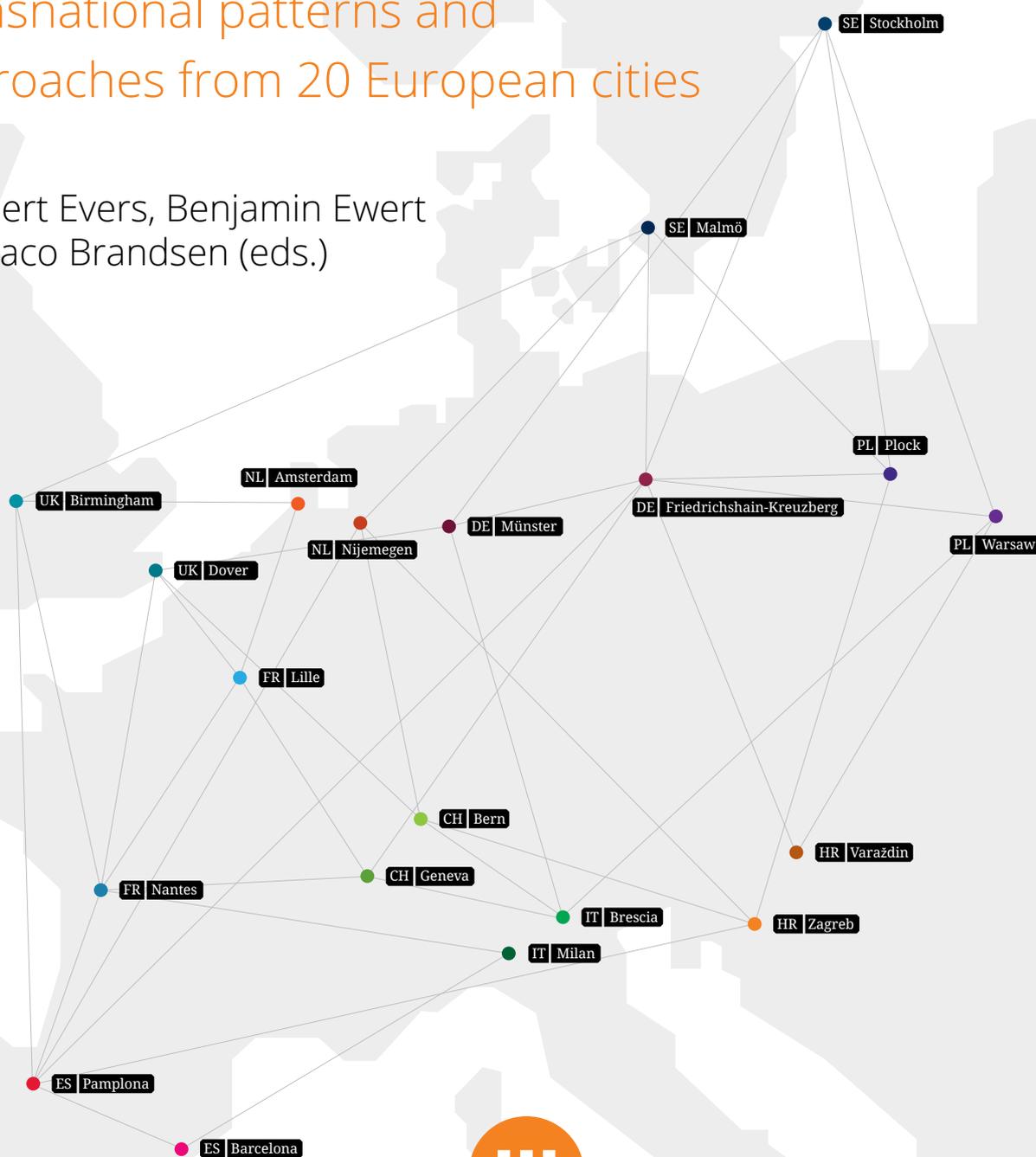


SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FOR SOCIAL COHESION

Transnational patterns and approaches from 20 European cities

Adalbert Evers, Benjamin Ewert and Taco Brandsen (eds.)



WILCO

Welfare innovations
at the local level
in favour of cohesion

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This e-book is part of the research project entitled “Welfare innovations at the local level in favour of cohesion” (WILCO). WILCO examined, through cross-national comparative research, how local welfare systems affect social inequalities and how they favour social cohesion, with a special focus on the missing link between innovations at the local level and their successful transfer to and implementation in other settings. The WILCO consortium covered ten European countries and was funded by the European Commission (FP7, Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities). More information on WILCO can be found at www.wilcoproject.eu.



WILCO

Welfare innovations
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Likewise this e-book represents an important part of over three years of research and networking by the teams that contributed to the WILCO project.

Furthermore it should be kept in mind that there is quite a long way from research material to a presentation and publishing designed for a wide and easy access. The staff from the EMES International Research Network, coordinated by Rocío Nogales, made this possible.

Finally it should not be forgotten, that the whole research and working project has been made feasible by funding from the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union.

We, as the editors and organizers of this collection of cases of local social innovations are grateful for all of that. We hope that this book is interesting and helpful for a wide variety of people, reaching from activists on the ground and academics concerned over to politicians and professionals.

Giessen, Nijmegen, January 2014

Adalbert Evers

Benjamin Ewert

Taco Brandsen

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Introduction

Social Innovations for social cohesion: 77 cases from 20 European cities

Recurrent patterns of approaches and instruments in local social innovations – on methods and outcomes of a study in the framework of the WILCO project

Keywords:

social innovation; service innovation; concepts and contexts; approaches and instruments; recurrent patterns of social innovations; ways of addressing users; internal organisation and modes of working; interaction with the local welfare system.

Adalbert Evers and Benjamin Ewert

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Introduction

Social Innovations for social cohesion: 77 cases from 20 European cities

Adalbert Evers and Benjamin Ewert

The main objective of this part of the research project was to describe instruments and approaches that are used by innovatory social projects and networks to fight social inequality and stimulate social cohesion.

All in all, the reading of the case studies presented in this introduction is focussing on one thing only: what could be learned and taken from these social innovations in a perspective of reforming and reconfiguring local welfare systems at large.

The project entitled “Welfare innovation at the local level in favour of cohesion” (WILCO), funded by the 7th framework programme of the EU from 12/2010 to 1/2014, was given a double task:

- > finding models, features and trends in local social innovation in support of social cohesion that appear across Europe despite national/local differences;
- > looking at local contexts and welfare systems: what are key factors for diffusion and upgrading of such innovations?

In a nutshell, WILCO aimed to examine, through cross-national comparative research, how local welfare systems affect social inequalities and how they favour social cohesion, with a special focus on the missing link between innovations at the local level and their successful transfer to and implementation in other settings. Coordinated by Prof. Taco Brandsen from the Radboud University Nijmegen, WILCO’s researchers (over 30 researchers from ten countries) chose 20 European cities for investigation. Each country studied was represented by one big and one medium-size city, namely: Zagreb and Varaždin (Croatia), Nantes and Lille (France), Berlin and Münster (Germany), Milan and Brescia (Italy), Warsaw and Plock (Poland), Barcelona and Pamplona (Spain), Stockholm and Malmö (Sweden), Berne and Geneva (Switzerland), Amsterdam and Nijmegen (Netherlands) and Birmingham and Dover (United Kingdom).

This book, including the present introductory chapter, builds on Work Package V, one of the central work packages of the WILCO project. The main objective of this part of the research project was to describe instruments and approaches that are used by innovatory social projects and networks to fight social inequality and stimulate social cohesion. Therefore the tasks convened upon in WP V were:

- > to identify a number of cases of innovation in each of the cities to be studied and to describe their characteristics in a way that was conducive to finding out recurrent patterns of approaches and instruments used;
- > to identify such recurrent approaches and instruments used in the innovative cases.

Moreover the case studies had to point at the linkages between innovations and the local context that play a key role in the ways these innovations developed as projects and processes. This was intended to help getting a clearer image of the real impact these innovations already have in local welfare systems.

What are innovative approaches and instruments in local welfare systems? Are there post-conventional service patterns and path-breaking social offers emerging in times of austerity? Or does the latter prevent the former by definition? What differentiates a social innovation in, say, Milan from one in, say, Birmingham? Which local conditions and support do they require in order to unfold and blossom? What else do we know about ways and

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processes to adopt and adapt good ideas in practice? These questions constituted the origin of our search for social innovations in 20 European cities in ten countries. Seventy-five innovations were been analysed alongside a consented scheme. This constituted one of the first attempts towards such a systematic stock-taking; a similar effort had been made in another EU-funded research project, INNOSERV (2012), though. It appears that what INNOSERV researchers drew from their sample in terms of generalized findings on new logics, instruments and ways of proceeding in social services is quite similar to what was found in our sample, this introduction and the reading of innovatory cases it presents.

The present introduction to the presentation of the research we carried within work package V of the WILCO project starts in its first part with some general remarks concerning our research goals and the ways in which they were achieved. We first clarify the intellectual basis and the practical guidelines as they have been developed in order to find out and analyse innovations in the twenty cities studied. Four general aspects are addressed in this first part:

1. The understanding of social innovations;
2. Methods to sort out local examples of social innovation;
3. Ways of mapping the context of selected innovations;
4. Guidelines for ways of presenting and analysing the innovations.

In the second part of this introduction, a structured overview is presented on what we see as the main recurrent patterns of approaches and instruments as they show up in the descriptions of local innovations presented in the book. This major part of the introduction represents what one might call a possible way of reading and understanding the innovations from a social policy perspective. What are these innovations offering in terms of potential lessons to be learned by (local) social policies and those engaged in developing (local) social services that work better for social cohesion?

However, before embarking into these two introductory parts, we have to remind the reader that there are elements and dimensions of the case studies that will not be taken up here. Indeed, the case studies mentioned elements of the local contexts and

more specifically of local politics that have in various ways either enabled or disabled the emergence and development of the social innovations studied—local support measures, programmes, reactions from other local actors and organisations, decisions in local parliaments, etc. In this introduction, however, no systematic reference is made to these parts of the findings on local innovations. They will be taken up in other parts of the WILCO project and a later book publication, in which we will analyse how prevailing discourses and the respective local routines, orientations and values deal with social innovations in place and shape their dynamics and potentials. Effects and sense of local innovations can finally only be understood with an eye on the interplay between innovations and contexts, or, more specifically, innovations and politics of welfare reform. This topic will be mentioned in a short conclusive part.

All in all, the reading of the case studies presented in this introduction is focussing on one thing only: what could be learned and taken from these social innovations in a perspective of reforming and reconfiguring local welfare systems at large—something that calls for more than just using these innovations as additional organisational devices within logics and institutional settings that stay basically unaffected.

Part 1: concepts and methods

1.1. The understanding of social innovations

If one studies the present literature on conceptualizing and defining social innovations (SIs) one comes to the clue that SIs are basically not the property of a specific social and political orientation. In some attempts for definition, it is claimed that they have to stand for “improvement” (Phills 2008) and a better answer to basic needs, and for more satisfying social relations (Moulaert 2010), and their initiators will obviously claim this and assorted “good things”. While most analyses try to derive from the “social” in social innovations a widely consented positive meaning (see BEPA 2010 and Mulgan 2006), social innovations’ values, actions and outcomes will in fact always be a contested issue. By definition, innovations are different from given widespread practices. They may become a mainstream practice over time but this is

not already so at the outset. They can be linked with a diversity of goals and take different meanings over time, depending on the wider political concept and institutional system wherein they become embedded (see e.g. Osborne and Brown 2011). Therefore, the (technically) same innovative instrument (e.g. case management) can work and be judged differently in different places and circumstances. The field of SIs and the attempts at defining them are open-ended. In the WILCO project we defined social innovations, products and processes alike, as:

- > ideas, turned into practical approaches;
- > new in the context where they appear;
- > attracting hopes for better coping strategies and solutions;
- > marked by a high degree of risk and uncertainty due inter alia to the specific context wherein they appear.

According to this working definition, **social innovations are, in a significant way, new and disruptive towards the routines and structures prevailing in a given (welfare) system or local setting. Whether or not they can be seen as “better” (more effective / social / democratic) is a question of its own that can only be answered in retrospective.**

Following these criteria there is still a broad field left for studying and selecting SIs. Our selection picked up, out of the broader stream of SIs—ranging from NPM-inspired concepts of public service reform to cultural alternative projects—, the kind of innovations in which ideas of bettering the conditions of local citizens (and especially of those threatened by various dimensions of exclusion) were claimed to be central not only by the initiators but also by the local key persons and actors that were interviewed.

As it turned out, the majority of such SIs were new service arrangements, making a difference in terms of organisational structures, processes and types of service offers; however, there were also innovations in terms of new interventions (new financial arrangements, tax/transfer measures, etc.). And our search for innovation in local welfare systems also concerned economic (e.g. funding arrangements) and political dimensions (e.g. new arrangements in decision-making and participation).

1.2. Methods to sort out local examples of innovations

It follows from our definition that an innovation is innovative in its specific context. So what matters is whether it is regarded as new in a particular city. It does not have to be path-breaking on a European or global scale. For example, family centres are well-known in the UK and an integral part of many other local welfare systems across Europe; however, in other places, e.g. Berlin, family-minded service hubs, addressing children and their parents, are a new thing. Since we looked as well at the dynamics of social innovations, we selected only those that had overcome the very inception stage. According to this criterion, every selected innovation should have existed for at least one year (since March 2011) in order to be scrutinized. This minimum period of existence was not agreed upon to filter unsuccessful innovations but to work with a sample of halfway realized cases providing enough material for our analysis. Thus, the SIs we looked at were about ideas or approaches that had been implemented in practice to some degree; therefore, each innovation picked up by our teams entailed a practical “project” that had been realised. As it turned out, this “project” could be an organisation or an organisational subunit with new services that clearly differed from what existed so far in the field, but it could also be a measure/intervention such as a new transfer, tax or resource arrangement.

However, as the compiled examples show, local social innovations can also take other forms. **Innovations always have a background of orientating streams of values and thinking as well as associated practices that back and inspire them.** Sometimes this takes the form of a clear-cut movement (e.g. to establish local foundations with social aims). Innovations may be represented by a local network rather than a single organisational unit; or they may show up as an experimental model and unit to be found in plural forms in the local setting (e.g. new family centres). Therefore, speaking about SIs can mean to refer to a large project, but also to a cluster of small, similar projects. In such a case, the task was to describe the whole cluster and zoom in on one or two of the small cases, to get a sense of the micro-dynamics. In case the innovation was part of a government program meant to promote, finance and regulate an innovative approach, only those innovations from wider national programs that could be seen as “local”—in the sense

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that there was a considerable degree of freedom to shape them in the local context—were picked up. Finally, since social innovations generally include both bottom-up and top-down elements, we chose projects with variations in the mix (i.e. both innovations that were more citizen-driven as well as others with a stronger government involvement, etc.) in order to get a good sense of the different dynamics.

For our selection criteria the political and economic dimensions of innovations and the new institutions they bring about were also important. There are innovations that focus on developing new forms of interest representation (as exemplified by the new local NGOs and lobbies featured in the cases of innovations we received); and there are innovations where the focus is on innovative ways of creating financial funds. These dimensions were central for the choice of examples of local innovations, especially for those that are about new service patterns. In these cases, the ways in which these innovations deal with power, authority and money are sketched.

As a mandatory requirement, in each city at least three and at most six innovations had to be featured and analysed by each team. The actual number of cases chosen in a city depended largely on the complexity of the respective cases. In fact, the more complex the innovations featured in the report, the smaller the number of innovations studied was. By “complex”, we refer here for example to innovations represented by a network or a program entailing diverse further micro-innovations (like e.g. many new approaches in neighbourhood and housing renewal).

Each team had to cover all the three policy fields (child care, employment and housing) and target groups (single mothers, youngsters and migrants) that we had agreed upon earlier when it came to make out of the criterion of exclusion/cohesion a practical and operational issue. For purposes of comparison, every innovation had to cover a specific field. However, we realised that in practice innovations cross-cut fields and address several groups at once. Therefore, as a general guideline, it was agreed that each research team had to make sure that all fields and groups were at least somehow covered in the selection of innovations. Finally, each team enjoyed freedom in making additional choices; this meant e.g. that those innovations held as central by local politicians, professionals and change agents interviewed did not necessarily have to be the obvious choice of

the WILCO researchers. Sometimes, the local partners pointed at more projects (which they saw as new, important and socially useful) than it was possible to take up in the study. In its portrayal of an innovation, each team was requested to give the reasons why the respective cases had been chosen.

1.3. Mapping the context of selected innovations

Social innovations are rarely micro-events standing alone; much more frequently, they are associated with running streams of ideas and concepts. Consequently, each WILCO team was requested to write a few pages at the beginning of each city report to point at background streams of cultural, public and/or professional debates and streams of (re)orientation that were animating the respective innovation(s) in the three fields and/or in relation with the three target groups.

Since the changing structures and notions of the national welfare system and those of (each city's) local system, together with the values that guide them, had already been part of the work accomplished in work package III of the WILCO project and were simultaneously studied in work package IV, it was recommended to look in WP V at streams of thinking and movements that were important incentives for and orientated the respective local innovations (like e.g. new ways of dealing with issues of participation and civic engagement; the debate on new types of neighbourhood revitalisation concepts and what they mean for the modernisation of housing stocks; or new concepts that enable services to reach out to migrant communities).

1.4. Guidelines for ways of presenting and analysing the innovations

Each feature of an innovation had to begin with a comprehensive description of what the selected example was all about, and of what was seen as the outstanding “innovative” trait in this particular case (against the given local and general background in the field). The description and analysis then were to focus on what was remarkable with respect to the selected case in terms of the approaches and instruments it had created and was operating with.

It was a key task of our analysis to deal with the question of what could be generalized from these innovations, their approaches and the tools and instruments developed by them—not only in the special local system within which an innovation was taking place, but as well at the level of an international European debate on local welfare systems, their institutions, rules, services, modes of governance and kinds of welfare mixes. Obviously, this task called for a fairly high degree of “abstractification”.

In terms of drawing conclusions for local welfare systems at large, several kinds of impacts can be envisaged in general, ranging from simply giving room for or basically accepting a similar project/concept in a different setting (e.g. getting towards a similar lobby organisation for migrants elsewhere—upscaling and diffusion) to questions concerning the degree to which an innovation represents some kind of message about an emerging new service and welfare logic that calls for changing the local welfare system to a larger extent (e.g. allowing for bundling contributions from different realms and sources in a personalised way for individual users—innovations as part of a comprehensive reform process) (BEPA 2010, 33). Taking all this into account, **a central challenge was to obtain both a very concrete and sensitive picture of the individual innovation, and an intelligible way to draw “messages” out of it that were interesting also for colleagues working on the issue in other countries and settings.** Thus, it was seen as important to keep an eye on discourses that inspire and legitimise SIs, seeing whether an innovation was inspired by examples from other regions or countries.

Moreover, it was suggested to analyse, discuss and portray each innovation with respect to the same basic points of interest. Given the enormous diversity of social innovations, we suggested only three “analysis grids”, which all teams should use when observing the selected innovations. Hence, the portrayal of each case of innovation is organised along three basic themes:

- > Conceptions and ways of addressing users;
- > Internal organisation and modes of working;
- > Interaction with the local welfare system.

(a) Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The focus here is on the kind of idea to be found about the users, groups concerned, etc. To what degree does one find here innovation in terms of (i) different conceptions of users, (ii) different types of services and (iii) different ways to provide a service (e.g. through an empowering approach, relying on users’ potentials rather than focusing mostly on their deficiencies)? Examples should include inter alia:

- > new ways of bridging the gap between the administrative world and “real life”, or between the social/public realm and the personal/private one;
- > pedagogical interventions operating partly with gratifications, sanctions or dialogues, etc.;
- > various capacity-building and empowering approaches and their respective instruments;
- > co-productive approaches that build on resources of the addressees;
- > “family-minded” approaches, that take into account the immediate setting of addressees/users;
- > personalisation of transfers and services; and
- > contractual relationships instead of rights.

(b) Internal organisation and modes of working

This part of the analysis was about questions that concern the organisational form chosen and the working culture to be found in innovative settings; the working culture may e.g. be innovative by the remarkable degree it is diverging from the working conditions and culture and the style of management found in local public administrations. New kinds of working units, marked by team work, flexible working contracts, etc. may mirror mainly the precarious status of innovative organisations, but it may entail as well elements for an innovative definition of what “public organisations” should look like and how they should organise themselves. Selected innovations in the working culture concerned inter alia:

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- > the organisation of the work by team work / team-building;
- > the impact of social entrepreneurs and of modes of post-bureaucratic management (“fluid” and “entrepreneurial” forms);
- > working contracts that are outcome-/project-based;
- > working by time-limited “projects” and their sequences;
- > making publicity strategies and social marketing part of innovators’ agenda.

As our choice of examples demonstrates, various “hybrid” organisational forms of social innovations exist (e.g. “agencification”, entrepreneurial and community-based styles of operation in third sector organisations and in public organisations opening up to the third sector and community life).

(c) Interaction with the local welfare system

Quite often, new innovative instruments or services are not just an “app”, but have repercussions on the context and at the level of the political and administrative system; they entail a chance and challenge for the governance system as a whole, which has to react in one or another way (this is e.g. what happens when a neighbourhood revitalisation scheme entails the establishment of a round table). An innovation at one point of a system may then alter the relationships between actors and organisations in local welfare and urban development, the underlying values (see work package IV of the WILCO project), modes of decision-making and participation, as well modes of funding and financing. Given these interactions and modes of interplay, we specifically looked at:

- > innovative ways of institutionalising organisations/“project units” (e.g. on a multi-stakeholder basis);
- > accepting, acknowledging or even promoting new rules for funding and financing;
- > solutions that aim to meet the peculiarities of various groups by allowing for diversity—going beyond standard solutions with respect to the content of the services provided;

- > ways of governing “by projects” rather than only administrating open-ended tasks within a fixed framework defined by public administrative bodies;
- > creating a diversity of public-private partnerships of bodies and organisations within (local) society and business;
- > operating through inter-sectorial networks that are (semi-)formalised;
- > upgrading of a diversity of forms of deliberation (forums of participation), going beyond decision-making through elected officials and corporatist, “behind-closed-door” arrangements.

Finally, in conclusion, the portray of each selected innovation should give information on the following points:

- > Has the innovation grown and stabilised?
- > Has there been more acceptance and support in political and financial terms compared to the beginnings and mid-term situation?
- > Has there been diffusion in terms of learning processes in the political and administrative system? For example, has the system taken over instruments and practices from the innovation?

Beside the use and review of documents and programs (1.2), interviews were a key source for analysing social innovations. The number of interviews carried out was obviously linked to the number of innovations chosen. However, the minimum number of interviews carried out for each city report was nine. For a very small-scale single innovation, at least two interviews (one with a key-promoter, the other one with an experienced user) had to be carried out; for a complex innovation, clustering several different sub-parts, more interviews (also with partners in the local welfare department and/or the department for urban planning) had to be undertaken. Therewith, we followed the procedure of data collection that had been promised in the initial work package description.

Part 2: findings on recurrent approaches and instruments

When it came to looking at the rich number and diversity of cases of innovations, discussing, analysing and finally presenting them, four issues called quite soon for joint decisions among the research teams.

The first one concerned the meaning of the terms “different”, “new” and “innovative” in relation to what was already there in terms of institutions, practices and modes of thinking of “welfare systems”, as they had been called by the EU institutions launching this piece of research. While research in the WILCO project devoted some time to describing different national paths and histories of institution-building, both with respect to welfare systems and the role of municipalities and cities in governance, its main aim was to look at common international innovatory trends that emerge despite different national trajectories. This orientation was useful since our task was to look first of all at innovations as developments that represent a break with traditions, rather than looking at levels of diffusion of innovations depending from the degree given national traditions, regimes or trends act in support or as a barrier to innovations. Furthermore, the point of view from which we looked at innovations did not concern the way in which they deviate from a special type of welfare regime (“liberal”, “conservative” or “social-democratic”) and its form of governance (such as e.g. “corporatist”) but it concerned the way in which they *differ from shared patterns of welfare and governance in the European region*. Three elements can be seen as widely shared across “regimes”:

- > First of all, there are the commonalities of postwar-welfarism as described by Wagner (1994), like standardisation and the search for large-scale uniform regulations in welfare institutions going along with a minor role of participative elements and civil society in welfare systems and democratic decision making.
- > Secondly, there has been the influence of new public management and respective managerial concepts across borders, with their practices of economisation and rationalisation of welfare agencies and concepts of governance that were taken from the business sector.

- > Finally, all countries in the European region have, in one form or another, gone through phases where cultural and social movements revitalized elements of self-organizing and new social solidarities—ranging from the social movements of the early 1970s and the democratic revolutions in Middle-Europe to the new waves of movements linked with the issues of growth, environmental sustainability and participation.

It is against a background shaped cross-nationally by the major influence of these three factors that the social innovations make a difference altogether. The descriptions of the various teams involved show this quite clearly.

The second point related to a difference between our choice of innovations and what is looked at in the mainstream literature. The latter usually looks at social innovations with a focus on social service innovations. What was brought from the first city surveys to the international meetings of the WILCO teams showed however quite soon that **innovations touch on more than “services” and ways of organising their provision**. Changes in rules and regulations (e.g. concerning the access to financial benefits) and in governance (forms of democracy and decision making on priorities in welfare and cohesion politics) are likewise important fields for social innovations, which should not be neglected. This widening of areas and types of innovation include as well developments that make a difference when it comes to conventional forms and modes of working and financing. All this should be kept in mind when looking at the classification system by which we have arranged our findings on recurrent patterns among the innovations.

The third point concerned the different degrees and stages concerning impact and diffusion of SIs that we found. Some SIs represent approaches that—while being like all others new in the immediate context where they appear—basically *represent an already quite developed international trend*, having popped up in many sites and cities across Europe. This holds true especially for the following three innovations:

- > social enterprises that work in the field of occupational and social integration as “*work integration enterprises*”. One could almost develop a kind of prototype out of the variants of work integration enterprises to be met from Plock to Barcelona and from Stockholm to Varaždin;

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- > participative and community-oriented forms of *revitalising housing estates and urban neighbourhoods*. Here, once again, examples reach across countries and cities;
- > *family support services and centres* of various kinds. These are as well quite common, and can be found in contexts as different as Italy, England or Germany. Despite differences, their common innovative core is to direct offers of support to the whole family system instead of focussing just on child-care services.

The fourth and final point concerned our way of ordering findings on recurrent approaches and instruments of the social innovations we looked at. When looking at the classification system used, one should keep in mind that it mirrors the central task and mandate that has been given to the WILCO research: to look at the impact of SIs on local “welfare systems”. It is therefore that we have not used other possible ways to arrange our findings, e.g. alongside separate policy fields, grouping findings on innovations as they prevail in the field of housing and neighbourhood development, occupational and social integration and family and child care-related services.

Instead we opted for five fields and dimensions of welfare systems wherein to group what we see as the most important recurrent approaches and instruments of social innovations:

5. Innovations in services and their ways to address users;
6. Innovations in regulations and rights;
7. Innovations in governance;
8. Innovations in modes of working and financing;
9. Innovations concerning the entity of (local) welfare systems.

These five dimensions hopefully allow to integrate our findings into current debates as they can be found in the community of researchers on welfare and social policy but as well among researchers on urbanism and local policy. We assume that all those who work in these fields are familiar with the aforementioned key points that we have chosen.

2.1. Innovations in services and their ways to address users

The majority of the social innovations that were recommended to the national teams by local interview partners as important and promising and finally chosen as cases to be described were service innovations. Services are easily accessible to small scale innovations and respective social entrepreneurs, groups and change agents, better than e.g. lots of high-tech products. Service innovations can be small-scale innovations and do not need big start-up investments.

Five characteristics mark the differences between the service innovations analysed in the WILCO project and services or service systems as they have built up alongside post-war welfare traditions and the more recent managerial culture of public and private services. These features play a role not only in the special field of social inclusion and integration policies but also to a large extent in the field of personal social services at large.

Investing in capabilities rather than spotting deficits

This hallmark can be found basically in most of the SIs studied. The services are not so much about giving or granting or filling gaps than about a kind of relationship that aims at reducing the initial dependency of the users by opening up chances or strengthening capabilities. In various ways this element can be linked with the activation rhetoric as it is known from public welfare debates. **Different activation discourses will give service innovations that want to strengthen capabilities different meanings.** A telling example in this respect is e.g. the project “Her second chance” from Varaždin (Croatia), which aims to support women and mothers experiencing special difficulties in acquiring competences and self-esteem in a way that might lead back to paid work. The “Primano” programme from Berne (Switzerland) is likewise a project for young mothers, aiming to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty (see at the end of the work package report the table with a selection of SIs—out of the full number of cases—that illustrate best the points we make).

Preference for open approaches, avoiding targeting with stigmatising effects

Most of the present occupational and social integration programmes and schemes one can find in workfare policies operate on the basis of a strict approach of targeting, which clearly indicates who is “in” and “out” and detailed rules for stages of foreseen integration proceedings, preconditions and admission to them, thus entailing much danger of stigmatisation. By contrast, many of the innovations that deal with topics of occupational and social integration operate with looser, more open approaches, which do not define in a top-down way admission to an offer and do not prescribe in detail a re-integration process and its stages. While personal help and advice play an important role, the whole approach is less directive. Among the many examples (see the abovementioned table), the “Filur” project from Stockholm (Sweden) operates with much more elements of choice for the young unemployed people it addresses than other schemes in Sweden or elsewhere in the EU. A likewise experience is represented by the Family Office in Münster (Germany), which offers its support in a kind of way that is basically open for all, even though some families will need and use it much more than others.

Concern for bridging the gaps between professional services and people’s life worlds

Cultural and ethnic diversity, overlapping with poverty, has increased in times of migration, unemployment and harsher inequalities. This makes it increasingly difficult for services and professionals to reach the groups that might need their help, be it that the respective offers are unknown by their potential users, hard to understand or not taken up due to a lack of trust. Therefore, bridging the gaps between professional services and people’s life worlds has become an increasing challenge. Among the innovations of our sample that touch on this problem, one can mention e.g. the “Neighbourhood mothers” from Berlin (Germany), women that are on the one hand networked with and trusted in their community of migrants, but also experienced in making contacts with administrations and the services and entitlements that the latter offer.

Service offers that connect otherwise often separated forms of support and access, allowing for personalized bundles of support

Public administrations and welfare bureaucracies have, in the course of their development, differentiated and specialized, with separate agencies offering different particular but as well partial solutions, following their own logics; as a result, the complex needs of customers cannot be met adequately. Getting together a bundle of support measures that fit is mostly complicated and discouraging. Therefore, among the selection of innovations, service offers that allow to connect otherwise often separated forms of support and channels of access play an important role. There are various schemes that operate with personal advisers, care- and case-managers and various forms of “one-stop-entry-points”. A good example is given e. g. by offices in Nantes (France) that offer joint assessment of families’ needs when it comes to link access to jobs and day care, something that is especially important for single-parent families; likewise intermediary organizations such as the Foundation for development beyond borders in Warsaw (Poland) have achieved to make very different offers work for migrants from other East-European countries, ranging from language courses to advice and support in juridical matters.

2.2. Innovations in regulations and rights

Creating flexible forms of ad hoc support

Biographies of working and living have become less continuous, with more complicated zones of transition between life situations and stages. Traditional services and transfers, which had been built before this evolution, have become ill-adapted. People can be out of school but not yet in a job, or on a track back to work but without access to a flat, for example. Often this coincides with acute problems that call for immediate and time-limited help, different from the lengthy ex-ante negotiation and decision-making on long-term provision, such as pension arrangements. **Innovative ways of offering an often provision-**

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al “quick fix” can well be the critical missing link when it comes to uphold a living and working arrangement that secures staying “in the game” and prevents people from “falling out”. Quite a number of the WILCO innovations are about establishing such kind of short-term, time-limited ad hoc support. A telling example is e.g. the “Welfare Foundation Ambrosiano” in Milano (Italy), which aims to support individuals and families who are in conditions of temporary need for various reasons (job loss, illness...), regardless of their previous and/or current type of working contract and place of origin. Another similar example is the target-ed discretionary housing payment scheme from Birmingham (UK), which addresses people on their way from welfare to work by time-limited payments that ease the costs of transition, helping e.g. towards rent arrears. A third example is given by a SI in Geneva (Switzerland), the Unit of Temporary Housing, where flats in a building are reserved for young people in special difficulties. What is specific is that residents may be supported by a team employed by the municipality, comprising a building manager and nurses. This service takes into account risk biographies and the way in which, in life, issues of health, employment, family status and housing situation often overlap.

Developing offers that meet newly emerging risks, beyond fixed social and participation rights and entitlements

Much of what has been presented above is about so far unknown gaps, a feature that some call “new risks”, not foreseen in the “manual” of standard risks that made up for the social service offers and transfer-systems of post-war welfare-states. Many of the innovative offers and measures that develop here are not very stable in terms of institutionalization and legal status; this constitutes a difference from the core area of public welfare institutions in health, education or pension schemes. New dispersed offers form a kind of settlement that may either be the forerunner of later, more stable rights or just a shaky substitute for social rights and entitlements that have been or get shortened. Among the broad variety of innovations that represent offers related to new risks—be it services, cash or various other forms of time-limited support—are e.g. programs such as the public rental housing program in Zagreb (Croatia), which gives better access to housing for a kind of group in need that had not been known or—more accurately—“publicly acknowledged”

before: young families that are just on the way to start into working life but have already to bear the manifold responsibilities and burdens of parenthood.

Working by kind of “social contracts” with individuals and groups

By tradition, most public welfare offers and services have the status of rights that are unconditional insofar as they usually require only a set of material preconditions to be fulfilled in order to have access to support in a defined situation of need. A new tendency in welfare arrangements, namely in the field of “workfare”, differs from that to the extent that here, the clients enter a kind of contractual relationship with the welfare provider, where the preconditions needed for support are concerning the future behaviour of the clients. The latter have to be ready to contract with the welfare provider to perform a number of duties in exchange for what they get from society. Mostly, this is about proving the readiness to increase one’s employability by taking part in training measures, etc. These types of contractual relationships (different from traditional rights) are about defined responsibilities the clients take exclusively for themselves (or sometimes their next-of-kin).

Among our set of innovations, other types of contracts were observed came into focus. These are kind of micro-social contracts that define the commitment to give something back for what one gets from society in a broader way: people get access to some goods and services once they oblige themselves to do something for others, be it in form of volunteer work, defined tasks of personal support for people in need in the community, etc. An example for such practices of a different, more socially defined kind of working with contracts is given by “Le temps pour toi” (Time for Roof), an inter-generational home-share service in Nantes, offering cheap lodging for students that enter an inter-generational co-habitation arrangement. In a similar way, in a program called “Fare e habitare” (Doing and living), a social housing agency in Brescia (Italy) has developed special offers for young people, where they as dwellers pay very little rents but engage themselves in civic activities—be they cultural, social (in the field of integration of migrants) or pro-environmental (e.g. doing urban gardening).

2.3. Innovations in governance

The cases of SIs that have been studied all represent a combination of new “products” and new “processes” The latter term refers to both the internal organisation of decision-making and ways of interacting with the environment—the public, various stakeholders, social partners and political and administrative authorities. Hence most SIs that aim at developing new kinds of services have as well a governance dimension. However, for some innovations, influencing and changing the system of governance has been found as being their core purpose.

Fostering units and types of organization that operate in more embedded and networked ways

Stating that the traditional service organizations and systems are very much focused on their respective special tasks, functioning like “silos”, has become nearly a stereotype. The low degree of cooperation and sharing also holds true for those parts of the service landscape that have been shaped by managerial reforms. Indeed, these kind of reforms fostered a concentration of single organizations on their respective core-tasks and a more competitive rather than cooperative orientation. In contrast to that, social innovations are characterized by the fact that they bring together what is usually separated, be it ideas, concerns or practices. Since the SIs that we studied have a highly local character, they are much more embedded in their direct environment than organizations that act as part of a hierarchical system, be it in business or centralized welfare administrations. Furthermore, the complex goals of many SIs correlate with networked ways of action. A good example of unconventional forms of networking is offered for instance by the Neighborhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development in Amsterdam (Netherlands), where teachers and students from the university cooperate with activists in a community development programme that links governmental, non-profit and business organizations. This kind of trilateral cooperation can be found in many of the SIs that operate in the field of programmes for restoring housing estates and revitalizing urban neighbourhoods. A good example is given by the Neighbourhood Management Project in Berlin-Kreuzberg, which links not only community groups and local business

but as well various departments of the public welfare system, ranging from urban planning to the school department.

Giving new concerns and groups a voice in the public domain

Innovation means as well to address issues, concerns and related forms of self-organizing in a way that is more up to date with changing challenges and pressures. Conventional orders of presenting and organizing concerns often do not work anymore. Looking back to the history of conflict articulation and management in welfare states, this means e.g. that, in most cases, the various special needs of groups cannot get assembled anymore under the roof of an overarching “workers’ movement” and its organization clusters. But one can observe as well changes in new social movements, such as the environmental and feminist movements, when it comes to themes and self-definitions of today. Impressive examples in our sample come here e.g. from movements and initiatives in post-socialist countries concerning the needs of women and mothers, who speak for themselves and their families. Both the MaMa Foundation in Warsaw and the RODA initiative in Zagreb have overcome the traditional restricted focus on getting the same role as men in a male-shaped labour market; they include and highlight other concerns that had before been seen as merely private issues, protesting local environments and systems that, before and after socialist times, showed little interest in the manifold challenges of care and the difficulties to get to new ways of combining working and family life; their action gives caring tasks an upgrade in public and policy agendas. The ways in which movements such as MaMa Foundation and RODA combine self-organizing, protest, campaigning and the building up of their own service and self-help organizations is an innovative contribution in the field of gender and family issues.

Organizing more intense forms of public debate and opinion-building around existing challenges in cohesion policies

By contrast to those agencies and service providers that work much on rather routinized issues, innovative organizations are by their very nature forced

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to create publicity to advertise and convince. The unconventional way in which they define their own needs and concerns and seek to act upon them calls for a strong orientation to the outside. However, quite often, “publicity” is hard to reach, and opinion building is difficult when it is left to the usual interplay of a single group or initiative with professional opinion builders and politicians. Some of the innovations we selected have been eager to find new forms of organizing debates, deliberation processes and publicity in order to establish finally a new consensus on priorities and agendas. Among such examples there are two especially impressive ones: the Maggio 12 Initiative in Milano, which aimed to bring together concerned citizens, experts, politicians, professionals and administrators in an organized deliberation process on a new agenda for dealing with children and childhood; and the city council of Berne, which acted in an innovative and courageous way when it invited experts and professionals to develop a process that led to widely consented guidelines on how the city should deal with migrants and the tasks of their integration into city life.

Building issue-related coalitions and partnerships

Networking can have various meanings. Often the focus is on day-to-day relationships between various organizations and agencies. A more demanding kind of networking is represented by coalitions, partnerships, alliances, presenting a more intense and dense forms of interaction, which are often concerned with raising or upgrading an issue. Establishing such kind of collective agency, which is at once unified and plural, can be seen as an important innovative element in policy-making and governance. A telling example is a SI from Plock (Poland), the Foundation Grant Fund for Plock, a joint initiative of the municipality and two local firms. It aims to combine the potential of the public and private sectors in support of projects that serve the local community. Besides examples from the field of urban, housing and neighbourhood revitalization, a SI such as the already mentioned Foundation Ambrosiano in Milano constitutes a good example; and one could point here as well once again at SIs like the MaMa Foundation (Warsaw) or RODA (Zagreb), for which building such alliances is highly important.

