2008 Summary of Results
BALTA Social Economy Survey
Fall 2008

by Julia Affolderbach and Mike Gismondi
BALTA Mapping Team
November 2008

with Anna Bubel, Oksana Delgado, Jenny Kain,
Sandy Lockhart, Heather Lynch,
Cyrille Médard de Chardon, Diana Shields,
Lena Soots and Bart Szopiak

For further information, contact the B.C.-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance, PO Box 1161, Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 7M1 (tel) 250-723-2296 (fax) 250-248-1957.
Website: www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca
e-mail: balta@xplornet.com

Author information

Julia Affolderbach is a doctoral student in Geography at Simon Fraser University and serves as Senior Mapping Researcher with the B.C.-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance. She has worked as research assistant for several years in the field of economic geography. She holds a diploma (MA equivalent) in Geography, from the University of Cologne, Germany.

Mike Gismondi is a Professor and Director of the Centre for Integrated Studies at Athabasca University, a member of the BALTA Steering Committee, the Lead Researcher on the Mapping and Portraiture Project, and currently working with SERC 2 with a series of students and colleagues to research social economy and sustainability; social economy and land tenure (social and ecological); and the relationship between heritage buildings and sheltering social economy organizations.

This *paper/report* has been produced as part of the research program of the B.C-Alberta Social Economy Research Alliance (BALTA). Financial support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) is gratefully acknowledged.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada
Canada

Preamble

The B.C. and Alberta Research Alliance on the Social Economy (BALTA) is a regional collaboration of universities, colleges, and stakeholder organizations engaged in research initiatives to strengthen the foundations of the social economy in western Canada. Undertaken by the BALTA mapping team, the social economy survey is aimed at identifying the scope and characteristics of the social economy in BC and Alberta. The online survey is ongoing. This report is based on the summary of preliminary results released earlier this year. It provides a brief overview of the responses collected from January to October 2008. For those of you who have filled in the BALTA survey, the analysis of responses should prove helpful. For those of you considering completing our mapping survey, we hope our findings will encourage you to complete the BALTA Survey by adding your profiles to the database.

More detailed reports, particularly a sub-report that focuses on those respondents who meet BALTA-defined social economy market trading criteria, will be released to the public in the near future.

For more information on the mapping project and BALTA social economy survey, contact:

Dr. Mike Gismondi
Co-Investigator
Athabasca University
E: mikeg@athabascau.ca

Julia Affolderbach
Senior Mapping Researcher
Simon Fraser University
E: juliaa@sfu.ca

Table of Content

1. Introduction

In January 2008 the BC and Alberta Research Alliance on the Social Economy (BALTA)[1] launched its Social Economy Survey, as part of its Portraiture and Mapping project. The survey consists of an online questionnaire and is housed at Athabasca University. It is designed to compile an inventory of social economy actors and organizations in BC and Alberta in order to provide general data on the scope and scale of the sector including evidence of its economic, social and environmental significance.[2] The survey is an ongoing endeavour. It will stay active for the duration of the mapping project until 2011. The survey is open to any organizations and actors that are part of the social economy. With the help of BALTA members who work in the social economy sector, the Mapping team identified organizations and actors as prospective survey participants. Since January 2008, invitations to participate in the BALTA Social Economy survey were sent by email to approximately 1600 of these organizations followed by reminder emails.

This paper provides a summary of the data collected in the first year of the survey and is an update of the Summary of Preliminary Results released earlier this year (see Affolderbach and Gismondi 2008). It should be understood as an overview and will be followed by more in-depth, analytical and thematic reports that will share in detail the information gathered with practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and the public. While the term 'social economy' is somewhat vague, as many definitions exist and views on who is 'in' and who is 'out' can differ to a certain degree, this paper does not elaborate the debate. Rather, we include all responses received to date based on the assumption that participating organizations and actors identify with or see themselves as part of the social economy.

[1] BALTA is a regional collaboration of practitioners and academics with an interest in the 'social economy' of the two provinces. It is a five-year research project (2006-2011) funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). For further information please visit http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca/index.html.
[2] The survey is available at https://secure.athabascau.ca/phpsurveyor/index.php?sid=50 or can be viewed as read-only version at: http://auspace.athabascau.ca:8080/dspace/bitstream/2149/1523/3/BALTA+Social+Economy+Survey.pdf.

2. Findings

Between mid-January and mid-October 2008, 212 individuals filled out the social economy questionnaire (corresponding to a 13 percent response rate to invitations) of which 211 are included in this summary.[3] Organizations were contacted and recruited in between January and April as well as August and October. The first round of invitations at the beginning of the year returned 164 responses (10 percent response rate). Between August and October 2008 organizations that had not filled out the survey were contacted again, leading to 48 additional responses. Despite our increased effort, the response rate remained low. Compared to the first round of contacts, responses dropped down to three percent for the second round of invitations (48 out of 1426 contacted). To a certain degree participation might have been limited by the absence/vacation of many representatives during the summer months but the drop in response rate also suggests that we might have exhausted the willingness to participate of those included in our sampling list. Due to the nature of sampling and response rate this summary is neither representative nor comprehensive of the sector.[4] We hope these findings about the profile of the sector in the two provinces will encourage more organizations to complete the survey. An increase in responses over the next months and years will help us to complement the picture and accentuate its characteristics, scope, and scale.

