no good idea emerges from an isolated environment. Even though it has been stated before that social innovation can help to provide local solutions to local problems, the main idea of social innovation is to, according to scholars (e.g. Mulgan. 2006; Cajaiba-Santana, 2014), create a greater common good.

5.2 External Environment

5.2.1 Public-Sector

It is stated by the European Commission (2013) that SIs can stem from third-party, private or public organisations. In this study, most of the participants fell into the category of either third-party or private organisation. Only participant B works for a governmental agency which makes the relationship with public sector imminent. The collaboration between three levels is hardly addressed in academia and a good interface seemed to be also a difficulty among interviewees A and F. To obtain public funding or another form of cooperation, interviewee G indicated that a good reputation of the organisation might
help in operating together with public-sector stakeholders. Majority of the innovations have been able to establish a relationship and gain public-sector funding that is in line with the findings of Boelman et al. (2014) that public institutions are starting to acknowledge the digital impact on social innovations and, thus, supporting the combined frameworks of the two.

5.2.2 Commercial
According to Pache and Chowdhury (2012), social innovators interact in a commercial environment to attract funding, clients, and partners. SI oftentimes faces challenges in financing the process (Oeij et al., 2018) which according to the interviewees is an ongoing process. Most of them rely on key donors or investors and have realised that there is a need to search for more alternatives to keep the innovation alive. On one hand, interviewees admitted having a hard time coming across with private investors because there is no profit in social innovation. On the other hand, some of the interviewees had a different point of view and interaction with social investors. This complies with ESG (Dreyer et al., 2017) as a growing way to finance social innovations.

Out of all the possible challenges that innovations face throughout the development process, the challenge of funding is accepted by literature and participants to be the most common. It is said that more than 50 percent of innovations face financial barriers which eventually might lead to a failure (Oeij et al., 2018). It is difficult for social innovations to attract funding due to its original feature of earning no or very little profits (Veselovsky et al., 2018). Therefore, literature and participants of this study agree with the fact that social innovations compared with commercial ones have incomparably more troubles to gain financial support (e.g. Mavropoulos et al., 2015; Lavikka et al., 2018; Teberga & Oliva, 2018; Veselovsky et al., 2018). Interviewees were often coming back to the topic of finances throughout the interviews and admitted that this is the most often encountered challenge. According to them, it is important not to rely on the funding too much and therefore a fitting revenue model must be developed.

Creating relationships and collaborations are essential to finding fresh ways of working together and involving users (Oeij et al., 2018) and it is fuelled by digitalisation and
spread of technology (Boelman et al., 2014). Digital part is essential for all the innovations to reach a larger scope of users which consents with Gulliksen (2017) that ICTs makes the information more accessible for organisations and users. The lack of experience in building digital tools requires external partners for technical support. Interviewee C stressed that the competitiveness lies in the solutions and not in the technology. Since it is naturalistic for SI to aim for the greater common good (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014) it is no wonder that vast majority of the interviewees collaborate with several commercial partners with a purpose of networking and exchanging information to maximise the usefulness of the innovation rather than to scale up or make a profit.

5.2.3 Social-Welfare

As stated by the European Commission (2013) social inclusion is one out of nine challenges that are strongly suggested to be addressed by entrepreneurs. With Sweden and Germany being one of the leading countries in growth of immigration ("International migrant stock 2017", 2017) interviewees from both countries have complied to the fact, that digital social innovations are one way to approach emerging challenges. With the consent of all the interviewees, main challenges were identified that are most often arising in the matter of integration. This complies with Turker and Vural’s (2017) statement of the voids arising from socioeconomic problems. The majority of interviewees stressed that an overall growing influx of immigrants has motivated the social innovators to seek for solutions.

According to Boelman et al. (2014), digital social innovations are a handy tool to solve challenges related to newcomers’ unemployment, information accessibility or language learning. According to Mavropoulos et al. (2015), welfare can be measured based on the accessibility of online information, services, and goods which is why mobile phones are often associated when talking about social change. Interviewees have revealed that in order to find the best solutions, digital technology can serve an invaluable purpose and make a difference in peoples’ lives which consents with Codagnone and Kluzer (2011).