2.4. Innovations in modes of working and financing

When taking up modes of working and financing it is important to point at the fact that innovations take shape under given, often adverse circumstances. While this is in itself banal, it represents quite a challenge when it comes to disentangling what is “innovative” about a project and development and what is just an effect of the deconstruction of or regression in existing welfare models and regulations. When innovation means to deal differently with a given challenge or pressure, this must often entail a way to accept and live with worsening material conditions. This tends to increase the already huge imbalance between ambitions, on the one hand, and conditions and means, on the other hand. Therefore, innovative elements like flexible team work are hard to disentangle from the mere reaction to conditions under which it is impossible to offer some basic degree of job security. Likewise, an innovative way of working in a multi-stakeholder perspective can entail as well the need to accept as a fact a chronically underfunded local public sector, making it difficult to differentiate between a perspective of winning additional societal support and using local partners as a spare wheel.

Flexicurity in working contracts; levels of institutionalization and security below traditional standards

Throughout the WILCO project, the descriptions of the modes of working in SIs show working arrangements that could be assembled under the label of “flexicurity”, i.e. a mix of elements that are about balancing constant changes in tasks, positions and time arrangements of the workers and a degree of minimal reliability in working conditions. People working in projects and making their living there may enjoy an atmosphere of creativity and trust-based relationships, which allow for many of the various co-operators to “plug in” just for a while and to accept short-term contracts, being sure that there will be a possibility for a new contract once circumstances allow. However, all these mixes between some attractive and other more frightening elements in the modes of working, between gains and sacrifices, are far from being chosen or shaped by those who work there. The SI “Kreuzberg Acts” describes

some of these recurrent dilemmas. Lok.a.Motion, a social enterprise organisation that is counselling local business and start-ups, interweaving this with community development, presents a sharp contrast to public administrations, where the size of staff is stable and jobs are socially protected. Having very few permanent staff provides Lok.a.Motion with sufficient leeway to decide whether a certain project actually suits their key professional principles. The flipside of the agency's flexibility is that Lok.a.Motion is not a good employer in traditional terms; it benefits from a satellite system of unsecured co-operators around its small core of constant jobholders.

Different working collectives – professional teams and voluntary commitments as part of the projects and approaches

It has already been mentioned that the kinds of arrangement for cooperation in SIs are much more diversified than in the public or business sector, including not only various forms of casual paid cooperation but also many forms of voluntary and civic contributions, ranging from short-term activism to regular unpaid volunteering with a long-term perspective, and from "hands-on" volunteer work to constant inputs by civic engagement in a board. Therefore, from what is reported on the various SIs, one gets the impression that working fields are taking shape here that are innovative in two respects. First, they are innovative because they balance very different arrangements for networking, paid work, volunteering and civic engagement. And secondly, it is at least remarkably new to see how much the demarcation lines between those who operate inside the organisation and those that get addressed as co-producers are often blurred. This can be illustrated by much of the examples of innovations in housing and neighbourhood revitalization. Another illustrative example is an initiative like "Bimbo chiama bimbo" (Child calls Child) (Brescia); here, voluntary commitment and community work are, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, more important than the contribution of paid staff; a similarly illustrative case for the strong role of users as co-producers, volunteers and participants is given by the description of the SI "Ilot Stephenson – Co-production of housing in a major urban renewal district in Lille" (France).

A strong mission profile and a professionalism that combines formerly fragmented knowledge

When going through the list of innovations in our pool, it is interesting to see, throughout the whole sample, the concern for finding catchy labels for the respective initiative and project. Where traditional organizations often presuppose that their business is basically known and established, SIs have to take care to make their missions' profile as clear as possible and well known; advertising oneself in the various (social) media is a core task of many of the innovations. The various forms of cooperation between concerned citizens, volunteers and professionals within and at the fringes of the project entail as well special processes of social learning on all sides.

The kind of professional to be found in many of the innovative projects and initiatives has to manage tasks that often escape traditional professions and the division of labour they imply; professionals in the innovations have to learn to dialogue with addressees, co-citizens and volunteers; they are sometimes simultaneously specialists, entrepreneurs and managers. This kind of re-professionalization processes may e. g. concern architects that work simultaneously as community organizers and mediators. A good example hereof is provided by "Les compagnons bâtisseurs" (Companion Builders) in Lille, a SI supporting housing self-renovation—managing, training and supervising the implementation of a self-renovation process in a region where such practices have been like elsewhere marginal and unprofessional. Likewise, the "Primano" initiative in Bern, a pre-school education program targeting disadvantaged children and their families in selected districts, is another telling example. This can be complemented by the example of the Neighbourhood Mothers (Berlin), which points at the enormous difficulties that arise when it comes to making room for new types of professional work in the established classification systems of acknowledged licensed professions.

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Short-term and time-limited funding, combining resources from different stakeholders

Many if not most of the SIs we dealt with rely on a multiplicity of resources and their combination; the mix may vary and state financing may often be the most important component, but in most cases there is a degree of (financial) co-responsibility of other organizations from the civil society or the business sector. Furthermore, the funding arrangements are very often precarious and limited in time. Here, once again, innovative elements mix with hardships one would rather reduce or avoid. The strengthening of social innovation and the consequences of welfare down-building are often hard to disentangle. Interesting examples of the possibilities opened up and the restrictions that are found are given e.g. by the SI "Job explorers" in Berlin, which matches *inter alia* money from the chamber of industry and commerce and the local labour market office for programs that build bridges between schools and local employers. The work corporations from Nijmegen (Netherlands) are another example about the "art" of mixing own income from service activities and funding from various local and other sources.

2.5. Innovations concerning the entity of (local) welfare systems

One of the aims offset by the EU-authorities for the WILCO project was to look at the possible contributions of SIs to changes and developments in local *welfare systems*. We understood that, by this label, consciously more is addressed than just the local *welfare-state* institutions. Speaking about a welfare system usually means to include, besides the local welfare state/the municipality, the welfare-related roles and responsibilities of the third sector, the market sector and the community and family sphere. The cases of social innovations we have looked at bear testimony to the mutual relations that exist between all of these four components of a (local) welfare system.

Reaching out to all sectors of local welfare systems; a lesser state focus

Even though the impact of state funding and backing for the SIs that we studied varies very much from one

case to another, one can make the general statement that basically all SIs are concerned with establishing relations with all sectors. Once again, one can argue that most SIs would like to see more state and municipal support but one can suspect as well that these initiatives would oppose becoming incorporated into the public sector. Therefore it can be argued that the SIs can be apprehended best by concepts of welfare that are based on a consciously worked-out mix and pluralism of resources and responsibilities. Needless to say that these issues of "sharing" and "mixing" are a very conflictual matter - not only in terms of ideas but as well of power.

Aiming at less standardized, more diverse and localized welfare arrangements

A second conclusion concerning the understanding of the welfare system as a whole can be related to the basic fact that innovation gets difficult, if not impossible, wherever a right to act, organise and provide differently is negated; this can be the case both in big private business organisations steered centrally and in the respective market sectors controlled by their oligopolies. But it can also be the case in much of the public sector when e.g. the school or health system is by tradition or by recent managerial reforms (see the managerial reforms in labour market services) organized in a highly centralised and standardized way. Therefore, those who want to give social innovations a more important role will have to allow for degrees of decentralisation, diversity, difference and moreover possibilities for unconventional merges between what is usually separated. This holds true with respect to both more time-limited experiments with pilot-schemes and a basic readiness for mainstreaming what has developed outside or at the margins of the respective system of provision and decision making. Moreover, supporting innovation means to go for arrangements that allow for a new balance between equal standards to be guaranteed everywhere and a diversity of localized arrangements that reach the same level as elsewhere when doing differently. Good examples of the tasks and problems linked to interweaving and balancing concerns for equality and diversity can be found in the case of German municipalities that strive for the right to get the status of "Optionskommune", i.e. a municipality which is allowed to work out its own options for occupation-

al integration strategies (as is the case of Münster). Concerns for and conflicts around the aim of allowing more variety in service provision can be illustrated as well by the SI “Casas Amigas” (Friendly Homes) in Pamplona (Spain), which aim to upgrade the status of in-house child care as part of the possible choices in child care services.

Upgrading the community component in mixed welfare systems (families, support networks, etc.)

In various ways the SIs that have been analysed in the WILCO project are about upgrading the community component in mixed and plural welfare systems. This shows first of all through innovations about services that rather seek to strengthen and support the role of families in caring and taking responsibilities, rather than merely aiming to substitute a loss in their capabilities and resources by professional child minding. Secondly, community activation and participation is upgraded throughout the innovative concepts for modernising housing estates and revitalizing urban areas. Given the fact that quite often the community sphere is subsumed under a “third sector” of voluntary associations in society, excluding family relationships and rather informal neighbourhood communities from such a classification, it is all the more important to see how innovative forms and functions of community are a dimension of many social innovations. Good examples for the intertwining of the public and community sphere and their sharing of responsibilities for care are given by the example of the Neighbourhood Cafes in Lille, which open up tasks and concerns for family life to the community; others are the Neighbourhood companies in Amsterdam, where a housing corporation decided to support community in organizing their housing areas under reconstruction. Obviously, once again, it may be argued that it is unavoidable to highlight the community component of welfare systems when the focus of the project as a whole is on local levels and welfare systems. Yet, on the other hand, it should certainly be noted that many SIs are in a way challenging an understanding of welfare wherein community is seen as a rather parochial element to be substituted stepwise by more state/public, professionalized and completely freely chosen “voluntary” elements.

Integrating economic and social logics (entrepreneurial action, developmental welfare)

Unlike the aforementioned point, the integration of social and economic logics is a much better established concern in the debates on the profile of future welfare systems. On the one hand, there is a lively public debate about the creeping economisation of all spheres and an increasingly productivist attitude, which measures all social actions and relations first of all with respect to their measurable economic effects. On the other hand, there is also a debate about the welfare state as a “social investment state”, modernizing public welfare by an approach that is based on future promises such as the positive economic by-effects of raising social expenses on education, family support, and occupational and social integration. Especially those SIs, e.g. in urban revitalization, that try to interweave active participation of people as co-producers and co-decision-makers with public and private investments can be analysed in such a social investment perspective of societal development. Furthermore the various SIs that operate as (work integration) social enterprises point at the wider tendency of acknowledging the social embeddedness of economic and entrepreneurial action and the possibilities of combining both in a renewed understanding of welfare, in an “activating social investment” perspective (Evers and Guillemard 2012).

Integrating welfare and urban politics

This final point is about the limits of a concept that analyses problems of social cohesion in a society and its cities mainly from the point of view of welfare policies. Even if one acknowledges the need to integrate concerns for social and economic policies in an investment perspective and even if one includes the welfare functions and effects of market, third sector and community actors in a mixed welfare approach, this enlarged welfare concept cannot frame all the fields that count for the development of social innovations and likewise social inclusion. *First* of all, policy fields that are usually excluded from the welfare system, such as environmental policies or cultural activities, are important stages for socially innovative developments. The two examples of innovations linked with the urban gardening movement—the “Gardens of Life” in Varaždin and the “Prinzessinnengärten”

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in Berlin—both point at the role of environmental politics. Furthermore, there is the important policy field of spatial planning and development, be it at the level of neighbourhoods, cities or regions. The very fact that many of the innovations collected and presented by the WILCO project look for better social cohesion and inclusion by interweaving social welfare and urban/spatial planning can hardly be overlooked. The innovations consist in establishing an essential link between urban transformation and social intervention, something completely new in local planning and based on merging knowledge and professionals from diverse fields (architects, economists, educators and social workers). A good example is the Område-sprogrammet, which aims at uplifting several districts in Malmö (Sweden) through the cooperation of “resource groups” e.g. for the city development, the elderly, young people, culture and recreation and, last but not least, labour market and economic growth. The program is thus both about the problem-oriented cooperation of departments of social and economic planning and about the intertwining of spatial and social planning areas. It is no accident that our collection of social innovations, deemed as important and promising by local experts, is in large parts located at the intersection of welfare and urban development

Part 3: Conclusive remarks: From the potentials of social innovations to the ways public policies deal with them today

To “do more with less”—this is the briefest, and probably the most honest reason why the European Commission puts so much hope in the promotion of social innovations. In times of banking crisis and austerity there are widespread calls for a further slimming down of welfare benefits and services, and more especially of those parts of the latter that can be seen as consumptive and protective rather than investive and productive (expenses for social protection, elderly care, etc.). Innovative welfare arrangements and services, as they will be introduced in this compilation, are conceived as possibly the most effective and efficient remedies for today’s social challenges. They can

be seen as a kind of so far underrated resource and sometimes as a last resort in situations of financial emergencies and failing welfare policies.

However, one of the central messages of our reading of the case studies on local social innovations is that they are the opposite of quick-fix-solutions; using their full potential requires nothing less than a combination of “the deep strategies of chess masters with the quick tactics of acrobats” (Cels et al. 2012, 11). **Social innovations’ life-cycles** (processes of emergence, stabilization and scaling up) are very conditional and are not available simply at the press of a button. Instead, welfare politics and social innovations have to be thought together and analyzed concerning potentials for mutual learning.

In this vein, four perspectives may nurture and stimulate further thinking about how to move from just using innovations towards learning as well from them. First, it is helpful to perceive the history of welfare and the welfare state as a history of social innovations taken up or rejected, marginalized or mainstreamed. When it comes to welfare provision, many movements and organisations have always played an important role in inventing and creating welfare arrangements of their own—mutuals in the field of social security, cooperatives as early “social enterprises”, voluntary associations bringing up and running all kind of services,... *Secondly*, it is crucial to rethink how innovation and diversity can get combined with reliability and equality. In order to achieve both, a balance has to be found between a guaranteed level of protection and openness for the changes brought about by welfare innovations, and between standardized and uniform regulations and claims on rights and spaces for trying out something new and different. *Thirdly*, narrowing the current gap between the changes brought about by social innovations and those change resulting from welfare reforms calls for policies that are less about *imposing* change and more about preparing it through programs, pilot schemes and forms of evaluation that allow for failing and failing better, thus enabling learning in social and policy terms on all sides. Nudging change and preparing reform through time-limited programs that take up an innovation is a line of tradition in policy making that has steadily won more influence in the last decade. And *fourthly*, thinking about the tensions between given policies of “welfare reform” and policies for “upscaling” social innovations is indispensable. When it comes to the future of welfare, one

should think more about the net-balance of the parallel processes of down-building big and basic welfare and protection systems and of supporting small-scale innovations in services and local networks.

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Innovative approaches and instruments in the fields of urban revitalization, childcare and work integration

Dimensions of innovation

I. Service innovations

Investing in capabilities rather than spotting deficits

Preference for open approaches, avoiding targeting and its stigmatizing effects

Concern for bridging the gaps between professional services and people's life worlds

Service offers that connect otherwise often separated forms of support and access



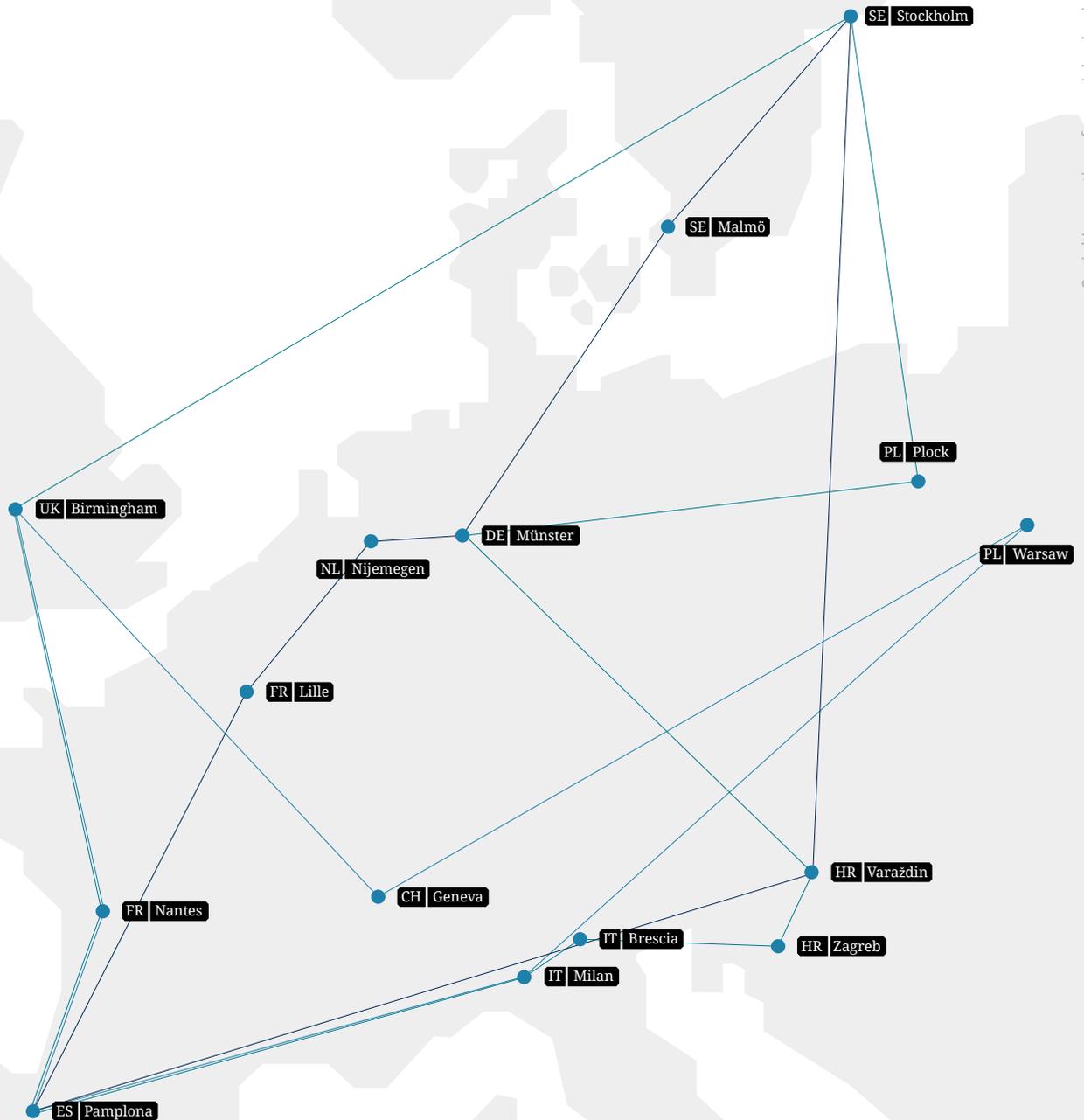
Dimensions of innovation

II. Innovations in regulations and rights

Creating flexible forms of ad hoc support

Developing offers beyond fixed social and participation rights and entitlements

Working by kind of “social contracts” with individuals and groups



Dimensions of innovation

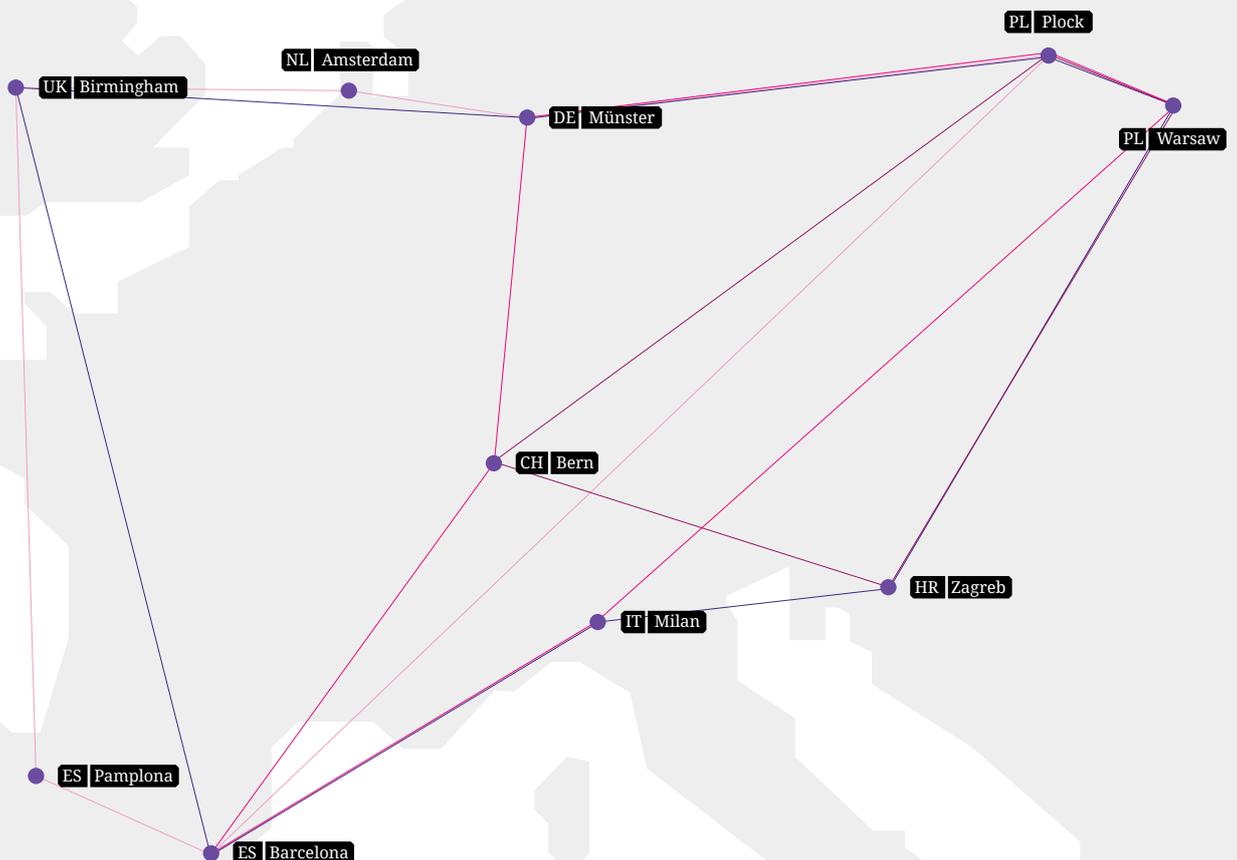
III. Innovations in governance

Fostering units and types of organisation that operate in more embedded and networked ways

Organizing more intense forms of public debate and opinion-building around prior challenges in cohesion policies

Giving new concerns and groups a voice in the public domain

Building issue-related coalitions, partnerships and networks



Dimensions of innovation

IV. Innovations in working and financing

Flexicurity in working contracts; levels of institutionalization and security below traditional standards

Different working collectives – professional teams and voluntary commitments as part of the projects and approaches

Strong mission profile and a changing professionalism that combines formerly fragmented knowledge

Short-term and time-limited funding, combining resources from different stakeholders



Dimensions of innovation

V. Innovations in welfare systems

Reaching out to all sectors of local welfare systems; lesser state focus

Aiming at less standardized, more diverse and localized welfare arrangements

Upgrading the community component in mixed welfare systems (families, support networks, etc.)

Integrating economic and social logics (entrepreneurial action, developmental welfare)

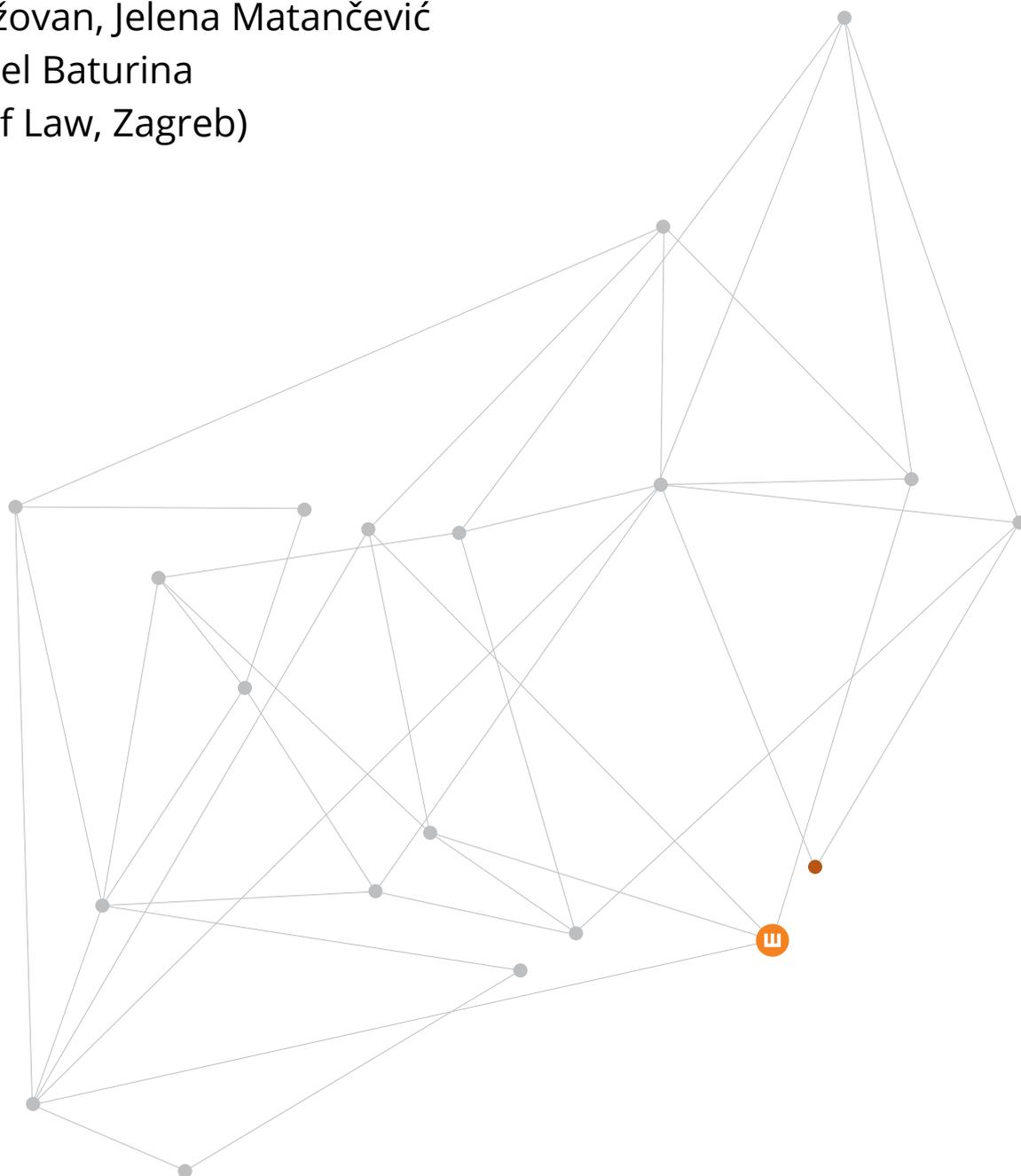
Integrating welfare and urban politics



HR Croatia

Zagreb

Gojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević
and Danijel Baturina
(Faculty of Law, Zagreb)



HR

Zagreb

AuthorsGojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević and Danijel Baturina
(Faculty of Law, Zagreb)**Introduction****Local background of the social innovations****Keywords:**

Child care
 Community development
 Empowerment
 Participation
 Social entrepreneurship
 Social investment

The concept of social innovation, its meaning and understanding is a relatively new approach for all stakeholders, even for the academic community. This concept comes more as a part of Europeanization of social policy, one kind of top-down concept of modernisation of social policy. Social policy is mostly centralised and in the hands of the government. In some cases, in particular specific social care programmes, local authorities also have responsibility. Mainstream programmes are implemented in rather bureaucratic ways, following certain procedures, with lot of paper work, isolated from other stakeholders in the field and are less sensitive to alternative approaches or partnerships with other stakeholders dealing with same issues. It is evident that these places of policymaking and policy implementation controlled by the state are not places of creativity and innovation.

Recent research (Bežovan 2010) on the roles and contribution of local stakeholders in the development of welfare mix states that civil society organisations are more aware than state organisations of the concept of social innovation. Projects in child and elderly care, community development projects and advocacy of the social rights of vulnerable groups are mentioned as spaces of social innovation.

Some innovative practices in employment and development of sustainable pension systems might be seen as real social innovations and even best practice. However, to have such best practice status they need “political recognition,” which is very often not a rationale choice. However, concurrence of the country with European Union laws requires legitimacy for social experimentation and social innovation.

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The three social innovations presented in this report were chosen based on background interviews with local stakeholders, experts, civil society representatives, practitioners and our own investigations of available resources (newspapers, websites and policy documents). The portraits of the three innovations, introduced by a comprehensive description, are organised alongside three basic themes: 1) types of services and ways of addressing users; 2) internal organisation and modes of working and 3) embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system. The innovations are presented alongside policy fields. The innovations chosen were a social mentoring project for employment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups, CSO RODA – Social Innovation: From Civic Engagement to Social Entrepreneurship, and the public rental-housing programme

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Social mentoring project for employment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups

1.1 Short description

Within the IV component frame of accession assistance (IPA) "Development of human resources", the Ministry of Health and Social Care (currently the field is within the Ministry of Social Politics and Youth) implemented the project "Establishing support in social integration and employment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups." The estimated duration of the project was 22 months, and it commenced in late 2010. The overall objective is to promote social inclusion of long-term unemployed beneficiaries of social assistance through the provision of support for their inclusion in the labour market. The purpose of this project is to develop an approach based on the needs of the users to access the labour market. The project consists of two interrelated components, in accordance with which it wishes: 1) to empower cross-sectorial and inter-agency cooperation in the field of employment and social inclusion; and 2) to improve the quality of services in centres for social care aimed at the inclusion of long-term unemployed to help support the market.

The project was connected to JIM (Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion) and its measures relate to social services and referrals by customising and integrating social services, giving customers choices and improving the quality of professional services in the welfare system. There is observable impact of Europeanization and EU convergence. These changes are intended to modernise the system to be more in line with criteria and standards of the European Union, and to improve the quality of social services. In addition, previously prepared and tested reform concepts and intellectual potential are seen in other countries, which then are transmitted to Croatia via the influence of foreign stakeholders. Here we find that not only is the project funded by the IPA, but also the core project team is from international consulting and other agencies. Doubts remain as to whether these experts know the Croatian social policy system, values and characteristics of action, and whether they lack contextual elements regarding planning and execution of the programme.

We can distinguish between the economic and political aspects of this invention taking into consideration that there is a lack of programmes that help and support social integration and employment of disadvantaged and

marginalised groups. The economic aspect is their possible inclusion in the labour market. This will be step forward in dealing with marginalised and long-term unemployed, which is a group with specific social risks and is difficult position in the labour market. The political dimension of the action is in the goals of the project, which are to modernise the social care system in line with criteria and standards in EU countries.

1.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The goal of the project is to improve the quality of service in social work aimed at long-term unemployed beneficiaries and their retention in the labour market. Training for social service mentoring was conducted related to skills for setting up the basic principles and tools necessary for its implementation. Mentors for social inclusion, in the testing of model of social mentoring, applied their knowledge and expertise to effectively connect theory and practice in order to define the final model that is applicable at the national level. Social mentoring is an extremely important component of the social inclusion process because it provides an individualised approach to working with long-term unemployed beneficiaries of social assistance or socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups. It is directed to enhance their involvement in the labour market. That kind of approach is innovative in our context. The model is based on the assumption that social workers will provide individual programmes to their clients by using some of the key elements of mentoring (duration of the relationship, quality of the relationship, continuity, empowerment, empathy, and communication based on feedback, active listening, etc., goal setting) as soft skills. Through the guidance of an individual plan and social mentoring, centres for social care will address potential structural, personal and world-view barriers that might prevent access to the labour market or other activities to long-term unemployed users of social assistance. The goal is to motivate people who are the most marginalised and the most distant from the labour market by focusing on their strengths and potential. In some cases, participants progress to employment, training or further education, while others gain increased self-confidence and increased strength and willingness to participate in further opportunities for self-development. Expected results are not only in

labour market activity. Taking into account the level of social exclusion experienced by some users, such results improve quality of life, and further education and increased social and basic skills are of equal importance and in some cases may be a step towards potential inclusion in the labour market.

1.3. Internal organization and mode of working

Analysis of the practices of services in the field of social inclusion and employment was conducted in order to strengthen inter-sector and inter-institutional cooperation in the field of social inclusion and employment. Eight working groups necessary for the development of models of social mentoring were formed based on the consultation process. Each of the working groups involved approximately 20 representatives of various institutions (centres for social care, the Croatian Employment Service, NGOs, social partners, representatives of cities, counties, etc.). The results of the consultation, as well as results of the implemented activities, contributed to the preparation of the draft of the "Code of Conduct" in the provision of services to long-term unemployed beneficiaries of social assistance." In addition, representatives of the Directorate of Social Welfare of Ministry of Health and Social Care (now the Ministry of Social Politics and Youth), centres for social care and the Croatian employment service have contributed to the development of protocols that was signed by the stakeholders mentioned above. Testing of the model of social mentoring was conducted in the initial phase of social mentoring. The testing phase model included professionals who had undergone training on social mentoring. Each of the skilled workers had chosen several people who, via their professional work, were using skills and knowledge that they gained through education on social mentoring. During this phase, two meetings were held on the principle of "learning from colleagues" (peer learning) to discuss the experiences in relation to the model of social mentoring and the intention of the discussion was to devise solutions for the difficulties professional workers encountered. Via this activity, experts that worked on the implementation of the project developed the "Handbook of self-evaluation", which served as a tool for qualified workers providing instructions and information on the development, management and successful implementation of social mentoring, focusing on the long-term unemployed. The handbook

will help future sustainability of the social mentoring approach by enhancing the approach with new solutions for contextual problems and providing a firm basis for further expansion of the model.

The social benefits of mentoring for the users are stated satisfaction with the informal and individual approach, a realistic assessment of needs, possible actions and results, improved knowledge, development of potential, and building self-esteem. Benefits for professionals are increased capabilities and self-esteem because of the adoption of new knowledge and skills; satisfaction with enhanced services for users, especially in compliance with quality standards, increased motivation to work, good feelings in dealing with customers, learning through supervision and learning from colleagues.

1.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Within the project, the action plan for media campaigns to raise public awareness of the needs of vulnerable groups was developed. The campaign aimed to raise awareness and inform the public about the issue and to create a climate to provide support to vulnerable and marginalised groups. Moreover, the purpose of the campaign was to activate a wide range of relevant stakeholders, on local and national levels, involved in the integration of disadvantaged and marginalised groups, such as social welfare institutions, civil society organizations, public institutions, social partners, local communities, to become actively engaged in spreading awareness and providing support for socially vulnerable groups. The campaign was designed to transmit a message to the general public, but also to all project stakeholders and potential partners in order for them to become familiar with the problems of socially vulnerable and marginalised groups related to access to the labour market. Through a campaign, the right to work as one of the citizens' basic rights was advocated as key to the prevention of social exclusion. This kind of action is aimed to have a wider impact with the expected result that the goals of this project would become rooted in the general public but also among all partners in the project. This seems important for the sustainability of the project and future work.

Awareness of stakeholders together with the results of social mentoring should open the option to extend the programme and other similar activities within the

local social policy. Thus, four public forums entitled "Social inclusion of vulnerable groups - challenges and solutions" were organised. In addition, in order to strengthen cooperation between stakeholders at the local level and promote the social model of mentoring to support social inclusion and employment, the project organised eight seminars entitled "Promotion of cooperation in the field of social inclusion and employment." Providing training for a larger group of social experts, prospective mentors for social inclusion and the creation of a manual for social mentoring will affect the further expansion of access to social mentoring through social policies and facilitate the adoption of its principles of action.

In conclusion, the goal was to educate a group of experts who would have knowledge, skills and tools to foster social inclusion of long-term unemployed beneficiaries of support, or socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups through the provision of support for their inclusion in the labour market by social mentoring model. In the long term, social inclusion would strengthen the social and economic cohesion. The project created a new kind of collaboration and networking. It promoted the following basic goals and tasks: providing quality services to more users, improving the quality, effectiveness and efficiency, encouraging innovation and new ideas, using the experience that each partner brings, and directing more resources to the provision of services rather than the multiplication of administration and infrastructure.

This project contributes to and is based on creating new kinds of partnerships, networks in the local community and to stimulate new form of governance, which puts the emphasis on using the available resources of state, municipal and private bodies. The project has the potential to be transferable to other cities as example of crosscutting principle of providing services for long-term unemployed and marginalised groups. Capacities and knowledge of social mentoring is especially promising to widening the project's approach in future. Social mentoring is an innovative model of work in social welfare and involves a partnership between professionals and users with the aim of activating and motivating them to change. Social mentoring is an extremely important component of the process of social inclusion because it provides individualised approach to the long-term unemployed beneficiaries or socially disadvantaged and marginalised groups and their integration into the labour

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Employment

market. Mentoring is a model for social improvement of service quality and customer satisfaction, which is one of the priorities of welfare reform.

Ultimately, the goal of the project was to ensure full adoption of new tools and practices in Croatian institutions as result of activities and knowledge gained on the project. The task of the project was to support the development of strategies to increase the number and quality of services based on their needs, and help professionals in institutions involved in the project with adaptation needed to introduce and use newly acquired tools.

There are some key challenges for future of the programme. Regarding the centres for social care: reorganization of work (training of social workers on the tools and skills of social mentoring, creating a network of mentors) for future expansion of the model. Regarding local communities: building a network of services, coordination through local partnerships, and engaging in a process of social planning. At the system level: creating a common ground through key documents (laws, regulations, protocols and guidelines). In addition, there are some key difficulties for scaling up of the project. The main difficulty is lack of time and difficult working conditions of overburdened social workers, lack of network providers - the differences between counties, the lack of financial resources to support users in some activities, and high expectations regarding employment.

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RODA - Parents in action

2.1 Short description

The association RODA - Parents in Action, with its innovative programme of activities was formed in the social space that was previously considered private and perceived as the responsibility of parents in traditional societies and their extended families. The need for such an initiative came with the increase in the number of young families with children, with better education, in a big city (Zagreb), who do not have the support of parents and close relatives and still face the challenge of reconciling professional and family commitments. Initially, the efforts of the association were centred on the protection of vested social rights, but with a lot of volunteer work and enthusiasm, the initiative resulted in multidimensional social change and social innovation.

As for family policy in Croatia, it is being manifested mostly through material benefits, such as children's allowances, tax reliefs and maternity leaves, rather than through provision of services for children. To some extent, this is related to the structure of a traditional family: women used to work less, while relatives and members of extended families used to be on hand. The lack of child care services is particularly evident in large cities, where nurseries and kindergartens often cannot accommodate the children of working parents (Zrinščak 2008). The number of children covered by preschool care has been increasing in the past 20 years and it now amounts to 35 per cent.

According to the National Family Policy Strategy (2003), an increase in the number of child care institutions and increase in the number of children covered with organised preschool care and education was one of the priority areas for family policy development. This strategy also proposed measures related to education and training of parents, incentives for implementation of programmes of civil organizations, educational programmes that include education on family, partnership, parenthood, etc. It was pointed out that family policy should therefore contribute to creating a friendly social environment, which would help families solve a variety of problems, first and foremost the ones related to children's development.

The problem of accommodation of children in preschool institutions only occasionally becomes a part of local public debates, as this is a service falls under the scope of local authorities. Rarely have there been cases of protests or highlighting problems in ways that would capture wide public attention. The practice of parents associations and their organised efforts, as beneficiaries to improve the provision of child care services were almost non-existent.

The issue of placing children in nurseries and kindergartens in Zagreb would usually appear on the agenda in early autumn only, when some children would be left without a place in kindergarten. Due to the pressure of extensive numbers of unenrolled children, private kindergartens and different forms of informal playrooms were established.

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Related to all policy fields



The association RODA - Parents in Action - was founded in mid-2001, as a spontaneous reaction of parents, women with children, who raised their voices against reduction of maternity allowance and protested in front of the government office. The women connected over the Internet. The association had continued to advocate the rights of parents persistently until the maternity allowance was not increased and maternity leave became longer and more flexible.

2.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

By promoting and advocating the rights of children, RODA has impacted changes in public policies for children, women and families. Through their consistent cooperation with the media, they have made a recognizable influence on public opinion and lobbied for changes in child care. RODA encourages active and responsible parenting through direct support and assistance to parents, to equip them with knowledge, empower them and make them better advocates for the rights of their children. They are joined and networked, which makes them strong and decisive in their public statements.