The responses from organizations[5] received so far are summarized below according to spatial, organizational, sectoral, employment, and financial characteristics.

Spatial distribution and characteristics

The survey seeks to capture social economy organizations both within and outside the two provinces, if their objectives and activities contribute to

[3] Since the first summary of preliminary results the list of identified organizations has been updated and expanded. Names have been added and names of no longer existing establishments have been deleted from the list. As of November 2008 the list consists of 1600 organizations.

[4] For a discussion on the challenges and limitations of sampling see the BALTA Mapping Working Paper #2 available from the BALTA website (Affolderbach et al. 2008).

[5] In the following, the term 'organizations' is used to refer to all respondents regardless of the legal status and size of the entity they represent.

the social economy in BC and Alberta. The 211 responses received include one organization located in the Northwest Territories that primarily serves the territory and for geographic reasons is not included in this summary. Figure 1 maps the geographic location of organizations (n=211) showing four clusters around the urban centres of Vancouver, Victoria, Edmonton, and Calgary and a sparse but somewhat even distribution over the rural areas. One organization that operates on a national scale is located in Ontario and is not included in the map. The majority of respondents (n=211, 86 percent) operate one establishment, while 21 (10 percent) indicated that their organizations have more than one branch or office (Tab. 1). The number of organizations with branch establishments for which distinct financial statements are held ranges from two to three (n=10) to 500 (n=1) locations.

Figure 1: Geographical location of social economy organizations (n=211)

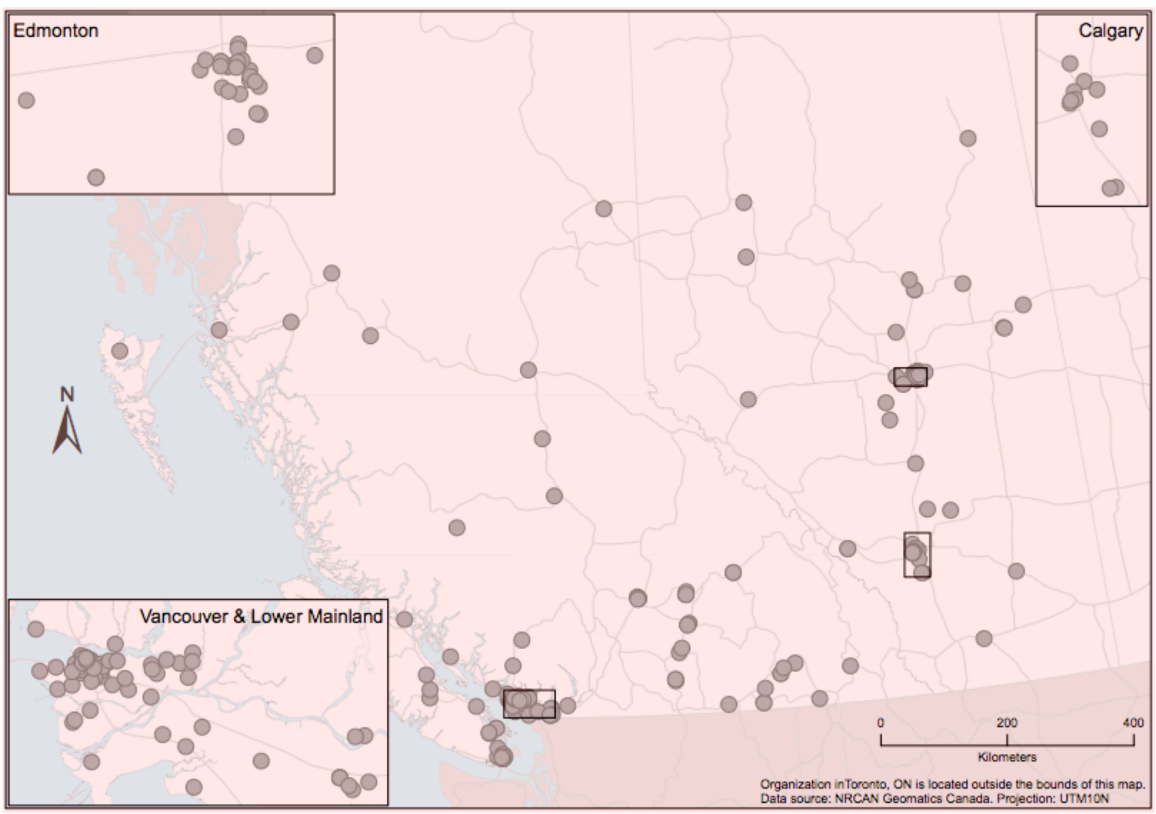


Table 1: Organizations with more than one establishment

More than one establishment	Number of responses (n=211)	Number of responses (in %)
Yes	21	10.0
No	182	86.3
N/a	8	3.8