Additionally, users can be identified as collaborators in this domain. The challenges that are in need to be addressed are not always easy to spot. Innovators are fostered not only
to execute in-depth research of their potential target group but also accept users as a major part of an innovation development structure and this way learn about implied applicability of solutions (Mulgan, 2006). All interviewees strongly agreed with this perspective. In the case of social innovations, collaborating with users is the ultimate way to meet the needs of people without investing a lot of resources. Based on the interviewees perspective it is safe to say, that involving users in the development process and getting back to them to constantly seek for ideas is what has made most of the innovations unique and successful.

5.3 Internal Environment

5.3.1 Innovation Team

The findings are supporting the fact that organisations see directly involved people as an additional group of internal informal collaborators. Teams of volunteers, interns or employees are an inseparable component of the process. Representatives of the analysed innovations have specified that team members who are newcomers themselves bring valuable perspectives which are much appreciated and significantly benefit the SI creation process. Scholars Dawson and Daniel (2012) have also emphasised on teams as a unique and substantial part of innovations. According to them and the interviewees, strong partnership and shared values with people within organisations ease the process significantly. Additionally, in some cases, team members themselves are immigrants, which is much appreciated by innovators. According to the findings, social innovators are likely to employ newcomers, they believe, that this way, they get much-needed access to diverse perspectives.

Without funds, innovations might face the challenge of not being able to attract a qualified team and therefore also the professional knowledge. As the findings show many of the innovations rely on volunteers and interns because they cannot afford to hire full-time employees. Even though interviewees have agreed that volunteers are a great deal, however, they have also stressed that since they are engaged only to a limited extent, that reflects on the overall process of innovation development and as explained by Oeij et al. (2018) has a negative effect on every third social innovation. Even though many
challenges and suggestions for future innovators were given by the interviewees, the emphasis on the team motivation was the most frequently mentioned. According to Dawson and Daniel (2012), it is essential to gather a team of professionals that share the same goals and these goals are related to personal aspirations and organisational intentions. That complies with the findings of the empirical study where interviewees have emphasised that every team member must be trustworthy, motivated and share the same vision.

5.3.2 Creative Environment

The creative environment in all of the eight organisations can be classified as informal. Two of the interviewees implicated low level of formality but still described the environment to be rather informal. According to Mulgan (2006), formal creativity methods can be used to generate possibilities and practical ideas. Formal methods that could be detected from organisations A and C, were organising workshops, and, not only keeping track on the number of ideas but re-evaluating them to have the best ideas ‘on top of the pile’ so to speak. This is in line with Sawyer (2007), who states that innovation is oftentimes the result of a synergy between strings of small ideas. As mentioned by the majority of the interviewees, anyone in the organisation is allowed, or encouraged, to come up with new ideas, projects or improvement suggestions. According to Sawyer (2007), it indeed is the interaction in teams that can enhance new discoveries.

5.4 Innovation Values

There were three main values appearing in the analysed material and the interviews. First of all, in three out of eight cases interviewees agreed that their value is to ease and speed up the integration into the labour market. Digital tools such as online job search engines or platforms guiding through the employment process are eligible solutions to approach the integration into the labour market measure (Codagnone & Kluzer 2011). Dissolving language barriers is the main value of two of the innovations. Which complies with the theory of Ersanilli and Koopmans (2010), saying that in order to align with integration measurements innovators are encouraged to speed up the process of newcomers’ acclimatisation to local language. The following value is to embrace learning about the
new culture and society and this way dissolve cultural barriers between locals and immigrants. However, the innovators must understand that the immigrants and natives should still be able to maintain their cultural identities as mentioned by the European Commission (2013). The question of equality between these two groups have been brought up immensely in the past years ("Sweden and migration", 2018), therefore, the value of cultural inclusion is often analysed by theorists and practitioners. Additional values brought up by the interviewees were such as care, equality, and empowerment. These align with Mulgan’s (2006) idea of social innovations typically having different motives to those of business innovations. The differences can be seen in compassion, care, autonomy, and identity.