Parents are the ones who make decisions about their children. The children do not belong to the institutions, but the parents can affect the quality of services that children receive in child care institutions.

RODA has become an important stakeholder in the debate on the right to adequate maternity allowance and maternity leave, the right to medically assisted reproduction, pregnancy and improving birthing conditions, as well as promotion, education and counselling on breastfeeding, education and support to parents and children safety in traffic.

The association has gradually developed into somewhat of a "union of parents". They have created a new paradigm of parenting in Croatia, promoting the idea that children need their parents and their greater affection. This is a kind of attachment parenting based on emotions and first experience of parenthood. "When you do not have a family to help you, you turn to those similar to yourself."

RODA is familiar with problems of the many parents barely surviving, seeking their help: they state the cases of families of five who live in apartments of 26 m². The housing situation is a limiting factor in the expansion of

families and the decision to have two or more children. Temporary, 1-year employment contracts also present certain constraints. The association has helped some families to cover delayed rent payments.

For 8 years, RODA has been providing support and advice on breastfeeding through their breastfeeding phone line. They have also organised a school of breastfeeding, a conference and printed, and distributed relevant materials. These activities become a strong lever for the social integration of young mothers.

Considering the vulnerability of children in their parents' cars, RODA launched an initiative for proper use of car seats for children. The result of the initiative was the increase in the number of children who are driven in car seats, as well as in the portion of car seats, which are correctly installed and used appropriately. In the framework of this programme, a large number of brochures have been printed and good cooperation with the police established, in so far as they organised quick traffic controls near kindergartens and on the city roads.

Four times a year, RODA organises sales of second-hand children's clothing, shoes and equipment. So far, 30 sales have been held, and each was visited by an average of 800 parents. Organising such a 3-day event requires the help of 40 volunteers.

2.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

The activities of the association are mainly financed through state and city programmes, which support civil society. Citizens have been participating with small-scale donations, while a company donated 100,000 kuna to RODA instead of giving the money for Christmas cards and gifts. RODA also receives various kinds of non-monetary assistance and they are allowed to use storage space free of charge. Initially, they decided not to accept donations from companies that violate the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, tobacco and pharmaceutical industries and the companies using unethical marketing targeted at children. However, activities of RODA rely mostly on voluntary engagement of members.

Deep involvement of RODA in active parenting initiatives has resulted in a social entrepreneurship project of sewing and selling cloth diapers and connected products. Since 2004, RODA has been

promoting the use of cloth diapers as a healthier, more environmentally friendly and cheaper solution, and in 2006, they launched the whole venture. With their production of cloth diapers, RODA has set an example of social entrepreneurship among associations. What is manufactured is a high-quality product made from natural materials, healthy and safe for children, while disabled and difficult-to-employ persons are involved in the production. The production facilities are established within Vocational High School in Varaždin and there are 56 women working there. Social entrepreneurship is sustainable, it brings profit to the association, develops and expands and creates new jobs. The profits generated are reinvested in the business and core activities of the organization. The association has recently established a limited liability company for further production of cloth diapers.

RODA has 12 branches throughout Croatia and they have organised various activities in more than 50 Croatian cities and towns. Now, it is a strong network embedded in society and is the voice of advocacy for social change.

In order to strengthen its mission and public acceptance, every year RODA gives out awards to the relevant stakeholders who have contributed to fulfilling the mission of their organisation within the society. They also give out a kind of anti-award to those who have been prominent in their negative approach to the vision of the association. In 2011, this anti-award went to the Croatian Minister of Health who had advocated for a restrictive law on medically assisted reproduction.

RODA is known to the wider public via the RODA forum, which has over 40,000 monthly visits. This is the platform where new members with new ideas appear, and they contribute to strengthening the community spirit of the association and its constant renewal. This usually refers to the first experience of membership in an organization and first experience of volunteering. New members always have the time and passion to volunteer and help others, and in that way, they also develop their own character: it is not only about giving, but also receiving to a great extent. Advising other people is a completely new experience to them - to have a feeling that they help others and that the others believe them. These are solid foundations of a sustainable social network ready to take on the new challenges.

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Related to all policy fields

The main organising principle is that the association is managed like a household, with better-educated members - 95 per cent of them have never been members of any associations before. Ideas and projects belong to the association, while volunteer work builds trust and the atmosphere in which members are accepted and respected and they enjoy support of others.

The fact is that these are the persons who are quite well-off, middle class, and none of them receives children's allowance, so the association is not concerned with this topic.

The dynamics of social innovation here remains visible through the provision of services: there are tangible and recognizable results. However, advocacy activities are harder to see and they provide long-term results. These two processes and priorities in the association are intertwined. As an association, RODA keeps changing as the children grow up and this is something that will be interesting to follow in the future. It is simply the dynamics that are difficult to predict. We are talking about a sense of membership in the network in which women share the same or similar values. This is a support that many people need in their lives. The strength and substance of the women is felt in the association.

Interestingly enough, none of the politicians has approached the association or expressed direct interest in their work¹. It might be seen as a critical issue in terms of governance and perception of this group among politicians as the "opposition".

RODA operates in a society where too many people remain silent about things that bother or disturb them; they do not protest, they were raised to obey. If they seek changes, they have to speak publically about it - those who provide services will hear them in one way or the other. What is announced publically always has a certain resonance. Through such public speech and statements, RODA has become a recognizable stakeholder in the family policy, which improves the quality of programmes for children, their accommodation and diet.

Adequate levels of trust and promoted norms and values are shared by all members of the association, especially the ones practicing volunteer work. In that

way, the contribution to social capital multiplication has been made, as a basis for social innovation in the association and beyond. In this case, social change is visible in an area that used to be the area of privacy and the space of few government services. It was a framework for social innovation that strengthens social cohesion in general public.

RODA has passed their knowledge to the organisations in South East Europe, in Sarajevo, Belgrade and other cities. However, it has been impossible to implement such a programme in these countries, as there is neither readiness nor need for volunteer work. So in this case, it can be clearly stated that social innovation emerged from civil engagement and volunteer work of citizens making effort to protect and promote their interests.

2.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

RODA, as well-known stakeholders and advocates of social services for children, had an impact on the practice of making and implementation of child care policy in Zagreb. In partnership with other organisations, they have pressed city administration to organise a special session of the *Committee for Education and Sport* with the topic of prices for child care services in Zagreb. Instead of paying the cost of services for parents on the income test basis, they insisted, and the Committee concluded that it should be means tested (income, property, etc.). With such impact, the proposal of increasing the cost for such services on an income test basis has not been accepted².

Also, RODA put on the agenda question of quality of child care services in terms of space per child in kindergartens, quality of food for children and educational programmes. In representing users of services, they are very much respected as a stakeholder and gradually they are witnessing a process of quality service improvement.

After RODA's actions, civil society organisations of parents have become a visible part of the governance structure of the local welfare system and it made the local welfare system more vibrant and responsive to public and, specifically, to users of social services. As the media were covering all debates and events, the general public got the sense of the importance of civil

¹ However, in case of discussion on increase of prices for children day-care, some stakeholders have seen that civil society organizations are happy to come under the umbrella of political parties, this association included, if it meets their interest.

² In that time, it was strong opposition to the Mayor in the city assembly

society organisations and, in this case, of self-organised mothers.

This case, for the first time, opened debate on public issues where citizens have vested interests and show strengths of civil organisation to address public issues and to influence policy process. With this experience, a new culture of communication of the city with civil society organisations might be seen.

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Zagreb

Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

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Public rental housing programme

3.1 Short description

Public policies and reforms in the public sector, on the different level of state administration, are predominantly made via a top-down approach, often with political connotations (political will) and with lack of respect for empirical evidence or analyses related to the topic (Bežovan 2008). Over the last 20 years, the practice is that the new governments or the new majors do not respecting the achievements of previous governments³. When they come to office they change professional staff, and they change policy programmes without debates or analysis. In such circumstances, there is “policy with a thousand new starts”, and creative professionals are very often forced to leave offices of public administration and set up civil society organisations to confirm their creativity and innovative skills. Public policies in fact are not places for real innovation, because of cognitive barriers - everything should be written in regulations or in policy programmes, before someone starts with new initiative.

A recent survey⁴, carried out among relevant stakeholders for local social welfare programmes implementation, stated that officials from public administration fail to understand and trust to the importance of social innovation. Civil society organisations are more aware of the importance of social innovation and they have produced more such projects and ideas. However, public officials are often suspicious of the range and usefulness of such innovations. Thus, it is not easy for civil society organisations to produce visible innovation that may receive the status of good practice in relevant policy area. In addition, the concept of good practice is not recognised as part of the possible policy agenda.

Housing policy, as a space for social innovation, is decentralised, fragmented and left to local politicians' will. Although the housing crisis is evident in larger urban areas and empirically documented as results of different surveys, vulnerable social groups (young families, single households, internal migrants, elderly, divorced people) are not organised in civil society organisations⁵. Besides that, there are no advocacy organisations addressing priority of housing needs and the need for affordable rental housing⁶. Recently, a civic organisation addressing family vio-

³ The problems of limitations of state administration are recognised, for Croatia and other transitional countries, as serious obstacles for further modernisation and development

⁴ Bežovan, G. (2010) Achievements and challenges of welfare mix development, (in Croatian) Zagreb: CERANEO.

⁵ In the survey of a WILCO project member of civil society organisations, RODA documented how their members live in terrible housing conditions, a four-member family of young generations live in a flat of 26 m². Affordability is a crucial problem for young families and it is a serious obstacle for them having more children.

⁶ As a curiosity, one major recently stated that civil society organisations pressurised him into investing money in a shelter for abandoned dogs, but he wondered why there was no such pressure from civil organisations to invest money in affordable rental housing, as a real priority.

lence influenced by-law regulation. Victims of family violence are on the priority list for social housing. However, lack of affordable renting housing is *ceterum censeo* of very rare public debates. The majority of these debates are in different internet forums⁷.

Publicly debated Strategy of Housing Policy in the City of Zagreb (2006) with well-documented issues of the lack of affordable rental housing for the people from younger generations, with the required level of political will, supported by professionals outside the city administration and capacity of administration in the city were driving forces of this innovation. This social innovation originates from pressing social needs and its potential is in the idea that innovation is implemented and driven by housing needs and recognised by different stakeholders.

Recent housing needs assessment for the city of Zagreb (Bežovan 2012) again stresses the vulnerability of young families and single people. These populations are not eligible to receive housing loans and they are exposed to uncontrolled housing rental, which is marked where they cannot afford decent housing.

Processes of drafting and putting the innovation on the agenda were examples of transparent policymaking processes. A draft of the public rental programme has been presented to the public via a press conference with additional explanation in radio programmes to contact of possible users. Public debate lasted for 15 days and interested citizens were in position to give the comments, to ask questions or to give proposals for improvement of the draft of the programme. All inputs have been analysed and publicly commented on by the policymakers and it gave additional legitimacy to this innovative housing programme. Comments made by the citizens have been built into the final version of the programme, which was framed in a proposal to the City Assembly.

Process of decision making of the programme in City Assembly was followed by lively debate. Representatives of different parties agreed about the importance of the programme, to finally address housing issues, and to meet the needs of young households. Remarks of oppositional party were more formal and directed to some legal issues related to the ownership of flats, which will be distributed in this programme.

7 An example of this debate addressing pressing housing needs says about housing deprivation "I live with my folks in 40 square metres and my younger teenage brother and I have had it! On top of it all, a cousin from Dalmatia came to stay with us for a month to attend a college preparation course... we all almost ended up killing each other..." <http://www.kupiprodaj.net/forum/showthread.php?t=838>

3.2 Conceptions and ways of addressing users

This innovation is entitled to young households, age up to 35 years, with more kids who are sub-tenants on the private rental market (that market is mostly not regulated at all) or living together with larger family but in unfavourable housing conditions. In different ways users suffered because of housing conditions. In cases of sub-tenant status, they are in a position to rent small and often poor-quality flats for very high prices. For a flat of 30-40 m² they pay rent of about 240 euros, whereas via the innovation 240 euros could pay for an 80 m² flat. As they do not have contracts, they cannot register their permanent residence. Permanent residence is a pre-requisite for obtaining a place in kindergarten. Households with such unstable tenures are at risk of moving and, so, if they cannot find other affordable flats in the neighbourhood, they are forced to change schools. These households are at risk of not being in a position to plan their life. In different aspects mentioned experiences in meeting housing needs made these families a prototype of socially excluded peoples.

Young families living with their parents or with other members of families, often three generations of a family living together and sharing a small flat, are at risks of conflict in such large households. All family members suffer from the lack of space and need for privacy.

Within this innovation, users selected via a public call for application, get a contract for 5 years with the possibility to extend it. They pay less for the rent than on the private rental market and they have very decent, large enough flats in newly built neighbourhoods. In these cases, their quality of life is visibly improved and they are in a position to plan their lives. In meeting the needs of such users, it is visible how housing, as the fundamental determinant of people's welfare, plays a crucial role in strengthening social integration and social cohesion. Here, decent housing can ensure participation of people in community life.

This type of service is new and bridges the gap between residual social rental housing and the unregulated housing market with the solution to avoid unaffordable flats. This service empowers young families and gives them more opportunities to take active citizenship and to create careers.

This innovation produces different types of tangible services, visibly serving earlier politically unrecognised

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needs, where, instead of social rights, there are contractual relationships with the potential to develop a new culture of responsible tenants.

3.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

Internal organisation of the innovation is part of the responsibilities in offices of local government and local city companies responsible for managing housing stock. The process of getting tenants in the public rental housing programme is very transparent and all families who are eligible according to mentioned criteria can apply. Tenants make a contract and they make a down payment to guarantee that they will pay rent regularly and keep the flat in good condition. Such down payments, as a pedagogical measure, are a kind of innovation in the local social welfare system⁸.

One important criterion for applicants to be eligible for this rental programme is that households must give evidence that they have reasonable income per household member. The level of income per household must be at least 30 per cent of the average income in Zagreb. This criterion gives advantage to families where the mother and father are employed and, in fact, guarantees regular payment of rent⁹.

Here social innovation involves vulnerable social groups. The boundary between “social” and “economic” blurs and learning from this innovation should be crucial for reapplication of the programme to other cities. Empirical evidence on social return: contribution of this innovation to social integration and social cohesion should be the topic of future research¹⁰.

Also, empirical evidence says that this innovation is sustainable and economically efficient.

There are several reasons to evaluate this innovation and to see ways to improve it.

⁸ Tenants in social housing programme very often are not willing to pay rent and other costs related to housing (electricity, gas, heating, water, communal fee). Besides that, internal maintenance in social flats is a problem for owners.

⁹ Now there are 558 families as tenants in his programme and local government officials see that some families threatened with recent crisis might be a problem, as they are not eligible for housing allowance, to cover increasing housing costs. In cases of worsening of economic situations, this issue might be critical for sustainability innovation or scaling-up as part of the learning process, making the housing allowance programme eligible for public rental housing tenants.

¹⁰ Inside the WILCO project, for the purpose of further understanding outcomes of this innovation, a survey will be carried out on the sample of tenants in this public rental housing programme.

Lack of coordination between activities of local government offices responsible for making call of applications for this programme and local city companies responsible for managing the housing stock makes this programme less visible to interested public. In such circumstances, marked with political conflicts in the governance of the city, publicity strategies or social marketing of this innovation, unfortunately, are not on the agenda.

3.4 Interaction with the local welfare system

Public rental programme brought a new spirit of local welfare system where officials used to deal only with poor people as a vulnerable population. Here, in this social innovation, there is the sense of a social investment programme with very viable returns in the near future. For the time being, tenants sharing newly build settlements with social renters and homeowners, do not have any form of influence on the programme or participation in its development.

The public rental housing programme is a case of path-breaking in the fragmented housing sector and the new role of local government addressing visible social needs of vulnerable populations. As a visible innovation, this programme has given a new face to the local welfare system and has made them more modern and responsive. Definitely, this project might be a milestone in process of reforming local welfare system and provides more space for social innovation and experimentation.

Also, this innovation put the issues of planning and cooperation of different local stakeholders on the agenda of local social policy.

Besides that, this innovation shows its capacity to become the model for other cities. Mayors and officials of other cities perceive public rental housing as an investment in competent labour force, and with such a programme, they see possibilities to attract young professionals who should be employed in public services (schools, health and social services, police, local administration). The economic crisis has influenced many fiscal capacities of Croatian cities and, for the time being, stopped re-implementation of this innovation in other cities.

Conclusions

The concept of social innovation, its meaning and understanding is a relatively new approach for all stakeholders, even for the academic community. Social innovation as a driver of change and further development are poorly recognised among stakeholders in Zagreb. Although some of them are quite innovative and creative, they do not express a sufficient understanding of the concept. It is a completely new concept in Zagreb. Some innovative practices in employment and development of sustainable pension systems might be seen as a real social innovation and even best practice. However, to have such best practice status they need "political recognition," which is very often not a rationale choice. It might be important to stress that respective local stakeholders with professionals from city administration bring more positive change than politicians can accept on public agenda.

The presented social innovations in the city of Zagreb are very different in nature, and in initiation and outcome. Innovation in labour market social mentoring comes as a transfer of innovation placed in existing institutional infrastructure, fully funded by EU money and remaining mostly in professional circles. Embeddedness of this innovation, with top-down legacy, in the community of local stakeholders was questionable and traces of the project are not visible.

RODA's innovations show the capacity of civil society to understand and address social problems and become co-governor in the child care system. The civic initiative provides evidence of developmental capacity in terms of creating a strong network and setting-up social enterprise. It should be stressed that the innovation is a bottom-up development. Besides that, new generations of social services produced here provide a sense of a potential welfare mix system.

Innovation regarding the public rental programme, as a contribution to welfare pluralism in the housing crisis marked with affordability issues for younger generations, in fact is innovation that has come as the result of political will and the professional capacity of the local authority.

City administration, particularly in the area of social policy, demonstrates openness for the development of new solutions and supporting new good ideas. This is particularly true in their cooperation with civil society and civic initiatives where they have built certain

partnerships. For the time being, in the local welfare system, the challenge is coordination with governmental programmes of social care and employment. Parallelism of governmental and local authority in social care and employment programmes on the local level are starved of social innovation.

In larger cities (Zagreb), civic initiatives for public good and engaged citizens are less visible than in smaller cities (Varaždin). In that sense, mobilisation of local stakeholders and facilitation of social change appears to be a more demanding and difficult process. Citizens in large cities are not so visible and civic energy looks to be less productive with outcomes only tangible only on the neighbourhood level. "Bringing" social capital from the neighbourhood to the city level is a rather long-lasting process.

Investment in knowledge and skills of those employed in local authorities and public sectors might be of crucial importance for the modernization of local welfare systems and the development of social innovations.

Nevertheless, accession of the county to the European Union provides legitimacy for social experimentation and social innovations. We expect some new framework of thinking and new initiatives to be developed, fostered by support, which will be primarily financial, from the EU. For further sustainability of social innovation, it would be necessary to show to the city government the usefulness of this kind of action and/or raise public attention and awareness to generate interest. That may demand increased management or marketing skills of people involved in social innovation projects. There is also space for the involvement of the private sector, which is as yet unrecognised. In addition, there is an opportunity for applying for EU funds for such projects. Actions in these areas would certainly help to increase the stability and opportunities for sustainable social innovations, relying on the capacity and support of public administration and social capital among all of stakeholders in local welfare systems.

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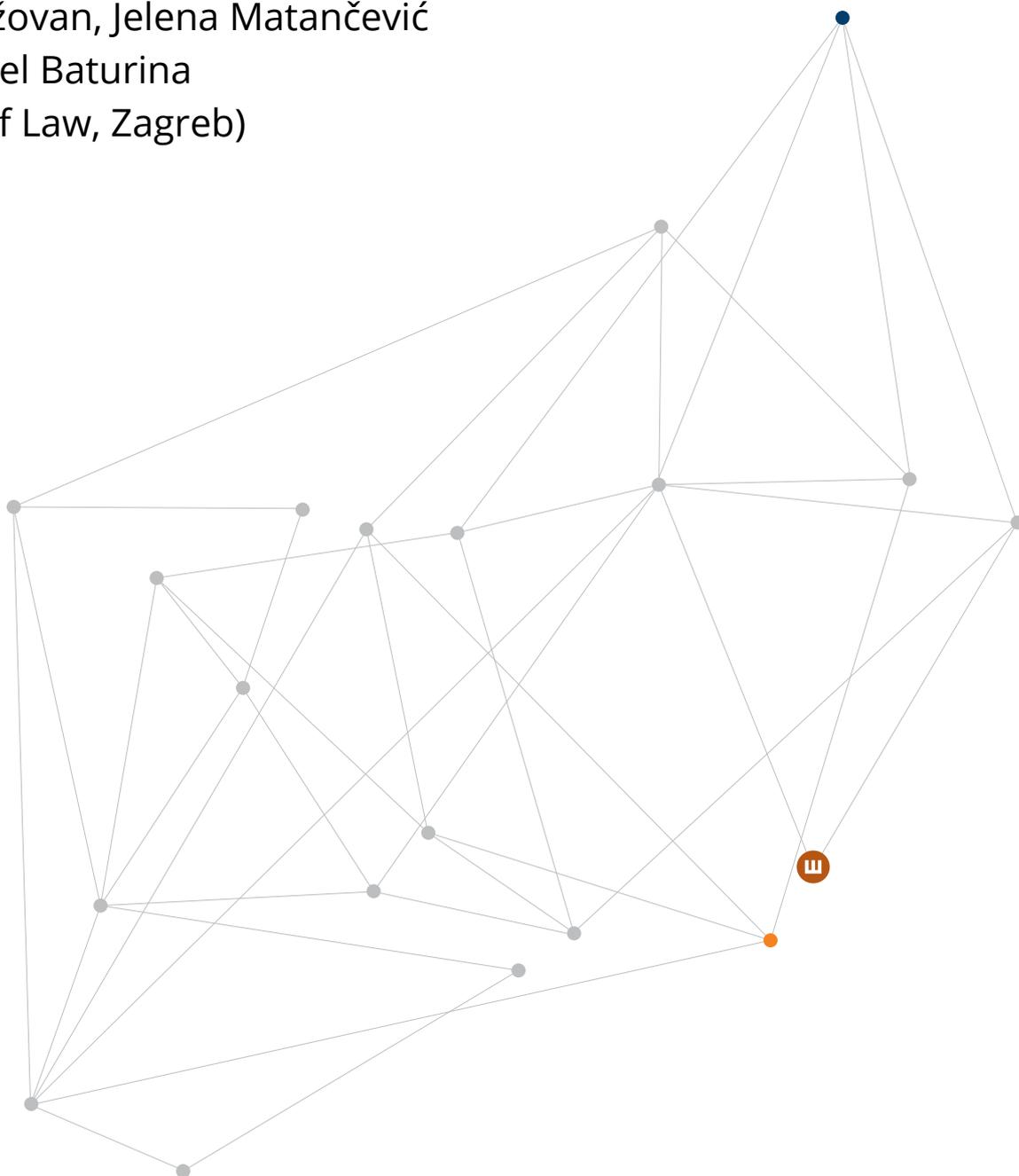
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HR Croatia

Varazdin

Gojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević
and Danijel Baturina
(Faculty of Law, Zagreb)



HR

Varaždin

Authors

Gojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević and Danijel Baturina
(Faculty of Law, Zagreb)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Empowerment
Network
Participation
Partnerships
Social capital
Social investment

The role and recognition of civil society in Varaždin has strengthened since 2000. Before, civil society was a rather marginal phenomenon. However, over the last decade, civil society organisations have grown respectably in their number, and have gained a growing policy role. Some of recognisable areas of civil society impact are organisations for children, professional organisations, organisations of the retired, environmental organisations and health organisations. Those areas are examples of systematic work, instead of ad hoc actions. However, some think that it is still in its early stage of development.

The local government has also become more responsive and open to initiatives from civil society. They also initiate partnerships with CSOs on different projects. However, political turbulence and changes to power structures over the last couple of years pose a threat to the development of systematic cooperation with civil society and its role in governance.

The economic crisis seems to have triggered the innovative potential of civil society. Important incentives have also come from abroad, through international cooperation of CSOs. This assumes more broad civic movements (such as urban gardening) as well as particular cooperation and transfer of good practice. In this respect, CSOs are important carriers of new initiatives and consequently, social change.

Civics Civil Society Index (CSI) research 2008-2010 in Croatia identified an “entrepreneurial orientation”, recognisable in Varaždin and the region, which is also a characteristic of its civil society organisations. Accordingly, Varaždin county, together with Istria county, was at that time leading participation in the EU pre-accession programmes for civil society.

Development agency “North” seems to have an important role in social and regional development of the Varaždin region. It was also recognised as an important stakeholder in the above-mentioned CSI research. Through its activities and projects, it strengthens inter-sector cooperation, participation in the EU funding schemes, supports the work of CSOs and promotes innovative practices.

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The four social innovations presented in this report were chosen based on background interviews with local stakeholders, experts, civil society representatives, practitioners and our own investigations of available resources (newspapers, websites, policy documents). The portraits of the four innovations, introduced by a comprehensive description, are organised alongside three basic themes: 1) types of services and ways of addressing users; 2) internal organisation and modes of working and 3) embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system. The innovations are presented alongside policy fields. The innovations chosen were Public works Varaždin, Her Second Chance, Gardens of life and Non-profit housing organisation.

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Public works Varaždin

4.1 Short description

In the frame of “National Plan for Employment for 2009 and 2010”, Regional Office Varaždin in cooperation with units of local government and NGOs started a public works programme. The scheme continued to operate in 2011-2013. District Employment Office Varaždin in 2009 planned to include 41 people in the public works program, but given the great interest for public works in Varaždin County, 109 people were employed. It was planned that in 2010 the public works programme would include 66 people, but given the great interest of local self-government and high-quality programme of public works in the Varaždin County employed 165 persons¹. In the framework of the Public Works Employment Office, people who listed in the records as unemployed for 6 or 12 months were co-financed to 75 per cent of the gross minimum wage and people who were unemployed for more than 36 months minimum were funded 100 per cent of the minimum gross wages and received travel expenses to a maximum of 40 euros per month. People mainly worked on reconstructing and maintaining the municipal infrastructure, green areas and the welfare of the elderly.

Social innovation in public work involves a new approach for the long-term unemployed where they are stimulated and their sense of purpose is raised by participating in the programme. Although, as a measure of activation, public works are established in Croatia and therefore cannot be considered innovative in Varaždin, they have achieved significant success in implementation and have a mode of operating that can be considered innovative. They were able to overcome the negative attitudes of users for participation in this type of activation. They continuously increased the number of users who reported satisfaction in participation in the project. Also beside the classical modalities of public works in community work and public utility works, there was another part of the public works called “individual projects.” It enabled cooperation with civil society organisations, which aim to provide support for the development and action of projects that will affect the local social system. In addition, innovation is at the organisation level in the new constellation of stakeholders that helped facilitate the programme. Thus, besides the public companies project has the support of local politics. It is adequately represented by the media. Increased interest of the private sector was noticed and cooperation with civil society organisations was set to a new level by making them active stakeholders in the project.

This innovation has an element of a top-down approach. It is part of the National Active Employment Policy measures, which has the goal of motivating long-term unemployed people. In the public works programmes, employ-

¹ These are data for Varaždin County. It is relevant to show the scope of the programme as it is a unique operating principle and CES Varaždin is conducting the programme not only in Varaždin but all counties because it is their operating area. Distinct data for the city of Varaždin are shown later in the text.

ment and activation of long-term unemployed and other groups that are disadvantaged in the market is encouraged. The shared goal is to promote their social inclusion and to affect their level of employability, motivation, work habits and to acquire competencies that they may have lost due to long-term unemployment.

Here is highlighted the special role of the local employment service in Varaždin, which is not only evident by in their off-chart capacities in implementing the project, but also in the way they introduce new elements to the programme, and expand and improve its framework. The economic dimension of innovation is the attempt to overcome the problem of inactive and barely employable people, especially in local communities. There is a considerable lack of programmes to activate those groups in the labour market, particularly in local communities.

In addition, the project proved to be successful in active cooperation with the local social system of Varaždin, working together with local politics and their stakeholders. At this level, Varaždin had significant success, as recognition of the project's success has shown that a national programme can be implemented and enhanced at the local level.

4.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

For people involved in the programme, in the opinion of experts from the CES, satisfaction was observed because they began to work again after long-term unemployment, they were useful to the community and gained new friends. Municipalities and cities consider this form of employment very useful because these people perform those tasks that otherwise may not have been performed. Although there were minor problems in the work (due to reduced ability of employees, alcohol, etc.) people involved in the process agree that the inclusion of long-term unemployed in public works is immeasurable wealth for cities and municipalities. Almost all employees were satisfied with the programme and all of them have achieved positive results in dealing with the maintenance of green areas, especially in the caretaking of the elderly, where the work of long-term unemployed women who have been trained at the Red Cross was particularly noted. Employers were very satisfied with the programme and workers; they especially noted people with disabilities as good workers.

We find that desire to participate in this kind of project have increased, and the stigma often associated with public works programmes, which can be a reason for their failure, has been overcome in case of Varaždin. Users of public works tend to have reserves about participation in the work because it may be considered somewhat shameful or unworthy work. In Varaždin, they recognised it as helpful and opinions and attitudes in the local community towards participation in that type of activation have changed.

As one of CES representatives said,

As for the impact on users, they were initially sceptical. Certain prejudice existed against this type of engagement. They were thinking in the style of a small town, they were worried what people would think and would say when they saw them cleaning the town or something like that. Even outside of Varaždin in some smaller municipalities, mayors of municipalities have had to engage people and literally dragged them by the sleeve to engage them in public works.... Now everybody would like to participate. We have experienced the boom of interest. People have realised that public works are useful.

Public works have affected users in a positive way. Not only do they recognise values of the effects of the preformed work, but also through activation, a certain degree of socialisation have happened. As stated: "It is particularly important for public works, what we noticed in dealing with them, there is a certain re-socialisation, and they realise that they are in some way useful. This is an extremely positive aspect²"

4.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

In the creation of a national plan to boost employment, the state and public administration, who are the bearers of labour market policies, developed measures for activation in coordination with social partners and representatives of civil society. Public works is one of the measures that aims to increase employment participation. Work on that programme is unprofitable and uncompetitive in the local market, improves the financial situation of people who are out of work, increases their employability and motivation for employment. The city of Varaždin, in collaboration with CES Regional Office Varaždin, is conducting this programme for 4th year in a row. Programme par-

² CES representative

Table 1. Number of participants in public Works in Varaždin 2008-2012

YEAR	Persons	Man	Women	Funds in HRK*
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	9	9	0	176.466,92
2011	5	3	2	79.981,41
2012	19	13	6	281.080,61
All	33	25	8	537528,94
All %	100%	75,76 %	24,24 %	

*1 EUR = around 7,5 HRK

Participants have been working for various employees groups, Varkom, the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the disabled and children's cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities associations, in a home for victims of domestic violence, "St Nicholas" Varaždin and others. The programme is usually applied to the less employable and long-term unemployed and people seeking to enter the labour market because they have lost certain knowledge and skills due to their long-term unemployment. Public works and programmes like this are an ideal opportunity for these people to return to the labour market, for them to gain money, but also to return the confidence to people that they are useful to society.

There are three distinct segments of public works. The first segment is a socially useful work. It is oriented towards the employment of persons in humanitarian-type services in local units. First, we have the environmental groups and various associations that help people in one or another form. Another type is the municipal public works³. There is not much interest in that kind of works. In fact, there is the problem that employers must keep the person engaged in public works for twice the duration of the project after their engagement through public works is finished⁴. The third type of public works is the so-called "Individual projects". They are also mostly realised in socially useful areas. They are intended for civil society organisations and institutions. They are significant positive

³ Often in jobs like cleaning the city or public areas.

⁴ For example, after 6 months working in public works they must engage them in another 6 months on personal expenses and that is not economically acceptable for the vast majority.

shifts in the collaboration of CES Varaždin with civil society organisations in developing and implementing various projects.

4.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

It is shown that in the implementation of public works, CES Varaždin established good coordination with all relevant stakeholders in the local social system from local politics, public administration and civil society organisations to end users.

As one of the users said⁵:

Responses to the programme were excellent, cooperation with all stakeholders is at the highest level. Not only with the CES, but even with the police and family centres. Here you can see an example of proactive work in the community. Public Works ... in this form are very flexible, provide a certain freedom in action. We have good communication with CES. I think that in this case, the basics are well placed so something like this can take place and continue.

That good cooperation is shown in implementing public works and various project within it, but the CES representative is shows some doubts about the intentions of some of the stakeholders "City is interested in these projects, but they were interested in politics also and, therefore, in certain situations they get involved and support this only to be photographed for a PR and many do not have real interest"

⁵ He is one of the users in "Individual projects section of the public works".

However, at the same time, there is a positive impact on the local welfare system regarding cooperation and support by all stakeholders and also by widening the scope of the project every year and the positive influence that it has on the users.

We can see the impact of public works in the local community. We at CES often visit and control public works and go to see how they are doing. Moreover, our boss often goes to control and tries to convey the importance of this type of engagement. We see the impact, especially in the area of civil society organisations. They certainly do useful things. It means a lot to them that, in the public works programme, they can realise certain things. Every year we have more and more organisations with whom we work and we have more and more interest. One can say that this is a reality⁶.

The conclusion is that the Public Works in the City of Varaždin achieved and are achieving positive results thanks to the good cooperation of all - CES, city, municipalities, NGOs, public and private companies. The participants are preparing a new public works programme with the hope that they will continue to succeed in their programme in improving the quality of life of the long-term unemployed in this area and encouraging their activation. **They are fulfilling the purpose of public works in activation of the users and have an impact on their re-socialisation. In addition, they are reshaping the modes of operating and are producing positive influences on system in hole with their innovative organisation and immersion in the local welfare system.**

As one of the users said,

Public Works provided us with the wind at our backs, and they have shown that they can be of great benefit. So I think that in these situations, and in general, the wind in the back should also be given to them because they are doing something useful and meaningful.

⁶ CES representative.

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Her Second Chance

5.1 Short description

The Croatian Employment Office has developed a grant scheme “Women in the Labour Market” within the Operational Programme “Human Resources Development”, financed by IV. Component of Accession Assistance (IPA). Projects funded through this grant scheme are designed to include in the labour market those women who are faced with special difficulties in employment, such as long-term unemployed women, unemployed women aged 40-65 years, unemployed single mothers, unemployed Roma women, unemployed women belonging to ethnic minorities and working women that are inactive. Project activities include participation in programmes of personal development and education tailored to individual needs, strengthening the motivation for participation in educational programmes and employment programmes, and providing psycho-social support.

Development Agency North has applied the project “Her Second Chance” in partnership with the City of Varaždin, Varaždin Open University and the regional office of the CES Varaždin. The value of the approved project to Development Agency North is 118,058.56 euros.

The very composition of the project stakeholders emerged as a new network of hybrid cooperation between stakeholders from different sectors. Here we have a city government that provides support for the project and demonstrates the political will for this type of project to take place in the city. The main organiser was the development agency North, which has considerable capacity for developing projects in the Varaždin area. They specialise in innovative projects, which they operate in the meso-environment of the Varaždin County. Stakeholders were also from the spheres of education and training. Open public college provided education services. In addition to supporting organisations that participated in the preparation and realisation of the project, CES District Office was also involved as a representative of a centralised national organisation, which is responsible for active employment policies. Already from the structure of the stakeholders we can see, given the size of the city, that a new type of project network has developed that includes local stakeholders and national institutions, development agencies and educational institutions.

The project aims to improve the socioeconomic conditions of disadvantaged women in the Varaždin County through their empowerment, training and development of business skills. Through the establishment of associations of women, they will seek to encourage them to actively seek work. The Association provides assistance in finding a jobs, raises awareness among members about the opportunities offered in the labour market and will provide a focal point for information exchange between women job seekers and potential employers. Social innovation in this case is a new form of organisation that was founded from the programme, especially regarding their

knowledge and capacity in dealing with the problems of marginalised women. This is seen as an innovative way of self-organisation of one of the disfavoured groups in the labour market with the concept that it will enhance their chances for employment. A new type of organisation is created, with new forms of services that are clearly different from that which existed up to now on the ground. Women as a disadvantaged group in the labour market did not only get training and acquire new skills making them more competitive in the labour market, but are also provided relationships with people who are in similar positions. The association provides them support in a difficult employment situation but also provides new opportunities for activation and interaction in the development of new projects, increase of personal and group abilities and capacities.

This innovation has elements of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The IPA has launched a grant scheme and mediation of CES shows that innovation is somewhat raised by the guidelines of EU funding that is specifically allocated in some areas and thus opened up certain sectors to innovate. But innovation is bottom-up because the second part of the project, after the training and capacity building, turned into an association that is guided and controlled by the users themselves, and can raise effective incentives for the development of further activities in women's employment area.

We can distinguish between the economic and political aspects of this invention. The economic dimension of innovation is the attempt to overcome the problem of female unemployment, especially in local communities. There is considerable lack of programmes to activate and assist women in the labour market, particularly in local communities. The political dimension of the action is realizing the project through the CES as a mediating factor, which is directed by IPA funds of EU but also in recognizing the needs and support local authorities who have proved willing to help in the realisation of the project.

5.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

For the purpose of capacity building, training was conducted in which women were educated for several occupations. Women received additional knowledge and competencies to compete for new jobs. In

addition, research was undertaken to evaluate the motivation of women to participate in various aspects of the programme. By doing this, valuable information was obtained that enabled modification of the project to effectively and adequately meet the needs of programme beneficiaries. Initial training included most participants; 133 beneficiaries of the project were included in the education sessions on "Basic computer skills" and "Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship." Here are some thoughts about the first users training, quotes that illustrate elements of empowerment, innovation and usefulness of the programme for capacity building and raising the labour market chances⁷.

The first day we started with a workshop "Fundamentals of computer". It was almost, well, terrible. I kept repeating in my head, "I cannot do this, what am I doing here, will I'll finish this?", but after we became familiar with what we were doing. Now I am more than satisfied with participation in the project"

Lots of good topics and activities were covered that will later come in handy in employment and life in general. From education to the next project, I expect as much as possible from this - opportunities that will lead us to the employment.

These quotations were singled out as indicators of the participants' thoughts about the visible impact of the project and training for women in Varaždin. Women with a lack of confidence may become more confident and start to believe in their abilities and chances for employment. There is also an element of friendship and unity, which shows that the project aims to support the achievement of women in similar situations.

The project's participants were also involved with the training/workshop on gender sensitivity. Special attention is focused on empowering and encouraging women to actively work within their communities. Beneficiaries of the project received additional training. They attended the training programme to become certified nurses (15 beneficiaries), and were given a new title, which is entered in a work booklet. Also 48 members have passed the training programme for business – grower of medicinal and aromatic plants, accountants, and cooks of simple dishes and desserts. Over time, 63 beneficiaries successfully acquired new professions that made them more competitive in the labour market. Besides education,

⁷ Quotes were found on workshops reports on web page of association

users were addressed in new way by providing to them association that arise from this project and their interest for self-organisation in local community to develop women capacities and enhance their chances on labour market.

5.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

Innovative capacity is shown in the transformation of the project in which the association is still involved in education in order to increase its capacity and took proactive action in their environment. For this purpose, they have participated in courses on “Marketing and management of non-profit organisations” as well as the 5-day workshops that helped stakeholders to understand the importance of the associations. This showed orientation on further development and progress, taking the necessary steps to establish associations to be adequately prepared and competitive in their work. Their awareness of future challenges and opportunities for action in the EU funds and synergic performance networking are included in the workshop on “Networking and the development of regional partnerships.” After they have completed the theoretical and practical parts of training on the project Civil Society Organisation “Her Second Chance” (H2C) was established on 10 June 2011. The establishment of the civil society organisation is foreseen as one of the required activities within the project. Initially, H2C had 124 members⁸. A couple of months later the Office of H2C began with the work. It was anticipated that the office would apply for tenders to attract funding, perform office administrative tasks, and carry out a partnership with civil society organisations, local and regional self-government bodies, businesses and other organisations. The aim of the association is to support the rights of unemployed women through the implementation of their own and other programmes/projects, in order to raise their competitiveness in seeking and obtaining employment. Activities are addressed in order to achieve the following objectives: exchange information and experiences, creation and implementation of joint programmes and public initiatives related to the topic of employment and self-employment of women, promotion of employment and self-employment of women through formal and informal education, and coopera-

8 Peek membership numbers were seen soon after that when the association counted 140 members.

tion with national and international organisations and institutions whose primary goal is employment and self-employment of women. Social innovation in this case is a new form of organisation that was founded from the programme, especially their knowledge and capacity in dealing with problems of marginalised women. Self-organisation of one of disfavoured group in the labour market is an innovative concept that will enhance their chances for employment and ensure continuing of the work on that goal.

