

Vincenzo Manes sheds light on a sector that acts as a catalyst for economic growth, employment and social aggregation at a time when crisis, widespread unemployment and growing marginalisation are the flavour of the day. Leaving aside the rhetoric, to what extent does a social enterprise affect our country's economic fabric? The National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) helps to provide an answer. The first eye-catching data refers to the growth rate of non-profit business in Italy: between 2001 and 2011, the third sector grew by 28% in terms of production units and almost 40% in terms of jobs. Not just volunteers (almost 5 million), as we often believe, but also 681,000 employees and 270,000 outside workers. ISTAT also emphasises the increasingly important role of the non-profit sector in social welfare and health. And yet, due to its heterogeneous distribution across the country, and excessive dependency on public funds, "the survival of many non-profit agencies may be at risk during this period of severe cuts in public expenditure". How should we interpret these statistics? First: unlike the public and private sector, social enterprises

keep on creating jobs. Second: non-profit has the potential to evolve into a pillar of *second welfare* at a time when public welfare programmes are becoming increasingly costly and unsustainable. Minister of Labour and Welfare Poletti has recently acknowledged that politics is responsible for creating the humus which will allow the third sector "to change the nature of its presence", evolving from a sporadic into a structural one, complementing public welfare. Third: to achieve this objective, efforts have to be made to promote the development of a social investment market. The British model is, inevitably, the best reference one: in 2012 the UK Government established Big Society Capital Ltd (BSC), a bank with a capital of up to £ 600 million which invests in financial intermediaries specialised in social investment. Thanks to the partnership with BSC these funds have in turn financed social ventures that implement pre-emptive welfare programmes, ranging from social inclusion of the homeless to the reinsertion of inmates. BSC has launched an innovative tool called the Social Impact Bond (already copied and adopted in other Anglo-Saxon

countries), thanks to which the funds provide seed capital to the ventures so that they can implement projects. The ventures are remunerated by the BSC only if the project achieves a quantifiable and socially relevant outcome (for example, a reduction in the rate of recidivism among inmates). And in Italy? The Government has announced the creation of a social venture Fund with a capital of €500 million, with the mission of fostering the creation of new entrepreneurial initiatives and new jobs. Also, before the end of June, a Bill laying down a complete overhaul of the third sector is expected to be introduced in Parliament. Perhaps, this is the right time to introduce, as already announced by the Government, a "universal voucher for services to individuals and families" so that users can freely choose their own social venture. In Manes' words, the voucher wouldn't just be an incentive, but "the vision of a new model of society".

Mariella Palazzolo  @Telosaes

Telos is a member of the [FIPRA](#) network

MANES

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS. THE NEW HEROES.

“Creating social ventures in Italy in 2014 means creating innovation. Difficulties can be tackled and overcome not by good intentions, but by good ideas, by the ability to work together, by a commitment to turn those ideas into concrete actions.”

Telos: You are the founder of Dynamo Camp, a pioneering philanthropic initiative, at least in Italy. Can you tell us how the idea came to you and why you thought of creating a therapeutic recreational camp for children in Italy, based on the American model? What have you achieved since its foundation, and how do you see the future shaping up?

Vincenzo Manes: The idea came to me when I met Paul Newman's organisation, and right away it became part of a broader and more complex philanthropic and socially-oriented project that I had already embarked on. I was looking for a really good initiative in which to invest the funds of *Fondazione Dynamo* which I founded in 2003 to promote social ventures. I've always admired Anglo-Saxon culture and American philanthropy, so I was immediately captivated by the entrepreneurial matrix of Paul Newman's project *Hole in the Wall Camps* launched in the USA in 1988 and now known as *SeriousFun Children's Network*. The legacy of the American project was first and foremost the fact that it successfully fulfilled its key mission of giving hope and happiness to seriously ill children and their families. The organisation and sustainability of existing camps was an important source of inspiration when I developed Dynamo Camp: we added our vision and planning ability to the expertise of the Camps and created a sustainable, multiannual project.

Dynamo Camp is now the first Therapeutic Recreational Camp in Italy, offering holidays and recreation activities to children from 6 to 17 years of age who suffer from serious or chronic illnesses, especially onco-hematological and neurological diseases as well as diabetes. The children come from all over Italy and some from abroad. Dynamo Camp provides tailor-made programmes for the whole family as well as programmes for healthy siblings. All the guests stay here free of charge. Dynamo Camp is located in Limestre (in the province of Pistoia, Tuscany) in a 900 hectare WWF affiliated oasis (Oasis Dynamo) and is part of the *SeriousFun Children's Network* I mentioned earlier.

I'll give you some figures for the Dynamo Camp 2013 project, our seventh year: 1157 children stayed free of charge for holiday or recreational periods as part of our Therapeutic Recreational programme; 156 families, 17 programmes were offered to children suffering from 54 different diseases, mainly onco-hematological, neurological diseases and diabetes; a network of 72 hospitals and 50 associations treating these illnesses in Italy and abroad; a staff of 49 employees; 54 seasonal workers; 20 doctors and 25 nurses present during the Dynamo Camp programmes throughout the year; 620 volunteers. Since 2007, the year we opened, Dynamo Camp has welcomed, free of charge, 4,622 children, 671 families, and involved 1767 volunteers. The project is entirely privately funded.