5.5 Innovation Process

5.5.1 Process Model
Based on the insights from the interviews, applying process models when developing digital social innovations is not a common phenomenon. Interviewees were feeling hesitant towards pre-defined models. As the findings show, most of the innovators relied on their own and their team’s experiences and did not have clear guidance through the process. However, in the case of Innovation A, several different tools and approaches were incorporated within different stages of innovation development. Other interviewees admitted that different approaches have been implemented to some extent, however, they were used rather as side tools not having much influence on the guidance of the process. Phillips et al. (2015) have suggested that the focus of researchers must be directed towards studying how processes of social innovations’ development should be undertaken. They are discussing the lack of applicable process models and encourage researchers to shift interest to this area of research. Therefore, as suggested by literature and can be comprehended from the interviews, there are no process models that could be applied to the development of digital social innovations. For this reason, participants of this study have explained that the innovators favoured their own skills and previous experiences in some cases, instead of adopting or relying on any proposed model in the literature.
5.5.2 Digital Development

Due to the growing role of digitalisation, all eight interviewees recognised the need to create a digital solution to improve the connectivity between parties (e.g. Viltard, 2016; Russo, 2018). All of the innovators advocated digital tools stating that without digital tools, there would be no service for them to provide. There also was a consensus among the interviewees that many of the newcomers have one common factor – a smartphone. This was especially recognised by Organisations B and D, that provided a web-based content which was not mobile accessible, and then turned it into a mobile version for more people to have access to it. This is in line with Dell'Era et al. (2018) that the usage of mobile devices allows dealing with broader social challenges rather than focusing only on a small group of individuals. Henceforth, digitalisation gives the opportunity to reach a wider public. Organisation G provided a good example of moving from traditional counselling to online-counselling and that way being able to reach more people. However, due to the limited resources, half of the organisations outsourced the technology development. As mentioned by one of the interviewees, technological advancement is not the main focus, which complies with Dawson and Daniel (2012).

5.5.3 Prototyping and Testing

The testing phase has been undertaken by seven innovators. Based on the experiences and insights of the interviewees testing is closely linked to collaborating with users and one cannot function without the other. Testing should be executed as soon as possible in the process and re-evaluated based on users’ experience. Respondents have complied to Mulgan’s (2006) theories which allow stating that testing with direct users is a fundamental stage of the process and better results can be achieved by employing this approach. Additionally, those who decided to incorporate the testing phase have all identified either technical or content-based errors which needed to be eliminated. Testing an early version of innovation helps to avoid unnecessary obstacles that might appear after implementation (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Therefore, innovators chose to involve users and improve innovations according to the feedback before potentially more radical challenges appear.

Technology and testing were often identified as an often challenge in the process. As explained by interviewees and Mavropoulos et al. (2015) and Sugiyama et al. (2017)
technology challenges are often related to the overall complexity of usage. Interviewees have stressed that testing and constant re-evaluation is essential and closely linked to users’ inclusion for the purpose of improvements. Scholars (Brown & Wyatt, 2010; Sørensen & Torfing, 2016; Dell’Era et al., 2018), as well as interviewees, agree that users are an integral part of the social innovation development process, therefore, they must be included throughout the whole journey. Innovations are advised to be presented to direct users to be evaluated in order to avoid errors after implementation (Brown & Wyatt, 2010), additionally different perspectives coming from the users are a valuable thing in order to build on the trustworthiness and boosts the social impact in the eyes of users.

5.5.4 Implementation
After innovations are being tested and re-evaluated, they get closer to the stage of implementation. However, none of the interviewees were able to specify the time when their represented innovations were ready to be launched. It appears that there is no perfect time to release the innovation and the implementation stage is rather seen as a more advanced type of testing, where changes are being made constantly even after officially introducing innovation to the users. This complies with the view of Mumford and Moertl (2003) stating that it is difficult to foresee the right time to implement social innovations in comparison to commercial innovations.

A different view presented by one of the interviewees was that implementations should be undertaken as soon as possible because the risk factor of losing any resources is low in case of social innovations. However, this point of view is only presented by one interviewee letting authors to predict, that early implementation is not acknowledged by innovators in most of the cases. On the contrary, based on the findings, innovators chose to rather take a longer time before releasing their innovations.

5.5.5 Marketing
Three main ways of communicating the innovations were chosen in the analysed cases. The most popular tool is social media, mentioned in seven out of eight cases. Representatives positively reflected on marketing the new solutions via free online channels which helps to spread the word fast and efficiently. The second tool is including
partners in spreading the news. This allows to get in touch with the users of collaborating organisations and quickly communicate the innovation to a big group of people. Finally, innovators employ word-of-mouth approach where users themselves are the ambassadors of innovation and play an important part in marketing the solution. Turker and Vural (2017) have noted that social innovations dedicate a lot of their resources to marketing campaigns. However, based on the findings, innovators chose marketing tools that are free, and the only dedicated resources are the intangible ones.