To understand the spatial scale and range of social economy organizations, participants were asked to indicate the geographic area they serve and/or work with. We distinguish between neighbourhood/local community, city/town, region (county/regional district), province, national and international level. Multiple answers are possible and respondents are given the option to specify or comment on that section. As Table 2 (left columns) shows, more organizations operate on a regional and sub-regional scale (49 percent on a regional scale alone and 27 percent of organizations indicating that they serve the provincial level), while only 15 and 11 percent respectively are engaged on a national or international level. We were also interested in the 'range of operations' of organizations (see Tab. 2, right columns) that describes the different (multiple) scales organizations cover. Of those serving a sub-regional and regional area, 14 respondents (6 percent) stated that they solely serve their direct neighbourhood, 45 (21 percent) their neighbourhood and/or town, and 120 (57 percent) that they don't operate on a higher spatial level than their region. Twelve percent (n=26) of respondents indicated that their organization serves solely the provincial level. However, 18 (9 percent) organizations focus exclusively on the national and/or international level and nine (4 percent) work solely internationally.

Table 2: Spatial scale and range of operation, multiple responses (n=211)

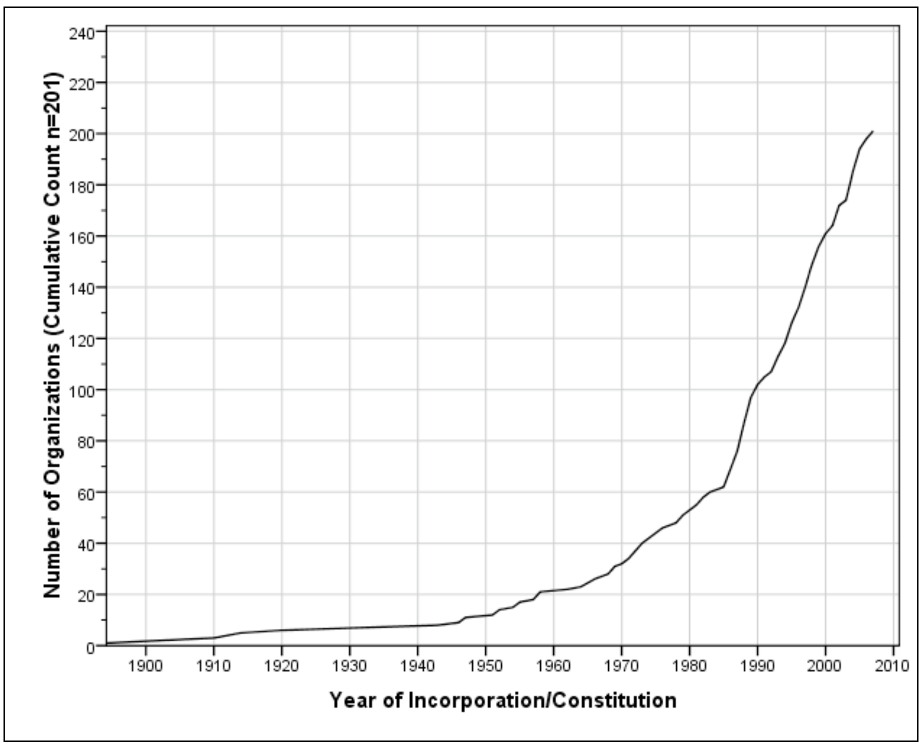
Spatial scale	Number of responses	Spatial range of operation	Number of responses
Neighbourhood/local community	65	Local community only	14
City/town	86	Local community and/or city/town	45
Region (county/ district)	103	Local community, city/town, and/or region	120
Province	57	Province only	26
National	32	National and international	18
International	24	International only	9
Other	12		

Organizational structure

To get a better idea of the organizational structure, we asked a number of general questions regarding the year of constitution, the organization's legal form, its membership base and size, and the composition of its board of directors.

Social economy organizations and actors in BC and Alberta have been around for a while – the oldest organization in our sample was founded in 1894 – but most institutions were started over the last 30 years (see Fig. 2) with the late 1980s, late 1990s, and mid 2000s in particular showing increased growth.

Figure 2: Year of Incorporation/Constitution, 1950-2008



With respect to the legal form of organizations, respondents could choose from a pre-given list including 'association', 'co-operative', 'for-profit' 'organization/corporation', 'foundation', 'not-for-profit corporation', 'not-for-profit organization', 'society', and 'other', as applied to their establishment.

