

Prof. Dr. phil. habil. Susanne Elsen:

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Susanne Elsen studied Social Work and Social Education, Sociology and Economics and graduated at the University of Trier, Germany. She obtained her PhD (*community economy*) at the same University and received the Habilitation at the Technical University of Dresden, Germany.

After seven years of fieldwork in a program for the development of sustainable tourism in different countries (*Studienkreis für Tourismus and Touristik Union International*), she worked at the University of Trier as a researcher and project leader in the field of community-based research and socio-economic development for urban restoration in a disadvantaged area. For her work in this project, she gained the award of the German Schader-Foundation for research in the sector of housing and urban development.

Since 1992, she was responsible for qualification programs of street- and community-workers as well as collaborators for endogenous rural development strategies at the study center of the German protestant church *Burckhardthaus, Gelnhausen*.

In 1995, she became the director of the research and development project EUROSOZIAL at the University of Trier, financed by the German Ministry for Research and Education (BMBF), focused on local labor market and community-based health-promotion in the European boarder-region SAAR-LOR-LUX, strongly effected by unemployment and poverty in that phase.

In a parallel contract, she worked as scientific collaborator in the national program *Neue Wege der Arbeitsplatzbeschaffung / New ways of generating labor* (1998-2003), financed by the German Ministry for Families, Elderly, Women and Youth. This project aimed to create employment options for women in remote rural areas of eastern Germany based on community-development methods.

Since 1997, she has been Professor for Community Development at the University of Applied sciences of Zürich and since 1999 at the University of Applied Sciences, Munich. Since 2010, she is full professor for social science at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano teaching in the trilingual courses on BA-, MA- and PhD-level. She has been the vice-dean for research and the coordinator of four cycles of the PhD program in humanities and social sciences. Since 2021, she is member of WP1 (economic sustainability) of the international ASTRA-PhD-program *Applying Sustainability Transition Research Methods in Social Work* (HORIZON 2020).

Her emphasis in research, teaching and development lies in social innovation, eco-social transformation and social and solidarity economy with a special focus on solutions for disadvantaged rural and urban areas. She combines participatory research strategies as cooperative and transdisciplinary knowledge production with approaches to sustainable social change and development, involving stakeholders and concerned people.

Recent memberships and advocacy:

2011-2015: Member to the future council of Bavaria.

2013 ongoing: Member of the expert commission for the development of social cooperatives of Bavaria.

2013 ongoing: Director of the institute for sustainable development and local economy, Mönkeberg;

2016-2020: Scientific councilor of the German Union of Green Enterprises.

2020 ongoing: Scientific reviewer for the Austrian society for research FFG;

2020 ongoing: Editor of the Journal of Social Economy and Common Welfare (Nomos);

2021 ongoing: Member of the expert-group of the UNTFSSSE (United Nations Task Force for Solidarity Economy).

Co-founder and member of diverse social and community cooperatives to experience and steer social innovation from the ground.

Selected research projects 2015 - 2023:

2015 – 2015 *WWWforEurope, Wealth, work Welfare, Europe moving to a new path of growth (EU FP7)*

2015 – 2017 *Competence Alliance for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development (EU funded)*

2018 – 2020 *Unlocking the Potential of Social Agriculture (UPAS), funded by Free University of Bolzano*

2018 - 2020 *Socio-economic integration of migrants and refugees in South-Tirol, funded by Free University of Bolzano*

2017 – 2020 *Development of community-based health care systems in South Tirol, funded by Free University of Bolzano*

2019 – 2020 *Multifunctional social farming combatting organized crime*

2020 – 2022 *Filiera Agricoltura Responsabile (FARm) (responsible agricultural chain) (EU-fund)*

2020 – 2022 *Multifunctional agriculture and eco-social transformation of remote rural areas*

2021 – 2024 *ASTRA Applying Sustainability Transition Research in Social Work (H2020)*

2020 – 2022 *Written in the landscape (funded by the Province of Bolzano)*

2020 – 2023 *Certificazione Partecipativa nella Filiera del Biologico Italiano (CARIVERONA)*

Selected publications 2015-2025

Zadra F., Elsen S. 2025. Reinforcing protective structures against labor exploitation of seasonal workers. Social innovation research in South Tyrol. Journal of Rural Studies. 2/2025