5.5.6 Growth
Mulgan (2006) has studied the future growth possibilities of social innovations. He states that the growth can be challenging and slower, however, less risky in comparison to commercial innovations. This view goes along with the view of interviewees admitting that growth is an obscure matter. All the interviewees were hesitant to foresee the success and scaling of the innovations in the long term. Oeij et al. (2018) have consented to this view admitting that social innovations might lack capabilities to move forward and therefore might stagnate eventually. The findings of interviews show that even though interviewees do not see a clear future, however, the majority is still working towards improvement, adding new features and/or growing within or outside the country of origins in the future. Unfortunately, growth appears to be one of the most challenging stages of all the social innovations and therefore, innovators must be aware of the fact, that due to limited resources the success innovations might tend to slow down or even deteriorate. Even though social innovations are slightly more resilient to failure (Mulgan, 2006), based on the findings, it is safe to say, that the future growth, however, is uncertain.

5.6 Development of the DSI Process Model
The development of the DSI process model begins with the Research Model presented by Turker and Vural (2017) and moves to Design Thinking as presented by Geissdoerfer et al., (2016). The main structure of the developed model follows the one presented by the former. Empirical findings are then used to validate the models and bring them together with an aim to create a suitable innovation process model for both practice and theory.
5.6.1 Institutional Context

Sweden and Germany fall into the category of having rich institutional arrangements (Turker & Vural, 2017) and therefore all eight innovations have had relatively good opportunities to address the socioeconomic challenges emerged from the context. The first part of the twofold model (Figure 3) presents three different logics in the IC and the effects, they had on the innovations.

![Figure 3: Institutional Context (Turker & Vural, 2017, p. 101)](image)

As it has been established, distinct logics frame the voids and supports; social-welfare, public-sector and commercial. It became clear from the empirical findings that all the innovations are rooted in these three logics. In some occasions, all logics are embedded simultaneously whilst on other occasions they take a competing role (Turker & Vural, 2017). Majority of the innovations receive formal support in various forms from public agencies. However, it was also indicated that there is room for improvement in government support. Similar findings can be derived from the commercial logic, as it was pointed out that private investors are hard to gain due to the social nature of the innovation but for some interviewees gaining commercial stakeholders was not a significant difficulty. Social-welfare logic was well-represented in all eight innovations. These findings allow this study to conclude that IV and IS mechanisms are relevant for social innovation in industrialised countries as they are in under more severe conditions. For this reason, this part is kept as presented in the original model.
5.6.2 Actor

The legal forms of the actors in this study vary between individuals, NGOs, governmental organisations, humanitarian organisations, social organisations, and non-profits. This part presents the role of the actor in-between the context and the SIP.

The actor has been located in-between the model due to their central role in the interaction between innovation context and social innovation. The interaction is achieved by building the SIP (Turker & Vural, 2017). According to the individualistic perspective by Cajaiba-Santana (2014), the actor is the one with the vision and personal attributes can help explain the SI. Typical attributes for entrepreneurial people such as creativeness, innovativeness, and pro-activeness could be seen from the interviewees. However, for example, lack of long-term pro-activeness in some of the cases dangers to cause the stagnation of the project. The actor can facilitate the process by mobilising resources or collaborating with stakeholders (Turker & Vural, 2017) which turned out to be more challenging to some of the innovations than others due to lack of previous experience, for instance, which caused difficulties in gaining public-sector support. As presented by Sawyer (2007), collaboration with external networks can increase the level of creativity and possibly help mobilise resources. An assumption can be made that personal attributes, including values, play an important role in SIP but the actor cannot be separated from the IC. This complies with insights of Paulus (2000), that creativity can arise from either individual, group or organisational characteristics, and it is affected by the environment. For this reason, this part is kept as presented in the original model.

5.6.3 Social Innovation Process

The second part of the twofold model (Figure 4) represents merged concepts of the theoretical model and the practical model. Based on the empirical findings, stages presented in this part are interconnected and complement each other creating a coherent process of digital social innovations.
Research, Creative Process, and Prototyping & Testing are all stages directly connected to Design Thinking model. Since SI ventures are built on their innovative abilities to address social problems (Turker & Vural, 2017), creativity becomes an important part of the process. Additionally, creativity is an integral part of a Design Thinking process, yet techniques or tools in order to stimulate it are not presented. Therefore, creativity in the innovation process is introduced to gain a more in-depth understanding of the process.