They employed two people in office, to establish a central point in a small town where the women can go, get information, have support and will continue to implement projects. Unfortunately, after the first period, they did not manage to get funds to continue with the employment. **As one of the members said**

So it was planned that our salaries were funded for 3 months. Unfortunately, no more than that. In this period, we should provide some form of self-financing or continue without employed persons only on a voluntary basis. It was of course a short period of time and it seems to me that it was not really thought what objectively could be done in the 3 months period.

They did not manage to get funds for salaries due to the difficult economic situation during the economies crisis, but also due to their relative inexperience in developing new projects. They now operate on voluntary basis but they continue with the relative scope of the activities. As their member said: “My opinion is that it is not necessary that someone is employed at the association, but we must have enthusiasm and desire. For a while that stagnated. Now some new members have joined and a new president who has the desire and knowledge”. They lost some of the members over time and now they have 26 active members. Many more women are in some way associated with the organisation. Some of the women stop being members when they become employed, some of them just lose interest. Nevertheless, the association is in communication and open to larger numbers of non-members⁹.

9 As president of H2C stated: “As they eventually got employed they exited the Association but we are still contact with them. They come back to us when they feel the need and when they are not pleased with the current work and with our support they want to change or improve their working environment”

5.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

To ensure future visibility and effective networking with key stakeholders involved in the employment of women, members of the association participated in various conferences and round tables that were thematically relevant. They achieved visibility for their efforts, including establishing goals, raised the interest of the public and made contacts that useful for further cooperation, facilitation of work and support for new projects. In addition, an association that was derived from the project has become a new participant who advocates women's empowerment and to the specific perspective of women in the community. They were particularly actively presented in the local environment. They operated through word of mouth of satisfied beneficiaries involved in project but also on participation Špancirfest, which is the most visited and most important event in Varaždin and other similar events.

Sustainability on the local welfare system: After the completion of the project, the organisation that was established guarantees the sustainability of project objectives for the target group of women. It has emerged as a guarantee that the end of the programme will not neglect further work on encouraging and strengthening the capacity of women to be competitive in the labour market. Also it opens up new space for dialogue, cooperation and networking with other partners in all areas. Women have a new place where they can turn for support, to increase opportunities for employment and for the activation of new projects, which would bring job opportunities directly or indirectly by acting on the microenvironment and improving conditions of employment opportunities for all women. As said by their prominent member "Association holds us together in some way"¹⁰.

They showed the capacity to connect with local government and become one of the important stakeholders in the part of the welfare system dealing with active politics of employment.

In conclusion, social innovation in this case is a new form of organisation that was founded from the programme, especially their knowledge and capacity for new ways of dealing with the problems of marginalised women. The main result is self-organisation of

one of the disfavoured groups in the labour market with an innovative concept that will enhance their chances for employment. This is a new way of addressing users because it was developed from the users themselves, the project activities were generated not only to educate but to empower women, increase their skills and also to create possibilities for employment opportunities for women in Varaždin. Such an approach carries the potential for innovation because it relies on new work culture. Unlike most previous centralised programmes, through self-organisation and association, proactive communities become the dominant aspect of the work and activities culture. Management style it is completely decentralised in order to let users to decide on the future work on the assembly with democratic principles. For now, the impact of new forms of organisation of this type on the employment system as a whole is not clearly distinguishable. Nevertheless, we can say that this is certainly a decentralised attempt to create new and innovative capacity at the local level. Taking that into consideration, it has the potential to be transferable to other cities as example of local initiative that has changed modes of operation and ways of addressing users in field of women's unemployment. Its long-term sustainability depends on capacities of the organised women and their continues efforts towards achieving their goals.

¹⁰ H2C member

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Gardens of life

6.1 Short description

“Gardens of life” is a project that started in 2011, and which was initiated by the CSO network “Green network,” and delivered in cooperation with Development agency “North”, City of Varaždin and the City Market Varaždin. The project was targeted at the socially vulnerable population in Varaždin, users of social assistance of the City of Varaždin, tenants in social housing and unemployed, with the goal of improving their quality of life and income conditions. Although the project was primarily targeted at the users of the City’s welfare measures, it was not restricted to them only, and other socially disadvantaged citizens could apply too.

The idea was that users of welfare measures grow their own vegetables on public land (of the City of Varaždin). The expected benefits were twofold: this way they produce their own food and thus save on their budget (with the possibility to sell surplus on the marketplace), and at the same time, they increase their self-esteem and are empowered to influence their own life circumstances. In addition, the project aims to raise awareness among citizens on environmental protection and sustainable development, including food production for one’s own needs in an organic manner.

The City of Varaždin gave its land, on the outskirts of the city, to their disposal. It spreads over 9,000 m², which was then divided into 40-50 smaller parts, with the prospect of widening the space. At the moment, there are approximately 60 users of the Gardens. The Gardens are located in the city district *Hrašćica*, a rather segregated city area due to the social housing stocks that are near the gardens.

The City of Varaždin made a list of users of the land, based on the call for interest. The users have a right to use the land as long as they continuously work on it. The City Market assures that users can sell their surplus on the marketplace. The “Green network” organised free workshops for all interested participants in the project on how to grow vegetables in an organic and biodynamic manner.

“Gardens of life” is seen as innovative practice of dealing with social exclusion, emerged from the local initiative, but is also innovative in terms of new modes of cooperation between the local government, public company and civil society organisation.

The initiators of the project recognise it as innovative in a sense that the City put the land to their disposal free of charge, which was formerly rented on the market and was not oriented towards civil society and community. Secondly, in this way the community is oriented towards changes, learning and activity. On an individual level, it aims to empower socially vulnerable citizens in order to become independent and pursue self-employment.



Apart from the “Gardens of life” project, another similar project emerged a year later, called “Magic gardens”, initiated by “Gredica” – an association for the promotion of sustainable living in Varaždin.

As well as the “Gardens of life” project, it was also inspired by the global urban gardening movement, but in this initiative came from the citizens themselves, who shared common values and the idea of production of their own food in an organic manner. In contrast to the “Gardens of life”, the project “Magic gardens” is targeted at the general population in Varaždin, regardless of their socio-economic conditions.

Even though there are similarities between the two projects in terms of general idea and partly in goals, as noted, these projects have had different trajectories, types of users and value baselines. In contrast to the “Gardens of life”, this was a bottom-up initiative, coming from the citizens who first organised the association (*Gredica*) and then engaged in cooperation with the local government, which also provided them with the public land. The project has had great success since it was launched. It was awarded the highest donation in the category for innovations from *Zagrebačka banka*, one of the biggest banks in Croatia, and they were recently nominated and selected for the second round (as one of 35 projects, among 308 nominated) for an international award for social innovation “*SocialMarie – Preis für Sociale In-*

novation”, awarded by the *Unruhe* private foundation from Vienna.

6.2. Concepts of and ways of addressing users

As stated by the representative of the Green network, the initiator of the project, the idea pursued by the project was activating approach to the users of welfare measures, where they would not only expect to receive assistance from the City. Contrary to the initial suspicion showed by the city officials that the users would not be willing to participate in such project, there was good response to the project. The interest shown by the potential users was higher than expected. The project has indisputably activated the users, it could be even said they “found themselves” in it, this was new daily occupation for them.

The idea of the project was that the partners provided the incentive, assured resources (land and facilities), organised training and foremost, to empowered users in order to become engaged, responsible, skilled in gardening and self-advocating. With the land assured, the project had a firm basis from its inception for sustainability. It was foreseen that with time, and after the project is formally over, users will continue with gardening and thus, the benefits of the project would be sustained.

Therefore, it was on the users to take over the coordination of the project follow-ups and continue work independently. The coordinators were not to supervise the users in the later phases. However, they offered them further support in terms of legal advice, training, etc. They advised the users to form associations or cooperatives, so they could self-employ and further improve their socio-economic position, but also strengthen their advocacy position. In addition, the City market offered them a bench on the market, aprons with their logo, which would make them recognisable. However, this was found to be difficult to implement. The users were not interested in forming associations and thus, reach greater scope and value of the project. Food growth was simply a sufficient goal for them. Furthermore, there was a lack of cohesion among the users; they were not used to cooperation. Some users showed a certain level of distrust toward others. As some representatives of users state, not all of users deserve to get the land, as some of them were not seriously interested in gardening. Instead, according to them, those places should be given to those who would really be engaged in gardening. Some users cooperate, help and socialise with others on individual level; they have built benches and common facilities for having time together, but there is a general lack of strategic cooperation and action towards common goals. However, it seems that some were inspired by the "Magic gardens" project and their results, and they are becoming more aware of the importance of associating.

The users do not have a representative or leader of the group. As the representative of the project initiators state, they should continue to work with the users so that they become a "good community". If they were a more cohesive community and oriented toward each other, that would have produced added values. As one of the users stated, "poverty is not a lack of material resources, but poverty in people's souls". They are often still envy each other. Users respond very positively to the activities organised for them, such as training, and in these examples results are visible. However, reaching tangible results assumes continuous work with the users; they expect strong leadership. Notwithstanding, results in terms of activation of users are noticeable. The users express content and are proud of their achievements. As the results of their work (food production) are seen as short term, the users were motivated. The

project is recognised as a good example of self-help. **This innovation has made the users feel economically safer, strengthened, they can produce food for themselves. They themselves report great benefits from the project, foremost in terms of improving financial situation.** As one user states, his gardens is his life. He is long-term unemployed, and due to his age (over 60) he can be considered difficult to employ. His wife is retired, and their total income is low. Another user is retired, and she still has a bank loan to pay off. Food they grow in their gardens brings savings to their budgets, but they are moreover interested in selling surpluses on the market in order to further improve their budgets.

Although the project was primarily aimed at users of local welfare measures, there was a great interest, if not greater, showed by other citizens who are economically deprived, also eligible to the land. As some users state, those who are on welfare are frequently not interested in such a project, as they get assistance and are not willing to participate.

Generally, the project was conceived in a way that it results in empowerment of users and their activation. It moreover counts on changing the attitude of users, in a sense that they need to offer something in order to expect to receive – "give something to the community, and you will get something back from it". As such, it was a top-down initiative, from experts and with the support coming from the politics, but it can be said that the approach of the project coordinators to the users was not based on power relations and instructions. They provided continuous support to the users, rather than supervision and control. It was on the users to carry the project further on. However, this concept failed in a way, as it was shown that they lacked human and moreover social capital to sustain and further develop the initiative. To a certain extent, they still seek the leadership from the "top", which limits the scope and potential of the project.

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Employment

6.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The project was inspired by foreign urban gardening projects and communities. Citizens in urban areas have no possibility of growing food, and the city, on the other hand, has unused land resources. It was further triggered by the circumstances of rising unemployment and lowering purchasing power.

The network of CSOs "Green network" was the initiator of the idea for the project, which was delivered in partnership with other local stakeholders – the City of Varaždin, Developmental Agency "North" and the City Market. The initiators describe the cooperation and management of the project as horizontal. They have held numerous meetings during coordination of the project. The City of Varaždin and the City market, as owners of the land, had first the task to parcel out the land and to assure the watering system (two water pumps). City market was further responsible for organizing that users get a bench on the market where they could sell their surplus. During the project, the coordinators had organised numerous training sessions for the users on gardening and permaculture, which increased their skills and knowledge.

When initiating the project, all partners embraced the idea and engaged in the project, including the (former) mayor, who promoted the project in the media when it was launched, so that more potential users get the information about the call for interest. Support coming from the media was also great.

The City Market and Development Agency North also applied for additional funds on a tender "Idemo", to build a greenhouse, but the proposal was not successful.

Besides the formal partners in the project, it heavily relied on voluntary work and help from the others, which the organisers coordinated. For example, one farmer voluntarily ploughed the land for them, and a horse club nearby provided manure. Foresters also engaged; they donated wood to build tool storage.

6.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

It is noticeable that this project has made an incremental impact on the wider governance system. It is assessed as a good example of horizontal governance and cooperation, where the initiative came from civil society network, with a viable potential for up-scaling and institutionalisation in the welfare system. This is evident in the project of "Magic gardens", which followed the "Gardens of life", and which is comparable in certain aspects in terms of innovation in the welfare system as a whole. They are both good examples of innovative initiatives, which were recognised and supported by the local government, and in a way introduced new movement of urban gardening in Varaždin.

The project further gave incentive to strengthening of a new practice of management of the city's property and resources. It is seen as "win-win" model: the local government is removed its obligation to take care of and maintain unused land, where citizens (users) are given free resources at their disposal. This model, seen as good practice, was also followed in the second example of the project "Magic gardens". This is seen as a new trend, where the local government puts its resources in function of public good.

Both projects have also had an impact on changing a general culture of welfare system in Varaždin; they have to a greater extent promoted the practice of activation, self-help, mutual help and cohesion, and where spheres of welfare policy, urban planning, environmental policy are intermeshing, also opening space for acknowledgement of particular lifestyles.

Generally, from the 2000 onwards, civil society in Varaždin and the region has developed significantly and has become important policy stakeholder. The number of registered CSOs has increased most notably in this period. However, some find that it is still in its early stage of development. Some of recognisable areas of civil society impact are organisations for children, professional organisations, organisations of retired, environmental organisations and health organisations. Those areas are examples of systematic work, instead of ad hoc actions. Also, due to the economic crisis, the local government offer CSOs free spaces for lower rent, which were earlier rented to private business for economic prices.

The local government has also become more responsive and open to initiatives from civil society. They also initiate partnerships to CSOs on projects. However, political turbulence and changes in power structures over last couple of years pose a threat to the development of systematic cooperation with civil society and its role in governance.

Varaždin was shown to be receptive to the urban gardening movement. This is an example of good cooperation between initiators of such projects and the local government. Generally, civil society and citizens' engagement seems to have strengthened over last decade in Varaždin. Civil society organisations in certain fields have become stakeholders in policymaking. On the other hand, unstable political structures results in unfavourable environment for building systematic relations to civil society.

The "Gardens of life" project is seen innovative in several aspects. First, it introduced new or unconventional type of activity – gardening – into the welfare system, thus breaking traditional borders between different policies and systems. Secondly, it has promoted and put into practice to a greater extent the principles of activation, self-help and promoted the value of "community" in peoples' well-being. Thirdly, the project has contributed to strengthening the practice of horizontal governance, openness in policymaking and mobilisation of voluntary contribution. Not least, both described projects have contributed to changing the culture of management of public good, and to a certain extent, the mindsets of citizens about public good and public spaces as something they are entitled to.

The two projects well illustrate the differences in their scopes and achievements, as one was a top-down, and the other a bottom-up initiative. It can be said that social capital plays a crucial role and is a key explanatory factor for the projects' outcomes and success. "Gardens of life", being a top-down initiative coming from experts to users (socially excluded citizens), developed successfully; however, it reached limitations for its further development and sustainability. Such a top-down initiative, albeit resulting in notable improvements of well-being and in activation and empowerment of users, seems to have lacked crucial prerequisites for its further development: cohesion and trust among users and their entrepreneurial orientation. On the other hand, the "Magic gardens" project was the result of citizen mobilisa-

tion for a common goal, their entrepreneurial skills, and is characterised by a high level of social capital among them. As the representative of Green network illustrated, "one can even feel the difference in the atmosphere between the two gardens; whereas in the 'Gardens of life' users are more inclined to mutual criticism, in the "Magic gardens" one can feel the spirit of community".

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Non-profit housing organisation

7.1. Short description: context

Institutional arrangement for housing policy at the local level, after the political turmoil in 1990, has been changed profoundly. Housing policy as a clear responsibility of different levels of state administration helping people to meet housing needs has disappeared. In that time, they were responsibility of local administration to sell public housing stock to setting tenants. From that privatisation of public housing stock, part of fund should be used for investment in social housing. City of Varaždin was one of the first in the country with the professional capacity to implement this policy measure of social housing construction.

From that time, the city has been recognised as active stakeholder in housing policy looking for innovative solutions and being open to learn from foreign experience. The Housing cooperative, as a non-profit organisation, existed in Varaždin in the beginning of 1990s with the remit of helping people to buy their first homes. A stable partnership with the city was of crucial importance for the success of this housing cooperative. In 1993, the government stopped tax incentives for housing cooperatives as non-profit organisations and it was the last part of the dismantling process in the field of housing.

During the 1990s, technical assistance offered in the development of non-profit housing organisations from western countries has been seen as a direction of modernisation of housing policy. Lack of political will and expectations that the market will resolve all housing problems were big obstacles to accept offered modernisation of institutional arrangement in the field of housing. However, also important for this innovation was that several professionals in the country learned about the importance of non-profit organisations and that concept has been part of the professional knowledge on housing policy.

The department of city administration in Varaždin, which deals with urbanisation and housing issues, was very responsive, active and open for the implementation of new initiatives. In the 1990s, they developed and implemented housing programmes for victims of the war. Also, from the very beginning, they became one of the best partners in the implementation of the POS housing programme, which started as a top-down and centralised programme helping people from younger generations to buy their first flat under favourable conditions. The programme is open for social rental programmes, but initiative should come from local authorities.

From the very beginning, the centralised POS programme has been exposed to serious criticism in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and requests for implementation of subsidiarity principle (Bežovan 2008; Tepuš 2005). The government, faced with operational issues on the local level, changed the legislation for implementation

of the POS housing programme and recommended the concept of setting up of local non-profit housing organisations at the city level. As a result of professional legacy from previous times, one of the first such organisations in the country was been created in the city of Varaždin 2004 under the name "Gradski stanovi"¹¹ (City flats). Here, in fact, circumstances of crisis of top-down programme implementation provided the opportunity for innovation and mobilisation of local resources and for putting housing on the local agenda. A non-profit organisation is in position to assess housing needs of different populations and to make a plan for housing investment.

The recent financial crisis also influenced the implementation of this programme, and there were more housing units waiting for the first buyers but the obstacles for them were financial capacity to get loans from the banks. In such situations local government, being aware of crisis of local housing market, with about 200 newly built housing units unsold, provided legislation and created the programme of public housing renting. Therefore, unsold housing units from the POS programme are available for renting. In this case, crisis on the housing market opened the space and provide legitimacy for social innovation.

From other side, the supply of private rental flats, mostly "black" market, are in hands of local politicians and well-off families. These owners were very strong opposition to the programme of public rental housing construction.

Related to the context, the crucial fact for emergence and development of this innovation is the level of local social capital, visible level of trust of the professional capacity of people in non-profit organisations, which contributed to the creation of fertile soil for social change.

7.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Three types of user are evident here and they have benefits from non-profit organisation. The largest numbers are homeowners, the majority of them are first buyers from young generation, and their benefits are evident in favourable condition: control level of housing prices, decent housing with good location and affordable housing loans.

Groups of vulnerable families from social renting programmes received decent housing through competing procedures on the waiting list. As it was started before in the assessment of social housing needs, more and more families are forced to look for this solution because of the economic crisis. This part of the programme inside the non-profit organisation is a real challenge in different ways. These housing units are owned by the city and the non-profit organisation is responsible for management and maintenance. Also, there is a problem regarding segregation of these social housing blocks. The non-profit organisation here is in charge to control tenants as users than to help their integration in the community. The low level of rent in social renting housing is under the control of the government, and is critical for the sustainability of this tenure; thus, for the larger impact of this innovation.

The new group of users, and this is the core part of the social innovation in this organisation, are tenants in the public rental programme. This programme is entitled to young households, with more children and who are sub-tenants on the non-regulated private rental market or living together with wider family but in unfavourable housing conditions. These families, because of unviable housing situations, are in fact prototype socially excluded peoples. They cannot afford housing loans to buy decent housing and are not eligible for social rental housing. In this innovation, users selected via public calls for application, receive a contract for 3 years with the possibility to extend it. They pay less for the rent than on the private rental market and they have very decent, sufficiently large enough flats in newly built neighbourhoods. The intention of this programme is to sell flats to tenants and in cases where they decide to buy these units, 80 per cent of the rent paid in the first year, 60 per cent in the second and 40 per cent in the third year will be calculated against the price of the flat.

In the concept of development of this non-profit organisation, tenants in the public rental programme are much more respected and they are stakeholders with a vested interest to contribute social capital for future development of this organisation. It should be a benefit of this innovation and firm basis for future development.

An interviewed user of this programme has a family of three members and before they were sub-tenants with in an old, badly maintained flat on the eighth

¹¹ <http://www.gradski-stanovi.hr/>

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floor. Housing costs were very high, more than 30 per cent of the family's income, and because of district heating provision, they were not in a position to control the costs of heating. Rent was 200 euros per month. Problems repairing the elevator frequently forced them to walk to eighth floor. Now, being a tenant in public rental housing, their quality of life is much better, as a family they are happier and finally, they are in position to plan their future, to invite friends and guests and to enjoy their lives. What is important is that they reduced their housing costs by almost 50 per cent and they can control their heating costs. The flat is 78 m², they have a garage and space for hobbies in part of the yard and it costs 243 euros per month.

This one family has already developed a strategy to buy a flat in the near future. According to the opinion of this tenant, other neighbours from public renting programmes are very satisfied and are also looking to buy flats.

7.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

The internal organisation of the innovation, in fact, is a response of the non-profit organisation or more appropriately, the leader of the organisation and knowledgeable and skilful person well connected with all respective stakeholders. The process of obtaining the status of users in one of the three programmes is very transparent and all families who are eligible according to the mentioned criteria can apply.

Tenants in public rental programmes agree a contract and make a down payment of two monthly rents as a guaranty to pay rents regularly and to keep the flat in good condition. Such a down payment, as pedagogical measure, is a type of innovation in the local social welfare system¹².

Here social innovation involves different social groups and the practice of the non-profit organisation welfare system is reoriented towards the needs of a diverse and pluralistic population. Empirical evidence on social return, separately in the public rental programme, is clear and it contributes to social integration and social cohesion.

Activities of non-profit organisations are very visible on the local level and organisations receive public recognition. The board of the organisation is composed of local politicians, mainly members of city council, is not so competent and invention on this level is needed. It should be important to involve users in the board and also professionals how are not in politics.

The unstable political situation in the city, resignation of the mayor and recent local elections prevented social marketing and national promotion this innovation.

7.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

This innovation arose in synergy with top-down offer and bottom-up initiatives and with the clear vision and entrepreneur spirit were definitely a very new style of governance for local welfare systems in the country. Innovation is embedded in the local system and, as they serve a more diverse population than other welfare organisations, they have a stronger position in the local welfare system.

Innovation raised the issue of the role and composition of the board of non-profit organisations. Also, at the city level, they recognised increasing needs for housing of the elderly and opened a debate on that topic, offering some new solutions.

In this social innovation, there is evidence of social investment programmes with very viable return and strategic plans of development.

This non-profit organisation is a case of path breaking in fragmented housing policy and it is putting a new style of management on the local agenda, which influences other departments. Non-profit housing organisation here appears as a key stakeholder in the housing market with the mission of mediation between housing needs of certain vulnerable social groups and housing supply made through governmental housing programmes.

In addition, this innovation shows the capacity to become the model for other cities with diffusion capacity. From other side, the economic crisis has influenced the fiscal capacities of Croatian cities and there is less capacity to spread out this innovation.

¹² Tenants in social housing programme, in this non-profit organisation, very often are not willing to pay rent and others costs related to housing (electricity, gas, heating, water, communal fee). Besides that, internal maintenance the social flats is a problem for owners.

Conclusions

Selected examples of social innovation and insights discovered via the research, show that in the city of Varaždin the area of social policy public administration has developed the capacity to understand the relevant issues. Their active work provides a framework for cooperation and encourages development of new programmes. In our case, it turned out that the public administration and other stakeholders, such as the Croatian Employment Service and development agencies, provided considerable support for social innovation in Varaždin. Of course, they work within their budget and situational constraints. Civil society organisations and other stakeholders of social innovation also recognise the public administration as a cooperative stakeholder and they are developing partnerships. They know that, in them, they can find reliable partners for their initiatives.

Examples of social innovations in Varaždin showed that a certain amount of social capital is evident in the local community. Citizens, mostly younger and better educated, are willing to join and act for their own interests, respecting the interests of others, particularly of vulnerable social groups, and being aware of public good. There have been a number of new initiatives, not only in our observed fields but also beyond¹³. There is a critical mass of stakeholders that are recognisable and have the capacity to act. Those in the local community can create a structure of action that will develop new projects. The potential for the future action is that they recognise each other and have created certain social networks that can stimulate action by using common resources, trust, norms and values that they share. Certainly, it helps that Varaždin is a smaller community and most of them know each other. Thus, they have established contacts on almost a daily basis and they are turn to each other in many situations. This facilitates the flow of information between them and facilitates the coordination of action. Projects that they develop certainly contribute to strengthening social cohesion of local communities.

On the other side, the attitude of the city government towards social innovation is somewhat detached. In the space of discourse of the city council, we did not

find awareness of social innovation as a concept. In their discussions, such issues do not receive adequate attention. Therefore, it seems that the stability of future support for social innovation, primarily financial, will largely depend on the city administration. We do not see signs that city government will soon embrace and recognise social innovations. However, some financial support exists and solid funding decisions are mostly delegated by public administration. They have significantly greater competence in this area. Therefore, the fact that social innovations are not recognisable in the discourse of city council and politicians, it may not necessarily be bad. Social innovations would not obtain additional support, but at least existing support is channelled by delegating responsibilities to public administration that make efficient use of it. For further sustainability of social innovation it would be necessary to prove the usefulness of this kind of action to the city government and/or raise public attention and awareness to generate interest. That may demand increased management or marketing skills of people involved in social innovation projects. There is also space for the involvement of the private sector that is for now unrecognised. In addition, there is an opportunity for applying for EU funds for such projects. Action in these areas would certainly help to increase the stability and opportunities for sustainable social innovation, relying on capacities and support of public administration and developed level of social capital among all of stakeholders in local welfare system.

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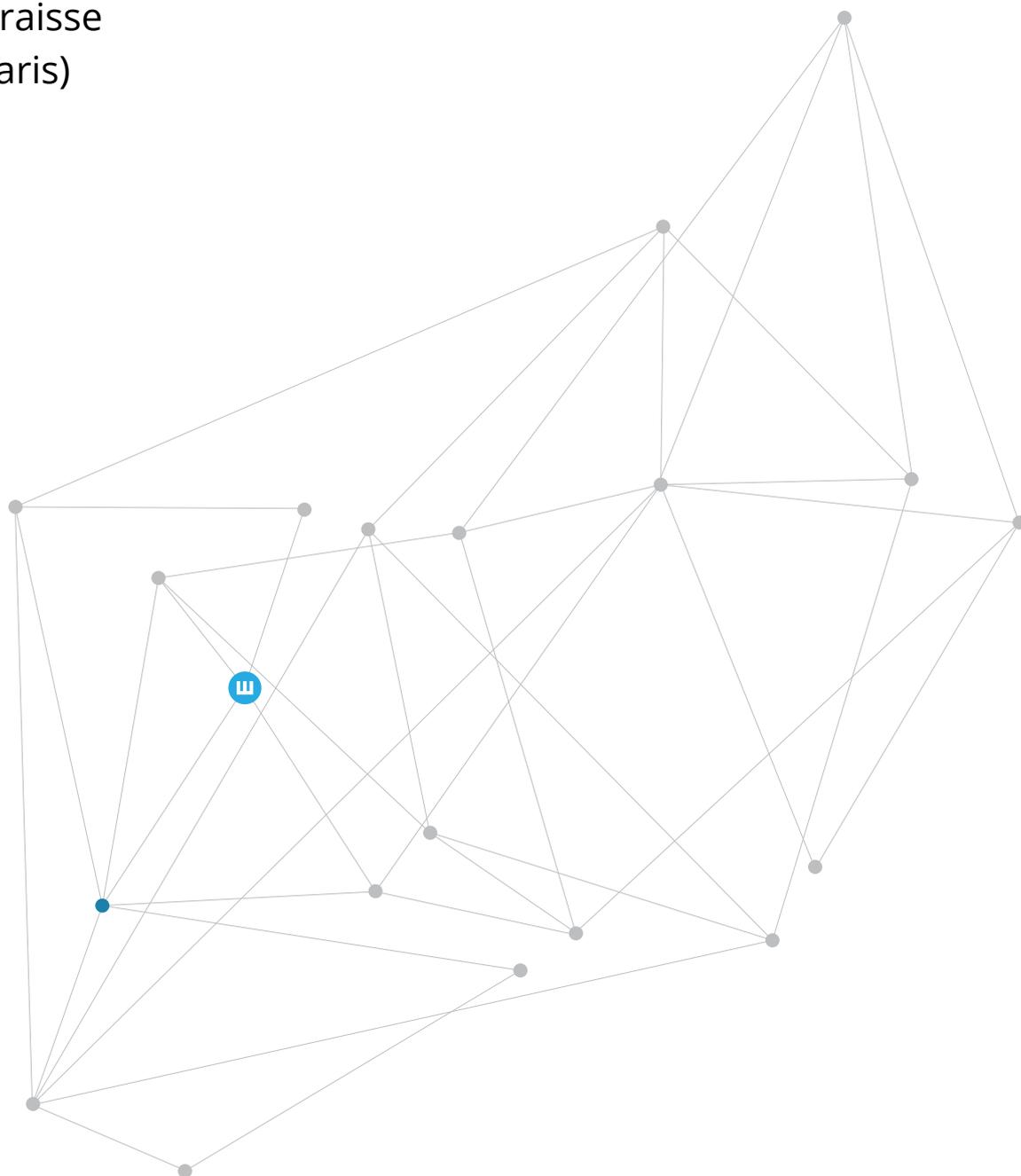
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¹³ A good example is the Association Gredica that became the winner of the third prize at the SozialMarie contest for social innovation for their Magic Gardens project.

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Lille

Laurent Fraise
(CRIDA, Paris)



Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Community development
Participation
Social and solidarity-based economy (SSE)
Urban renewal

An unequal distribution of responsibilities between national and local governments in the WILCO policy fields:

Taking into consideration the three WILCO policy fields, multi-governance is the predominant situation with more or less shared responsibilities between national and local governments. However, we can clearly distinguish labour market policy where local authorities' room for action is quite limited. They can facilitate coordination between local employment public services with local enterprises and institutions or take a proactive role in the local implementation of national employment schemes. Although employment and professional integration do not fall directly under the authority of Lille municipality, the increasing unemployment rate and worsening living conditions of young people concern local policymakers and explain local political initiatives in this field. Conversely, housing is an explicit responsibility and one of Lille Metropolis' ambitious policy fields. Similarly, local child-care policy would not exist without municipal regulation, investment and provision of facilities. These unbalanced situations explain why we have decided to select and analyse innovative practices in the housing and child-care fields.

Predominance of quantitative issues over qualitative and innovative actions:

Taking into account municipal initiatives for reducing the growing youth unemployment rate, "building more" with the construction plan for 5,000 new dwellings per year in Lille Metropolis, creating new child care places and optimising existing places, political discourse and administrative recommendations focus above all on quantitative objectives and indicators. Qualitative and innovative actions are positioned as secondary issues but are not absent from the political agenda. The housing policy field is a good example. Beyond general objectives¹, Lille Metropolis Local Housing Plan includes an innovative component named "experiments" in each of the main priorities. According to the municipal administration, the initiatives that could be assessed as innovative are: a focus on citizen participation with a call for projects on "participative habitat"²; a consensus conference³ on housing launched in 2011; a renovation programme for private dwellings based on technical assistance for self-help renovation and mutual aid within groups of 8-10 owners; etc. However, the local political arena for social innovation promotion and debate remains per-

1 "Build more", "Renovate old social housing areas and run-down private stock", "Promote social diversity (the social mix) with actions adapting dwellings for disabled and dependant elderly people, housing for students, intergenerational cohabitation and emergency and inclusion shelters", "Sustainable housing improvement of the energy efficiency of housing stock as well as experimenting with eco-districts".

2 Gathering of inhabitants in order to think up and work together to build their future housing.

3 A consensus conference is made up of a panel of citizens who question expert witnesses on a particular topic at a public conference. Their recommendations are then circulated widely.

manently weakened by attention paid primarily to a limited number of quantitative priorities, especially in times of economic crisis when budget cuts have entered into the public debate.

Social innovations in the age of public spending restrictions:

The child-care field illustrates existing tensions between local providers, local authorities and representatives of family policy in the ways innovative practices are promoted. In Lille, a multi-governance issue has emerged with the decrease of funding coming from the Family Allowance Office (CAF) during the negotiation of the next “*contrat enfance-jeunesse*” (early child care contract). Supporting qualitative actions such as early childhood centres or emergency home child-care services for low-income parents with atypical working hours is no longer a national priority in contrast to classical quantitative objectives of increasing and optimising the number of places. Although considered as useful, initiatives supported a few years ago as innovative are now subject to reduced funding. Financial support from the municipality can be partial and temporary in a context marked by budget restrictions. Budget constraints lead to a selection process relating to innovations. *Parler Bambins*, one of the experiments analysed in the next chapter, is strongly supported by the municipality whereas the future of former initiatives is much more uncertain despite the recognition of the usefulness by elected representatives and technicians.

The public spending restriction period is going to re-configure the funding method of social innovation. As qualitative actions are marginalised within the early child-care contract negotiated with Lille municipality, the local family office has launched a temporary call for innovative actions in child-care services. However, the number of selected projects is quite limited (only one in Lille), with the funding presented as one-shot support within a co-funding perspective. A few years ago, the local family office had its own funding budget for providing long-term support for bottom-up initiatives negotiated on a face-to-face basis and in cooperation with the local authorities.

The end of the of civil society monopoly over social innovation discourse and actions?

Another interesting aspect is that social innovation is no longer the monopoly of organised civil society discourse and practice. Whereas in the 1990s not-for-profit organisations were considered key agents in innovative practices, they are now in competition with local authorities. In a similar way to participatory democracy, social innovation is progressively integrated into a new framework of local public action. Several initiatives presented in the report, such as *Parler Bambins* and support for housing self-renovation, have been launched by Lille Municipality or Lille Metropolis.

Local policies dedicated to social and solidarity-based economy (SSE) - a window of opportunity for social innovation:

The main innovation policy frameworks remain related to economic development, research and technological investment, information technology, support to entrepreneurship, etc. Stimulation of innovation is, for instance, included in Lille Metropolis' economic development agenda with specific programmes such as *Pôles de compétitivité* (competitiveness clusters), industries and sectors of excellence, etc.

However, social innovation is not absent from local political discourse. It is, in particular, a key concept used in the description of the social and solidarity-based plan developed by Lille Metropolis. Social innovation is presented as an intrinsic characteristic of socio-economic initiatives and enterprises with participative governance and social goals (cooperatives, self-help initiatives, not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises, etc.) It is also associated with Lille Metropolis' economic development initiatives and programmes.

At a time when rhetoric and budgets of innovation are monopolised by competitiveness and reindustrialisation development objectives and strategies, new fields of public action such as SSE local policies constitute a window of opportunity for testing different innovative strategies and services in response to meeting local needs.

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Ilot Stephenson neighbourhood

8.1. Short description

Union is the name of one of the biggest urban renewal projects in the Roubaix-Tourcoing-Wattreloot district (Lille Metropolis). In a post-industrial site spreading across 80 hectares, a large project has been planned combining an eco-neighbourhood, a business hub and new housing, including 30 per cent of social housing. In a district called Ilot Stephenson at the periphery of this area, a protest on the part of the inhabitants against the demolition of their popular housing led to an innovative housing co-production action between architects, local authorities and an inhabitants' organisation. Access to 30 homes at reduced cost has been achieved thanks to an innovative mode of architectural intervention that encourages inhabitants' participation in the self-rehabilitation of their neighbourhood. This emblematic initiative has inspired and been integrated into the broader participative governance process concerning one of the most ambitious urban renewal projects in northern France.

The background to this innovation is the period of urban policies characterised in the 2000s by a vast national programme of urban renewal targeting deprived districts. The Ilot Stephenson initiative could be considered as a pilot project contributing to testing out alternative ways of conceiving urban renewal operations. *Construisons ensemble, le grand ensemble* (Working together to build the whole urban area) is the concept launched by the architect Patrick Bouchain and his colleagues which has been tested out between 2009 and 2012.

The story of the Ilot Stephenson neighbourhood started with a conflict at the beginning of the 2000s when the inhabitants of this small working-class neighbourhood located at the periphery of the Union urban renewal project learnt that their houses would be purchased by the municipality and then demolished. They organised themselves into an organisation named *Rase pas mon quartier* (Don't demolish my neighbourhood) and initiated actions protesting against the project with some support from various elected opposition members.

After several years, they succeeded in stopping the demolition project in 2004. In 2007, the Lille Metropolis authorities decided to transfer the management of the whole Union urban renewal development to the semi-public company, SEM Ville Renouvelée, with an obligation to properly integrate sustainable development and participatory approaches. After 3 years during which nothing happened, the Ilot Stephenson project was the first operation launched in an atmosphere of mutual mistrust between inhabitants and urban planners. The mayor of Tourcoing and SEM Ville Renouvelée decided to call on architect Patrick Bouchain and his team to rethink the urban project with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

8.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

After a contentious phase, new ways of addressing inhabitants of the Stephenson neighbourhood emerged, comprising several innovative aspects. Conceptually, the building site was no longer considered as a no man's land and a temporary phase in the life of the neighbourhood but as a living episode for the inhabitants. The architects immersed themselves in the neighbourhood by locating part of their office in an old electronics workshop. This daily presence changed relationships with inhabitants and other stakeholders. They knew whom to contact for any daily issues on the building site. Conversely, the immersion changed the architects' perceptions of the initial architectural scheme by bringing it up against the habits and needs of everyday life. Moreover, the electronics workshop was also transformed into a public space where a large model of the urban project was reconstructed for the inhabitants. Several meetings with residents, elected representatives, technicians from local authorities and representatives of local organisations were organised for presenting and discussing adaptation of the initial plan. Finally, regular workshops and conferences were organised in the electronics workshop bringing together the current and future inhabitants and exploring topics such as making compost or recovering wastewater. Educational activities were also planned with children.

The new approach to the urban renewal project led to concrete and substantive results:

- > the shift from a contentious atmosphere between inhabitants and local authorities to a collaborative period;
- > the rehabilitation of 30 historical houses and the improvement of 24 inhabited houses;
- > the public exhibition and discussion of the large-scale model led to a change in the initial architectural proposal;
- > the construction of the first model of renewed housing that the residents agreed on was visited by present and future inhabitants. The idea was to meet and involve future residents in the district before they moved in.

Despite undeniable achievements, several factors limiting inhabitants' participation and commitment

can be underlined. The mix between former and new residents has not happened to the extent expected because of the difference between generations. Newcomers are often young families with small children whereas former residents are mainly elderly people. In addition, the positive participation in the renewal project seems not to have generated, for the moment, new inhabitants' organisations and projects after the end of the building phase.

The Ilot Stephenson project has also inspired and strengthened the participatory approach adopted by semi-public company SEM Ville Renouvelée in implementing the eco-neighbourhood. Factors include the co-production of a sustainable development framework. Its formulation has not only involved the different local authorities and housing developers, but also groups of local non-profit organisations named "Union will not happen without us". This group of local organisations demanded, from the beginning of the Union urban renewal plan, integration of employment, social and ecological aspects alongside the initial business and construction dimensions. The framework for the eco-neighbourhood adopted in 2007 is a progressive process, revised every 4 years in order to adjust to new needs expressed by local actors, local institutions' strategies and national legislation. Moreover, a charter of participation was drawn up with the different Union stakeholders. The active involvement of the group of local organisations led to the creation of a specific fund for resident participation by the local authorities in order to support local initiatives connected to the renewal urban project.