Table 3 shows the number of responses for each category with the largest number being not-for-profit organizations (n=103), societies (n=68), and not-for-profit corporations (n=35). Several respondents provided additional information of which, among others, six identified themselves as charity/charitable status, four university related, two as not-for-profit co-operative society/federation, two as coalition/network, one as administered by the local school district, one as not-for-profit cooperative society, and one described it's organization as a for-profit but managed as a trust which feeds into the not-for-profit beneficiary.

Table 3: Legal form of organizations (ordered by number of counts)

Legal form	Multiple responses (n=211)
Not-for-profit organization	103
Society	68
Not-for-profit corporation	35
Co-operative	21
Other	14
For-profit-organization/corporation	10
Foundation	9
Association	6

Regarding membership, 59 respondents indicated that they had no membership base. One hundred forty-one out of 211 respondents stated that their organizations have a membership base (Tab. 4). The membership base of these organizations totals 3,425,441 members. The size of membership, however, varies considerably. It ranges from four to 2.8 million (for a non-financial co-operative) with a median of 117.5 members. The median is the middle value in a ranked distribution. As Table 5 shows, most organizations have less than 500 members, and about half have less than 100 members.

Table 4: Number of organizations with membership base

Membership base	Number of responses (n=211)	Number of responses in %
Yes	141	66.8
No	59	28.0
N/A	11	5.2

Table 5: Organizations with membership base by size categories (n=136)

Size category	Number of members
0-26	26
26-50	21
51-100	16
101-250	32
251-500	17
501-1,000	10
1,001-5,000	6
5,001-100,000	6
Over 100,000	2

All but four participants (n=207) answered the question 'How many persons are on your organization's board of directors?'. The number of board members ranges from one to 87. However, that high value is an exception.[6] Only five respondents stated that their board of directors has more than 25 members. We also asked about gender and respondents indicated that almost a third of all board directors in our sample are women (31.8 percent, n=206) and 93 percent of the organizations have at least one female board director (n=193). Five percent of organizations (n=10) have boards that consist solely of women. According to a census of women board directors of Canada's 500 largest companies conducted in 2007, only 13 percent of board seats of the companies are held by women (a one percent increase from 2005, Catalyst 2006) and 56.8 percent of companies have at least one women board director (Jenner et al. 2008). While the 2007 figures are not available for the provincial level, the 2005 report shows that both Alberta (n=78) and British Columbia (n=57) lay below the national average of 12 percent with 11.7 and 11.5 percent of board seats held by women (Catalyst 2006). Even compared to the three sectors with highest percentages of women directors in the census, insurance services (30.8 percent), real estate, and credit unions (both 25 percent), our sample of the social economy shows a higher representation.

[6] As the 25 percent quartile of six, median of nine (mean = 9.7), and 75 percent quartile of 12 indicate.

Work sectors and mission

Social economy organizations work in a wide range of different fields. We asked respondents to identify **all sector(s)** they work in, offering 22 sector categories including 'other' (see Tab. 6) and allowing for multiple responses. Over 30 percent of participating organizations checked each of the following four sectors: 'social sciences', 'teaching and education', 'arts and culture', and 'training'. 'Other' was chosen by 55 respondents who provided additional information on the topic (see below). More than 20 percent of organizations work in 'recreation/tourism', 'professional services', and 'agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining'. 'Wholesale sales', 'manufacturing', 'real estate', 'construction', 'transportation/storage', 'catering/hosting', and 'waste management' are the least represented sectors, with less than 15 organizations (7 percent) each. Of the 55 'other' responses, many individuals used the space to elaborate on their focus. Based on their responses, two additional categories can be identified namely 'environment' (n=17) and 'housing' (n=7). Most other responses could be

Table 6: Responses regarding the sector(s) organizations work in (ordered by number of counts), multiple answers possible (n=211)

Sectors	Number of responses	Number of responses in %
Social services	79	37.4
Teaching/education	73	34.6
Arts and culture	70	33.2
Training	65	30.8
Other	55	26.1
Recreation/tourism	47	22.3
Professional services	43	20.4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	46	21.8
Health	36	17.1
Retail sales	33	15.6
Public services	33	15.6
Finance and/or insurance	25	11.8
Communications	25	11.8
Administrative services	17	8.1
Technical/scientific services	16	7.6
Wholesale sales	13	6.2
Manufacturing	12	5.7
Real estate	10	4.7
Construction	10	4.7
Transportation/storage	10	4.7
Catering/hosting	8	3.8
Waste management	8	3.8

classified under the existing categories particularly 'social services (n=9), 'finance and/or insurance' (n=8), 'professional services' (n=12) and 'technical and scientific support' (n=5). The relatively high number of organizations working in the environmental field is not surprising as the survey team invited environmental non-governmental organizations to respond. Some respondents were surprised that the environment was not offered as a work sector on our category list.[7]

When asked about the **primary sector** organizations work in, 54 respondents (25.5 percent) chose 'other' and 45 (21 percent) used the provided space to give additional information (Tab. 7). Of the given categories, 'social services' and 'arts and culture' had the highest representation, with 37 (17.5 percent) and 34 (16.1 percent) organizations respectively followed by 'agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining' (6.7 percent, n=14) and 'teaching and education' (6.1 percent, n=13). Six of the given categories were not represented by the respondents at all (see the note on Table 7). Five categories were only named by one to two respondents and nine respondents did not provide an answer. The overall low representation of organizations in some sector categories, together with the high level of respondents that did not identify with any of the given categories, suggests that 1) the sector categories provided are not sufficient to cover the spectrum of operations or 2) respondents do not recognize our categories as capturing their organizational functions.