Dynamo Camp is just one of the projects of *Fondazione Dynamo*. The latter is also active in the fields of environmental conservation, social education and the development of social ventures in Italy. Ten years after it was created, the Foundation has affirmed and consolidated its commitment to tackle and find solutions to social problems. Its priorities include the wellbeing of seriously ill children and their families, building social networks, education, environmental sustainability, the social role of ventures, youth unemployment, and territorial requalification.



Vincenzo Manes is Chairman and a shareholder in the KME GROUP, a leading European company producing semi-finished copper products. The KME Group has a turnover of approximately €2.5 billion, and employs 6,000 workers in 12 plants in Europe and China. In 2003, Manes decided to exploit his entrepreneurial skills in philanthropic activities and founded *Fondazione Dynamo*, where he now serves as Chairman. Over the years *Fondazione Dynamo*, the first Italian fund dedicated to Venture Philanthropy, has established itself as a catalyst of philanthropy. In 2006 *Fondazione Dynamo* promoted and established *Associazione Dynamo Camp Onlus* where Manes serves as an Advisor; it is the only Italian association created to host - completely free of charge - young people between the ages of 7 and 17 who suffer from serious or chronic diseases, are convalescing after hospitalisation and/or in remission from treatment. Every Camp is a separate entity inspired by the dream of the actor Paul Newman who in 1988 founded the first Camp in the United States. As member of several management boards, Manes serves in varying capacities in *Fondazione Vita*, *Fondazione Laureus Sport for Good*, and *Fondazione Adriano Olivetti*. He is also member of the Committee to encourage corporate philanthropy in the United States.

In 2012 he was awarded the title of Grand Officer of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic; in May 2013 the President of the Republic also awarded him the title of Knight of the Order of Merit for Labour for his entrepreneurial and philanthropic services.

Born in 1960, Manes is married with three children.

Dynamo Camp is also the brainchild of an innovative strategy of non-profit funding, based on the concept of Venture Philanthropy: could you explain?

The Venture Philanthropy concept was inspired by the cultural and strategic approach of *Fondazione Dynamo* to input into the development of philanthropy in Italy by applying the Venture Capital model to the non-profit sector. It is important to elaborate a sustainable multiannual strategic plan which has to be managerially developed and administered, according to business criteria and parameters: we organise resources and skills for complex projects.

In particular, *Fondazione Dynamo* implements its mission by funding and providing technical and managerial support for initiatives that promote and create new social ventures which operate according to the criteria of efficiency, efficacy and cost-effectiveness. These criteria are applied to *Dynamo Camp* and all the projects funded by the Foundation.

Dynamo Camp was and is a great opportunity to achieve environmental and productive requalification in the area where it is located: can it be used as a model for the many areas now trying to manage a post-industrial future?

The model can be used anywhere but it requires huge investment and needs to be elaborated based on a serious multiannual development plan, typical of the profit sector; it also requires the ability to dialogue and interact with the territory. However, the benefits of a far-reaching territorial project can be enormous.

In all *Fondazione Dynamo* projects the territory plays a key role in the recruitment of the workforce and involvement of suppliers; the territory also benefits from our cultural, social and sports activities and initiatives; our project attracts thousands of individuals from all over Italy either on a daily basis or on special occasions, when over 7,000 people from the vicinity, as well as the whole country, attend our *Open Day* - yet another beneficial opportunity for the territory.

While we were setting up *Dynamo Camp* we also renovated an old 900 hectare hunting estate, sprawling across the hills and mountains in the heart of the Pistoia Apennines; we then affiliated the estate to the WWF, established long-term conservation and sustainability programmes, and opened it to the public.

There's more to add. We are currently performing a feasibility study to create a commercial company (now in the pilot stage) which will allocate 100% of its profits to *Dynamo Camp*. The carefully chosen and locally grown foodstuffs are provided by small local producers and craftsmen who use traditional methods to provide quality products.

We are also currently studying a project called *Dynatown*, an activities centre following the principles of social economy; it is like a huge market place with artisanal activities and distribution based on the concept of recovery and recycling, cultural activities, incubator of social ventures, and socially sustainable activities and services.

If management buys into this idea, developing a project goes hand in hand with territorial requalification.

Compared to other countries, such as the United States where non-profit is a more consolidated tradition, is it more difficult to create social ventures in Italy? Does the legislative framework and the attitude of our Institutions encourage or hinder the development of the sector?

Creating social ventures in Italy in 2014 means creating innovation.

Difficulties can be tackled and overcome not by good intentions, but by good ideas, by the ability to work together, by a commitment to turn those ideas into concrete actions. The thing that gives me greatest satisfaction, rather than trying to justify doing nothing or the fact that our best minds emigrate abroad, is to stay in Italy, do a good job and turn one's passions into something tangible, even if all this costs you the earth. After an in-depth study of philanthropy in the UK and Italy, *Fondazione Dynamo* adopted the Venture Philanthropy model and adapted it to the Italian system and to the skills of our group; we also used it to encourage *pro bono* contribution by professionals, something quite uncommon in Italy in 2003.

Creating social ventures, as I mentioned earlier, requires feasibility studies, building an organisation, seed capital for the initiative, implementation of the project, actually starting the activities, and a long-term sustainability plan. Just like any well-managed business project.

Right now the legislative framework is on the move, but we're not holding our breath, we just carry on working.