8.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

As already underlined, the Ilot Stephenson project is a new architectural and urban planning experiment conceptualised by Patrick Bouchain and his architects' firm, Construire. They are part of the architectural movement that believes that building cities should not only be a matter for specialists (architects, urban planners, property developers, social landlords, etc.) and that inhabitants should not be passive subjects who are generally excluded from most social housing, construction and urban renewal projects. "Building is living" means that the building phase is no longer considered a parenthesis in inhabitants' lives, but an important opportunity for public expression and civic

participation. Concretely, as the Stephenson project has demonstrated, opening a building site involves:

- > the temporary establishment of at least one architect in the neighbourhood during the building phase;
- > the permanent participation of present and future inhabitants and other stakeholders (elected representatives, social landlords, urban planners, local not-for-profit organisations, etc.) from initial design to completion of the building;
- > the creation of a special meeting place at the building venue where inhabitants can talk with architects, where the different stakeholders can discuss the projects and follow the achievements, and where activities are organised with the local and future community;
- > the programming of cultural events in partnership with local artists and cultural facilities;
- > the contribution of students from Tourcoing Beaux Arts School who created a temporary art performance within the houses under renovation.

It is worth noting that the contract mechanism used for this experiment is also unusual for this kind of urban operation. Whereas local authorities usually turn to public procurement for urban planning projects, this was a partnership agreement ("convention de partenariat") which provided the contractual frame between the architects' firm and SEM Ville Renouvelée. How such a tailor-made project could fit in with the specifications of traditional public tendering remains an open question.

At the urban planners' level, the main change in working methods has been the 2007 creation of a new statute of technician in charge of sustainable development and inhabitants' participation, introduced when management of the urban renewal project was transferred to SEM Ville Renouvelée. It is presented as an innovation in a professional milieu dominated by architects and urban planners who are not used to and do not know how to work with groups of inhabitants, local organisations and neighbourhood councils. Urban planners have learnt to systematically present and discuss the urban project with residents within the different neighbourhood councils as well as on ad-hoc committees.



8.4. Embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The Ilot Stephenson story has profoundly influenced the Tourcoing mayor, urban planners from SEM Ville Renouvelée and Lille Metropolis and other stakeholders in the project. It has definitely led to the integration of a human and participatory dimension in urban planning and urban renewal projects. According to the architects, even partially questioning the plan for a large and emblematic urban renewal project already voted by the local authorities' remains quite rare. They are planning to publish a book in 2013 that will conceptualise and illustrate a new urban approach to social housing construction and urban rehabilitation. In addition, Marie Blanckaert, the architect who worked in the Stephenson' neighbourhood throughout the entire project, won a prize for young urban planners in 2012.

The Ilot Stephenson project has been subject to local publicity and media coverage with a special website and numerous articles in the regional press. The inhabitants' organisation was often solicited by journalists. Stephenson has gradually become a kind of showcase project with all the risks of overexposure in terms of expectations created. Whereas the Ilot Stephenson was a local political problem at the beginning of the 2000s, 10 years on it has become an emblematic success promoted by the local authorities. Feedback on the project goes far beyond the local community. Many professors and students of architectural schools, delegations of technicians from other cities and even international visitors from Brazil; England and Brazil have been to visit the building site and met the architects and urban planning team.

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Support for housing self-renovation in Lille Metropolis

9.1. Short description

Within the scope of its second Local Housing Plan (PLMH2, 2008-2012)⁴, Lille Metropolis chose to provide support for self-renovation at the beginning of 2011. This experiment is one of the actions contributing to the fight against poor quality and substandard housing (*“lutte contre le mal logement”*) but also against fuel poverty, especially for low-income residents of run-down private housing stock. After a call for projects, the proposal from the non-profit organisation *Les compagnons bâtisseurs* (Companion Builders), was selected for managing, training and supervising the implementation of a self-renovation process in a region where such practices remain marginal and unprofessional. After a first phase of information and exploration in 2011, three volunteer local housing organisations (GRAAL, APU Wazemmes and PACT MN) were recruited for implementing the project in three different areas in Lille Metropolis.

This innovation is interesting because it concerns the transfer and reproduction of self-renovation practices, seen as socially innovative by local authorities. In other words, this is not an institutionalised process of local bottom-up practices based on the skills and demands of local actors. According to promoters of self-renovation, this is the first time in France that a large metropolis like Lille has included an action of this kind in its housing policy. This sign of public recognition and support of self-renovation implies a method based on the identification and transfer of skills and knowledge to local practitioners adapted to the local housing context.

Support for self-renovation covers a set of practices that aim at improving the living conditions of low-income households by renovating their homes with their active participation (Rémy, Foulter, 2007). It combines dual objectives and functions. In addition to the material maintenance and renovation facilitated by technical support, self-renovation is also expected to have positive impacts on social inclusion and empowerment of families. This relatively old practice has been the object of renewed interest in recent years in the face of increasing issues of substandard and run-down housing as well as the rise in energy bills for modest households living with fuel poverty.

⁴ PLMH2, 2008-2012

9.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

In comparison with other cities, a feature specific to Lille Metropolis is that most self-help renovation has targeted owners and tenants in run-down private dwellings rather than residents of social housing stock. This institutional demand was confirmed in the diagnosis phase and can be explained by the high number of substandard dwellings that form part of the major stock of old working-class houses in the Nord region. Another specificity is the high numbers of owners in comparison to tenants benefiting from the first phase of the experiment, which can be explained by the financial incentive provided by the agency for housing improvement and Lille Metropolis. However, whether owners or tenants, the users targeted could not afford to carry out improvements on their run-down homes by themselves. In addition to insufficient income, the beneficiaries were experiencing different personal, professional and social difficulties (unemployment or an insecure job, family breakups, social isolation, etc.).

Specifically, the types of services provided to users are:

- > a technical and social diagnosis on housing improvements and household living conditions;
- > administrative support for the establishment of the application of diverse funding including support from the National Agency for Housing Improvement (ANAH);
- > mediation between tenants and owners on the repair and maintenance works to be performed and paid for. The presence of a third party is often a factor in easing conflicts;
- > educational and technical support to the members of family involved in concrete renovation tasks;
- > some collective and technical training sessions were also provided to families on topics such as plumbing, insulation, tenants' rights, energy savings, etc.;
- > potential direction towards other social services and housing benefits.

The principle of support for self-renovation is that renovation works are carried out by at least one member of the household with the support of a tech-

nical adviser and in some cases by a self-help network (other family members, friends, neighbours or other volunteer beneficiaries of the programme). This experiment is based on major involvement of the users over a period of time. The users' involvement is not considered as free but is subject to financial accountability in order to give value to this contribution.

A year and a half after the launch of this experiment 49 people have been referred to the three volunteer organisations for the experiment, mainly by non-profit housing organisations and social workers at local housing improvement institutions. Only 11 buildings have been launched due to the time required (about 5-6 months) for compiling the technical file and obtaining funding agreement. However, according to the director of the GRAAL, one of the three organisations, the demand is growing with, for instance, 20 renovation projects planned. The users are mainly introduced by social workers, neighbourhood and housing organisations. Word of mouth is also starting to work as well as direct calls from households that have seen advertisements by Lille Metropolis or the General Council of the Nord Department.

The main and visible outcome is the maintenance and improvement of housing such as glazing, painting, minor plumbing, insulation, replacement of switches, plugs or light bulbs, ventilation, etc. All these improvements also have a positive impact by reducing obligatory expenses, such as energy expenditure. Beyond the visible housing improvement and financial gains, the promoters of support for self-renovation insist on the social impacts for the household. Self-renovating one's own apartment has a strong impact on personal self-esteem and progressive awareness of one's own capabilities. Some users rediscover the pleasure of taking care of their home and develop basic handiwork skills. Moreover, the renovation period can also be an opportunity for socialisation, with the mobilisation of personal or family networks focused on a specific project but also sometimes with meetings of volunteers. Compared to external maintenance, self-renovation is also seen by owners as well as social landlords as a guarantee against rapid deterioration because works have been carried out by tenants.

Convincing families to commit themselves to the housing self-renovation method is the first obstacle to overcome because this practice is still unfamiliar, takes time and often leads to more comprehensive housing improvements than those initially project-

ed by the household. Convincing arguments for the benefits of self-renovation are cost reduction for the families, the quality of work done at official standards as well as the energy and financial savings. Although users have priority of access to financial support from housing programmes, a minimum of self-funding is required, which could exclude the very poorest or indebted households.

9.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

The self-renovation team is generally composed of three people:

- > an administrative and project coordinator who contacts, negotiates and draws up the contract with owners and tenants as well as prepares applications to housing institutions for funding;
- > a technical advisor who technically diagnoses the restoration works, advises and supports the household in the renovation of their home and negotiates materials or minor interventions by external tradespeople;
- > a volunteer involved as a civic participant and in professional training processes. Her/his role focuses much more on the relationship with families.

The first part of the experiment included several training sessions with the local operational teams because there were no organisations qualified to support self-help renovation in Lille Metropolis. Here we can identify a clear process of transfer and adaptation of skills and expertise coming from outside the experiment's area. Training consisted in particular of a two-month immersion session for future technical and social advisers with experienced technicians from *Les compagnons bâtisseurs* working in other cities (Marseille, Rennes).

The profile of the technical advisor is particularly specific and quite rare because it combines technical skills from different building trades with educational and social interventions similar to social workers. These dual skills make it more difficult to recruit technical advisers, taking into account that the wages provided remain attractive in relation to the responsibilities required. This explains why technical advisers present atypical career paths, with engineers who have the choice of moving into the social profession

or social workers who want to get away from administrative and work routines. However, the requirements for such work could be a future obstacle for answering the growing demand for self-renovation.

9.4. Embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

One of the *Les compagnons bâtisseurs*' tasks has been to inform and convince a large number of stakeholders in the housing sector of the usefulness of support for the self-renovation method. Beyond overcoming potential indifference or sceptical viewpoints, the objective is to build a network of institutional partners able to direct potential beneficiaries towards this kind of solution. This means that social workers, non-profit housing organisations and local authorities need to assess if support for self-renovation meets the needs of the families they are used to advising. The process has culminated in the creation of a local committee for guiding and assisting potential users.

Another key component in the reproduction of self-renovation methods in other urban contexts consists of preventing potential conflicts and regulating relations with building tradespeople as well as small- and medium-sized construction companies. The fear of unfair competition, especially in a time of building and housing crisis, is a frequent objection expressed by trade organisations. To prevent it, the head of *Les compagnons bâtisseurs* generally points out that self-renovation is not a market because the families involved are usually low-income households.

As already noted, this initiative is a top-down experiment originating in an institutional demand from Lille Metropolis rather than inhabitants or local not-for-profit housing organisations. To a certain extent, institutional recognition comes before the emergence of professional organisations, skilled workers and active promoters. A first issue in the transfer is the integration of support for self-renovation within the objectives and frameworks of local authorities and housing institutions other than Lille Metropolis. The General Council of the Nord region and the family allowance office have already become funding partners. The ability to finance support for self-renovation on a larger scale remains an open question. In the event of growing demand, the extension of the experiment to social landlords is another challenge. The second main issue is the emergence of local leaders

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as well as active and competent organisations able to promote and disseminate such practices once *Les compagnons bâtisseurs'* work ends.

In conclusion, we would like to underline that the experience in Lille Metropolis could represent an important step forward in a context characterised by the absence of national self-renovation programmes. Lille Metropolis explicitly included support for self-renovation in its housing policy, whereas such practices have tended to be supported within social policies (family support, inclusion pathways, community development programmes) in other urban contexts. The Lille experiment is even more likely to positively influence the national political agenda given that the present deputy in charge of the future housing law is a former municipal councillor for housing in Lille and is very familiar with the housing organisations involved in support for self-renovation projects.

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Parler Bambins – Toddler Talk

10.1. Short description

Parler Bambins is a prevention programme for early language development for children aged 3-36 months attending child-care facilities. Developed by Dr Michel Zorman and his research team (Zorman M. et al., 2011) in an educational and cognitive sciences centre, it was first experimented during the period 2005-2008 in several day nurseries located in deprived neighbourhoods in the city of Grenoble. The first results, based on individual language psychometric tests, demonstrated significant progress in the language of the children who benefited from the programme. Convinced by this method, the elected councillor for child-care policy for Lille decided to launch an experiment in two child-care facilities in September 2011. After 1 year, the programme has been disseminated to eight other municipal day-care facilities starting in 2012.

Like in Grenoble, the broad objective of the programme is the reduction of social inequalities. Recent studies on the factors influencing educational inequalities underline that differences in language skills are strongly related to social and cultural differences, starting at an early age with an impact on future educational performances. Providing all children equally with early opportunities for the development of language is presented as a way of preventing future school failures. This is why the implementation of the *Parler Bambins* programme targets child-care facilities first and foremost, including children from disadvantaged and foreign-born families.

The innovative aspects are mainly educational and based on new kinds of language interactions between professionals, children and their parents. The objectives are to create a favourable environment for communication with children by multiplying opportunities for conversations. The programme is based on three actions:

- > Daily interactions with children. This involves taking advantage of every opportunity in the day for communicating individually with each child using an adaptive and personal approach.
- > Communication with the parents based on discussions of the programme, the child's language acquisition and her/his development. This parent-based action aims at building the parents' trust and support and disseminating the practices at home.
- > A language workshop targeting children who speak a little with the aim of stimulating expression and the pleasure of communication with the support of books, pictures or toys.

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10.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

Exploring in far more detail the ways professionals address children implies starting with the usual communication practices in day-care facilities. Professionals tend to talk collectively to children rather than individually, speaking in the imperative mood, asking questions that require a simple yes or no answer and formulating questions and answers at the same time. If these unconscious modes of expression have the advantage of helping to manage large groups of children, the disadvantage lies in not focusing attention on quiet children who do not express themselves much. These isolated children tend to fall behind the others in their language development. The *Parler Bambins* programme helps child-care workers to change their professional practices, which specifically means to stop talking in a neutral or general way to children but to address each of them personally by their own name, formulating open questions and allowing time for the shyest to answer in order to stimulate communication.

According to professionals who used this method, one of the advantages lies in the rapid and positive changes in the children's behaviour. These new ways of speaking to the children make it easier to capture the attention of introverted children who tend to play alone. Communication often starts with the body and gestural language used by children to show what they want. These more frequent interactions lead progressively to children pronouncing a few words in a second stage. The workshop with a small group of the shyest children is based on fun and pleasure. None of the children refuses to participate. On the contrary, after the first few sessions, the children express themselves and dare to ask to go to the workshop.

Parler Bambins also influences ways of addressing parents. Cooperation between professionals and parents is a key component in the success of the method. Firstly, they are informed about it as soon as they register their child at the crèche. Secondly, language development in the day-care centre as at home becomes a subject of discussion with the professional that is as important as issues such as health, food, sleeping and so on. Parents are generally motivated and rarely reluctant to take part in the programme. Sometimes the programme helps to relieve illiterate or non-native speaking parents and make problematic relationships with reading less of a major issue. Because communication with the child is based less on reading stories and more on picking out words from a picture, the relationship with books can become positive and an educational tool at home. Some parents develop a relationship of trust and can talk about their fears about learning to speak and read.

10.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

As already noted, *Parler Bambins* changes the ways the child-care workers speak and communicate with children. At the beginning of the programme, certain professionals expressed some reluctance. Once these fears were eased, programmes had globally positive effects on professional practices. They are generally motivated by the programme, which is presented as complementary to other skills. Their personal investment in language techniques consists of a training session of 1-2 days combining the conceptual presentation of the programme by one of the researchers and practices with children. The two first day-nursery directors have been qualified and are now local representatives playing a supervisory role. *Parler Bambins*

generally creates a positive team dynamic centring on this collaborative project.

An unexpected effect for the two directors first involved in the experiment has been the particular interest shown in this initiative, with growing media coverage leading to numerous requests. They find themselves in the position of meeting the Minister for the Family or being interviewed by journalists, which is gratifying.

10.4. Embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The experiment of the *Parler Bambins* springs more from the consequences of the meeting between the strong convictions of two elected municipal councillors, respectively in charge of child care and the eradication of illiteracy, and the motivation of a number of early childhood workers. Following on from Grenoble, Lille and Rennes are part of the second wave of cities testing out the *Parler Bambins* framework. Originating in a strong political will to take action, *Parler Bambins* has been integrated in the municipal agenda through one of the actions of what is known as the global educational project. It is interesting to note that the support is partially financed by the child-care budget despite a context of limited spending for qualitative and innovative child-care initiatives. Moreover, the programme is not funded by the family allowance office, which did not select it from among the proposals received for the call for innovative projects in 2012. This partial but progressive integration of *Parler Bambins* within local child-care policies can also be illustrated by the fact that only municipal services are part of the experiment, which does not concern non-for-profit private providers.

Different channels of dissemination can be identified:

- > scientific communication of the results through academic articles but also professional reviews⁵ for presenting the programme and the first results;
- > popularisation of research findings through conferences⁶, training sessions for professionals, an official website⁷ and a short film produced by Lille municipality;

5 For instance, an article in *Les métiers de la petite enfance* (Pouget, 2013)

6 For instance, the conference *Langages et réussite éducative: des actions innovantes* [Educational language and success: innovative actions], March 2009.

7 www.parler-bambin.fr

- > a political interest through networks of elected local representatives that encourage new cities (Lille and Rennes) to apply to join the experiment. A film has been projected to local authorities and institutions (General Council, the family allowance office) in charge of child-care and education issues. Recently, *Parler Bambins* reached a broader audience with the visit to Lille of the Minister for the Family, Dominique Bertinotti⁸ in the context of the national child-care and parenthood consultation process;
- > growing media coverage with articles in the local press (Bastin, 2011)⁹ initially but also a television report on a national channel.

Another indicator of the dissemination process is that the two directors representing *Parler Bambins* to professional organisations cannot meet the growing demand for presentations coming from other diverse child-care services or educational organisations and federations. They lack the time and resources to disseminate the programme beyond the municipal day-care facilities, which remain the municipality's current priority.

Finally, it is interesting to note that some professionals, child-care educators and speech therapists have taken a critical stance towards the new programme. Their concern is the risk of stigmatisation and categorisation for some children diagnosed too young as having language development deficiencies. Thus, the national federation of early childhood educators¹⁰ expressed doubts as to the opportunity of applying *Parler Bambins* as a national programme, as it is seen to be similar to early detection practices targeting specific children and families. These concerns can partially be interpreted as the result of a major polemic about a controversial programme on the detection of at-risk behaviour at an early age proposed by the previous government.

8 Dominique Bertinotti's visit to Lille, Friday 7 December 2012, www.social-sante.gouv.fr/actualite-presse,42/invitations-presse,2339/deplacement-de-dominique,15436.html.

9 Bastien (2011) *Les crèches expérimentent le « parler bambins »*, *Nord Eclair*, November. Crapet E. (2011) "A la rentrée, la ville expérimentera le 'parler bambin' dans deux crèches" [When school starts again, the city will be testing out *Parler Bambins* in two day nurseries], *La Voix du Nord*, May. Guignot C. (2012) "L'égalité des chances passe par le langage", *La Gazette Santé sociale*, March.

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Potes en Ciel - Children's Café

11.1. Short description

The children café, *Potes en Ciel*, is a welcoming and open place for children aged 0-16 years as well as their parents living in the neighbourhood and nearby or wishing to meet other families and share experiences. The café is a meeting place that promotes children's well-being, good parent-child relationships, socialisation and mutual aid between families and generations by developing free creative and participatory learning activities. Educational and recreational actions are organised, such as parent-child workshops (music, visual arts, etc.), creative and cultural exchanges, book loans and festive and neighbourhood events. On the café side, non-alcoholic refreshments and snacks are served.

The *Potes en Ciel* café was set up by 10 founding members in 2006 in a working-class neighbourhood of Lille named Fives. This non-for-profit initiative was inspired by the pioneering and similar experience of Café Zoïde, set up in Paris in 1999. *Potes en Ciel* is therefore also part of the dissemination process of the children's café concept within several large cities in France (Lyon, Nantes, etc.) but also in other European countries. A national then European network was created in 2011 with a common charter based on shared values such as affirmation of children's rights, learning citizenship, mutual aid and cooperation, the fight against discrimination and rejection of violence.

The *Potes en Ciel* café is not a traditional child-care service in the sense that professionals do not have to manage access and availability of places according to criteria defined by local child-care institutions and funders. The main objective is not to facilitate work and care conciliation of working parents, as the activities provided suppose a co-presence of the child with the parent. The café is open over the weekend, which is also perceived as innovative in terms of opening hours considering that most child-care facilities and municipal recreational centres tend to be closed.

11.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

The children's café had a membership of 356 in 2012 and registered 4,366 visits per year (27 people a day on average). After a strong progression over the first 4 years, the number of members has slightly decreased and has now stabilised. About 30 volunteers have participated in the project. The composition of users is important and subject to debate because the social mix of families is one of the stated objectives of the *Potes en Ciel* café. We can distinguish different motivations and profiles among the parents. A first group is composed of young parents who have recently moved to the Fives neighbourhood. The café is viewed as a place for socialisation, a friendly way to

meet other parents and establish good neighbourly relations. For some parents, going to the café fits with educational preferences or work and care balance choices. It is in line with parents' choice to spend time with their young children in a creative and user-friendly atmosphere.

For parents, the café also corresponds to an educational approach perceived by some parents as more adapted to children's rhythm and development than a traditional pre-school framework. Parents and children reproduce the creative activities they share in the café at home. In this sense, visual arts and children's singing workshops are also a learning process for both parents and children. The educational motivation can also be identified through the high number of users coming from other Lille Metropolis districts. More than 50 per cent of users come from outside the neighbourhood on Wednesday or during the weekend. The café is seen as a unique place in the region in terms of sharing creative activities and parent-children participation. An interesting point is also the way the café can support divorced and separated parents, in particular fathers who have custody of children at the weekend. For them, the café helps to build a qualitative relationship between the children and their fathers, which improves their care and educational capabilities. Finally, child-minders are another group of users who come during the week. For them, the café is a collective place that provides a socialisation space with other children and leisure activities that they cannot provide at home.

The social mix of users was one of the initial objectives behind setting up the café in a working-class neighbourhood. However, the diversity of users' social origins has not yet met the board's initial expectations. The cultural barriers to knowledge of the café, such as parental participation, could partially explain this situation. In order to avoid the risk of social homogenisation, volunteers and professionals have decided over recent years to adopt a proactive approach by building partnerships with a young single mothers centre and non-for-profit organisations such as ATD Fourth-World. Parents and professionals organise activities out of the café and meet parents in other places in the neighbourhood. The choice has been made to welcome families in difficulties with the assistance of social workers as a first step during the time needed for parents to gain confidence and autonomy before trying to come on their own. Although the cost,

1 euro per child, is cheap compared to private and for-profit leisure activities for young children, access to the café is now free for very low-income families.

11.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

Whereas the types of activities and forms of parental participation are clearly innovative, the working methods are also interesting, though sometimes problematic. In addition to their participation in creative and leisure activities, parents are involved as volunteers in the working organisation with tasks such as opening the café in the morning, welcoming new parents and children, serving at the bar, developing the website and so on. Volunteers and staff work together on reception functions and welcoming parents to the café, which is presented as fundamental. Volunteers are not always parents and users but also people from the neighbourhood who support the project. Professionals, parents and representatives of institutions regard this strong involvement of volunteers and users as innovative in comparison with traditional child-care facilities, where professionals tend to keep parents at a distance. In addition, the participation of parents fosters flexibility and adjustments to activities according to user demands. For instance, the staff organise picnic lunches as a convivial moment with parents for informal discussion of educational issues.

However, the close relationship between workers and users can sometimes be problematic and has still not been formally stabilised. Because parents are involved in running key activities proposed by the staff, some professionals are sometimes subject to harsh criticism by parents in the way they facilitate workshops. Because of the friendly and participative atmosphere, the respective responsibilities between professionals and users are sometimes unclear. Moreover, the staff have to manage specific demands from child-minders asking for personal advice or problematic situations with certain parents (from the Rom community, for instance). The special attention given to individual cases can cause tensions with the collective dynamic.

With the almost complete renewal of the staff, the *Potes en Ciel* café is in the process of clarifying its working methods in line with the classical path taken by voluntary organisations. The first workers team, and in particular the manager, were among the

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founders of the project. This dual role (professional and promoter) was creative during the emergence phase of the project. It seems to have become problematic in the development phase when fundraising imperatives arose along with the first management tensions between staff, board and users. The personal involvement of the new generation of workers in the project is less pronounced. For many of them, working at the café is a job first and foremost. In addition, the insecure job status (fixed term contracts, subsidised jobs, etc.) that applies to some young workers does not facilitate long-term investment.

This development has led to a process of clarification and formalisation of the respective roles and statutes of board members, users and workers. The new coordinator was recruited to manage the professional staff without which the café could no longer operate. There has been a major turnover of staff over recent years. The café is staffed by a significant number of temporary workers, trainees and students, making it complicated to create a stable professional team. Partially offset by the involvement of volunteers, human resources management is actually the weakest part of this initiative.

11.4. Embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The role played by the *Potes en Ciel* café in local governance is interesting. As with many innovative projects, integration within the local welfare system has not been immediate and met some resistance at the beginning. *Potes en Ciel* is not a municipal initiative and does not lie within the traditional scope of community skills. Also, recognition by the political and administrative sphere has been progressive and a little controversial. Initially supported by the elected municipal representative (Green party) for the SSE, the project met with scepticism from the elected official (Communist party) from the Fives district and civil servants in charge of urban community development. They were reluctant to invest in an initiative perceived as a boho concept, targeting middle class newcomers and contributing to the gentrification process of a working-class neighbourhood. This partly explains the difficulties of finding a role for the café. In addition, as already underlined, the café is neither a traditional child-care facility nor a leisure activity, in view of the co-presence of parents and children. It therefore takes time to convince municipalities and local institutions to find the corresponding budget lines for financial support.

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Early childhood centre

12.1. Short description

Lille has supported the implementation of early childhood centres, especially in popular neighbourhoods. These early childhood centres are multi-stakeholder, multi-service facilities, which create networks and pathways between professionals, child-care services, and institutions. It is a local way for governing the diversification of facilities at the neighbourhood level, and preventing the social polarisation of services. Such services work thanks to local child-care coordinators, a new profession. Moreover, these kinds of centres provide a lively space for parents and children with temporary and permanent information, special events, and activities embedded in the neighbourhood.

This case study focuses on the Childhood centre *Halte-garderie doux calins* (Tender loving part-time child-care centre) in the Faubourg de Béthune district. Our choice is justified by the fact that this service is located in one of the most popular and precarious districts in Lille, the pioneering and original nature of certain experimentations, and also the difficulties encountered in the attempt to consolidate and generalise these experiments.

The Faubourg de Béthune Childhood centre was founded at the end of the 1990s. In the same place, it groups together a part-time child-care centre ("Halte-garderie"), maternal and infant health and care protection centre (Protection *Maternelle et Infantile*), a child-minder centre (*Relais assistants maternelles*), a recreation centre, and a games library. The *Doux calins* (Tender loving) part-time child-care centre is an association created at the beginning of the 1990s following the observations made by local government representatives and various professionals of the educational difficulties faced by many single mothers, and the lack of any activity centre for young children in this district. Each year, it provides 20 hours of child care services per week for the children of 145-50 families (including 35 single-parent families in 2009), which still seems to be inadequate as there were 86 families on the waiting list in 2011. The request to create a multi-child care facility (combining part-time and full-time child-care facilities) has been on hold for several years due to a lack of funding.

The Béthune district is a disadvantaged residential district in the south-western part of Lille, a city with a population of 232,432 inhabitants. It is an urban tax-free zone, where 77 per cent of the housing units are social housing. The unemployment rate in this district exceeds 30 per cent, and there is a high proportion of immigrants. Together with Moulins, this is one of the districts in which there is the highest number of single-parent families with nearly 40 per cent of children living with a single parent (Compas, ABS 2006: 18, 23). Thirty-seven per cent of the children live in a poor household (900 euros per month in 2006, ABS 2006: 26). Nearly 30 per cent of the children in the part-time and full-time child-care centres are from single-parent families.

12.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

As of its creation, the project of the *Doux calins* part-time child-care centre was to involve parents in the district in its management and in leading activities. Different types of participation can be identified:

- > participation on the Board of Directors and as officers of the association;
- > participation in preparing and leading activities such as outings, and parties;
- > meeting with families and listening to their concerns.

This participation is generally beneficial to the parents who get involved. When mothers organise activities, they gain self-esteem and confidence in their personal capacities. For several of them, this responsibility was a step toward finding a new job. Nonetheless, several of the people interviewed stressed that there were more and more obstacles preventing parent participation. Besides the fact that it is a short-term involvement (1-2 years), linked to the age of their children, participating in managing the whole budget of an association is not always easy for parents who often live with limited financial resources. More generally speaking, parents seem to have less time available to devote to collective activities than a few years ago. Child-care professionals have observed that single mothers are often overwhelmed with time constraints (a combination of family, work and administrative issues) that make them less available.

Many of the parents are in a precarious professional situation (unemployed, completing training, or with a government subsidised job). Child care often permits single mothers, who are in the national priority group, to complete training, look for a job, or work part-time. Since parents regularly confide in the child-care professionals about diverse personal issues, the part-time child-care centres also play a role in orienting them toward appropriate employment services, social services, and associations in the district.

Parenting support is a priority in both the part-time and the full-time child-care centres. Child-care professionals agree that there are definite educational challenges. Children lack points of reference, and parents lack authority, but there are also language problems in immigrant families in which French

is not always well spoken. Early childhood centre (ECC) professionals take turns co-organising regular workshops with the parents. Along with the Arpège association, the ECC organises coffee breaks at the pre-schools in the morning. These are informal meetings with the parents who are so inclined. They facilitate contact with parents who are sometimes reticent about participating in formal meetings organised in social institutions. This type of initiative is part of a combined reflection on the difficulties involved in touching certain parents who do not go to the social centre or games library very often. These parenting activities have also helped bring about more significant involvement of fathers of immigrant origins who are more present and participate more in literacy activities organised at the social centre.

The Béthune ECC along with its partners has created an experimental welcome booklet for families and professionals, which includes information on all the early childhood services and associations in the district as well as a way to monitor contacts with the various professionals. If this initial booklet proves to be successful, it will be further developed in the future.

12.3. Internal organisation and mode of working

The ECC is lucky to have two people taking care of its daily operations: a receptionist, who informs and orients parents toward different services and organisations, and a coordinator and activities leader, who builds synergy between member organisations and helps put together common projects. It is worth noting that the Béthune ECC is the only one in Lille where there is a coordinator in addition to a receptionist. The presence in the same place of a variety of services makes it easier to guide families, to help them visit the appropriate services and meet with the right professionals, to organise common events such as the tale festival, and to resolve informal problems. The Béthune ECC was the model used by City Hall, the local General Council and Family Allowance Office to draw up a charter for early childhood centres in Lille. Grouping together several services and organisations in the same place also enables professional services to be mutualised. For example, an occupational therapist has been working with the children at the ECC for many years. Likewise, all of the professionals in all of the services participated in a quarterly meeting with a

child psychiatrist, who is a professor at the University of Lyon, to exchange their experiences about the specific difficulties encountered by the professionals with the families. In addition, the ECC enables cross-disciplinary professional training to be organised, which is open to employees from all its member organisations. One such example is a music appreciation class.

Having observed that many parents were enrolling their children in pre-school at an earlier and earlier age (before they turned 3), the Director of the part-time child-care centre (Halte-garderie Doux Calins) ran a survey on the expectations of professionals and parents. A need for parenting support for the transition between the child-care centre and the national pre-school led to the setting up in 2003 of preparatory half-days for children with their parents at the pre-school. Through dialogue with professionals, a progressive calendar for integrating these children was established, which takes into account the behaviour and the maturity of the children who are less than 3 years.

12.4. Embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The Director of the Doux calins part-time child-care centre has a twofold mission: she manages the child-care service, and also oversees social development in the district. This set up is original because it enables her to spend time working on various partnerships with local institutions, such as the school and city hall, and associations as well as inhabitants. It also enables her to monitor and assess the needs of families through information-exchange sessions and surveys. Several activities are carried out with other institutions and organisations in the district. The person in charge of the ECC, and the part-time child-care centre Director, are members of an early childhood commission in the district. They are also involved as speakers at meetings and conferences organised by the city of Lille, such as the “Early Childhood General Assembly” held in 2011.

The first interviews bear witness to the fact that there are obstacles making it impossible to more widely develop several experiments. Several factors have been identified. The main factor has to do with the lack of resources and means to consolidate the innovative activities. For instance, several of them are not or are no longer funded by the CAF (Family Allowance Office). While the municipality continues supporting

them, it is not always able to extend them to other districts. More generally speaking, the managerial pressure coming from those who finance the projects, for whom the percentage of places filled is the principal indicator used to assess the organisation, makes the professionals vulnerable and undermines these organisations, which have less time to devote to common projects and partnerships in the district. When management is optimised in terms of the number of places filled, this leaves less room for qualitative innovation. Another factor is the distance or barriers between professionals and users, limiting the involvement of users. Despite several local experimentations for supporting parental participation and develop parenthood activities and spaces, professionals remain too often perceived as part of the “institutional world” or considered as “social workers” which are sometimes seen as a complex even “hostile world” especially by recent immigrant parents.

Conclusions

Sustainability

Among the innovations presented in this report, some are recent (support for self-renovation, *Parler Bambins*) and others are fragile (*Potes en Ciel*). In other words, the description and analysis of past initiatives shows that they are not all success stories. But the ability to overcome certain difficulties also influences the conditions for their sustainability.

From being in step with local priorities to being able to resist changes in the local political agenda

This is more or less a question of chance and opportunism. Social innovations can be in step with dominant issues on national and local political agendas. From time to time priorities change, highlighting new practices and leaving previous innovations in the shade.

For instance, parental participation was considered as innovative by child-care institutions a few years ago, but this is less the case at present. Conversely, local solutions such as *Parler Bambins* to fight against social and educational inequalities at the early preschool age are in keeping with the spirit of the times. In the housing and urban field, participation by inhabitants was a key component of urban social policies in the 1980s and 90s before it was progressively forgotten in

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favour of urban renewal policies in the 2000s, which were based on the demolition and reconstruction of former social housing areas. In this regard, some local authorities retain an ability to maintain their own political agendas concerning innovative issues, as illustrated by the action launched by Lille city council to promote self-renovation initiatives. Processes such as participation by inhabitants could re-emerge via a locally contentious context, for example, as triggered by the association *Rase pas mon quartier* [Don't demolish my neighbourhood] that was the starting point for the Ilot Stephenson experiment in co-producing a neighbourhood urban renewal project.

From initial political support to institutional coalition

Initial support from the local political sphere is often a crucial factor in the process by which local social policy innovations emerge, depending as they do mainly on public funding, along with other local services of general interest. In Lille, *Parler Bambins* is clearly an experiment strongly supported by the elected councillor in charge of child care. Support for self-renovation has been promoted internally by professionals in the Lille council housing department. Patrick Bouchain and his architects were called in by the mayor of Tourcoing and the semi-public company in charge of the Union renewal urban project. Even when the opportunity to support an initiative is the subject of political disputes or administrative resistance, as was initially the case for the children's café *Potes en Ciel*, local allies among elected officials opened windows of opportunities. The challenge of sustainability is to strengthen the initial political and/or administrative support over time and ensure that it is not merely a temporary boost. Long-standing commitment is decisive for building broader local coalitions of stakeholders and creating bridges between different political fields and administrative departments. This is, for instance, the strategy used by *Les compagnons bâtisseurs* for strengthening housing self-renovation experiments.

Diversification and consolidation strategies for mobilising funds and resources

This is a key point because funding support for innovation remains fragile. It is often project-based, limited in time and depreciation-based. Co-funding strategies are often the result of local authorities' rules and practices; as they are reluctant to invest in

a project alone, building a local coalition of funders is often necessary. In this context, diversification strategies can mean getting funds from local authorities and public institutions at different levels and in charge of skills in different fields. Mixed funding also implies mobilising private resources from private foundations, user contributions or the sale of services. Finally, non-monetary contributions from user participation or volunteer contributions could also be a component in a hybridised balance of resources. We can identify user participation in most of the initiatives analysed. In some of them, it is at the heart of the projects, as in the children's café where parents are co-producers of the activities provided or in support for housing self-renovation where household contributions are accounted for. In this context, renewal of volunteers, user participation and social mix are both key internal human resource for the sustainability of the service and an important external factor of legitimisation support from partners and funders.

Recognition and consolidation of new trades, atypical job profiles and skills mix

An interesting aspect studied in several initiatives is the emergence of new professional practices or job profiles asking for a skills mix at the crossroads of different existing trades. For instance, being an advisor in the support team for housing self-renovation requires a mix of skills coming from the construction trades and social work sector. The architect's immersion in the building site led to direct management of relationships with inhabitants, not only with professionals in the urban renewal operation. In the early childhood centres in Faubourg de Bethune, the director of the part-time child care service has, besides her management function, a social development mission in the district in relation to various neighbourhood associations and local institutions (schools, social centre. etc.) seeking to improve living conditions and social inclusion for families with young children. Making this kind of job sustainable is the challenge facing social innovators. It requires finding and attracting workers with a relatively rare profile who are sufficiently motivated to want to escape professional routines. The process of consolidating these atypical professions also requires social entrepreneurs to invent complex or tailored funding packages as well as specific deals with existing reference qualifications and training programmes.

Dissemination

From singular initiative to innovative concept

Dissemination means a way of translating a process for transforming specific practices emerging within a specific context into a more or less mainstream concept or story able to influence collective representations of what is or is not innovative, and to become relevant to people and institutions from outside. Dissemination cannot be disconnected from discursive innovations, which are often crystallised as an expression of a concept that can be circulated through different socio-cultural contexts. Several local initiatives studied in Lille (*Parler Bambins*, *Café Potes en Ciel* and support for housing self-renovation) are examples of the dissemination of innovations conceptualised elsewhere and adapted in response to local issues. Specifically, notions such as *Parler Bambins*, *Potes en Ciel* and support for housing self-renovation cover similar groups of initiatives, which have already been tested in different cities. These are not products that can be technically reproduced, nor are they turn-key solutions; rather they are approaches, methods and organisations that could be characterised or formalised as principles of action and recommendations for implementation. The Ilot Stephenson case is interesting because conceptualisation is an ongoing process, expressed by the slogan *Faire ensemble, le grand ensemble* [Working together to build the whole urban area], which has not yet stabilised.

Communications channels and media coverage

This is a more ambiguous form of dissemination. Examples such as Ilot Stephenson or *Parler Bambins* demonstrate how an initiative, launched recently and yet having achieved much, can become the go-to concept despite the first positive outcomes yet to be confirmed. Even if a deeper analysis is needed of the role of communications as a key factor in the reputation of innovative practices, we can note that using different channels of communication facilitates broader coverage. A mix between major institutional communications (making a film, special website), local press articles, publications in academic and trade press, participation in diverse conferences or public events all constitute a favourable terrain for reaching the national media. How well social innovation performs does not always seem to be directly con-

nected to effective results. However, excessively rapid overexposure also risks compromising the longevity of social innovation.

Formalising mechanisms for transferring and adapting know-how and skills to different contexts

Dissemination processes need formalised mechanisms for transferring and adapting concepts, know-how and skills to various promoters and stakeholders. This point can be illustrated in different ways via the Lille case studies: specific training sessions for local professional teams in the experimental *Parler Bambins* project and support for housing self-renovation, reference to and membership of a national charter for children cafés for *Potes en Ciel*, publication of a book on alternative and participative approaches to social housing construction and urban renewal neighbourhoods by the team of architects and urban planners from the *Construire* company. The dissemination challenge is based on the ability of pioneers and social innovators to transmit not only an inspirational vision and concept, but also operational principles. It also requires project management skills of local stakeholders.