The Research component is representing the first two steps in the Design Thinking process which are Understand and Observe. As already explained these two sections represent primary and secondary research. In the research phase, innovators and their teams are analysing a social problem that might be already identified or is still unknown (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Additionally, the challenge might occur from the external or internal environment (Dawson & Daniel, 2012), therefore the challenge might be known to some extent before the research is done or it might be identified after looking into it. The task of a team is to look at the problem from two perspectives, which are related to findings from secondary and primary research. Innovators are invited to boost the engagement with the target group during this stage in order to obtain direct feedback and this way ensure that the challenge is sensitive to the target group and solutions to solve it are highly needed. In this part innovators are supposed to keep their mind open for any alternatives, meaning that the view or believes about the social problem are not pre-set and innovators are frank to inspirations. This complies with the insights of Brown and Wyatt (2010) that innovators must retain their minds open for new or disregarded ideas.
The *Creative Process* component is a merge of Define and Ideate steps form the Design Thinking Process. According to Design Thinking model in this stage, innovators have already educated themselves about the challenge and the research comes to a more explicit perspective (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). In this stage, previous experience and existing knowledge are fundamental resources (Von Oech, 2008). Morris and colleagues (2011) have emphasised that creativity comes from gathering information and observing society at first. However, *Creative Process* stage does not imply that the solution is being identified. In fact, according to Guilford (1967), the solution can emerge after generating many diverse ideas. Innovators are fostered to enhance creativity by constructing several potential ideas which will be compared and further processed in the next steps (Brown & Wyatt, 2010). Generally, a goal or multiple goals are being identified in order to address the existing challenge. Just as in the previous phase, a goal might be derived or become more explicit after undertaking the *Creative Process* or it might result from the first step and lead to an extended *Creative Process*.

The last step is the *Development Process* which is connected to Prototype and Test parts of the Design Thinking process. Innovators are encouraged to put their creative solutions into action. Mulgan (2006) states that best solutions do not come from the research but from a trial of prototypes. Several potential solutions might be brought to this stage and evaluated. Testing an idea means that it might turn out to be non-applicable, even though the research beforehand implied differently. Additionally, just as throughout the previous steps, this one requires turning back to the potential users and allow the innovation to be influenced by their feedback. The testing will determine whether an innovation is ready to be implemented or if there is a need to go a few steps back and re-evaluate (Sørensen, & Torfing, 2016). Turker and Vural (2017) have explained that this step is very closely linked to voids and supports meaning that depending on the context, partners, resources, and actions, there might be a need to reconsider the choices and decisions made throughout the whole phase of *Social Innovation Process*.

The grouping of *Research* with *Challenge*, *Creative Process* with *Goal*, *Prototype & Test* with *Development Process* was influenced by empirical findings and similarities in models. Each group’s inner steps are interrelated and might result in affecting one another. Therefore, their relationship is depicted with an outer frame which creates an
image of unity of the internal segments and the partial separation from the other two groups of segments. Nevertheless, the three groups are bounded aspects and tend to influence each other. The Social Innovation Process part is not to be undertaken in a linear manner and each group of segments can be processed individually or in the desired order. The SIP is not restricted to a pre-set sequence allowing innovators to adjust it to the special requirements and be influenced by the context or internal and/or external influences. Additionally, this simulation allows innovators to go back and forth between stages in order to achieve the best possible outcome. Innovation process does not end with the testing, but it can lead to taking few steps back and re-evaluating by carrying out more extended research or going back to the Creative Process in order to re-define the goals. Only when the social needs of the target group are fully met, the model suggests taking on the final step of the DSI process model.

Even though the analysis of this study contains the topic of marketing it was not touched upon in any of the theoretical concepts raising a question of whether a communication is part of the DSI process model. Empirical findings contradict the reviewed theory in this matter. Findings from the interviews and extra material prove that even though social innovations do not seek for the profit, marketing is used to reach a wider group of people in order to address a social challenge that they encounter. Based on the most often used marketing channels in the analysed cases, authors speculate that the marketing phase is undertaken throughout the entire DSIs’ development process. The chosen marketing channels do not require much additional effort in order to be implemented, it rather appears to be a natural action which is undertaken while communicating with stakeholders. However, this assumption is not built upon theoretical evidence and is entirely implied based on the results of the interviews. Since the original model by Turker & Vural (2017) allows additions to the process, the authors have decided to add it as a part of the process, even though it is not demonstrated in the model but rather is an ongoing activity in the background.
5.6.4  Three Levels of Social Innovation

This part presents the levels of social innovation within the final services. Finally, the suggested model (Figure 5) is introduced where the interrelatedness between separate components can be demonstrated.