In order to classify the 54 organizations that didn't choose any of the predefined categories, the mapping team re-grouped the 'other' responses in existing and newly created categories. Newly created categories are 'environment', 'health', and 'intermediary'. The result is summarized in Table 8. Eleven of the responses were re-grouped in the new categories of 'environment', and another six as 'housing', and two were identified as 'intermediary'. Nine responses were added to the existing categories of 'finance and/or insurance', five to 'social services', five to 'professional

[7] Our survey followed the categories developed by Dr. Marie Bouchard, Canadian Research Chair in Social Economy, and used by her team in their Quebec studies. We are in debate with our colleagues to include environmental/ecological work in future classifications.

services', two to 'teaching and education', and one to 'technical/scientific services' and 'communications.' This left 13 unclassified responses ('other') due to either missing information and multiple or changing objectives of the organizations.

Table 7: Responses regarding the primary sector organizations work in (n=211)

Primary sector*	Number of responses	Responses in %
Other	54	25.5
Social services	37	17.5
Arts and culture	34	16.1
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	14	6.7
Teaching/education	13	6.2
Health	10	4.7
Professional services	9	4.3
Training	7	3.3
Retail sales	6	2.8
Finance and/or insurance	5	2.4
Public services	5	2.4
Communications	2	0.9
Real estate	2	0.9
Recreation/tourism	2	0.9
Wholesale sales	1	0.5
Technical/scientific services	1	0.5
N/A	9	4.3

* Administrative services, Manufacturing, Construction, Transportation/storage, Catering/hosting, and Waste management are not chosen by any respondents.

Table 8: Adjusted responses regarding the primary sector organizations work in (n=211)

Primary sector*	Number of responses	Responses in %
Social services	42	19.9
Arts and culture	34	16.1
Teaching/education	15	7.1
Finance and/or insurance	14	6.6
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	14	6.6
Professional services	14	6.6
Other	13	6.1
Environment	11	5.2
Health	10	4.7
Training	7	3.3
Retail sales	6	2.8
Housing	6	2.8
Public services	5	2.4
Communications	3	1.4
Real estate	2	0.9
Recreation/tourism	2	0.9
Technical/scientific services	2	0.9
Intermediary	2	0.9
Wholesale sales	1	0.5
N/A	8	3.8

* Administrative services, Manufacturing, Construction, Transportation/storage, Catering/hosting, and Waste management are not represented.

In a separate question, respondents were asked about their organization's stated social and/or environmental purpose and to identify categories that would best describe their mission or sector of activity. While 85 percent (n=180) of surveyed institutions stated they had a social purpose, 27 percent (n=57) indicated that they had an environmental mission, and 25 percent (n=53) indicated that they do both (Tab. 9). Environmental missions are almost always combined with a social objective (93 percent) – only four organizations reported to have an environmental but no social purpose. Alternatively, only 29 percent of organizations with a stated social mission reported environmental objectives. Clearly the environment is an important mission sector for the social economy and will be the focus of future research by BALTA.

Table 9: Does your organization have a stated social or environmental purpose/mission, or both? (n=211)

	Social	Environmental	Social and Environmental
Yes	180 (85.3%)	57 (27.0%)	53 (25.1%)
No	25 (11.8%)	145 (68.7%)	150 (71.1%)
N/A	6 (2.8%)	9 (4.3%)	8 (3.8%)

The next topic asked respondents to identify **all categories** of their mission or scope of activities. Organizations chose from a list of 21 categories including 'other'. Table 10 (left column) summarizes the responses. 'General community' and 'education' ranked highest followed by 'persons with disabilities', 'children/youth', and 'lower income individuals'. Even though 48 respondents checked 'other', 76 offered additional information in the space provided regarding their organization's objectives. Of the 48 responses, 11 can be grouped as 'environment/sustainability' and 'intermediaries' respectively, eight as 'arts and culture', six as 'general community', five as 'legal/financial services', three as 'local community', two as 'human rights' and 'youth' and one as 'ethnic communities'.

Table 10: Categories that apply best to social mission or scope of activities by number of responses. For multiple answers see left columns, for best response right columns.