Bottom-link supports mean that local innovation are integrated and legitimised by networks, processes and resources from other scales. In two cases studied, *Parler Bambins* and the Ilot Stephenson urban renewal project, the intervention of a scientific team or well-known architect from outside accelerated local innovation processes and overcame some resistance at the local level. A more traditional method of networking is the inclusion of local initiatives within a regional, national or European network able to offer symbolic, technical and financial opportunities. The creation of a national network of 10 children's cafés is one example. Becoming members of *Les compagnons bâtisseurs* (Companion Builders) network is also an option considered by some local non-profit organisations in charge of implementing self-renovation housing projects in Lille.

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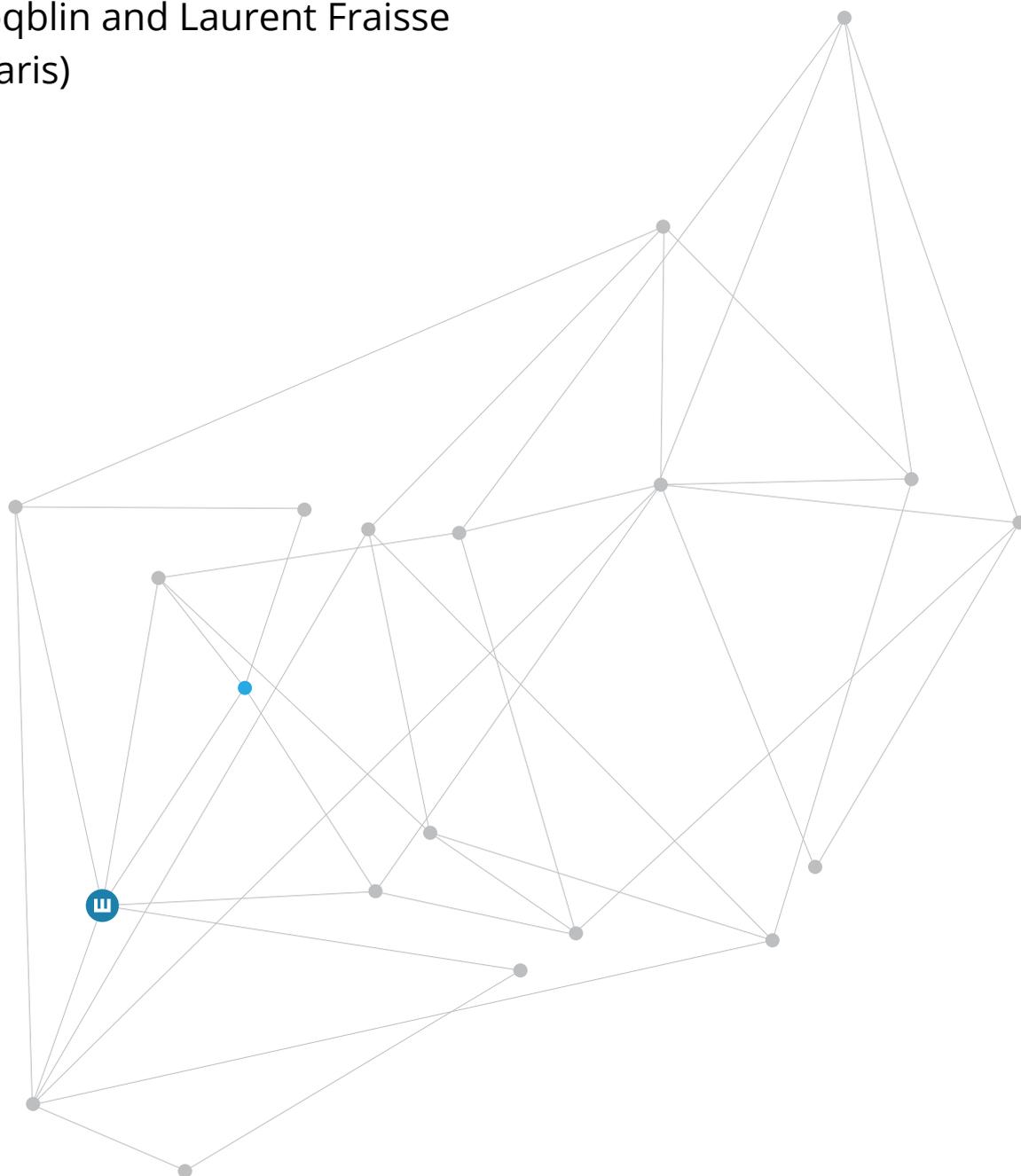
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Nantes

Anouk Coqblin and Laurent Fraise
(CRIDA, Paris)



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AuthorsAnouk Coqblin and Laurent Fraisse
CRIDA (Paris)**Introduction****Local background of the social innovations****Keywords:**

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Emergence of local proactive welfare policies:

As far as housing and child care policies are concerned, multi-level governance is the predominant situation with more or less shared responsibilities between national and local governments. It introduces complex institutional relations and potential tensions on issues such as priorities on the agenda and funding. Indeed, child care and housing issues are partly determined by national policies. Nevertheless, cities and metropolises have taken more responsibilities throughout the years for different reasons: continuation of the decentralisation process; the economic crisis implying state withdrawal from welfare policies; development of technical resources and expertise at the level of cities and metropolises, enabling them to develop their own policies. This is the case for the City of Nantes and Nantes Metropolis, which have been leading proactive welfare policies and playing a major role in promoting development of social innovation. It is worth noting that controversies, existing between national and Nantes local governments, mainly concern allocation of funds in a context of funding scarcity and constant drive for efficiency in public spending.

A tendency to focus on the most vulnerable groups within a social cohesion strategy:

One of the main Nantes City and Metropolis' welfare policy orientations is to address the most vulnerable social groups. For instance, the Local Housing Programme (2010-2016), focuses on rehabilitation and construction of social housing; rehabilitation of old unsanitary housing, improvement of energy efficiency; enhancing affordable housing for low- and intermediary-income households. Similarly, child care policies, national as well as local, address new challenges of social cohesion, such as the increase of women's work and degradation of working conditions (precariousness, increase of part-time jobs and atypical hours). The priority is put on reconciling family life and professional commitments as a means to combat poverty.

Although there is a multiplicity of stakeholders, providers and institutions in the field of child care, reconciliation between family and work is subject to a relative consensus among them (political majority and opposition, public structures and associations). Important reforms have been implemented since 2004 (large increase of new places in collective care, a more integrated local child care governance, new services dedicated to low-income families, etc.) and led to the building of new bridges between child care and employment policies and the respective administrative services, which were completely separate until then. Indeed, we notice the dissemination of new employment policy patterns to child care policies.

In 2007-2009, a new "social experimentation" in the employment field was launched in order to improve the mechanisms of social allowanc-

es (Activity Solidarity Income), aiming to combat poverty of employees and facilitating poor families' return to work. The innovation initiated by the City of Nantes (presented below) uses the same terminology of "social experimentation" and similar patterns, encouraging low-income mothers to return to work thanks to the improvement of child care facilities. To a certain extent, the priority is to improve access of vulnerable groups, less by creating specific and dedicated services and programmes than by facilitating their access to traditional social services through adaptation and better coordination of existing providers and professionals or through local experiments with new intermediations between different policy fields.

Local policies dedicated to the social and solidarity-based economy (SSE): a window of opportunity for social innovation:

At the same time, multi-level governance creates windows of opportunity for social innovation in terms of recognition and funding. For instance, the emergence of metropolises in the 2000s led to the implementation of new local policies. This is the case of Nantes Metropolis, created in 2001, that has initiated SSE policies since 2002. Until the election of François Hollande in 2012, there was no national SSE policy. Local SSE policies gave opportunities and space for social innovation and initiatives in a cross-cutting perspective. As an example, Nantes Metropolis SSE policies promote the development of cross-cutting approaches between sectorial policies, reinforcing partnerships between public and non-governmental organisations.

Nantes Metropolis has created a specific SSE Call for Proposals, in order to finance new and socially innovative projects in various fields such as home care services, home-sharing, child care, social entrepreneurship, intercultural exchanges, international solidarity, organic agriculture, waste recycling, territorial and neighbourhood revitalisation, etc. The specificity of such a Call for Proposals is to support projects that address different sectorial policies at the same time (housing, education, employment, culture, child care, etc.). This framework of action is new in comparison with traditional public action frameworks of local institutions and civil servants that classify policies according to their areas of competence and not to the reality of newly emerged action.

Plurality of discourses on social innovation:

The main frameworks for innovation policy remain related to economic development, research and technology investment, information technology, support for entrepreneurship, etc. Technological and economic innovations are promoted in the Pays de la Loire regional territory through the "Atlanpole technopole" (high-tech industrial research and development facilities), fostering the emergence and development of innovative companies and facilitating networks of actors. However, social innovation is not absent from local political discourse. Whereas in the 1990s NGOs were considered as key agents in innovative practices, they no longer have the monopoly over discourse on this issue. Local authorities also tend to present the action or policies they experiment and implement as innovative social strategies. In the Nantes municipal child care project, presented below, public institutions present themselves as social innovators, while not-for-profit organisations are not associated with the project or considered as partners of child care policies.

In addition, it is worth underlining how social innovation is progressively integrated into a new framework of local public action. In 2012, Nantes Metropolis and City initiated a joint project on innovation in public action, presented in the official discourse as the main source of change in policies. Working groups (administrative services and policymakers) aim at drafting a first set of good practices and defining favourable conditions for innovation; creating a more operational framework for supporting innovation in the territory; and deciding strategic orientations for public policy.

However, we observe at the same time the emergence of new discourses and positions on social innovation in the third sector. One is the emergence of a social entrepreneur discourse that, in line with a European approach, is more and more often associated with social innovation. Within the initiatives selected, we can find both new social entrepreneur profiles (Time for Roof) that promote a move towards social entrepreneurship in comparison with traditional social services, but also new projects supported by civil society organisations and social and solidarity-based economic programmes that present themselves as "social entrepreneurs" because it tends to appear to local policymakers as a "modern" and "innovative" approach in order to tackle social issues.

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Authors

Anouk Coqblin and Laurent Fraisse
CRIDA (Paris)

Grassroots initiatives, on the other hand, could speak of social innovation without promoting the social entrepreneurship perspective. This notion is not stabilised, which explains why networks in the third sector “milieu” and policymakers have developed different notions of “social entrepreneurship” and “social innovation”.

Family-minded and friendly projects as a way to facilitate social cohesion:

In a context of rationalisation of social policies, increasing budget constraints, and the standardisation and specialisation of social work tasks, it is interesting to note that two initiatives presented in the case studies intend to build new spaces for exchanges, not only in a functional perspective (rendering services to target groups) but also aiming at creating social ties between inhabitants developing convivial activities, mixing different groups, such as young and elderly people, mothers from social disadvantaged areas and mothers from middle-classes, etc.

This report presents three social innovations that have recently emerged in the territory of Nantes Metropolis. One of them is a grassroots initiative developed by the not-for-profit organisation Time for Roof. The second is a top-down driven initiative, supported jointly by three local child care institutions: the City of Nantes, the local Family Allowance Fund and the General Council. The third initiative combines two approaches: seven grassroots initiatives opened neighbourhood community centres and a network, made up of the seven initiatives, was created based on the idea and the support of local public institutions and well-established NGOs.

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Le temps pour toit - Time for Roof

13.1. Short description

The project Time for Roof emerged in 2005 in the specific context of the years 2003-2005: the heat wave of the summer 2003 caused an enormous number of deaths of elderly people and highlighted the issue of isolation for elderly people living alone. Most French experiences of intergenerational cohabitation have been initiated in this context since 2004. In addition, the project aimed at addressing the lack of cheap lodging for students and young people undergoing professional integration.

The association Time for Roof defines its objectives as follows:

- > to propose a local and affordable accommodation solution to students and young workers;
- > to find local and inexpensive solutions to enable older people to remain in their own homes;
- > more generally, to offer a solution to people for whom everyday life becomes less easy to manage because of ageing, loneliness, family situation;
- > to promote solidarity between older and younger generations by the exchange of concrete services (housing for help) and mutual support between the householder and the home-sharer.

This initiative supported 82 “duos” of householders and home-sharers in 2011. In total, since the beginning of the project, 350 duos have been accompanied by the organisation. Time for Roof offers users different types of contracts, depending on the needs of the elderly people and the personal commitment of the young people. The economic model is based on a mix of monetary contributions and solidarity-based mutual help. The financial contribution is inversely proportional to the quantity of services rendered or regular presence given: for householders, the more presence they need, the more they pay; for home-sharers, the more they commit themselves to the relationship and give time, the less they pay.

13.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

The association Time for Roof proposes innovative services to its users: exchange of housing for support, reinforcing social and solidarity ties, enabling elderly people losing autonomy to stay at their homes, providing support and mediation between the users. The exchange of time and presence between the users constitutes a fundamental dimension of the project. In the context of home care services for elderly people, it can be seen as an innovative aspect in a context of rationalisation of home care professional interventions. Professional caregivers have to fulfil more standardised tasks and have less time to share with the elderly person. By contrast, exchanging time and reinforcing social ties are at the centre of the Time for Roof project.

Furthermore, the direction taken by the Time for Roof cofounders is to put the emphasis on intergenerational cohabitation as a way to address limits of home care services for elderly people losing their autonomy. The solution proposed by Time for Roof is complementary to “professional” home care services in the way that it does not replace the services of personal care attendants or family caregivers but gives additional help in the form of presence in the evening and during the night: generally it is the moment when people are left alone and may face difficulties. It can be considered as a preventive approach in care for elderly people. It helps people to stay living in their homes longer and postpones recourse to other more complex and expensive solutions. This trend corresponds to a real demand from elderly people: in 2010, 60 per cent of the new contracts were dedicated to such situations.

As a consequence, the evolution of the householder’s profile has led to a modification in the profile of the home-sharers. At the beginning of the project, a majority of students was contacting the association. Nowadays, home-sharers are mainly workers being in a phase of professional transition or attending vocational training that requires them live for a temporary period in Nantes. The average age of the home-sharers is 31. Some of them, generally women, face difficult social or family situations (divorce, hospitalisation of a close relative, etc.). They look for cheap accommodation and very rapidly see the advantages of such a solution, especially from the

financial point of view: they “pay 10 times less than if they were renting a classical accommodation”. At the same time, these people can be defined as mature and competent, ready to go live with elderly people in more difficult situations.

The exchange of housing for services and a regular presence is made possible thanks to the mediation and support of Time for Roof. The mediation, paid for by the users, consists of different key components, on which depends the success of the home sharing: the selection process of the users; establishment of personalised contact; presentation of the rights and obligations of the users; preventing conflicts between the users; providing capacity-building. Time for Roof plays a role in conflict prevention and management by watching over the situation of the users. Indeed, the situation may become explosive between the two people; the health of the host person may deteriorate rapidly, requiring a decision to be taken urgently. The organisation stays in contact with the users and organises regular meetings with the householder and the home-sharer, generally every month and a half or every 2 months. Training sessions play a major role of support to the home-sharers, especially for those signing a totem contract: professionals help home-sharers to better understand the situation of the elderly and analyse difficulties they may face. The global support provided to users plays a major role in the success and sustainability of the duos, especially in the case of totem contracts.

13.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

In order to develop its sustainability, the association considers itself as part of the social and solidarity-based economy and promotes hybridisation of sources of funding (public, private, non-monetary). Concerning the Time for Roof budget in 2012, one-third comes from the users’ contribution, one-third corresponds to the funding of the paid staff from the Regional Council and Nantes Metropolis, and one-third comes from external funding through calls for projects (public institutions and private foundations). In addition, it is worth mentioning that the association also develops voluntary work: 15 volunteers are recruited for their skills and involved in different types of activities (organisation of conferences and public events, communication, support for users).

The internal organisation of the association raises the question of the quality of work. For the time being, the working team is composed of six full-time paid staff members. The salaries are co-funded by the Regional Council and Nantes Metropolis for a period of 8 years. Each year, the amount financed by the Regional Council is reduced and not compensated by Nantes Metropolis, which means that the association has to develop its own resources in order to keep the paid staff at the end of public funding. In addition, salaries are relatively low.

Working on time-limited projects and contracts that are project-based is not considered as an innovation by the staff. On the one hand, it shows the capacity of the organisation to adapt its work to new constraints and to develop new and innovative projects (for instance, the new project on social housing landlords). On the other hand, this organisational form is not supported by regular funders and well-established welfare policies, which would guarantee continuity of funding and prevent a too high dependency on short-time projects.

13.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The association's cofounders intend to create an impact on the local welfare system. Their main focus concerns intergenerational cohabitation as an alternative solution for keeping elderly people living in their homes. The Time for Roof association raises public awareness through the publication of newsletters, the organisation of public conferences on intergenerational cohabitation, participation in public events organised by vocational training institutes, pension funds, complementary medical assurance funds, etc. The organisation has developed links within the health and home care local sector: professionals, doctors, home care services, not-for-profit organisations, Municipal Social Action Centres and sociologists working on the theme of care for elderly people. The doctors and professional caregivers they are associated with see the positive effects of intergenerational cohabitation on the health of their patients.

Since its creation in 2005, the Time for Roof association is regularly invited by national and local public institutions (ministry of Social Cohesion, General Council, Nantes municipality, etc.) to participate in

working meetings aiming to create strategic priorities in the field of care for elderly people. However, Time for Roof is seen by public institutions as the organiser of an experimental project that is still under construction and not yet as a regular partner in the elaboration of policies. This situation raises the question of the diffusion at a larger scale of such an initiative if intergenerational cohabitation has to be recognised officially. For the time being, there is no juridical framework, the host and housed people do not have an official status recognised by the State, and neither does the signed contract.

For the time being, two French networks of non-governmental organisations exist in the field of intergenerational cohabitation (*Cohabitation Solidaire Intergénérationnelle* and *Logement Intergénérationnel Solidaire*). The lack of public recognition of intergenerational cohabitation and visibility of the associative stakeholders involved in this field may be explained by their financial precariousness and the competition existing between them. As a consequence, we observe the weakness of intergenerational home sharing organisations' coalitions. They lack a common strategic vision and wish to collectively develop advocacy actions towards governmental institutions. Competition between organisations constitutes a real obstacle to social innovation sustainability.

Last but not least, Time for Roof has succeeded in disseminating the project in other locations and for other target groups. In 2007, it reproduced the project in the City of Angers. According to the founders, the local context was easier in Angers: contrary to Nantes, where they are in competition with another association, Time for Roof received the full support of the City of Angers to develop its project. Today, the project is well developed in Angers and one full-time paid staff member works there. In 2012, the association obtained funds from social housing landlords, Nantes Metropolis and the Regional Council to develop a new project in the disadvantaged residential districts. Until now, intergenerational home sharing was not developed for rental lodging, especially social housing, and the most socially excluded people were not addressed by Time for Roof. In the framework of this project, the association comes across new profiles of users and new social needs. In addition, the association should also soon begin a new project in rural areas.

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Joint assessment of families' needs and changes in child care provision for single-parent families

14.1. Short description of the innovation

For the past 20 years, the City of Nantes has been adopting policies in the field of child care services, in order not only to increase the number of places in collective child care facilities but also to achieve social objectives, such as social cohesion and reconciliation between work and family life. Emphasis is put on the most vulnerable groups, such as parents returning to work or completing vocational training and experiencing difficult social situations. This initiative intends to address the issue of low-income single parents for whom access to child care services is an obstacle to labour market inclusion. It is the result of an original joint assessment and a strong partnership between local child care institutions (the City of Nantes, the local Family Allowance Fund and the General Council).

The North Nantes district was chosen because of the density of social housing. Some 200 single-parent recipients of the Active Solidarity Income (RSA) are registered there. The main change for single mothers was the merger in 2009 of the Single Parent Allowance (*Allocation Parent Isolé*) that targeted single parents as part of the RSA programme. As recipients of the RSA, the single parents are now obliged to commit themselves to a process of social and professional inclusion. As a consequence, the General Council in charge of the implementation of the RSA has to find tangible solutions for facilitating the return to employment of single parents. Indeed, a financial incentive such as the RSA has limited effectiveness unless the main barriers to employment for single mothers, such as the lack of suitable child care services, are taken into account.

This innovation can be characterised as an institutional experiment in local welfare governance rather than a grassroots innovation.

14.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

The main innovative dimension is characterised by the improvement of access to child care services for low-income single parents as a way to remove barriers to their professional inclusion. The initiative consists of a new municipal service dedicated to this target group and aiming to develop adequate solutions to their specific needs.

In order to reduce the fragmentation of the local child care system, the City of Nantes set up four Childhood Coordination Centres in the City area in October 2011, in charge of informing and supporting families in their search for early childhood services and of coordinating child care services with other public institutions. Three Childhood Coordination Centres are located in “sensitive urban areas”. The coordinators of the Childhood Coordination Centres play a major role in supporting single mothers undergoing social and professional inclusion: proposing different child care solutions adapted to their needs and contacting the relevant structures with them, acting as an intermediary between the child care services and the employment offices. This coordination between child care and employment services is a major innovation, since before the professionals were not informed of other institutions’ missions and did not contact each other.

In addition, the emergency places service, already existing in Nantes, has been adapted to the needs of low-income single parents looking for a job: the duration period of the emergency care has been extended; new emergency places have been created; a new procedure is in place, giving direct access to places in child care collective centres without going through the municipal admission commission. This exemption of the common rules is characteristic of the initiative, whose aim is to facilitate immediate solutions to emergency situations.

Among the different new services of the initiative, it is also planned to encourage individual care. The idea is to mobilise and support a group of child-minders, who agree to work with single parent families in difficulty. In order to overcome the issue of affordability the City of Nantes, the local CAF and the General Council created a common Guarantee Fund (30,000 euros¹) in case families fail to pay the child-minders.

¹ Each institution gave 10,000 euros.

This Fund is presented as an innovation in that it is a tangible realisation of the cross-cutting approach encouraged by the three institutions in this initiative.

Six months after the beginning of the initiative, we observed the first signs of a lower demand of single parents than expected. Around 20 families benefited from the initiative from January to July 2012. Among them, five families accepted child-minder services, two of them received places in day-care centres in the framework of the new mechanism reserved for professional inclusion, and the rest of the families were given places in day-care centres through emergency places or usual occasional care. In addition, the Guarantee Fund has not been used yet. Possible explanations are that the selection criteria for beneficiaries were too restrictive and the absence of participation of beneficiaries, associations and child-minders in the project’s elaboration.

14.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

In addition to the newly created child care services aiming to remove obstacles to the professional inclusion of single-parent families, the innovative dimension of this institutional initiative consists of the constitution of cross-cutting modes of working and new professional practices.

A main dimension of the innovation is to promote a better long-term coordination between child care services and local employment offices, in order to facilitate the reconciliation of care and work for single mothers. Although the political support of these three institutions was essential for the emergence of the innovation, its success depends on the quality of cooperation practices between professionals from child care and employment sectors. A preparatory phase constituted a very important period of construction of the initiative in as far as it enabled child care and employment professionals to begin working together “to find a common language”, to create interpersonal relationships between professionals and to enable them to integrate the innovation’s objectives and the respective functions they would have to fulfil. After six months of experimenting, professionals attest to the positive impact of the inter-sectorial cooperation: they contact each other to solve situations affecting single parent families and succeed in finding solutions together. Nevertheless, there is a need to enlarge

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this cooperation to other public employment services (Municipal Employment Services, State Agency for job seekers).

This initiative provoked resistance among two professional groups. On the one hand, the idea of mobilising a group of child-minders, who agree to work with single parent families, had been developed following the example of a successful project carried out in another city². The aim is to provide mutual support among child-minders and to give them a secure framework. Nevertheless, in Nantes, 6 months after the beginning of the initiative, the results were very limited. In the local context, where there is a shortage of places, child-minders are in a position to choose the profile of the parents, and low-income single families undergoing professional inclusion are not attractive for them. On the other hand, the introduction of a new framework of action, much more oriented towards the “welfare to work” principle and aiming at changing families’ and professionals’ representations, has impacts on professional practices. Child care professionals and social workers are asked to consider return to work as a new priority in their support to mothers, while until now the focus was put on the wellbeing of the child and the mother. For all groups, child-minders, child care professionals and social workers, the initiative’s new framework of action may be perceived as an intrusion in their practices.

14.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

This innovation has raised awareness among child care professionals and policymakers on the issue of employment and professional inclusion. The introduction of a new priority given to low-income single parents has led to modifications in representations and practices. Concerning municipal child care collective centres, new selection criteria, focusing on this target group, are now used, though it provoked resistance at the beginning among professionals. The idea that child care services should play a role in the professional inclusion of parents is progressively spreading in the local child care system and recognised as legitimate. Nevertheless, it raises the question of whether the innovation could contribute to a sustainable cross-cutting approach between child care and employment policies. In order to enable the

City of Nantes, the local CAF and the General Council to cooperate on concrete objectives, the choice was made to work using a project-based logic with objectives, activities, expected results, division of tasks and responsibilities. It permitted professionals, coming from different institutions, to work on common objectives, but it may be difficult to apply to policies.

Local child care policies are facing a financial withdrawal by the National Family Allowance Fund (CNAF), rationalisation of resources and a constant drive for public spending efficiency. In this context, the financial sustainability of this kind of initiative constitutes a major issue. Therefore, the approach chosen by the municipality is to integrate this innovation into local child care policies. The local CAF has a similar strategy of promoting progressive inclusion of the innovation in its general framework of action. A possibility would be to mention the initiative in the Childhood-Youth Contract that frames the financial relationship between the CAF and the municipalities. The three institutional partners in the initiative are planning to carry out an evaluation on the results of the innovation 1 year after its launch. The aim is to decide whether a duplication of the initiative is relevant or not. All three institutions express the desire to pursue the initiative, planned for 2 years, and apply it to the whole territory of Nantes.

Nevertheless, the approach chosen for the dissemination of the initiative, that is to say, an inclusion in mainstream local child care and employment policies, brings into question the possibility of reproducing it. Indeed, the success of the initiative relies mostly on the existing network of child care and employment professionals, who participated in the construction of the mechanisms developed. “The transmission of good practices through procedural guidelines will not be enough to reproduce the initiative to other districts and among other professionals³”. Strong commitment by the three public institutions may be needed to support the dissemination and encourage a larger number of local professionals towards making important changes in their practices and representations.

2 The City of Grigny.

3 Interview with a coordinator of a childhood coordination centre, North Nantes district.

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The *Lieux Collectifs de Proximité* network

15.1. Short description of the innovation

The network of “Lieux Collectifs de Proximité” (“neighbourhood community places” referred to hereafter as LCP) was created in April 2010 by seven local initiatives⁴ as a means to enable their development and sustainability, to professionalise their modes of working and secure long-term funding. In the framework of a collective project aiming at defining their common features and recognising the specificity of their work, a name and a definition were elaborated by the seven initiatives:

An LCP is a place that is open to all, with a strong identity, located in different neighbourhoods in Nantes Metropolis. It produces services aiming to strengthen social diversity, social ties and citizenship, improving living surroundings, reinforcing community dynamic. Therefore, it promotes inhabitants’ direct participation and cooperation with other local stakeholders, including public institutions. The LCP is an innovative stakeholder in its territory at the level of governance and delivered services. Its services are complementary to public institutions and it plays the role of a bridge between inhabitants and these institutions.

This definition enables very different initiatives to gather around common objectives. Their diversity concerns their location (city centre, middle-class neighbourhood, socially disadvantaged district, Nantes City suburbs) as well as the profile of their target groups (women, families, youth, children) and the content of the actions. We can underline the following activities as the main characteristics of the seven local initiatives:

- > social inclusion and professional integration for disadvantaged youth and women, enhancing their professional know-how (sewing, dry-cleaning, child care, intercultural cooking, etc.);
- > social and cultural development of children;
- > reinforcing parenthood, strengthening ties between parents and children;
- > creating exchanges of know-how (computer, cooking, art, etc.) and mutual support between neighbourhood inhabitants;

⁴ The network consists of the following seven local initiatives: *A l’abordage*, a café for children, created in 2004, *L’Equipage*, a bookshop created in 2009, *L’ilot Familles* (2010), *Rencontres Amitiés et Partage Interculturels* (“Intercultural Meetings and Friendship” referred to hereafter as RAPI), (2009), *Regart’s* (2005), *Style Alpaga* (1995), *Tak Après* (1999).

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- > developing an economic activity as a means to support collective projects: for instance, the production of food catering services, based on the know-how and participation of the women, enables financing of cultural activities aimed at reinforcing the sense of citizenship among immigrant women.

Although the LCP network was created by grassroots initiatives, public institutions and well-known non-governmental organisations have played a major role in its conception and development. Indeed, the specific local context of Nantes Metropolis Social and Solidarity-based Economy (SSE) policies and the existence of a close public-private partnership have contributed to the emergence of the LCP network. Nantes Metropolis has been developing proactive SSE policies for years. Recognised as major local non-governmental associations, in 2010 *Ecosolies*⁵ and *Animation Rurale 44*⁶ participated in the first meetings between LCP leaders and worked with Nantes Metropolis to formulate the idea of funding the development of a network.

15.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

One of the main LCP initiatives' specificities is to focus on conviviality as a goal in itself and as a way to achieve its objectives (social inclusion, professional integration, etc.). This is an important dimension of the LCP, created as friendly places where women and families feel at ease and not only as social services providers. The innovative dimension of the LCP lies in their capacity to create family-minded and friendly spaces of exchanges and meetings among people as a way to combat social exclusion and loneliness of people living close by. For instance, the cafés *L'Equipage* and *A l'Abordage* have become a point of reference for parents and isolated inhabitants experiencing temporary difficult situations: divorces, long-term unemployment, disability, recent arrival in the city, etc. Construction of social ties is the key element for helping women in difficult social situations: "poverty without social ties, it is hell".

National and local studies have shown the increasing number of people who do not have recourse to their rights, either because they are not aware of them, or

because they have given up on the possibility of gaining access to their rights (discouragement when faced with the complexity of administrative procedures, loss of self-esteem, stigmatisation effects, etc.). This issue constitutes a major challenge for LCP initiatives. Indeed, the LCP leaders feel that the inhabitants they meet lack confidence in public institutions and this problem is more acute in the socially disadvantaged districts with a high concentration of migrants and French families with foreign origins. Each LCP initiative has developed networks with local social institutions (Family Allowance Office), associations and professionals (jurists, psychologists, etc.), so that it can orientate or support users to contact the right body, provide inhabitants with information on their rights (domestic violence, immigration law) and develop their capabilities to overcome difficult situations (arrival of the first child at home, divorce). Nevertheless, as far as mediation between users and public administrations is concerned, the key innovative dimension of the LCP initiatives lies in their capacity to welcome newcomers in a family-minded and convivial atmosphere, which enables users to re-create social ties and self-confidence, disclose social difficulties and then find adequate solutions, in relation to local partners.

The LCP initiatives all aim to develop co-productive approaches that build on the resources of the addressees. The activities developed by each LCP are based on the know-how, skills and preferences of the members and users willing to commit themselves to the association: production of food catering services, organisation of thematic workshops (well-being, music, travelling, sewing, etc.). They also promote empowering approaches for their members, highlighting their skills (either parental, either concerning a specific professional field) thanks to workshops organised with the support of professionals.

Several LCP initiatives specifically address professional integration of women considered as disqualified into the labour market. They promote a global approach of social support to women and families, which may be considered as innovative in the national and local context. Indeed, two main approaches towards social and professional inclusion may be distinguished. On the one hand, national and local institutions are developing programmes addressing low-income single parents for whom access to child care services is the main obstacle to labour market inclusion (see innovation II above). On the other hand, the LCP initiatives integrate the

⁵ Created in 2006 and regrouping a large number of local SSE stakeholders (associations, cooperatives, foundations, social entrepreneurs, etc.).

⁶ Specialised in childhood and youth projects.

professional dimension into more open support for women where gaining self-confidence, highlighting their own skills, developing their social networks, resolving concrete problems, such as mobility and access to transport, health, social rights, knowledge of the French language and culture, are as important as child care, when considering the return to work of women in difficult social situations and disqualified on the labour market.

15.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

After a first period of development, the LCP initiatives are in the process of clarifying their working methods in line with the classical path generally taken by voluntary organisations. Today's LCP leaders were among the founders and their personal commitment was a determinant factor in the project's success. At the same time, the volunteers are playing an important role in the working organisation with tasks such as reception of users, organisation of workshops, administrative work, etc.

Securing professional positions, professionalising the modes of working and strengthening the users' participation are the main current challenges. First of all, over the years most of the LCP initiatives have obtained public funding for one or several professional positions (an average of 2.7 full-time equivalent per LCP). Nevertheless, public funding is limited in its duration (2 or 3 years according to the contracts). It is important to note the precarious professional situation of the LCP professionals: absence of long-term perspectives for themselves and the structure, low level of salaries in comparison with the responsibilities and skills they have, quantitative deficiency of paid staff members in comparison with the overload of work. It has contributed to difficulties inside the structures: professional burn-out, difficulty in continuously giving time and attention to users when administrative work becomes more and more time-consuming. Secondly, it raises the question of the respective roles of volunteers and professionals in the LCP organisation. Until now, the separation between volunteers and paid staff members' skills and responsibilities has not been very strictly defined in the LCP organisation. The LCP are assessing the limits of such an organisation and expressing a need for more professional skills. The priority is today to recruit professionals whose function is to support volunteers' participation, whose skills enable to mobilise

volunteers on the LCP project and coordinate them around common objectives and activities.

In order to develop its sustainability, the LCP initiatives are developing diversification strategies and sources of funding. All seven LCPs have succeeded in mixing public, private and non-monetary resources. Public funding⁷ constitutes the main resource of the LCP (from 58-92 per cent of their budget). Four LCP have private resources (an average of 30 per cent of the budget) thanks to the services they sell to users. Important commitment of volunteers is highlighted in three LCP.

In this context of fragile internal organisation, the LCP network is used as a tool for securing professional positions and developing longstanding sustainability. Since its creation in 2010, the LCP network has been functioning as a loose and flexible structure, dedicated to strengthening the organisational capacities of the seven initiatives. We can underline the organisation of training sessions and exchanges of experiences between LCP leaders. Nevertheless, the main achievement of the LCP network is the decision of the City of Nantes and Nantes Metropolis in May 2013 to secure and fund the directors/coordinators' positions for the seven LCP on a long-term basis. The intense capacity-building process initiated in 2011 by the network has led to the official recognition of the LCP as innovative stakeholders and to additional funding, in particular for the most urgent needs: salaries and premises. Furthermore, the City of Nantes and Nantes Metropolis have agreed to fund a "mutual support platform" with the recruitment of two professionals (support to the directors in the performance of their multiple functions, fundraising, bookkeeping, etc.).

15.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The LCP network plays a classical network role, which is to make its members more visible and legitimate them. The network creates much more important opportunities for dialogue and negotiation with public institutions than those each LCP could have on its own. It enables the LCP leaders to make their voices heard and advocate about common problems they face, such as lack of premises and the precariousness of professional staff. They also recognise that belonging

⁷ Funding comes from the State, the General Council, the City of Nantes, Nantes Metropolis and the Family Allowance Fund.

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to the network and being in contact with well-established NGOs permitted them to reduce possible misunderstandings with political representatives (better understanding of the political world's codes of conduct and decision-making processes' slowness, in contrast to the field-based realities they face in everyday life).

The main innovation of the LCP network is its capacity to have obtained cross-cutting funding for the LCP network as a whole, especially in the national and local context of public funds' reduction and the economic crisis. Indeed, the City of Nantes and Nantes Metropolis agreed to finance the sustainability of the LCP network, which means that each of the seven LCP receives long-term funding because they belong to the network and independently of the sectorial policies that may be concerned by each LCP's activities. It recognises LCP's added value in developing cross-cutting approaches in the same place (parenthood and children, citizen participation, social mediation, professional integration, etc.).

In addition, the strength of the network lies in its capacity to maintain collective negotiations, which has helped to enhance its autonomy and legitimacy with public institutions and the initiatives themselves. The collective dimension of the LCP network's advocacy introduced, for public institutions, insecurity in the decision-making process and potential loss of power. The City of Nantes is not used to negotiating funding for associations on a multilateral principle and attempted to obtain bilateral decisions or to divide LCP initiatives. However, the LCP leaders, supported by *Ecosolies* and *Animation Rurale 44*, kept on defending a collective position towards public institutions.

It raises the issue of the LCP network's governance, the role of the LCP initiatives' Boards of Administration, absent from the negotiation process, and the independence of the LCP network from public institutions. The new mutual sharing platform should be coordinated by a governance body, in which the City of Nantes and Nantes Metropolis intend to participate along with several LCP leaders, *Ecosolies* and *Animation Rurale 44* representatives. Although this model of collaborative governance can be viewed as innovative in its capacity to secure a public-associative partnership, it raises the issue to what extent LCP non-professional members, whose participation is supposed to be at the core of the projects and guarantee the initiatives' collective dimension and autonomy, are

considered (or not) as legitimate and key stakeholders in the governance of this kind of regulation body.

Conclusions

Sustainability

The innovations studied in Nantes are quite recent and still developing. Nevertheless, they have reached a certain level of stabilisation and are already overcoming difficulties. Therefore, we can already underline several key elements of sustainability.

One important aspect is the integration in broad coalitions. Initial support from the local political sphere is often a crucial factor in the process by which local social policy innovations emerge, as they depend mainly on public funding. Local allies, especially among elected officials, open windows of opportunity. The challenge of sustainability is to strengthen the initial political and/or administrative support over time and ensure that it is not merely a temporary boost. Long-standing commitment is decisive for building broader local coalitions of stakeholders and creating bridges between different political fields and administrative departments. This is, for instance, the strategy used by the LCP network for strengthening the seven local initiatives. Similarly, the strong partnership between the City of Nantes, the General Council and the CAF is a condition of sustainability of the initiative. Conversely, although it received support from elected district representatives at the beginning, which contributed to open the doors to public funding, Time for Roof did not succeed over time in building broader local coalitions of stakeholders. This is one of the factors impeding the association from being fully legitimate and securing its sustainability.

Building broad institutional coalitions requires federating all stakeholders: elected representatives and civil servants; high and intermediary levels (directors of administrative services and professionals, such as social workers, etc.). If one of them is missing, it can jeopardise the success of the innovation.

Integration into non-governmental networks and coalitions are a way to enhance public recognition of the social innovation. For social innovations that emerged from grassroots non-governmental organisations, a main challenge of sustainability is to integrate broader local and national networks as a way to legitimate

their actions and benefit from resources already developed by other structures. This is the case of the LCP network, which has contributed to increasing the power of negotiation of each particular social initiative and lobbied public institutions on common issues and challenges. The main factor is the support of two local well-recognised non-governmental organisations (*Ecosolies* and *Animation Rurale 44*), which use their own resources, such as direct contacts with political elected officials and civil servants, to promote the grassroots initiatives. On the contrary, we could say that the absence of fruitful cooperation between Time for Roof and other national or regional umbrellas involved in intergenerational cohabitation hinders public recognition of the social innovation.

Are public-private partnerships a risk for social innovation's independence? Broad coalitions of public institutions and non-governmental associations may lead to the constitution of close partnerships, enabling them to secure public funding for social innovations. It is the case in the LCP project, in which a new governance body comprises public institutions, two local NGOs and the LCP leaders (professionals). However, it could jeopardise social innovations' independence in relation to public institutions, in as far as representatives of grassroots initiatives are in a minority and LCP initiatives' Boards of Administration are not invited to be members.