Figure 5: DSI Process Model (Virketyte & Wiklund, 2019)

According to the findings of Nicholls and Murdock (2012), social innovation takes place in incremental, market and system levels. The first one, incremental innovation aims to develop a new social offering that arises from IV. This is the main goal of most NGOs, foundations, and bottom-of-the-pyramid organisations. At the market level, institutional innovation is integrated with economic issues along with social motives. Based on this logic, it can be argued that all innovations belong either to the incremental or market level. In contradictory to the findings of Turker and Vural (2017), none of the innovations take place at the system level. This can potentially be explained by the differences within the context. It can be concluded that in Sweden and in Germany incremental and market level innovations are more common since the level of institutionalisation is high which consequently lowers the level of uncertainty. Another explanation can be the type of case innovations. Turker and Vural (2017) discuss disruptive (system level) change taking longer time and to be able to alter hierarchies require transformative mindset which was not the interest of any of the interviewees. Finally, it can be stated that the construct of
the SI is embedded in the IC which in the model is represented by an arrow. After all, the main goal for social innovation is to create greater common good (Cabaija-Santana, 2014) which could not be achieved without reflecting the innovation to the context.

To summarise the analysis, the authors of this study have discovered the linkage between Research Model and Process for Design Thinking that cannot be disregarded. These two concepts complement each other creating a coherent environment for DSIs’ development. The new process model (Figure 5) combines theoretical and practical approaches which together form a sustainable guidance for innovators. Academic literature has not yet provided this solution. Therefore, the authors of this study have closed the gap in the literature.
6. Conclusion

The empirical findings and analysis allow answering the research question at the beginning of this chapter. That is followed by presenting theoretical and practical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

6.1 Purpose and Research Question

Intertwines between digital technology and innovation is growing (Dreyer et al., 2017) which is escalating innovation flow (Viltard, 2016). Fast-paced digitation can play an important role in addressing vibrant social challenges (Jabłoński, 2018) such as migrant integration that has been one of the most addressed topics when it comes to social innovativeness (European Commission, 2013). Eight representatives of digital social innovations with a focus on the integration of migrants were interviewed to gain pragmatic insights into the study. However, scholars around the world have not succeeded to unanimously describe the universal meaning of social innovation (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014) let alone explain how the process is constructed in this highly context-based phenomenon. The purpose of this study, thus, was to examine how the process of digital social innovations unfolds in organisations. Furthermore, the study was delimited to a context-based factor to be able to present generalised results within that context but that may be applicable elsewhere as well. The abductive research approach allowed the authors to empirically test Research Model (Figure 1) and Design Thinking Process (Figure 2). The models then were combined and developed further based on findings from the empirical data. The two frameworks provided multiple perspectives, but empirical findings showed the importance of marketing within the context of migrant integration. With the help of the suggested concepts, the research question has been answered:

- How do organisations undertake the process of digital social innovations in relation to migrant integration?

The findings of the study showed that the innovation process consists of interrelated components that cannot be demonstrated in a linear manner. The first step implicated that institutional context either furthered or inhibited the social innovation process. For instance, it was found that support from public agencies or collaborations in the
commercial sector can help to move the innovation forward whilst the innovations struggling to have support lacked resources for sustaining or scaling the innovation. The role of the second component, the actor, has been discussed in the literature with contradictory views. The actor, however, plays an important role in the construction of the innovation process. The values and networks of the actors were the main force driving the innovation forward. The third component, the SIP, was modified from the original model (Figure 1) to comply better with the additional requirements of building digital tools. The concept of creativity in the innovation process and Design Thinking process were brought in to make the model more suitable for practitioners. In accordance with the original model, resources, networks, and collaborations are aggregated throughout the process. However, marketing is added to the list based on the findings, as the original model suggested that new categories may emerge depending on the innovation. The final component of the step is the end-product/service that is the result of the combination of institutional context, the actor and the social innovation process. Empirical findings together with literature analysis showed that these components and steps are needed in order to undertake the process of digital social innovation.