Categories that apply best to social mission or scope of activities	Multiple responses (n=180)	Primary category that best describes social mission or scope of activities	Number of responses (n=167)
General community	90	Other	47
Education	84	General community	32
Persons with disabilities	57	Education	15
Children/Youth	55	Persons with disabilities	12
Lower income individuals	51	Children/Youth	9
Other	48	Housing	7
Unemployed persons	47	Unemployed persons	6
Health	44	Basic needs provision	5
Human rights	41	Family services	5
Women	39	Persons with mental illness	5
Basic needs provision	38	Lower income individuals	4
Persons with mental illness	36	Legal/financial services	3
Indigenous People	34	Women	3
Housing	35	Health	3
Homeless persons	32	Elderly persons	3
Family services	32	Human rights	2
Ethnic communities	26	Indigenous people	2
Elderly persons	24	Fair trade	2
Legal/financial services	19	Ethnic communities	1
Refugees	17	Homeless persons	1
Fair trade	14	Refugees	0

Of the 180 organizations with a social mission, 167 identified a **primary category** that best described their scope of activities (Tab. 10, right columns). The categories 'general community' and 'education' still rank highest but only with 15 percent (n=32) and 7 percent (n=15) of all respondents respectively. Rather than choosing one of the given categories, 47 respondents chose 'other' and provided alternative categories that, not surprisingly, overlap with the previous answers. Additionally, two respondents who didn't check one of the given categories (including 'other') provided feedback. While most responses were either quite specific or broad, some can be roughly grouped under three new categories namely 'environment/sustainability' (n=10), 'arts and culture' (n=9), and 'intermediaries' (n=8). Other responses match (at least to a certain degree) already existing categories and can be added to 'general community' (n=3), 'legal/financial services' (n=3), 'health' (n=2), 'human rights' (n=1), and 'children/youth'.

With respect to environmental purpose or mission, respondents offered 15 categories (including 'other') to identify **all** activities that apply. As Table 11 (left columns) shows more than 40 percent (n=32) of the organizations with stated environmental mission indicated 'conservation and protection' (n=28), 'resource management' (n=25), 'climate change' (n=24), and/or 'alternative/sustainable business practices' (n=23). Scoring lowest on this scale were 'legal/financial services' (n=5), 'ecolabeling/auditing/monitoring' (n=6) and 'research/ independent science' (n=7). Only 48 of the 57 organizations named a **primary category** (Tab. 11, right columns) that describes their objectives. Of these, 'conservation and protection' (n=13) and 'alternative/sustainable business practices' (n=6) were repeatedly named. Most other categories received low scores. Six respondents selected 'other' and provided further information including, for example, 'land reform', 'education', and 'philanthropy'.

Table 11: Categories that best describe organization's/establishment's environmental mission or scope of activities. For multiple answers see left columns, for best response see right columns.

Categories that describe best environmental mission or scope of activities	Number of responses (n=57)	Primary category that best describes environmental mission or scope of activities	Number of responses (n=48)
Conservation and protection	32	Conservation and protection	13
Resource management	25	Alternative/Sustainable business practices	6
Climate change	24	Other	6
Alternative/Sustainable business practices	23	Agriculture and food	5
Pollution prevention	21	Climate change	3
Waste management/Recycling	21	Resource management	3
Agriculture and food	20	Health	3
Alternative energy	20	Waste management/Recycling	3
Health	17	Pollution prevention	2
Transportation	16	Green building/architecture	2
Other	14	Ecolabeling/Auditing/ Monitoring	1
Green building/architecture	14	Research/independent science	1
Research/independent science	7		
Ecolabeling/Auditing/ Monitoring	6		
Legal/financial services	5		

Employment and social contribution

To get a better idea of labour force characteristics of the sector, we asked organizations the number of full time, part time, seasonal, freelance and contract workers they employ, as well as volunteers. Table 12 lists the total number of employees by form of employment, including volunteers. The numbers show that responding organizations employ a total of 10177 people including full time (6185), part time (2125), seasonal workers (610) and freelancers (1257). While the numbers might seem high for the small number of responses with a mean or average of 48 employees per organization, the median reveals that half of all organizations have ten or less paid employees, and no more than three full time employees (see Tab. 12, right column). Half of the respondents have no seasonal workers (median=0).

Table 12: Total number and median of employees and volunteers

Labour force characteristics	Total	Median
Full time	6185	3
Part time	2125	1
Seasonal	610	0
Freelancer	1257	1
*All paid employees**	*10177*	*10*
Volunteers	14446	9

* This category includes full time, part time and seasonal employees as well as freelancers.

The social economy sector is characterized by high numbers of volunteers. Respondents reported a total of 14446 volunteers – approximately 4000 more than employees – with a median of nine. In other words, 50 percent of respondents rely on the work of nine or more volunteers and many of the organizations depend to a considerable extent on volunteers.

The high number of small organizations becomes even clearer when grouping organizations by employment size and labour force characteristics categories (Tab. 13). Looking at the total number of paid workers in each organization the vast majority (n=177) employ less than 200 individuals and would be categorized by Statistics Canada as small, eight fall in the medium-sized business category with 200 to 499 employees, and only three can be considered as large. Compared to other business sectors, respondents indicated considerably lower numbers of full-time staff in relation to part-time, seasonal, and contract workers. Further, the number of volunteers deserves attention. Sixty-four percent (n=136) of all organizations indicated they rely on volunteers, and 22 organizations reported to work with 100 or more volunteers (including event volunteers) (Tab. 13, right column).