Co-construction of new working cultures, quality of work and associative governance

New innovative practices challenge their surroundings and the social innovation's protagonists themselves. Although the change promoters may be convinced of the relevancy of the new working culture brought by the innovation, the stakeholders involved in its co-production and implementation (professional staff, volunteers, users, etc.) may be sceptical or reluctant to integrate new professional cultures and practices. The participation of stakeholders in the co-construction of the project and the existence of a capacity-building process are crucial for the sustainability of the social innovation. For instance, in the project initiated by the City of Nantes, a preparatory phase organised for child care and employment services enabled professionals to overcome their fears and resistance. In the LCP project, external consultants provided LCP leaders with training and capacity building. It enabled them to co-construct a common identity, culture and practices with the grassroots initiatives.

In its first phase of development, social innovation does not have a stable organisational structure and generally requires polyvalence and the capacity to mix different skills (social, administrative, financial, political, technical, etc.), to adapt and react rapidly to new situations. In this context, professionals often face precarious working conditions, overload of work, low salaries, non-recognition of their skills and burn-out. Therefore, a key factor of sustainability is the capacity of the social innovation to stabilise its working conditions and find longstanding solutions to the professionals' precariousness.

Social innovations often emerge thanks to the strong personal commitment of the founders, giving time on a voluntary basis and being available for developing the project and contacts. Thus, it raises the question of sustainability beyond the investment of a few individuals. The capacity for developing and maintaining a collective dimension, implying the participation of users and volunteers in the co-production of services and in the governance body, is also a main challenge of sustainability.

Diversification and consolidation strategies for mobilising funds and resources

This is a key point because funding support for innovation remains fragile. It is often project-based, limited in time and depreciation-based. The role of specific funding mechanisms is important for the emergence of social innovation. The existence of public calls for proposals dedicated to the emergence of new projects is an important factor of development for social innovations. It is interesting to note that public funds do not often come from sectorial social policies (housing, elderly people, child care, etc.) but from cross-cutting policies, such as Social and Solidarity-based Economy policies or the Social European Fund. For instance, the Social and Solidarity-based Economy Call for Proposals, created in 2006 by Nantes Metropolis, plays a major role in support for grassroots initiatives: between 2006 and 2010, 129 grants were allocated to 73 organisations for a total amount of 673,000 euros.

Nevertheless, in as far as this first support is limited in its duration, the main challenge is long-term funding for social innovations. Co-funding strategies are often the result of local authorities' rules and practices; as they are reluctant to invest in a project alone, building a local coalition of funders is often necessary. In this context, diversification strategies

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can mean getting funds from local authorities and public institutions at different levels and in charge of skills in different fields. As a consequence, fund-raising often becomes a permanent activity for social innovations and takes an enormous amount of time, without the assurance that the result will be positive and often to the detriment of time spent with users. In addition, time-limited funding constitutes a real limitation since it requires social innovations to keep on running after new opportunities (calls for proposals, etc.). It also requires adapting project proposals to the selection criteria defined by public institutions or private foundations. This may lead to paradoxical situations for social innovations. For instance, in order to get financial support, Time for Roof is required to keep on proposing new innovating projects. As a consequence, it faces the following contradiction: it is not given the means to sustain its innovation and constantly faces risks of destabilisation of its structure by being forced to innovate all the time.

Furthermore, the sustainability of social innovations raises the question of the continuity and the quality of the support given by public institutions. In Nantes, once social innovations are no longer funded by the SSE Call for Proposals, there are no other specific budget lines and we note a vacuum between the first grants given to the new innovative projects and the support given to more consolidated projects by sectorial administrative departments (employment, housing, child care, etc.) but not adapted to social innovations still under construction.

There is a need for the development of cross-cutting funding between different policy fields. Social innovation often concerns several policy fields (housing, child care, employment, youth, care for elderly people and social and solidarity-based economy policies) and demonstrates that cross-cutting approaches are suitable to address complex social problems. However, it faces many obstacles and resistance, as the sectorial division of policy fields is deeply rooted in the welfare system and its modification requires long-term cultural changes, loss of power and budgets, etc. Nevertheless, we observe that the LCP project and the initiative led by the City of Nantes succeeded in obtaining cross-cutting and inter-institutional funding (City of Nantes, Nantes Metropolis, General Council, CAF). Future evaluation would enable analysis of the sustainability of such new funding mechanisms.

Mixed funding also implies mobilising private resources from private foundations, user contributions or the sale of services. In comparison with other inter-generational home sharing projects, Time for Roof has developed an original economic model in which financial participation of the users is a key element of sustainability. Users' contributions finance 60-70 per cent of the intermediary role played by the association (support to the users, mediation, etc.).

Finally, non-monetary contributions from user participation or volunteer contributions could also be a component in a hybridised balance of resources. In some cases, it is at the heart of the projects, as in the LCP initiatives, where parents, women and inhabitants are co-producers of the activities provided. In this context, renewal of volunteers, user participation and social mix are both key internal human resources for the sustainability of the service and an important external factor of legitimisation as well as of independence in the relation with partners and funders.

Dissemination

Diffusion is defined as the possibility of "mainstreaming" the respective organised projects, not only their operations, but also their central instruments, patterns, values and "messages", thereby influencing the institutional architecture as well as mind-sets in societies, their local welfare systems and governance.

New projects, identified as innovative in a particular context, may be based on other experimentations conceptualised and implemented elsewhere. However, in order to be successful, dissemination of good practices cannot be disconnected from local context specificities. The same innovative concept may lead to very diverse initiatives on the ground, and implies adaptation in response to local issues. Among various factors, the understanding, position and support from various stakeholders (public bodies, professionals, users, etc.) who structure the local "professional milieu" is a key element of diffusion. For instance, Time for Roof encountered strong political support in the city of Angers that enabled it to rapidly develop inter-generational homes sharing based on the model conceived in Nantes. Conversely, the City of Nantes faced child-minders' resistance to cooperate. This can be explained by a lack of analysis of the Nantes context: the City of Nantes had taken for granted the conclusions of a similar project in the city of Grigny, where most child-minders were unemployed and looking for

job. By contrast, child-minders in Nantes face a strong demand from parents and are able to choose those who propose secure funding.

Dissemination processes need formalised mechanisms for transferring and adapting concepts, know-how and skills to various promoters and stakeholders. This point can be illustrated in different ways by the Nantes case studies: training sessions for LCP leaders, creation of a collective LCP charter; working sessions for child care and employment services' professionals, elaboration of common working tools (information documents, procedures).

Communication plays a main role in dissemination. Innovative projects tend to diversify as much as possible their communication tools: websites, local press articles, publication in academic press, participation in diverse conferences and public events, etc. Besides, the support given by public institutions is another key factor of diffusion. For instance, the LCP has benefited from broad coverage by *Ecosolies* and Nantes Metropolis, which funded the production of a documentary film presenting the network. It is presented systematically during official conferences, in the press and in website articles, and has become a kind of emblematic local successful project.

Dissemination of an innovative concept generally faces resistance at local and national levels. In order to defend social, economic and/or cultural changes they promote, innovations may rely on the expertise of researchers and specialists. For instance, the Time for Roof cofounders regularly organise public events to which they invite experts (sociologists, economists, doctors, etc.), in order to make intergenerational cohabitation recognised as a sustainable alternative in the care of dependent elderly people.

Expertise can be external, as for Time for Roof, or developed as an internal tool. For instance, the City of Nantes has a Policies Evaluation Service (Mission Evaluation Publiques), playing a role of expertise body. It gives resources and capacities, in terms of policies' analysis and reforms' implementation that many French cities do not have. It played an important role in the emergence of the experimentation and in its diffusion (conducting evaluations, spreading results via publications and public conferences).

Dissemination strategies aiming to influence the institutional architecture of local welfare systems and governance may consist of integrating social innova-

tions into local mainstream policies. In a context of funding scarcity, this is the strategy chosen by the City of Nantes in order to disseminate the initiative in all Nantes districts. Nevertheless, it raises the question as to what extent it may have a "mainstreaming" effect and influence modifications in the welfare system or, on the contrary, lead to the social innovation being emptied of its contents by stronger routine professional practices.

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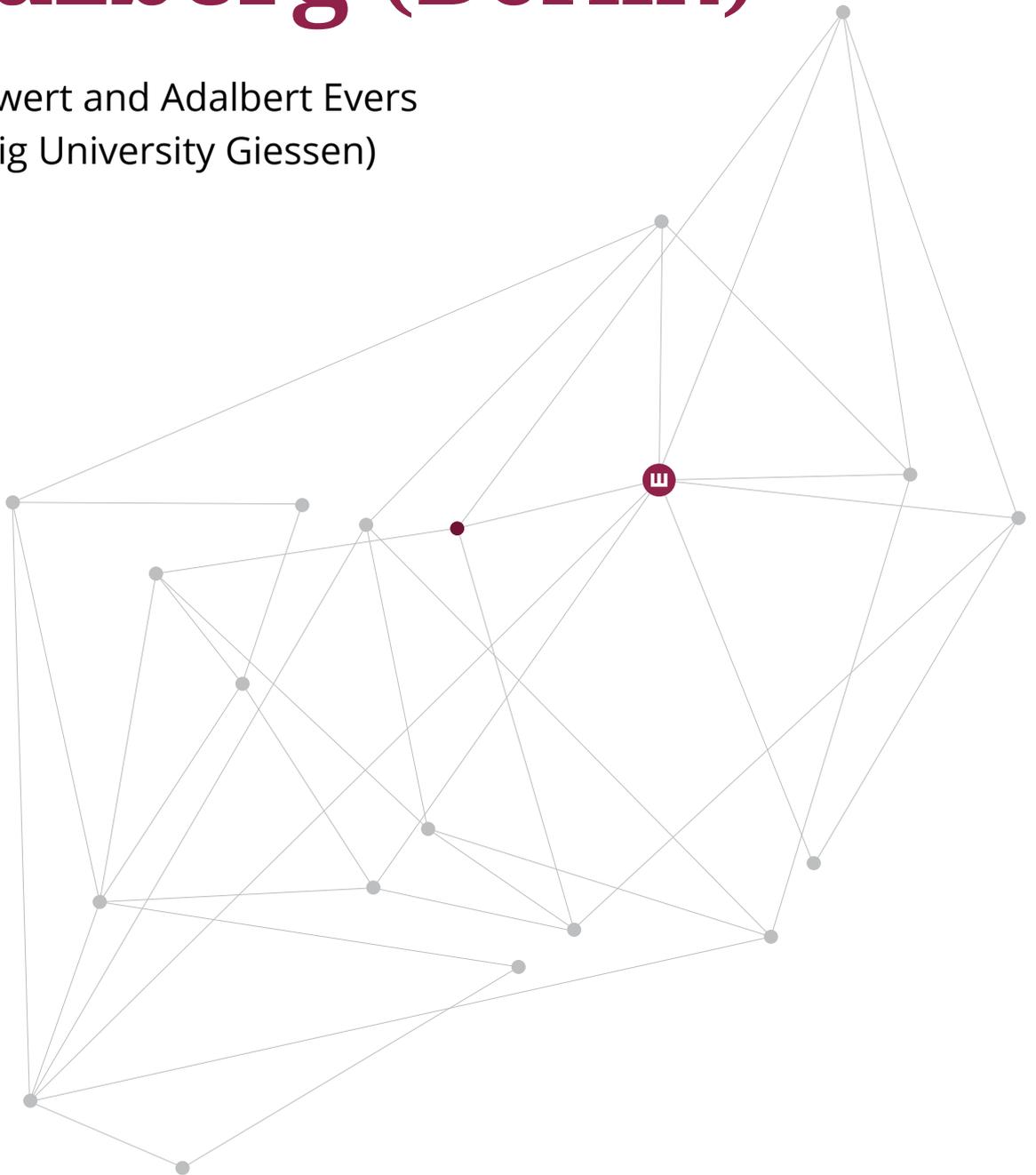
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DE Germany

Friedrichshain - Kreuzberg (Berlin)

Benjamin Ewert and Adalbert Evers
(Justus-Liebig University Giessen)



DE

Friedrichshain -
Kreuzberg (Berlin)

Authors

Benjamin Ewert and Adalbert Evers
(Justus-Liebig University Giessen)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Community development
Empowerment
Entrepreneurship
European Social Fund
Family Centres
Family-minded
Gentrification
Labour market integration
Local context
Participation
Political administrative system
Social cohesion
Social housing policies
Social investment
Third sector organisations
Urban gardening
Welfare governance
Welfare mixes

Social innovations do not come “out of the blue” but capitalise on different resources, e.g. human capital and public support, available at the locality where they are developed and put into practice. Moreover, social innovations, perceived as indicators and messengers, respond to social problems occurring at a particular time and place. They point to local areas and issues blocked off from change and inform about local opportunity structures to tackle social problems and needs. Hence, new routine-breaking services or approaches of addressing users say a lot about the specific nature of a location, e.g. whether its political system is open and participatory instead of being a closed shop driven by elites or whether certain policies are realised by collaborative working and networking instead of uncoordinated action. By applying this perspective on social innovations to the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in Berlin, one gets a rather mixed image of a locality that describes itself as young, multicultural, creative and “always on the move”. Indeed, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg represents a unique mixture of different historical legacies, streams of thinking, social movements and communities that overlap, intermingle and collide with each other at the same time.

Merged into one district in 2001, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is characterised by the East-West divide that brought along different groups of residents, neighbourhoods and urban planning approaches. Friedrichshain was East Berlin’s workers district with industry premises alongside the Spree River and huge (classical old-style) housing stocks. Kreuzberg, having also traditionally a proletarian character, became the assigned home of West Berlin’s guest workers and a homeland of creative bohemians pursuing an alternative subculture distant from the “normal” labour market. From these colourful histories emanated (at least) two discourses that still have an impact on today’s local policies. First, a discourse on solidarity, social coherence and a fair share of opportunities for everybody in the district, which leads to a simple question: what holds a diverse, both in terms of origins and capabilities, urban society together? Second, an economic discourse that centres on the question how to re-industrialise the district and how to spread an entrepreneurial spirit among its residents.

Today’s answers of these challenges are manifold. With regard to urban coherence, many local pundits conjure the integrative strength of the *Kiez*, a German synonym for well-functioning neighbourhoods based on reciprocal solidarity. In order to preserve those “social habitats”, policymakers attempt to spread an attitude of “togetherness” and cooperation among local stakeholders and inhabitants. When it comes to the economic development of the district, hopes emanate from companies, symbolising the spirit of a new creative industry, such as *Universal Music and MTV* that based their headquarters in Friedrichshain’s old factory sites. Other strategies focus primarily on an upturn of the local economy, e.g. those that stimulate entrepreneurial skills among migrants and job seekers by combining the issue of (social) integration with local trends such as tourism and gastronomy.

A key reference point for social innovations in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is the concept of spatial policy interventions dividing the urban space in manageable units and areas of coordinated action. Four of our six social innovations introduced below conceptualised their services by taking the particularities of certain urban and social spaces – housing blocks, quarters and neighbourhoods – into account. However, for an analysis of this approach two different dimensions have to be separated: first, the professional dimension at the level of social workers and administrators after which spatial policy interventions, involving all local stakeholders, are a panacea against urban decay that is more promising than uniform programmes administrated single-handedly by the authorities. Second, “spatial policies” are combined with debates of public self-assurance. By addressing local identities and strengthening people’s local patriotism (e.g. through campaigns such as “We in Kreuzberg”) a sense of belonging to the district should be enforced.

However, in order to avoid a simplistic picture that portrays Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg euphemistically as a dynamic breeding ground for social innovations it is worth noting that there is growing social division among its residents. On the one hand, there is an ongoing influx of well-educated better-offs, such as cosmopolitans, young professionals, silver agers and double-income households. This clientele, having little or no interest in local politics and social problems, choose the district for life and living due to its central location in Berlin and its cultural richness. On the other hand, there are native residents and rather ordinary people – immigrants, bohemians, single parents and GDR-socialised seniors – with low income who are becoming ever more marginalised in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. This diverse clientele of vulnerable people, being hard to reach by traditional social policy programs, is increasingly addressed “in a different way” by innovative projects and service arrangements as we will show in this report. Of course, this differs according to policy fields and groups. However, certain target groups, e.g. single mothers or youngsters without a school degree, have cumulated problems and therefore need comprehensive support packages.

By and large, we found many routine-breaking service arrangements and projects in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. We thereby confirm the self-image of many local activists describing their scene as Berlin’s “spearhead of an active civil society”. However, actual contribu-

tions of “active citizens” and third sector organisations concern foremost the issues of labour market integration and child care but lack innovations dealing with the most urgent problem of the district: the scarcity of social housing. This imbalance goes back to the fact that in Germany housing policies are determined by the federal government, whereas the Berlin Senate (state level/Land) and the districts (local level) have merely some leeway to decide how to allocate and manage existing housing stocks. Structural developments, such as substantial investments in new (social) housing stocks, are beyond the power of Berlin’s government (Senate and district). In this respect, the housing market differs much from other policy fields that leave space for decentralised solutions. As a consequence, potential innovators, e.g. initiatives of residents or neighbourhood groups, are thus far limiting their activism to creative forms of protest and public presence. To put it in a nutshell: rising rents and the gradual replacement of the poor (immigrants, single parents, the unemployed) are hot public issues in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg that have triggered an ongoing debate on urban development and social cohesion but have not yet led to innovations in social housing policies.

The six innovations introduced below were chosen according to the following criteria: first, we applied a broad and neutral definition of “innovation”, indicating merely new ways to deal with social problems while abstaining from predefined (normative) goals. Second, we distinguish between different drivers, such as managerialism, participatory governance and/or forms of progressive professionalism, e.g. schools opening up to the community or social workers bridging their services with local support networks. We are convinced that innovations in the realm of local social policy consist necessarily of both a certain project and an underlying background approach. The respective scale of innovations and their future developments depend on another factor: the implementing power of the stakeholder(s) who put(s) them into practice and the relationship to the dominating policy coalition. This tension is (very often) reflected in practical and symbolic levels of innovations. On the one hand, innovations are about looking at concrete offers and services; on the other hand, they are also about being engaged in the dissemination of messages about the wider meaning and visions of their practices and offers.

DE**Friedrichshain -
Kreuzberg (Berlin)****Authors**Benjamin Ewert and Adalbert Evers
(Justus-Liebig University Giessen)

Local background of the social innovations

The six social innovations to be presented in this report were chosen based on background interviews with local stakeholders and our own investigations of available resources (newspapers, websites, policy documents). The choice of innovations, ranging from urban revitalisation programmes and new forms of vocational training to family-minded policies, remains exemplary and incomplete. Each example stands for similar innovative projects in the district that we cannot introduce for reasons of space. The portraits of the six innovations, introduced by a comprehensive description, are organised around three basic themes: 1) types of services and ways of addressing users; 2) internal organisation and modes of working; 3) embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system. For each case study, we draw on at least two interviews: one with the respective social innovator and one with experienced users and/or local observers of the innovation. The innovations are presented in the context of policy fields. We start with two innovations in urban revitalisation, continue with two projects in the field of labour market integration and finish with two cases of family-focussed policies. In practice, however, most of our examples pursue integrated actions plans. They thus belong to more than one policy field and address more than one group we focus on, for instance by bridging urban renewal with the stimulation of entrepreneurialism.

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Neighbourhood Management (NM)

16.1. Short description

The innovative core of NM is combining spatial and urban planning with sectorial policy interventions in a defined territory (see above). Hence, the background approach of NM is mainly about networking among stakeholders and the pooling of local resources within districts with special development needs. The project is financed by a federal-regional programme called “Socially Integrative City”. We have studied NM via a real example in Kreuzberg Zentrum, an area that is home to some 8,000 inhabitants. The majority of people have an immigration background. In this area, NM treats persisting local problems in a new way – such as high numbers of youngsters without a school degree, immigrant quotas in kindergarten and schools of up to 90 percent, and a milieu that lacks overall access to decent education and jobs. The NM team, consisting of a full-time manager and two employees, facilitate contacts and exchange between local authorities, service providers (TSOs), cultural associations, and residents in order to support informal cooperation and non-bureaucratic help. For instance, the NM invites headmasters from local schools and kindergartens on a regular basis, in order to encourage discussion on comprehensive educational concepts for the district. However, it is worth noting that NM does not follow blueprints or best practice models that are prescribed top-down but sets its own agenda in each neighbourhood.

16.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

As a low-threshold, neighbourhood located and participative project NM teams invite everybody – inhabitants, communities, professionals and the local economy – within a locality to contribute to urban revitalisation and social cohesion. By providing the infrastructure (rooms, resources, etc.) and organisational guidance, NM teams address inhabitants of social hotspots such as Kreuzberg Zentrum as “owners of their neighbourhood” and encourage them to participate in local projects. Many different levels of involvement exist though. For instance, “being involved” may merely mean taking part in a photo competition searching for powerful pictures of living together in the Kiez. More commitment is asked of youngsters considering being graffiti artists or residents devising a campaign to keep the neighbourhood clean and safe. Beyond such creative-practical hands-on-offers, locals are addressed as people who associate and develop their own small-scale offers. To realise promising ideas such as a workshop on intercultural learning or the planting of flowerbeds in concreted backyards, the NM has an ad-hoc

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Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

fund at its disposal (up to 1,000 euros per project). Furthermore, local inhabitants are called to become part of the actual management of the neighbourhood. As elected members of so-called neighbourhood boards they have a say on the issues to be dealt with and how budgets are distributed. All in all, the NM approach addresses people as volunteers and co-producers for the common public good in their neighbourhoods. In practice, however, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg's NMs struggle to find sufficient people competent enough to participate in boards or in conceptual workshops. "People in the neighbourhood need consultancy and support to master their life. Only a few are able to contribute something to the community", states Werner Oehlert, a local expert for urban planning.

16.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

If one looks at NMs staffing levels it becomes clearer how dependent they are on volunteer contributions. The NM Kreuzberg Zentrum has only three employees: a full-time manager and two half-time office workers. Other NMs in Kreuzberg, responsible for larger areas, operate with up to five employees. The core of the management work is to find the right balance between three main tasks of the NM: to be a well-known, low-threshold meeting point in the Kiez; to support residents with daily-life problems through easy-to-access-services ranging from after-school homework supervision to consultancy for various social and bureaucratic problems (employment, housing, care, etc.); and to build up networks among local stakeholders. Local people – kids, youngsters, adults, families and women – who visit the NM at its friendly, café-like office receive bundled information about existing service offers in the neighbourhood, of which only few are provided by the NM. "We don't need more offers but more knowledge on services that are already there", says Laila Atrache-Younes, manager of the NM Kreuzberg Zentrum.

Networking activities also include exchange and time for reflection with (bordering) NMs in Kreuzberg. However, the real challenge for NM staff is to keep up an infrastructure where all stakeholders are in regular contact and learn from each other through mutual exchange. In this respect, good networking means, e.g. to facilitate exchange between the biggest

local housing company and a parents initiative or organising coaching for pupils with learning deficits. In this real case, the housing company provided free office rooms in order to support the initiative. In other cases, though, effective steering of networks is more difficult, particularly collaboration around issues such as child care, schooling and the composition of classes. So far, solutions do not exist how to avoid so-called "left-over-schools" where up to 100 per cent of the pupils are immigrants and where the quota of dropouts without a school certificate is out of proportion. "Headmasters of those schools have more urgent things to do than reasoning about a problem that needs foremost structural reforms in the allocation of school places", reports Ms Atrache-Younes.

16.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Despite having a "good grip on reality" in the neighbourhoods, the impact of NMs on the governance of local welfare systems is limited. NMs are in an odd situation: as junctions of thematic networks they accumulate detailed knowledge about social problems such as segregated schools or long-term unemployment. Nevertheless, NMs are not "real players" in the local governance system, able to change structures that do not work in practice. Instead, they are "add-on institutions" working parallel to traditional authorities and welfare providers. While the latter mostly still operate alongside sectors and policy fields, NMs are insulated counterpoints to the pillarisation of welfare and urban planning. They provide non-bureaucratic support, work in cross-sectorial networks, and involve citizens at eye-to-eye level. The crux of this innovative approach is that NMs, being not fully recognised by politics, lack large-scale results and are practically not allowed to take up hot policy issues. In this respect, the problem of increasing rents in Kreuzberg is a telling example: NMs, financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), the federal state and the Land Berlin, lacked the clout to bring the burning issue to the agenda. Instead, a group of protesting tenants, camping permanently at the Kottbusser Tor, has become a political player in the debate on social housing. "NMs are determined to help-out where traditional social policy has failed. Political recommendations or even critical comments are not requested by the contracting entity", says Werner Oehlert, missing, in particular, a stronger interlocking between NMs

and sectorial policies: “Cooperation among schools is good but without support from the competent authority it is nothing.” In summary, the innovative character of NMs is weakened by their low impact on the local political system that forces NMs to leave out issues that move people. Vice versa, the actual work of NMs becomes neither evaluated nor benchmarked while public claims concerning the approach are not communicated effectively.

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Princesses Gardens

17.1. Short description

The so-called Princesses Gardens in Kreuzberg offer a complex project that attempts to change people's mind sets on a broader scale than most of the pragmatic solutions in the realm of welfare. As a part of the international urban gardening movement, the highly attractive project pursues an alternative approach how to use urban space ecologically and sustainably. Without having concrete short-term goals (such as lowering unemployment among youngsters or caring for certain people in need), Princesses Gardens' activists make a difference on the symbolic level. By creating a huge urban garden area on former wasteland in the centre of the district, the project demonstrates that cooperation and common learning among a heterogeneous urban citizenry is possible. Since July 2009, the Princesses Gardens community accomplished, for example the farming of agriculture crops, the building of greenhouses and the creating of flowerbeds. According to this approach, raising public concern, attention and deliberation is of key importance. Therefore, Princesses Gardens, despite its superficial emphasis on manual labour in the urban locality, also succeed in building bridges to major global discourses such as climate change and sustainability. Hence, participants become strengthened in practical terms by making their neighbourhood a greener place to live in and as citizens who claim a say in the usage of their urban environment. From a social policy perspective, the project contributes to (local) measures of vocational training: the activists attempt to develop new job profiles in cooperation with employers in the fields of gardening and farming.

17.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

According to Robert Shaw, manager of the Princesses Gardens, the project aims to provide informal education of people through empowerment. Looking at Princesses Gardens' relationship to users in practice, though, value-loaded terms as "empowerment" or "education" are slightly misleading. Instead of building a movement of urban gardeners, the project pursues a rather soft approach. Residents' interest in questions of ecology and sustainability should be attracted while engaging in more pleasant activities such as visiting the garden café or chatting with gardeners. Princesses Gardens are a green recreational oasis where "visitors" should come in contact with each other easily. Characterised by a hustle and bustle of activities, however, they are a classic hands-on project in need of volunteers. Therefore, the "hard core" of the project team, consisting of nine employed workers, continuously involves visitors in small-sized manual activities such as watering plants or sowing seeds. With the help of those "feeding" strategies and the wish of many visitors' to contribute to the garden in one way or another, an extended group of around 70 urban gardeners emerged. "These are the people who take responsibility for the



garden”, says Mr Shaw, describing his own task as “bringing different people together”. For Mr Shaw and his team it is the art of matching volunteers that guarantees success. Therefore, they combine volunteer’s different strengths and assets in order to facilitate a situation of mutual learning. In practice, work groups that consist of unequal team mates such as an older Russian woman with a lot of gardening experience, an ecologically interested unemployed hippie and a designer are not an exception but the rule. “Ideally, the old Russian woman learns German, the hippie a more structured way of working and the designer some basics about gardening, while they all create, more or less as a side effect, a vertical plant-bed”, states Mr Shaw. Such an approach of “common learning without a teacher” requires intrinsic motivation and pleasure from volunteers, something that Princesses Gardens evoke by providing a relaxing and stimulating environment. Additionally, the project offers a range of practical learning events for kindergartens, schools and universities to teach practical knowledge of seeding and growing plants. Thereby, international discourses on ecological food and healthy lifestyles become easily combined with various do-it-yourself activities such as harvesting different kinds of potatoes and using them for cooking meals.

17.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The idea of the Princesses Gardens goes back to Robert Shaw and Marco Clausen, today’s managers of the project. As self-declared “non-experts” in the field of gardening, the founding fathers of the project cultivated an approach of cooperation, unconventional action and continuous learning. Shaw and Clausen did a lot of lobbying in the district for their idea, which they had presented in a detailed business plan. They finally got the opportunity to lease an unused 6,000 m² area in the middle of Kreuzberg. Until today, three key convictions have been driving Princesses Gardens: first, the garden should be a “vehicle for social processes” (ibid.); second, activists should develop an experiment-friendly do-it-yourself-mentality; third, the garden should be a non-profit project. According to these guiding principles, modes of internal organisation and working have been developed. Backed by Nomadisch Grün, a non-profit limited liability company, Princesses Gardens have emerged through a number of consecutive projects involving up to 2,500 volunteers per year since June 2009.

In retrospect, it is the project’s finely tuned balance between hands-on activities, educational and cultural events in cooperation with local partners that turned

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Princesses Gardens into a Berlin-wide innovation. In addition to the step-by-step expansion of the garden (up to more than 400 beds and a potato field), the project team successfully spread the concept of urban gardening to the local public and beyond through workshops such as “Urban farming and local empowerment”. Princesses Gardens’ mixed structure of activities is also owed to its organisational form: as a non-profit-organisation, Nomadisch Grün is obliged to invest 51 per cent of its resources into public education and nature protection, while 49 per cent may go to business activities such as the garden café or the selling of vegetables. Since recently, Princesses Gardens’ employees have been offering their skills to schools, companies and public institutions interested in courses about urban gardening or actions to green-up their premises. All in all: the whole endeavour is a good example for a social enterprise in practice.

17.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

After 3 years of existence, Princesses Gardens have become “everybody’s darling” in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. The project managers succeeded in cultivating the image of a “hip location” where a cosmopolitan Berlin-feeling, a good degree of non-conformism and common ecological learning come together. Hence, cooperation and joint ventures with Princesses Gar-

dens, e.g. cooking workshops for school classes, are much requested. Moreover, the project gains much attention from local politics and authorities. Before local elections in November 2011 major politicians visited the location, praising its contribution to the liveability and social coherence of the district. However, social-cultural acknowledgment did not pay off in terms of real material support. So far, the lease with the local property fund (Liegenschaftsfond) is limited to 5 years. An extension of the contract is uncertain, due to the fund’s interest to sell the lucrative area most profitable – a common practice in the face of Berlin’s enormous public debts. Currently, a local campaign called “Let it grow!” gathers signatures for the maintenance of the garden. Activists, mostly stemming from the wider community of Princesses Gardens, argue that the project has a “pilot character” for innovative urban development policy, and demand a public debate on who owns public space and how it should be used best. In this vein, Princesses Gardens have a strong implicit impact on local politics: they put an issue on the political agenda that was neglected by the mantra of budget consolidation. Mr Shaw’s expectations concerning local authorities’ commitment to support Princesses Gardens’ future are low, however: “I am realistic enough for not claiming money. I only ask for a long-term perspective for projects like ours that are exploited by the city council in terms of city marketing but neglected in practice.”

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Job Explorer

18.1. Short description

The “Job Explorer” project aims to create new ways of job orientation for youngsters by paving personal links between pupils and employers instead of between schools and companies. Hence, the project claims to establish a lasting, trust-based dialogue between tomorrow’s jobseekers and potential employers that could be regarded as innovative. A multiphase concept introduces pupils aged 13-17 years step by step to the working world, starting 3 years before they finish school, aiming to replace the currently common obligatory internships that quite often represent merely a desultory attempt to bring pupils closer to the job market. Instead, “Job Explorer” invites young people to discover a certain job in practical terms, while local companies have the opportunity to voice their specific demands to career starters. Thereby, the project avoids explicit references to stigmatising issues such as “precariousness” and/or “underclass”. Youngsters are not a priori perceived as “the jobless of the future”. Instead, mutual prejudices should be eliminated, e.g. those youngsters might have towards employment in general and those employers might have against young people from less educated or long-term unemployed backgrounds. Participating pupils need a gentle introduction to possible fields of work and labour virtues; otherwise they may end up as lifelong clients of job agencies.

18.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Job Explorer addresses pupils aged 13-17 years in secondary schools. Core of the project is an early introduction of youngsters to different jobs, vocational training schemes and the labour market. Thereby participants pass a multi-stage programme starting from scratch. In the first phase, Job Explorer teams ask pupils which jobs they know and where they want to work in the future. This “reality check” takes place in a playful manner that encourages participants to discover job opportunities in their local environment. By exploring “real jobs”, e.g. bus driver, baker or car mechanic, helps pupils to uncover partly unrealistic expectations (e.g. concerning potential earnings). In short, the first phase serves as an introductory course to the working world – a new territory for many pupils due to the lack of employment of their parents.

The second phase addresses participants more directly as “future workers”. Employers visit schools and brief youngsters on what they ask from their trainees (e.g. reliability and persistence) and give them the opportunity to get to know a job in practice. Due to this strategy of “sticks and carrots” pupils feel taken seriously and may develop a “post-school” perspective. In the third phase things become even more concrete: during so-called “experience

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days" participants visit different companies for 2 hours after school once a week. According to a local car dealer who supports the Job Explorer project this phase is indicative for companies searching for trainees: "Whether somebody shows commitment and fits for a job becomes obvious very quickly." Finally, pupils in tenth grade pass a final phase: they complete a 4-day traineeship at a chosen company during their vacations. All in all, the Job Explorer project attempts to reduce pupil's distance from the labour market due to consecutive phases of discovering and learning. Thereby, local employers play a pivotal role by co-addressing youngsters as future employees.

18.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The Job Explorer team consists of three people responsible for the "Job Explorer Academy", "Job Explorer activities" and "public relations". Three guiding principles make up the core of the project's work philosophy: generating trust and mutual understanding as well as sustainable relationships between youngsters, schools and local companies. The Job Explorer team started their work with an extended assessment of needs by profiling a good amount of local schools and companies in advance. Based on this groundwork, cooperation with nine (out of 17) schools and the local association of entrepreneurs were established - something that has not existed before in the district. "Every school and every company is different", states Michaela Westphal from Job Explorer, describing her own job as "translation work" and "match-making" between schools and the local economy. Particularly companies searching for trainees but lacking resources to acquire them appreciate support to improve their relationships with schools. In this respect, support provided by the Job Explorer is much welcomed. Services comprise the coordination of contact between schools and employers and of precise recommendations how to treat pupils with respect and effectively strengthen their self-esteem - an issue to which the Job Explorer approach is in particular sensitive. Participating schools, obliged to offer courses for job orientation, value Job Explorer's support free of charge. However, the project's key partners, playing a decisive role for its success or failure, are the pupils themselves. Therefore, modes of working concern also pedagogical and didactical aspects. Here, finding a sound balance between an

attractive format and the much needed teaching of competences turned out to be the main challenge - even more in face of competing offers such as "speed dating events" for applicants and providers of vocational training.

18.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Since its start in 2010, Job Explorer has been embedded in the local welfare system in two different phases. Within the first phase (2010-12), the project team enjoyed the privilege of being relatively autonomous due to its pilot character. Sponsored by a special funding instrument of the job agency, Job Explorer was seen as an experimental investment in new ways of vocational orientation. The project's impression on local stakeholders during this test phase was extraordinarily strong, precisely because Job Explorer was born out not by authorities but in cooperation with the local economy that voiced their demands on future employers while the project was conceptualised. Hence, support for maintaining the project came from all sides and across parties. As a result, the district council was forced to take action. Since July 2012, the project is financed as an "economically beneficial measure" by the Economic Development Agency (Wirtschaftsförderung) of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. However, Job Explorer has to pay a price for its survival. Owing to the new sponsor, a much tighter cooperation with district authorities concerning project aims and ways of achieving them has become necessary. Nowadays, the project competes with other vocational programmes sponsored by public money. Hence, the question concerning "measurable outputs", e.g. numbers of mediated trainees, and the "scale of the project" (e.g. number of involved schools) is gaining importance. However, so far Job Explorer is in a good position: the project takes advantage of its solid cooperation with the local association of entrepreneurs. "There is a constant demand for trainees among our members", says a speaker of the association, adding that in many cases it has been Job Explorer's merit "helping to find the one right person (for an apprenticeship) out of the masses". Nevertheless, the District Council for Labour and Economy wants to extend Job Explorer's range of action. In the mid-term, a toolkit promoting apprenticeships provided by the local economy should be developed.

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Kreuzberg Acts

19.1. Short description

“Kreuzberg Acts – entrepreneurship in the district” pursues a twofold approach towards social inclusion. On the one hand, jobseekers and local entrepreneurs, half of them migrants, receive comprehensive consultancy to explore their entrepreneurial potentials or rather stabilise their business. For instance, those interested in founding a start-up are coached by local mentors how to apply for public subsidies and how to launch an effective marketing campaign. On the other hand, the project is simultaneously striving for street credibility by building bridges to the local economy. Through the strengthening of local networks processes of gentrification are counterbalanced that go along with a rather one-sided setting of cafés, restaurants and luxurious stores at local in-places. In order to maintain a sound mix of local businesses the project eases cooperation of retailers, grocers and social services providers (e.g. physicians and carers) that also evoke a sense of belonging to the district. Moreover, project leaders and participants develop strategies of how locals may benefit from the districts’ booming economic sectors such as healthcare or tourism. Inventions are thought of in a neighbourhood-friendly way, e.g. by devising small-scale business ideas that fit the local social ecology.

In short, members of the local economy should do both - get together and become profitable. During all these activities project leaders are constantly both facilitators and lobbyists for their clientele. The innovation results in the intertwining of two activities that are usually separated: on the one hand, individual consultancy for (future) entrepreneurs; on the other hand, a kind of concern with community development and urban planning addressing different local groups. Thereby, Kreuzberg Acts also bridges economic and social concerns.

19.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

According to the concept and vision of Kreuzberg Acts, social inclusion is thought of as something that inevitably takes place in the local environment and depends strongly on the plurality of people’s opportunities to unfold their entrepreneurial potentials. Therefore, service offers are twofold: on the one hand, people are encouraged in their decision to become self-employed by receiving various support to improve their skills as entrepreneurs before applying for a start-up financing grant; on the other hand, individual consultancy and coaching is accompanied by collective support for the local community of (future) entrepreneurs. Among other things, the collective dimension of the project involves devising common marketing campaigns, facilitating networking activities and boosting joint ventures between local businesses. “We are not only helping local entrepreneurs individually, bringing out the best of their potentials, but feel responsible for the long-term development of the district’s local economy”, underpins

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the project manager. Perceiving project users as social beings, embedded within a local context, asks for an approach that is sensitive to people's multiple ties and requires complex ways of addressing users. For instance, one experienced user of the project, a 25-year-old owner of an American Diner restaurant, reported that she has been visited continuously by someone of "Kreuzberg Acts" who addressed her from the beginning as a member of the local community of entrepreneurs – a dimension of belonging she had not been aware of before. In short, due to strong local references, Kreuzberg Acts addresses their clientele as entrepreneurs within the local economy, (social and active) citizens, and community members. In all these roles, the project addressees learn that their entrepreneurial success depends not only on individual competences and sufficient incubation time for their business idea but is also inseparably linked to the overall development of the district.

19.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

From September 2009 until October 2012, Kreuzberg Acts operated in three neighbourhoods with special development needs. All of them belong to the so-called NM programme (another innovation we focus on above), combining spatial and urban planning with sectorial policy interventions. The project is funded by a federal programme of the ESF called Education, Economy and Labour in the Neighbourhood aiming to provide "innovative interventions in managed

neighbourhoods". Currently, the project employs four people from LOK.a.Motion (see below), responsible for public relations, marketing, social media and communication with local companies. The main task of project coordinator Luna Weineck is building networks by contacting politicians, local authorities, the chamber of commerce, job agencies and neighbourhood managers. Since affordable flats and sales floors have become scarce in the district, housing companies have become pivotal partners, having a huge impact on the social and economical structure of neighbourhoods. In doing lobby work, Ms Weineck generates trust among all relevant stakeholders while tracing opportunities for the project to connect. Kreuzberg Acts is one of several projects by Lok.a.Motion, an organisation that operates at the crossroads of European and federal labour market programmes and the local level.