6.2 Implications

6.2.1 Theoretical Implications
Academic studies are still not sufficiently analysing the matter of DSIs’ process. The existing body of literature is touching upon processes vaguely (Phillips et al., 2015; Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). Therefore, the research gap in the theory has remained for decades since the SI phenomenon started becoming a widely discussed matter. This study aimed to gather the scattered limited academic literature in order to combine the features characterising the process of social innovation development therefore, a more focused theoretical analysis has been produced.

This study provides researchers with an empirically tested DSIs process model which can be further applied in other studies for the purpose of digital social innovations’ analysis. The model is built to be applicable in any context no matter the industry or purpose, however, its applicability in different settings is not tested yet. Therefore, the gathered
theory and empirical findings can be replicable in other studies aiming to analyse the phenomenon of DSIs.

6.2.2 Practical Implications
Organisations are encouraged to become more socially responsible, turn to societies and comply with the challenges they are facing nowadays. The comprehension of innovations is changing (Boelman et al., 2014; Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). As explained earlier, the academic literature has not yet provided much practical guidance for innovators wishing to do things differently. The authors of this study have analysed two process models that have been closely linked to SIs. The Research Model (Figure 1) is an example of a theoretical approach yet is not providing a practical roadmap. While the Design Thinking model (Figure 2) is practically applicable but quite generic and missing important stages of the DSI process. Additionally, in order to complement the idea generation stages in Design Thinking, concepts of creativity have been incorporated. Therefore, the authors have been analysing the specifics of real DSIs and have noticed the patterns that the majority of innovators have been following throughout the innovation development process. As a result, based on the empirical findings the two models (Figure 1 & Figure 2) have been merged creating a process model including theoretical and practical aspects (Figure 5). The motivation to do so was to produce an applicable process model which alone would cover the majority of tasks that need to be undertaken while developing a DSI. The authors aimed to provide guidance in a way that people involved in DSIs’ development process would easier understand the fundamentals needed to be taken into consideration without trying to apply many different models.

6.3 Limitations
Several limitations were identified throughout the process. Main limitations in this study are related to the lack of literature, the sample, and the data collection process. The limitations contained separate aspects, and each of them is explained more in detail in this section.

Literature within the field is rather scattered. In some occasions, there were difficulties with access that hindered this study in collecting relevant articles. For this reason, a
systematic literature review approach could not have been taken, that is suggested for this type of study.

Another limitation was related to the sample. Not all of the interviewees were involved with the innovation from the very beginning. This led to situations where interviewees were not able to answer some of the questions to the detail this study was requiring. The two topics that interviewees were not familiar with were the digital development and legal aspects. Hence, some of the interviewees were not thoroughly familiar with the specifics of an innovation development process due to the remoteness of their original responsibilities, or, because of joining an innovation later in the process.

The data collection process had some limitations. Since the native language of neither the interviewees nor the interviewers is English, some language barriers might have occurred during the interviews. Misunderstandings, however, were minimised by sending the results to the participants to be checked before analysing them. The authors assume, that interviewees might have had difficulties to express themselves when talking about details in the process they were not prepared to discuss or were not completely familiar with, since the interview topics were not revealed to the participants beforehand.

Finally, another limitation was the format of the interview as all eight interviews were held through videoconference tools such as Skype. It arguably is the most convenient way to gain access to participants from multiple locations, to which could not have been reached in person due to lack of time and resources. However, some interviews were disturbed by issues with technology or by another factor in their interview environment which might have affected, not only the level of concentration but delivering outright answers. Additionally, there might have been missed reactions toward certain questions since not all interviewees had the ability to keep a camera on the whole time.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

This thesis was based on a qualitative research approach in order to get an in-depth understanding of the DSIs process phenomenon. By analysing real-life cases and applying it to the gathered theory the authors aimed to investigate existing process models and
adapt them according to the findings. However, due to the chosen approach and the limited amount of gathered empirical data, the suggested process model might not be applicable in different context or market. In order to test the applicability of the adapted model, the authors are suggesting future researchers undertake a quantitative approach. A quantitative study would allow to examine the process model with a larger sample of study participants and measure its relevance in practice (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015).

As authors have mentioned in the limitations, systematic literature was not applicable for the study. Therefore, there is a possibility that relevant concepts or models were not discovered. As presented by Turker and Vural (2017), additional components can be added to the Research Model (Figure 1) depending on the context. Thus, future researchers are advised to analyse whether the developed DSI process model might include additional components.