Table 13: Organizations by employment size categories and labour force characteristics

Employment size categories (by number of workers)*	Number of responses (organizations)					
	All paid workers	Full time employees	Part time employees	Seasonal employees	Freelancers/ contract workers	Volunteers
1-4	*48*	59	85	28	80	20
5-19	*79*	53	16	20	27	43
20-49	*28*	14	11	6	6	32
50-99	*13*	10	6	3	3	19
100-199	*9*	7	6	0	2	11
200-499	*8*	1	1	0	1	5
≥500	*3*	2	0	0	0	6

* Statistics Canada categorizes business enterprises with less than 100 paid employees as small, with 200-499 as medium-sized, and those with 500 and more employees as large.

Information on the employment of **target groups** helps us to get a sense of the scale of marginal groups employed by the social economy sector. Depending on the focus and objectives of organizations, target groups include persons with disabilities, homeless people, women, or persons with mental illness, among others. One quarter of organizations stated that they employ specific target groups (n=53), while 62 percent do not (n=131). Thirteen percent (n=27) preferred not to answer the question. Of the 53 institutions that hired target groups, 50 provided information on number and gender. There were 786 target employees of which 76 percent (n=599) are women.[8] The number of target employees per organization varied considerably between one and 130, with a median of five. The representation of women in the target workforce, however, needs to be

[8] The number drops down to 65 percent (n=514) after cleaning out what seemed to be data entry errors.

treated with caution. Numbers given appear to contain data entry errors or refer to the total number of women in the workforce rather than the target group. Still, the remaining numbers suggest that women are privileged target employees: 53 percent (n=28) of organizations hired more women than men. Seventeen contracted all women. Only 17 percent (n=9) hired fewer women than men.

But social economy organizations do not only provide social contributions through employment to otherwise disadvantaged persons. The majority (n=160) provide support to other organizations (Tab. 14). Asked about the form of support they offer, more than half specified they provide 'networking', 'capacity building', 'training' and/or 'advocacy and promotion' (Tab. 15). And, one out of three respondents specified 'technical' services, as well as 'organizational development' and 'research and development' support activities, whereas 'financial' help and 'enterprise development' are less common. The existence of cooperation and support networks is also reflected in membership in networks, association, and/or umbrella groups identified by 181 (86 percent) of the surveyed organizations. To make a statement about the coherence and connectedness within the social economy sector, we would need to take a closer look at the networks and associations identified.

Table 14: Number of organizations providing support to other organizations

Support to other organizations	Number of responses (n=211)	Number of responses (in %)
Yes	160	75.8
No	43	20.4
N/a	8	3.8

Table 15: Support activities provided by organizations, multiple responses possible

Form of support	Multiple responses (n=160)	Responses in %
Networking	109	68.1
Capacity building	101	63.1
Training	88	55.0
Advocacy and promotion	80	50.0
Organizational development	69	43.1
Technical	66	41.3
Research and education	62	38.7
Financial	50	31.2
Enterprise development	42	26.2
Other	19	11.9

With respect to monetary contributions and benefits, we are interested in how organizations distribute most of their profits. Respondents were offered a list of five categories to choose from and asked to check all answers that apply (see Tab. 16). Indeed, only nine (4.3 percent) organizations indicated that their surpluses are primarily distributed to individual members, while 37 and 21 respectively hold reserves/trusts or donate to other community organizations. The majority, however, invest most of their profits back into the organization. Twenty-five respondents provided alternative explanations: four clarified that they do not have any profits (yet) and three that they return the profits to funding source, while all others indicated that they fund projects, give money to others or invest in funds.

Table 16: Distribution of financial surplus or profit earned, multiple responses possible

Distribution of profits	Multiple responses (n=211)	Response in % of n
Invested back into the organization	153	72.5
Held in reserve for community benefit/community trust	37	17.5
Donated to other community organizations	21	10.0
Other	18	8.5
Distribution of profit to individual members	9	4.3

Financial Information

Even though not representative for the sector, the data collected, based on the total operating budget and sources of revenue, gives an idea of the economic characteristics and significance of the sample. The total actual **operating budget** of our entire sample accounted for $308.18 million (n=182) with a median or typical budget of $378,082. The total actual **capital budget** equalled $951.69 million (n=117) with a median of $93,707. Table 17 gives an overview of organizations by budget size categories.