Tadesse M., Elsen S. 2025. The Social Solidarity Economy Organizations of People of African Descent in Europe: A Systematic Scoping Review. The Review of Political Economy. 1-49. 21.2. 2025. SAGE

Benedikter T., Elsen S. 2025. Auf der Suche nach Spuren der Erinnerung. In: Kofler-Engl W. et al. Writen in the Landscape. Bozen: bu,press

Piccoli A., Uleri F., Elsen S. 2025. Participatory Guarantee System as prefiguration of redefined relationships within food networks. Culture della Sostenibilità - ISSN 1972-5817 (print), 1973-2511 (online). 214-234

Elsen S. 2024. Soziale Landwirtschaft und ökosoziale Transformation – Beispiele aus Italien. In: Hofmann Ch., Spieker M. (Hg.). 2024. Potenziale der Sozialen Landwirtschaft. Weimar bei Marburg: Metropolis.

Elsen S. 2024. Bürger:innengenosenschaften zur Erhaltung und Gestaltung von Sozialräumen. In: Kurscheid, Maier-Rigaud, Sauer (Hrsg.): 2024. Lebenslagen und Gemeinwohl. Baden Baden: Nomos-Verlag. S. 251-261

Elsen S. 2024. Soziale und solidarische Ökonomie, ökosoziale Transformation und ihr potenzieller Beitrag für Gemeinwohl und Klimaschutz. Soziale Passagen. Mai 2024

Elsen S. 2023. Soziale und Solidarische Ökonomie. In: Armutskonferenz Hg. 2023. Es brennt. Armut bekämpfen, Klimawandel stoppen. Norderstedt: BoD

Elsen S, Uleri F. 2023. Ruralità tra resinificazione e centralità nuova: giovani agricoltori e transizione alla multifunzionalità nelle valli Trentine e Altoatesine. Sociologia Urbana e Rurale. Volume 130/2023. P 144-168

Zadra F., Elsen S., Bragagnolo C., Scarone S. 2023. Il lavoro sociale di bassa soglia nel sostegno all'emersione dallo sfruttato. In: Bonardi O., Calafà L, Elsen S., Salomon R. (ed.) 2023. Lavoro Sfruttato e Caporalato. Percorsi Diritti. Bologna: il Mulino

Zadra F., Elsen S., Bragagnolo C., Scarone S. 2023. Il lavoro connettivo per l'emersione e la prevenzione dello sfruttamento. Bonardi O., Calafà L, Elsen S., Salomon R. (ed.) 2023. Lavoro Sfruttato e Caporalato. Percorsi Diritti. Bologna: il Mulino

Bonardi O., Calafà L, Elsen S., Salomon R. (ed.) 2023. Lavoro Sfruttato e Caporalato. Percorsi Diritti. Bologna: il Mulino

Zadra F., Elsen S. 2023. Aufbau eines Präventionsnetzwerkes gegen die Aubeutung von Saisonarbeiter*innen in Norditalien. In: Laschewski, L, Putzing, M., Wiesinger G., Egartner, S. Eller, L. (Hrsg.) 2023: Abhängig Beschäftigte in der Landwirtschaft. Schriftenreihe für ländliche Sozialfragen Nr. 149. Göttingen.

Elsen S. 2023. Die fehlerhaften Prämissen neoliberalen Wirtschaftens und die reale Utopie Solidarischer Ökonomie. In: Stiehler S., Haag C., Reutlinger C. Ravagli M. (Hrsg.) 2023. Solidarität heute. Frankfurt am Main. Campus Verlag (169 – 189)

Elsen S. 2023. Wie können soziale Dienste armutserfahrene Menschen erreichen und einbeziehen? Sozial Extra 2023

Elsen S. 2023. Nachhaltigkeit als Thema von und in Organisationen Sozialer Arbeit: vergessene Wurzeln und ihre aktuellen Bedeutungen. Sozial Extra. Special Issue Oktober 2023

Piccoli A., Uleri F., Elsen S., Muro C. 2023. Participatory Guarantee Systems as a prefiguration of redefined relationships within food networks. Journal of Agriculture and Human Values

Tadesse M., Elsen S. 2023. The Social Solidarity Economy and the Hull-House Tradition of Social Work: Keys for Unlocking the Potential of Social Work for Sustainable Social Development. Journal of Social Science. Vol 12. Issue 3, 2023

