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A MODEL OF SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

We advance new insights into social entrepreneurship by theorizing the role of different forms of solidarity across the government, personal and market spheres in society. We then go on to develop specific predictions about the effects of formal solidarity (welfare state), cultural support for formal solidarity and informal personal solidarity (trust, religiosity) on social entrepreneurship taking a regional perspective. We conduct multi-level analysis in which individuals are nested in regions and countries based on data from the 2009 EU Flash Eurobarometer on Entrepreneurship, the European Social Survey and Eurostat. Our findings advance and help to reconcile past research proposed opposing roles of the welfare state for social entrepreneurship in the institutional support and void perspectives by developing a richer account of how solidarity plays out in different spheres. We find that in regions with higher levels of solidarity individuals are more likely to become social entrepreneurs. One implication is that we find support for a long-term 'crowding in' effect of the welfare state.

KEYWORDS: Social entrepreneurship; Institutions; Solidarity; Welfare state;

Religiosity; Generalised social trust