Table 17: Organizations' actual operating and capital budget by budget size

Budget size in Canadian dollars	Actual operating budget (n=182)	Actual capital budget (n=117)
None or negative	2	38
<5,000	6	7
>5,000-20,000	15	14
>20,000-100,000	29	24
>100,000-500,000	51	21
>500,000-1million	27	2
>1-10million	47	8
>10million	6	3
n/a or missing	29	94

The revenues of all respondents totals $607,436,747 (see Tab. 18). In respect to sources of revenues, a few points are worth noting. Two thirds of our sample engages in market-based activities (n=140, 66.4 percent). The 'sale of goods and services' and 'service contracts' amount for $271 million (n=109) and $39.3 million (n=71) respectively of total revenues of all organizations (see Tab. 18). High revenues are also derived from 'donations', $120.3 million (n=101), and 'government grants', $70.2 million (n=107), while 'investments', 'membership' contributions, 'foundation grants', 'corporate sponsorship', 'endowments', and 'loans' contribute to a smaller degree. Additionally, 63 respondents claimed a total of $71.4 million from other sources. Distribution of revenues within the different categories will be included in future, in-depth reports.

Table 18: Total revenues of all organizations by source of revenues (n varies from source to source and refers to the number of organizations who provided data)

Source of revenues	Amount in Canadian Dollars
Sale of goods and services (n=109)	271,030,223
Donations (n=101)	120,297,951
Other (n=63)	71,402,899
Government grants (n=107)	70,252,882
Service contracts (n=71)	39,278,614
Investments (n=66)	13,342,009
Membership/Subscriptions (n=64)	9,560,193
Foundation grants (n-48)	5,959,631
Corporate sponsorship (n=45)	4,032,604
Endowments (n=10)	1,312,213
Loans (n=8)	692,000
Anomalies (n=7)	178,028
Utilities/Crown (n=3)	97,500
Total of all revenues	*607,436,747*

3. Outlook

The basic statistics and trends outlined above provide a first step to understanding the scale and scope of the social economy in British Columbia and Alberta. One of our research objectives has been to categorize social economy organizations in order to understand the structure and function of the sector and its actors. With the help of the survey, we seek to identify trends, patterns, and gaps that will help BALTA members and researchers identify future research projects and case studies. Together with other research underway, the findings from the survey will be used in a series of BALTA policy papers. We also expect to integrate and compare our findings with research from other provinces and national level studies. While the response rate is still low, the additional responses collected between May and October 2008 confirm the trends and findings revealed in our Spring 2008 Summary of Preliminary Results based on the data collected between January and April 2008.

BALTA findings are made publicly available and we would like to encourage social economy actors to use the data to advance their own interests and lobbying activities. We will also do our best to respond to individual requests, and provide data in aggregated form and/or maps.[9] But we also hope to go beyond a mere informative role, as we seek to provide tools to practitioners and actors in the social economy sector that will allow them to build up support and information networks.

Clearly, much work still needs to be done. **Most importantly we need your help to increase the BALTA survey response rate.**

Next steps will include an in-depth and critical analysis of the data at hand, that takes into account different definitions of the social economy in order to develop a typology of organizations and to identify case studies. In addition to the online survey and planned case studies, we will conduct in-depth probing into specific organizational dimensions and sub-sectors. Many respondents have indicated their interest to collaborate in future projects and

[9] We are restricted by limited human resources and might not be able to respond to every request immediately.

research endeavours. Please feel free to write us and suggest topics for future research.

The majority (n=175, 83 percent) said they would like to receive a copy of the results (8 percent no, 9 percent N/A) and 69 percent are interested in participating in future projects/follow ups. Further, 58 percent[10] are interested in the creation of a directory to facilitate collaboration and information exchange within the sector (we are working on it – stay tuned!).

Bibliography

AFFOLDERBACH, J., GISMONDI, M., SOOTS, L. (2008) *Research Decisions in Mapping the Social Economy in Alberta and British Columbia* BALTA Mapping Working Paper No. 2 (BC and Alberta Research Alliance on the Social Economy: Port Alberni)

AFFOLDERBACH, J. and GISMONDI, M. (2008) Summary of Preliminary Results: BALTA Social Economy Survey Spring 2008 (BC and Alberta Research Alliance on the Social Economy: Port Alberni)

BALTA (BC AND ALBERTA RESEARCH ALLIANCE ON THE SOCIAL ECONOMY): http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca/index.html

BALTA MAPPING: http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca/mapping.html

BALTA SOCIAL ECONOMY SURVEY: https://secure.athabascau.CA/phpsurveyor/index.php?sid=50

CATALYST (2006) *2005 Catalyst Census of Women Board Directors of the FP500,* Catalyst research report (Catalyst Publications: Toronto)

JENNER, L., CYER, M. and WHITHAM, L. (2008) *2007 Catalyst Census of Women Board Directors of the FP500: Voices from the Boardroom*, Catalyst research report (Catalyst Publications: Toronto)

MANHEIM, J.B., RICH, R.C., WILLNAT, L., and BRIANS, C.L. (2008) *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, 7th edition (Pearson: New York)

[10] The 62 respondents (29.4 percent) who preferred not to answer the question include 19 (9 percent) who filled out the questionnaire before the question was added.