This study has been undertaken in the context of migrants’ integration. However, the size of organisations or any criteria regarding financial independence were not taking into consideration when choosing the sample of study participants. Therefore, it is possible, that different scenarios would evolve if more strict criteria were applied to the sample choice. For future research, the authors suggest, to analyse and compare the development processes of innovations that fall into different categories related to size, financial stability, or other relevant parameters.

The suggested model (Figure 5) is an example of theoretical and practical aspects joint together. It gives a clear picture of common steps that social innovations need to undertake in the development process. The suggestion for future research would be to analyse more in-depth how the steps should be undertaken more practically, suggesting ways of easier obtaining qualified people, how the user analysis should be organised, what are the ways of obtaining public or commercial funds, etc.

Another suggestion for future research would be to apply an ethnographic research method. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), this type of methodology is used when researchers aim to obtain a very close-up perspective of a matter by becoming an integral part of an organization. The authors of this study believe, that a much more
detailed understanding of DSIs’ process could be gained by adapting ethnographic approach.

Lastly, the authors would suggest developing a process model that would be more applicable to products created for a social purpose. The process stages might differ significantly when developing a tangible product.
References


Galletta, A. (2013). Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication. NYU Press.


Appendix 1: Topic Guideline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Presentation of the interviewers</td>
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<td>• The length of the interview</td>
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<td>• The Form of Consent</td>
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<td>• Audio records</td>
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<tr>
<th>Opening Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Could you start by introducing yourself?</td>
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<td>• Can you briefly introduce the innovation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is your role regarding the innovation?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Innovation Idea</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How did the idea of service come about? <em>Can you please describe the idea development process?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• How did you conduct research about the problem? <em>Probe: If yes: What kind of research did you conduct? If no: How did you recognise a need in the market?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Was your target group included in this research? How?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Does the organisation/you have previous experience on social innovation? <em>Probe: If yes, how it has helped to guide the idea generation process? If no, how it has affected the idea generation process?</em></td>
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<th>External Environment</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Who did you collaborate throughout the process with?</td>
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<td>• What were the advantages of collaborating with different stakeholders?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How did you organise funding for the project?</td>
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<td>• How did you deal with the legal aspects?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What was the motivation behind migrants as a target group?</td>
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<th>Internal Environment</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Is creativity important in innovation? <em>Probe: If yes: How do you encourage creativity? If no: How do you motivate employees/team members to be innovative?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What is the business model of the innovation?</td>
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<th>Innovation Goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>• What values your service adds to society?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How did you differentiate your idea form already existing similar innovations?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Innovation Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Have you tried running a pilot version of the service before launching the innovation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Did you change anything after testing the pilot version? Please explain this more in detail.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• When did you know the innovation was ready to be implemented?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How did you communicate the innovation to the target group?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do you see scaling up regarding this innovation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do you make sure that the innovation does not stagnate?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How much risk were you willing to take in the innovation process?</td>
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</table>
- Did you use an existing process model for your innovation? *Probe: If yes, can you please explain this process model? Did you adapt it to your needs? What were the advantages of using an existing process model? If not, what were the advantages of creating your own process?*
- What ICT technology is employed in innovation?
- In which ways the digital part supports the innovation?
- What were the main motivators to create a digital innovation? *How is the digital service produced? e.g. outsourcing or in-house*

### Challenges and Advice

- What did you find challenging in the process of innovating?
- What did you find easy in the process of innovating?
- What would you advise other innovators to do before they innovate?

### Ending questions

- Is there anything you would like to add that we haven’t covered yet?
- Do you have any extra material about the process that you could share with us?
- Would you like to receive the results of the study?
- Is there anyone you could recommend participating in this study?
- Is it okay if we need to contact you later with additional questions?
Appendix 2: Form of Consent

Consent form for interviews participants

This form indicates that I consent to participate in the Master Thesis Research Study.

I participate in this study voluntarily. I am allowed to withdraw at any time without a reason and penalty. In the case of personal or confidential questions, I can decline to reply to them. I understand that mine and the company name will maintain anonymity throughout the research and will be given a different identification symbol in the study.

I accept the interview to be audio-recorded and I understand that only interviewers and the thesis supervisor have access to the data. I am aware that once the audio-record is transcribed, it will be obliterated immediately.

I am aware that I can contact people related to this research for any further explanations or requests.

I know that I can bring up more conditions to be included in this form before signing it.

Research Participant:

_______________________________                  ________________
Signature of Participant                   Date and Place