Elsen S. 2023. Social Services and the Social and Solidarity Economy. In: Yi I., Utting P, Laville J et al in partnership with United Nations Inter-Agency Force on Social and Solidarity Economy. 2023. Encyclopedia of the Social and Solidarity Economy (UNTSSE). Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar Publishing, entry 38, p.295-302

Zadra F., Elsen S. 2022. Preventing and redressing exploitation. Methods of anti-trafficking social work outreach in Northern Italy. European Journal of Social Work. November 2022

Elsen S. 2022. Die Bedeutung von Genossenschaften für die öko-soziale Transformation unter Berücksichtigung neuer Entwicklungen in Italien und Deutschland. In: Zeitschrift für Gemeinwirtschaft und Gemeinwohl ZGuG, 45. Jahrg. Heft 4 2022

Zadra F., Viganò F., Elsen S. 2022. Azioni di rete per la qualità sociale del lavoro agricolo e la prevenzione dello sfruttamento. In: Borgi M., Genova A., Collacchi B. 2022. Agricoltura Sociale: processi, pratiche e riflessione per innovazione sociosanitaria. ISTISAN report 9/22. Roma: Istituto superiore die Sanità

Uleri F., Elsen S., Piccoli A. 2022. Nuovi agricoltori e trasformazione eco-sociale per le aree interne: processi di innovazione e costruzione sociale della qualità in Trentino Alto-Adige e Liguria. In: Fuori Luogo Rivista di Sociologia del Territorio, Turismo, Tecnologia, Napoli, online 7/2022, print 12/22

Elsen S. 2022. Solidarische Ökonomie, öko-soziale Transformation und Soziale Arbeit. In: Liedholz Y., Verch J. 2022. Nachhaltigkeit und Soziale Arbeit. Opladen: Verlag Budrich

Elsen S. 2022. Genossenschaften als Organisationen der sozialen Transformation. In: Kamphausen, G. (ed.) Genossenschaften in Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft. Weilerswist: Velbrück Wissenschaft

Crepaz K, Elsen S. 2021. Soziale Innovation, Transformation und Empowerment während der Covid-19-Krise. In: POLITIKA 2021. Politik und Gesellschaft im Umbruch: Folgen der Covid-19-Pandemie. Bozen: politika 2021

Elsen, S., Fazzi, L. 2021. Genossenschaften und Soziale Landwirtschaft – Potentiale sozialökonomischer Entwicklung ländlicher Räume in Italien. Zeitschrift für Gemeinwirtschaft und Gemeinwohl ZGuG, 44. Jahrg. Heft 1 2021

Elsen, S., Fazzi, L. 2021. Extending the concept of social farming: rural development and fight against organized crime in disadvantaged areas of southern Italy. Journal of Rural Studies, April 2021

Elsen S., Nothdurfter U., Nagy A., Lintner C., Trott L. 2021. Social Work in a Border Region. Bozen/Bolzano: bu,press

Fazzi, L., Elsen. S. 2020. Actors in Social Agriculture Cooperatives Combatting Organized Crime in Southern Italy: Cultivating the Ground. *Sustainability* No. 12 November 2020

Lintner, C, Elsen, S. 2020. Empowering refugees and asylum seekers in the Italian agricultural sector. *International Journal of Social Welfare*. August 2020

Nicli, S, Elsen, S, Bernhard, A. 2020. Eco-social agriculture for social transformation and environmental sustainability: a case study of the UPAS-Project. *Sustainability*, special issue

Elsen, S., Angeli, S., Bernhard, A., Nicli, S. (ed.). 2020. Perspektiven der Sozialen Landwirtschaft unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Entwicklungen in Italien. *Prospettive dell'Agricoltura Sociale con particolare riferimento agli sviluppi in Italia*. Bozen: Bolzano University Press

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Elsen, S. 2016: Das Innovative Potenzial genossenschaftlichen Wirtschaftens. In: Schmale, I., Blome-Drees J. 2016: Genossenschaft innovativ - Genossenschaften als neue Organisationsform in der Sozialwirtschaft. Springer, Berlin

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Elsen Susanne, Walk Heike. 2016. Genossenschaften und Zivilgesellschaft: Historische Dynamiken und zukunftsfähige Potenziale einer öko-sozialen Transformation. Forschungsjournal Soziale Bewegungen, Heft 3 September 2016, S. 60-73

Elsen, S. Reifer, G. (Hrsg.) 2015: Die Kunst des Wandels. Ansätze für die ökosoziale Transformation. München oekom Verlag

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