Within the last 3 years Lok.a.Motion has run four major projects and has initiated several forms of cooperation with local stakeholders. Starting as a non-profit-organisation for "youth welfare and local economy", Lok.a.Motion turned towards an entrepreneurial approach and now holds the legal status of a non-profit limited liability company. With respect to working relations in the organisation Lok.a.Motion presents a sharp contrast to public administrations where the size of staff is stable and jobs are socially protected. Operating with few permanent staff Lok.a.Motion has sufficient leeway to decide whether a certain project actually suits their key professional principle, stating that any engagement must pursue the development



of its social environment. The flip side of the agency's flexibility is that Lok.a.motion is not a good employer in traditional terms by benefitting from unsecured precarious jobs.

19.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

In terms of local embeddedness, Kreuzberg Acts is a hybrid. Even though the project has cultivated solid relations to most of the relevant stakeholders, it remains to a certain degree an alien element, disturbing routine patterns of local welfare governance. Being both embedded and dis-embedded at the same time constitutes the innovative character of Kreuzberg Acts. This ambiguity is mirrored by the project's relations to job agencies and local authorities, the two most important welfare providers at the local level. Although both institutions acknowledge (and partly depend on) the work of the project, Kreuzberg Acts (as similar projects too) is mainly perceived as an "ad-hoc consultant" for vocational training while lacking the status of a normal service provider funded on a regularly basis. It hence coexists with the local welfare system, rather than interacting with it frequently. As a result, Kreuzberg Acts fills a rather unsteady intermediate position depending on the respective situation of available projects. As a response to the challenge of coping with uncertainty the project team has developed a cooperative manner and invests much in trust-generating activities for acquiring new orders. However, this approach has its limits due to the com-

petition with other project providers.

Defending the project's design and modes of working against the theft of innovative ideas is of utmost importance. This is a dilemma, given the fact that close cooperation and a steady knowledge exchange is both a precondition to have a stake in the local landscape of service providers but also a risk to lose its own competitive advantage. "We have to prove that we are innovative otherwise we cannot develop new projects", says Ms Weineck, who argues for a patent law that protects project concepts as it does commercial products. In comparison to established welfare institutions, tensions concern in particular the driving mission and the underlying working culture. Foremost, the way of addressing users differentiates Kreuzberg Acts from established policies in the field of labour. Especially in comparison to the job agencies its logic of integrating people is poles apart. Job agencies pursue a fairly sequential approach where every minor support depends on jobseekers' compliance in advance – be it with regard to reveal their financial situation or to take any job they are offered. In sharp contrast to job agencies' verdicts of employability, Kreuzberg Acts follows a process-orientated and tightly-structured approach, encouraging people to realise their entrepreneurial potential according to their interests and personal skills in a gently way.

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Neighbourhood Mothers

20.1. Short description

The project Neighbourhood Mothers bridges gaps within a multicultural but fragmented society, both pragmatically and symbolically. Based on blueprints from the Netherlands and other German cities, the innovative approach is strictly resource-oriented and neighbourhood-related. Basically, the project developed further the idea of intercultural mediators and mentors helping immigrant families with educational and also family-related issues. Kreuzberg's Neighbourhood Mothers, mostly immigrants that completed a special qualification phase, deal with a wide range of topics such as health promotion, language support and child protection. By pursuing a two-way approach, Neighbourhood Mothers make existing support structures better known and accessible and also translate their clients' needs and concerns in order to improve district authorities' awareness towards them. Being a low-threshold service in practice – Neighbourhood Mothers are easily identifiable by a red scarf in order to get directly addressed on the street – the project attempts to establish informal support networks and trust by building bridges among (multicultural) communities and authorities. If requested, Neighbourhood Mothers give advice to families through regular home visits free of charge.

The project, which has received several awards for successful integration work, may also be a springboard to the labour market: neighbourhood mothers can combine their voluntary work (a small monthly allowance is paid) with a professional training in order to become a social assistant for intercultural family care. However, this real job perspective makes it difficult for the management of the project (the Diakonisches Werk) to provide continuity as it requests a steady recruitment of new neighbourhood mothers. Hence, non-bureaucratic support by the job agency and the responsible district council department are preconditions for future success of the project.

20.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Neighbourhood Mothers offer a bundle of outreach services for migrant families. Families using the offer are addressed as neighbours and community members – instead of bearers of multiple (social) problems. In contrast to local authorities, pursuing a rather directive style of user interaction, Neighbourhood Mothers strengthen families in a friendly and cooperative manner. As multipliers of knowledge and mentors, Neighbourhood Mothers' services are "family-minded", including not only individual users but also people with links to their families and community networks. However, it is worth noting that in practice it is mostly mothers who accept support by the project, while fathers (despite first attempts to establish neighbourhood fathers too) are difficult to reach. Moreover, acute problems and conflicts are rarely the reason of contacting Neighbourhood Mothers who build up trust with families

via informal meetings, e.g. at the family café of the Diakonisches Werk, on the playground or chatting in the street. “First of all, we are helping companions for daily life matters rather than being experts for severe family problems”, states a neighbourhood mother who migrated with her parents from Turkey 30 years ago.

The range of daily life matters where Neighbourhood Mothers offer support and consultancy is rather broad, comprising issues such as basic knowledge on children’s development and needs, basic competences on health promotion, nutrition and sports, linguistic development, the German child care and educational systems and problems in family networks (e.g. drug abuse, divorce, violence). What differentiates Neighbourhood Mothers most from professional services concerning these issues is its peer-to-peer approach. Most of the neighbourhood mothers went through similar situations as the families they care for. They have a better understanding of feelings of alienation and particular needs than professionals, literally speaking “another language”. Therefore, Neighbourhood Mothers take “real problems” (e.g. missing knowledge about the German school system) as starting points for support – instead of adapting their services to the structures of silo-like service departments.

20.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Neighbourhood Mothers pass a 6-month qualification course before working with clients. For instance, Kreuzberg’s first generation of neighbourhood mothers (30 women) has been trained with a curriculum comprising of 10 modules such as children rights, health promotion and transition from kindergarten to school. The comprehensive qualification has two important effects: on the one hand, it facilitates identification and team building among neighbourhood mothers; on the other hand, Neighbourhood Mothers gather various contacts with local institutions during this introductory phase through visits at the job agency, district authorities (e.g. child and youth welfare aid) or birth houses which are valuable resources for their later work. After the qualification, quality management takes place once a week via exchange and reflections about work experiences. “Recurrent issues in those meetings are for example families’ problems to subscribe their children to preferred

schools”, states a neighbourhood mother, appreciating especially the opportunity to simulate courses of conversation with clients before going into practice. Furthermore, during reflection rounds neighbourhood mothers learn “what is going on elsewhere in the district”. Being informed about other projects, e.g. sewing courses for immigrant women or mother-child language courses provided by family centres (see below), is central for neighbourhood mothers who also function as switchboards for various learning and leisure time offers. The project is coordinated and further developed by two managers of the Diakonisches Werk, responsible for recruiting, qualifying and accompanying neighbourhood mothers. In addition both managers are in regular contact with similar projects in Berlin in order to cultivate professional exchange and evaluation. The project managers established strong links between Neighbourhood Mothers and other services provided by the Diakonisches Werk. Thereby sustainability concerning the work with families may be strengthened, as Ulrike Koch, one of the two managers, hopes: “The Diakonisches Werk has been providing social work in Kreuzberg for more than 30 years. Due to its temporary financing scheme, the future of Neighbourhood Mothers remains future uncertain. Families cannot count on them alone.”

20.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Similar to the Princesses Gardens, Neighbourhood Mothers are a publicly recognised and well-known social innovation in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. After a good degree of initial scepticism and profound reservations on behalf of established welfare institutions and services providers, Neighbourhood Mothers is now welcomed as an early protection intervention against severe social problems of immigrant families that are hard to reach. In this respect, Neighbourhood Mothers’ excellent public relations work paid off, especially in relation to kindergartens and schools but also to the job agency. According to the coalition agreement of Berlin’s government of Social and Christian democrats, Neighbourhood Mothers should be financed on a regular basis. So far, however, this political intention and the large amount of public recognition have not spilled over into a secure future of the project. Started as a test run in 2008, the project has been financed by different sources: the job agency, the local youth welfare office and ESF. “We

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are constantly re-calculating our budget and make provisional solutions instead of far-reaching plans”, complains Ms Koch.

After 5 years of existence, the project is in an odd situation. Practically, Neighbourhood Mothers are part of the local welfare system and there is no doubt that their services for families are very much needed. On the other hand, the project is still far away of being a regular offer, at eye-to-eye level with established services providers, even if some local partners have a strong interest in the maintenance of its contributions to local welfare. For instance, the local youth welfare office in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg has already created five part-time positions for neighbourhood mothers who additionally passed a professional training to become a social assistant for intercultural family care. Other institutions and local employers may follow this example. Therefore, project managers keep repeating demands of regular funding, in particular to cover the costly qualification of neighbourhood mothers.

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Family Centres

21.1. Short description

Family centres are a complementary offer to kindergartens and day-care institutions pursuing a more holistic approach. Their innovative feature is to empower families by strengthening their competences instead of providing merely services to them that claim to substitute what the respective families cannot provide. This complementary and holistic approach of “family-minded services” represents a paradigm shift by offering support not only to one group (children) but also to parents. Another innovative aspect of family centres is to perceive families as partners to be (re)empowered and not as communities unable to perform. Currently, eight centres have been installed in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, mostly initiated by parents and sponsored by the Berlin Senate. Centres provide multiple family-related services and activities on a small scale, starting from giving families the opportunity to share leisure time together, receiving advice and participating in various courses that strengthen (e.g. linguistic and self-help) competences of children and parents up to regular working groups where service providers and families join in order to develop new service arrangements for the respective neighbourhood. As well-known contact points and low-threshold places to drop-in, family centres also support the work of the Child and Youth Welfare Office, e.g. by forwarding feedback from the “grassroots level” to the district department.

21.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

As all-in-one service hubs for the whole family, family centres represent a counterpoint to services organised in separate “silos” for singular groups. Family centres do not exclude classic childcare services to support families with their caring duties. However, according to their “family-minded” concept, parents are as well addressees of family centres whose competences should be strengthened. Which kinds of services are included in such a comprehensive approach strongly depends on the neighbourhood where the family centre is located. In short, bundles of services are offered, tailored to respective families’ needs. For instance, the intercultural family centre Adalbertstraße, a rather segregated area in Kreuzberg with a high number of immigrant families and transfer payment recipients, puts emphasis on helping families under stress. Owing to their main clientele, regular offers comprise of issues such as identifying and supporting families’ resources and self-help potentials, developing alternatives for families’ everyday live tasks and improvement of families’ language skills. Contrary to this, the family centre “Das Haus” in Friedrichshain, catering to a mostly middle-class clientele, is much more perceived as a place where families can spend their leisure time, e.g. by socialising and cooking. Furthermore, parents are invited to create their own support networks while having coffee in the family café or they may participate in the conception of new

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professional service offers. In both examples, family centres are meeting point and forum of support for families, parents, children and local multipliers dealing with all kinds of family issues.

21.3 Internal organisation and modes of working

Since 2006, two types of services provided by family centres coexist in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg: on the one hand, traditional kindergartens that revised their conceptual orientation by developing family-minded services; on the other hand, new established centres that were built with the help of neighbourhood initiatives and/or third sector organisations. In both cases the focus on families was combined with a much stronger focus on the social and urban space. This twofold approach is mirrored in organisational terms: in order to address families, instead of children only, family centres need to capitalise on local resources and networks. Hence, cooperation is key, be it with existing parent-child-groups, consultancy agencies of welfare associations or, of course, the Child and Youth Welfare Office. However, family centres are not merely a point of information about family-minded services in the district but services are also offered directly in the centre. This requires much acceptance by professionals and authorities, as family centres are embedded instead of competing institutions, where exchange, education and consultancy take place. Perceived this way, family centres may also function as local “think tanks” for networked family care services, as Birgit Bosse, manager of “Das Haus” in Friedrichshain describes: “We established an expert forum, organised and steered by us, for kindergarten, day-care centres, schools and parents in order to facilitate the transition from childcare to schooling.” Internally, Ms Bosse works together with a team consisting of three employees (in charge of parent and psychological counselling and conflict management) and a pool of flexible external specialists on a freelance basis. Additionally, the local job agency provides the centre with so-called “one-euro-jobbers”, in charge of maintenance activities. In formal terms, family centres make so called “service level agreements” with the district council on a yearly basis, stating exactly which specific offers are demanded. As it turned out, family centres have much leeway to propose innovative offers - e.g. theatre and artistic projects in cooperation with freelance artists - due to their practical knowledge of developments and needs at grassroots level.

21.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Family centres in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg have the full support and backing of the local Child and Youth Welfare Office. The latter pursues a spatial approach that divides the district into eight social environments to be vested with (at least) one family centre. “Our aim is to establish close contacts with families under stress. In this respect, family centres are a standard offer”, states Thomas Harkenthal, manager of the Child and Youth Welfare Office. Despite their rather short time of existence, family centres have succeeded in becoming local role models concerning child and family care. Now, Mr Harkenthal and his team attempt to scale-up family centres’ role as hubs providing services and networks. “There is much unmet need for additional educational offers tailored to the respective neighbourhood structure”, reports Mr Harkenthal. Moreover, the number of so-called family meeting points, conceptualised as small branches of family centres cooperating with huge kindergarten with 300 to 400 children, should be extended. Nevertheless, there is a discrepancy between the public support for (and belief in) the family centre approach and its effectiveness in reality. Anchoring family centres in the social and urban space needs much more commitment in terms of permanent positions and long-term planning security. Furthermore, authorities tend to underestimate the cultural change and practical re-learning that is needed to let family centres blossom. “Cooperation means sharing of responsibilities. Some huge service providers are still used to top-down chains of commands”, says Ms Bosse. In addition, she refuses to call family centres a “best-practice-approach” because she fears that such a perspective could easily turn into a one-(best)-model-fits-all approach. Instead, Ms Bosse insists on the need to give room for a profile that corresponds with the specific social environment of every family centre.

Conclusions

The description of innovations presented here can be discussed and developed further in various directions and within various frameworks. Three possible ways – all to be dealt with in the WILCO project - will be sketched here in the conclusive remarks.

Social services research: innovations as illustrative examples for a new generation of social services

Obviously, the innovations we have described are marked by the specificity of time and circumstances – the special situation in Berlin with its mix of innovative traditions but likewise rather stable traditions of how to handle social inclusion issues by local welfare administrations, the more general problem of new attempts in times of austerity and pressing household depths. However, it can be assumed that behind the diversity of single innovations in Berlin and in other cities and countries, there are *recurrent patterns of how to handle service issues differently*, to be found across cities and countries. While there are obviously national and local specificities, many traits of these innovations are inter-national in character:

- > Innovations entail *approaches and instruments* that enrich and change the classical tool kits of social welfare and service policies, e.g. moving from fixed entitlements to flexible support budgets and ad hoc support; developing services that give personalised bundles of support; creating new forms of social investments into people's capabilities;
- > Innovations entail *innovations in public governance*, at least to a certain degree. Some innovations have a governance focus; groups organise and present themselves and their concerns in new ways; networks and coalition building across departments and sectors are part of many innovative projects and sometimes even "meta-governance" takes new forms of deliberation and consent finding in search for the public good;
- > There are shared features that point to the *links between these innovations and post-traditional welfare concepts*: services that address the strengths and not merely the weaknesses of their target groups are examples for enabling welfare concepts; the focus on critical transitional stages rather than standard situations links with the

debate on new risks and a life-course-orientation in welfare; the ways new services are more family minded, personalised, but yet tying in people's support networks contributes to an upgrading of the role of communities in mixed welfare systems; finally, the ways many innovative projects in local development link concerns of economic and social development exemplifies a social investment perspective on public welfare.

Researching innovation and change on the local level: The importance of the local context

A second line of making further use of our findings is to look at the inter-connectedness of innovations with the local context. As far as this context has been mentioned here our analysis underlines the central importance of four issues at given stages in the development of innovations:

- > *Plurality of discourses*. In order to understand the interplay of context and innovations it is important to see them in a tension field structured by the juxtaposition and rivalry of different discourses, e.g. about classical welfare issues, more managerial approaches to welfare and one where concerns with autonomy, participation and pluralism prevail.
- > *The impact of history*. Practices and values that guide action and politics are very much shaped by historical developments, experiences and the ways they crystallise in a locality. A deeper analysis of the dynamics of local innovations must take historical underpinnings into account.
- > *The welfare system*, encompassing more than the political administrative system. We understand a welfare system as a large and mixed one, that comprises the fields of family and community, the business sector and the third sector of associations – looking at all of them from the perspective of welfare developments and their role as parts of a mixed welfare system. In such a perspective, a welfare system encompasses more than the field of professional politics and welfare administrations, even though the latter usually plays a dominating role. Social innovations should be understood in relation to this wider environment and not solely with respect to one of the sectors of the welfare system

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- > *Differences by policy fields.* Often innovative ideas, while restricted by the locally prevalent general discourse, may get much endorsement by a community of experts in a special policy field. Then, the overall impact of a productivist discourse for instance (as it has been sketched for the city of Muenster) may set less limits for innovative concepts in child care, compared to labour market politics; vertical (policy-field related) differences can be as important as horizontal (locally prevailing values and concepts) ones.

Researching the role of innovations in local politics and governance

Most innovations, like those presented here, are small scale and located at the margins of the political administrative system (PAS). However among the many context factors that have an impact on their upcoming and moreover their further development, the strategies and value orientations of the local PAS are of special importance. Local politics and governance increasingly include interactions with partners, reaching from casual arrangements and agreements in networks over to cross-sector partnerships and corporatist frameworks. What role can innovative organisations play within these forms of governance and policymaking? We assume pointing at the “innovative” quality of organisations and projects can give additional support for developing the kind of policies that give social innovation a place in the overall changing architecture of welfare governance.

Therefore, rather than only looking at special programmes in support of special innovation projects it might be preferable both in analytic and policy terms to look at the range of ways in which public policies already make use and take up new approaches from partners, developing policies that support innovations without explicitly using this label.

While our paper has just traced some ways found in Berlin, the real picture will be much wider. For decades, an increasing role of time-limited social programs, pilot schemes and targeted support-schemes for ‘new’ services, professional practices or rules of the game have arisen. In many of these programmes and their governance schemes one finds a mix of participants from different sectors: state, business, the third sector of associations, hybrid organisations, and groups that represent community action and family

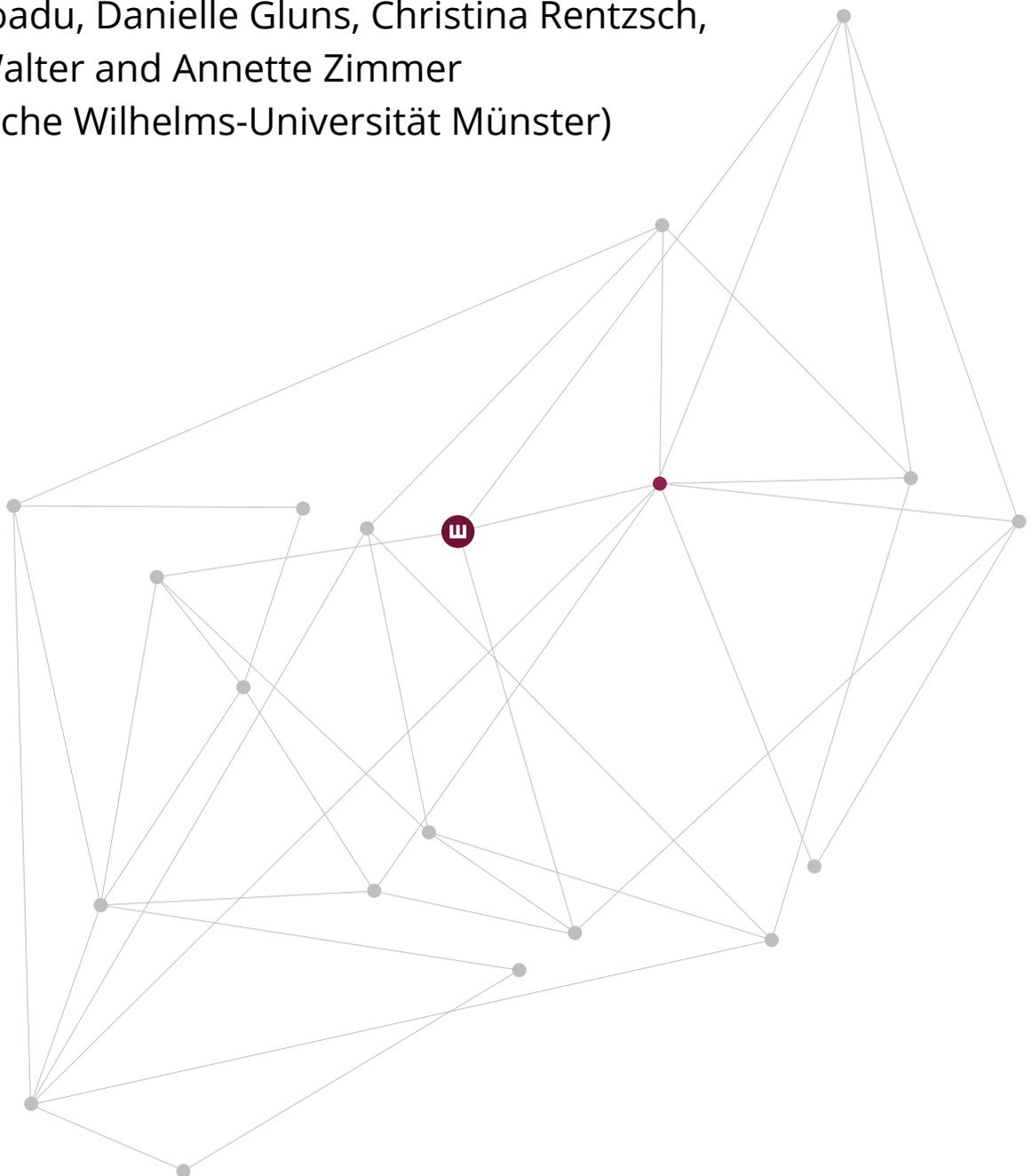
concerns. It is this increasingly pluralist character of projects and policies that can favour innovations of political and governance concepts. What do we know about the achievements and limits of these forms of linking change agents and mainstream stakeholders? What about their selection as forms of scaling up social innovation? Do they just support what works in short-term measurable forms or do they work as social investments where one is ready to take a risk? Into what kind of overarching discourse do the respective partners and participants get involved?

Bringing concerns with social innovations and their scaling up into this context may enrich the already ongoing debate about new “welfare mixes”, divisions of responsibility “paradigms of social interventions” and respective “mixed” and open forms of governance. The degree to which an outspoken reference to innovation makes a difference, depends on two critical issues: one must acknowledge what spills over in social innovations in terms of prospects and visions beyond immediate practical issues; there must also be a degree of readiness to put the wider context of institutionalised practices and policies at disposal. Otherwise a kind of new dialectic between small-scale innovation and wider ranging reform will not be put into motion.

DE Germany

Münster

Patrick Boadu, Danielle Gluns, Christina Rentzsch,
Andrea Walter and Annette Zimmer
(Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)



DE
Münster

Authors

Patrick Boadu, Danielle Gluns, Christina Rentzsch,
Andrea Walter and Annette Zimmer
(Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Local governance
Networking
Public administration
Subsidiarity

The context of welfare innovations in Münster is dominated by the overarching logic of competitiveness and investment (see City Report Münster, WP4). This discursive frame was established in the 1990s, when a coalition involving stakeholders from local politics and administration, the university and local entrepreneurship joined forces to promote Münster as an attractive location for businesses. The main aims were an increase in market efficiency and economic growth. Even though this discourse stems from economic considerations, it has been applied to all political sectors and therefore has important implications for the field of social policies as well¹. Its logic is closely connected to the wider scientific and political discourse on the “third way” of welfare policy, the main elements of which shall be outlined in the following.

The main aim of the concept of the “third way²” is to recombine the paradigms of market efficiency and social justice in order to achieve equal opportunities. Through participation in the labour market, each individual shall be empowered to improve his/her own chances in life as well as contribute to the national economy (Jun 2000: 1514f.). The role of the state is confined to providing a framework in which market efficiency can be performed at its best and is close to neoliberal thinking in its priority for fiscal conservatism (Merkel 2000: 274). This leads to a micro-economic approach of increasing individual employability to further inclusion into the labour market instead of enhancing the number of available jobs through deficit spending. In this regard, the role of the state is that of a “social investment state” while personal responsibility and the meritocratic principle are emphasised (Merkel 2000: 277-9). This approach stands in contrast with the former “curing” or “caring” state.

At the same time, social policy in Münster is influenced by a strong catholic tradition, which leads to an emphasis on solidarity and subsidiarity and a connection to the concept of communitarianism (Vorländer 2001). Consequently, society has the duty to care for those who are unable to do so themselves. The smallest possible entity (the individual, the community, etc.) should be responsible for this, in order to avoid unnecessary collectivisation (Leuninger 2002: 21-6). The foundation for this claim lies in the high value of personal autonomy in the catholic tradition (Focke 1978: 192; Leuninger 2002: 20f.). Thus, the state should enable everyone to contribute actively to society, which stresses the social political focus on prevention and investments in human capital as a basis for competitiveness and participation (Leuninger 2002: 113-16, 121).

1 The implications of this discourse for the field of social policy have been highlighted by several interview partners in individual interviews as well as the three focus groups.

2 There are several conceptions of the third way, which differ in certain points. The aim here is only to give a general overview of the main ideas without going into detail. However, the concept as applied in Münster is rather close to the original British version of “New Labour”.

All of these aspects can be found in Münster's welfare paradigm. **Subsidiarity is promoted wherever possible, so that many public services are provided by private or third-sector organisations.** During the last two decades, this trend has been reinforced by the need to decrease public spending. The labour market is considered the main promoter of social cohesion and participation, which is why (individual) employability shall be strengthened through welfare policies. As shown in WP4, the view prevails that prevention is a necessary and cost-effective approach for the welfare system.

This general frame of welfare has profound implications for social innovations, since they are not constructed at the drawing board. Instead, they are context-specific and embedded into the wider social, economic and political context (Moulaert et al. 2005). Accordingly, the context opens windows of opportunity for social innovators and social entrepreneurs. It establishes the conditions social entrepreneurs encounter and thereby promote or inhibit new ideas. Regarding the role of municipal stakeholders and their influence on these windows of opportunity, this can mean:

- > a *laissez-faire* attitude, neither supporting nor obstructing an undertaking;
- > steering attempts, either through (1) financing enterprises, (2) incorporating them (and possibly providing the goods/services themselves), or (3) selective intervention at neuralgic points (in order to achieve the maximum impact through minimal financial engagement);
- > the obstruction of ideas, e.g. through legislation.

The following chapters will analyse different innovations undertaken in Münster regarding their organisation and implementation. The aim is to identify their reciprocal effects with the local welfare system in terms of local discourse and interaction of different local stakeholders. The findings will be discussed in a final chapter. The discussion will also draw conclusions regarding the sustainability and possible diffusion of the innovations studied herein.

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MAMBA³

22.1. Short description

Although immigration rates in Germany have constantly been high for decades, many immigrants face problems with integration into social and economic life. In particular, refugees are confronted with a rather restrictive legislation regarding residence and work permissions. Without a residence permit it is hard to get a job and many employers do not want to hire refugees because of bureaucratic hurdles and uncertain future perspectives. On the other hand, for some groups there is no chance to obtain a long-term residence permit without proof of employment and independence of social assistance. Obviously, refugees need special support and consultancy for labour market integration (cf. Fiebiger et al. 2009).

As an inter-sectoral network, MAMBA addresses this issue with a “one-stop” concept: its main tasks are to counsel and qualify immigrants as well as to find employers willing to offer them jobs. The network comprises five partners from the non-profit, for-profit and public sector. The concept for MAMBA was originally developed in 2008 by the local organisation Association for Refugee Relief (GGUA, *Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft zur Unterstützung Asylsuchender e.V.*), which is considered one of the most experienced organisations in this field in Germany. As of early 2012, MAMBA has provided work to more than 200 people and in addition to that, apprenticeships for young participants. In total, MAMBA had around 300 participants at the time. For the duration of the second allowance period (Nov. 2010 - Dec. 2013), the programme was expanded to include further towns in the region of *Münsterland* where the GGUA now offers advisory services once a week. Moreover, it serves as a blue print for several similar initiatives all over Germany. Conceptions of and ways of addressing users is open to immigrants both with and without a permanent residence permit. One of the programme’s main qualities is that the GGUA is widely known and well reputed among the target group. Refugees are more comfortable addressing a local NGO to seek work than accessing a public institution such as the Jobcenter, as the interviews with MAMBA employees indicate. The counsellors speak several languages and have intercultural skills. Moreover, they are familiar with the special legal situation of refugees, which is rarely the case in public agencies. Therefore, MAMBA compensates for the deficits of public administration.

MAMBA follows a voluntary and empowering approach. All stakeholders within the network (refugees, organisations, employers) work together as partners. The network offers a wide range of services to its participants - even

³ “MAMBA” is the abbreviation of the full title “Münsters Aktionsprogramm für MigrantInnen und Bleibeberechtigte zur Arbeitsmarktintegration in Münster und im Münsterland” (Action programme of Münster for the labour market integration of migrants and persons with a right to stay in Münster and the Münsterland).

after they have found a job. Those who do not have sufficient language skills in German can participate in special language courses. Moreover, participants can join computer courses or other kinds of training programmes in order to improve their competences for the labour market.

Within the MAMBA project, refugees are considered as being able to contribute to the local labour market. During a first information session at the GGUA, they can indicate their preferences and qualifications concerning a potential employment. GGUA's coaches try to build on the special resources and competences of MAMBA participants in order to find the right job for each person. They furthermore help participants to cope with administrative procedures involving their residence and work permits. Subsequently, participants get in touch with one of the partner organisations that provide contacts to potential employers and offer vocational training. As the interviews indicate, employers are interested in the MAMBA project as they consider participants highly motivated for most kinds of jobs as well as for temporary work. This motivation does not only stem from financial reasons. In fact, employment can lead to improvements in their residence status. This applies especially to the group of several hundred Roma refugees from Kosovo, many of whom have been living in Münster for more than a decade without regular residence permits.

22.2. Internal organisation and modes of working

Currently, 14 employees of the five partner organisations work for MAMBA (most of them 19-30 hours per week). While GGUA is an independent non-profit organisation, training and vocational education programmes are offered by the Society for Promotion and Education (*GEBA, Gesellschaft für Berufsförderung und Ausbildung*), a for-profit organisation, and the Centre for Youth Education (*JAZ, Jugendausbildungszentrum*), a non-profit enterprise belonging to the catholic charity organisation Caritas. Contacts to employers and job-related counselling are provided by the Educational Centre of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (*HBZ, Handwerkskammer-Bildungszentrum*) and the *Jobcenter*, a municipal public institution. The network efficiently links different competences: whereas the GGUA has good access to the target group, the other institutions are familiar with Münster's labour

market and have contacts to local enterprises. A team meeting involving all concerned personnel within the organisations is scheduled once a month. In order to facilitate cooperation, all employees share the same computer software, which provides them with data concerning participants.

When the project started, the GGUA provided special training sessions for employees in the public administration offices in order to strengthen intercultural skills as well as improve their knowledge concerning the legal situation of refugees in Germany. It may be considered a positive side effect that through MAMBA the local administration became more acquainted with immigration issues and acquired special knowledge as to how to deal with them. Through this development, at least a partial sustainability and legacy of MAMBA beyond the actual duration of the project has been established.

22.3. Interaction with the local welfare system

MAMBA receives multilevel funding from several institutions. The largest share is provided by the European Social Fund whereas the city of Münster has contributed few resources on an ad hoc basis according to requirements. However, funding by the EU and the federal government is limited to the end of the year 2013. As such, it is not assured that the network will subsist after 2013. Nevertheless, many local stakeholders see MAMBA as a big success and a flagship project. The success of the project in terms of the number of participants and the percentage placed in paid labour is established in internal evaluations of the project as well as those of the federal programme (Mirbach et al. 2012; Mirbach and Schobert 2011). MAMBA is in line with Münster's local discourse. Strengthening the employability of individuals follows the main paradigmatic lines of Münster's welfare system outlined in the introduction. Furthermore, it fits into the local welfare discourse and can be seen as one way of promoting the image of Münster as an integrative and liberal-minded city.

In Münster there is a broad consensus across all parties not to carry out controversies on refugee policy in public. Therefore, in 2009 a resolution was passed unanimously by the city council to stop deportations of Roma to Kosovo. However, there is still no political consensus on a general right of residence for this

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group on the level of federal and regional legislation, so labour market integration is crucial to reach a more permanent status. With respect to this situation, MAMBA's political dimension can be evaluated as extending far beyond an innovative approach in labour market integration.

MAMBA's modus operandi positively promotes the concept of public private partnerships, or inter-sector networks. According to a representative of the social department of the municipal administration, MAMBA also had an impact on Münster's 2010 decision to apply to be an "Optionskommune" (see below). This model provides the local level with additional responsibilities in local labour market policy, especially in regards to the long-term unemployed. The liberties of the city within this model to decide upon funding received by the federal level for labour market integration may both further the development of similar networks for other "difficult" groups on the labour market as well as help in sustaining the MAMBA network.

Concerning the question of diffusion, MAMBA is already applied in different cities in Germany. As long as funding is guaranteed and there is an interest of local stakeholders to promote labour market participation of refugees, the project can easily be transferred. It might also be transferred to other target groups (e.g. other immigrant groups or unemployed young people) if there are institutional structures (i.e. partner organisations already working with the intended target groups) to which the project can be connected.

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Optionskommune

23.1. Short description

Traditionally, labour market and social policies are organised and allocated separately in Germany. While labour market related issues are taken care of by local branches of the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*), communities have always been in charge of the provision of social services and welfare-related financial support. Most recently, this division has partly been abolished and combining different policy fields is the innovative aspect of this new development: the Federal Government institutionalised the possibility to hand over the provision of social assistance (welfare support) and assistance related to unemployment (in particular benefits granted for long-term unemployed) to the municipalities. **This new approach permits the allocation of responsibility for labour market and social policy issues to local governments and is called “Optionskommune”.** However, not being an *Optionskommune* means that the Federal Employment Agency remains the leading institution coordinating the supply of social benefits. It relies on cooperation with the local administrations. Either way, both models contain a legal obligation to establish joint institutions called *Jobcenters*.

In order to become an *Optionskommune* local governments had to file an individual application to the State Ministry for Labour, Integration and Social Affairs. They had to show that they are capable of successfully taking over the tasks and duties of the *Jobcenter*. Since the programme departs from the traditional German approach regarding social and labour market policies, this has been a competitive process. At the moment, there are around 110 *Optionskommunen* all over Germany. In 2012, Münster was chosen to become one of them, whereas several rural districts in the surrounding *Münsterland* have already established the model since 2004. This allows a coherent and integrated regional approach with respect to labour market initiatives, particularly for those groups and constituencies that face significant difficulties in finding a job. Indeed, the city of Münster hopes to significantly improve job placement processes and other services offered to citizens and local companies. The change towards the *Optionskommune* involves an adaptation of the structures of labour market policy and is therefore a quasi-permanent innovation.

23.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Being an *Optionskommune* is an innovative approach as it allows a different perspective on unemployed people: unemployment is not seen as individual failure, it mainly considers unemployment a structural problem. Therefore, the development towards an *Optionskommune* can be seen as an answer to these structural problems as it brings social policy and labour market together.

Essentially this model follows a decentralised approach: it is assumed that the Jobcenter as a local institution is better situated to take care of unemployed people than the Federal Employment Agency, since it can rely on local expertise and networks. In this way, it is possible to establish more individualised ways of addressing users and finally place more people in paid labour. In this, the Optionskommune follows an empowering approach, as the Head of the Social Department explains. As it is not possible to appoint more staff to support the unemployed, existing staff changed their ways of working. They are now using another consulting approach “away from taking care of the unemployed on the basis of software tools towards the individual and his/her history”⁴. He further states that the Jobcenter in general has taken on another perspective on unemployed people: from now on it considers them more as potential contributors to the local economy than as “problematic cases”.

Subsequently this approach is based on

“another perspective on the issue of unemployment. It is another way of working with the people that come to us. The consulting process [...], the way in which measures of integration are conceptualised and implemented has changed. [...] Not everyone has to participate in application training, not everyone has to participate in this and that...rather the focus is placed on the customer and its chances and strengths. On that basis, integration measures are conceptualised. This offers an entirely modified approach...”⁵

Moreover, local authority tries to decrease bureaucracy in the *Jobcenter*. This decision has positive consequences for the unemployed since it improves the focus on the individual and his/her specific situation. It also supports the idea of giving the case workers enough scope for independent decisions that favour the individual unemployed. Altogether, the *Optionskommune* offers more room for other, more flexible

4 “Sie nutzen nun einen anderen Beratungsansatz, der darauf beruht, einen Fall nicht mehr nur auf Basis von Software zu bearbeiten, sondern das Individuum mit ihrer oder seiner Geschichte anzuerkennen.” (Interview with the head of the Social Department).

5 “Das ist eine andere Sichtweise auf das Thema. Es ist eine ganz andere Arbeit mit den Menschen, die zu uns kommen. Der Beratungsprozess [...] die Art, wie Eingliederungsmaßnahmen konzipiert und umgesetzt werden verändert sich [...]. Nicht jeder muss ein Bewerbungstraining machen, nicht jeder muss dies und das machen, sondern je nachdem, wie Kunden so sind und wo ihre Chancen und Stärken liegen, so werden auch die Eingliederungsmaßnahmen konzipiert. Das ist ein völlig veränderter Ansatz...” (Focus group interview IV, head of the Social Department).

and sustainable instruments in addressing users than the former model did.

23.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Currently, it is quite difficult to evaluate the status quo of the implementation of the Optionskommune and its modes of working, because the new instruments have not been set up in detail yet. However, an advisory board, which is required by law, has been given additional weight in Münster: consisting of 16 regional representatives from the field of labour market policy from the administration, civil society and political parties, this board is becoming increasingly involved in the development of local labour market strategies in order to develop innovative approaches for the integration into the job market⁶.

At the moment, involved parties (administration, civil society and political parties) are working on an approach as to how to effect and modify local structures that were implemented with the Optionskommune. As this is an ongoing process the first step has been developing strategic principles for the future social- and labour market-political organisation of the Optionskommune. Therefore, tangible outcomes are not available yet (cf. focus group interview II and IV).

23.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The Optionskommune follows the concept of subsidiarity, stating that matters should be handled by the least centralised authority. Thereby, this concept fits into the overarching structure of the German welfare state and Münster's main paradigms. In this way, the *Optionskommune* is an example for a general German trend that started a couple of years ago and has brought immense changes for the local welfare system, particularly financially: a transfer of competences from the federal state or the *Länder* towards the local level.

6 “Es gibt ja von Gesetzes wegen die Verpflichtung einen sogenannten Beirat zu wählen. Der Beirat ist ja ein Institut aus regionalen Vertretern des Arbeitsmarktes hier. 16 Vertreter haben wir im Beirat bei uns im Jobcenter und wir haben gerade im letzten Jahr einen ganz interessanten Ansatz gewählt und den werden wir auch weiterverfolgen. Wir sind nämlich hingegangen und haben gesagt: nicht wir setzen uns jetzt hin und machen jetzt mal ein Arbeitsmarktprogramm, weil wir das ja alles genau wissen, was uns fehlt, sondern wir fragen mal die Akteure. Und haben alle Akteure aus dem Beirat eingeladen an sogenannten Zielgruppen-Workshops teilzunehmen.” (Focus group interview IV, Head of the Jobcenter).

Particularly concerning the provision of labour, the opting-model follows the assumption that the local authority is more appropriate than the state in providing jobs. Local authority in Münster can draw on good contacts to entrepreneurs and networks within the local economy. Thus, the *Jobcenter* knows the local job market and can help job seekers on their way to getting in touch with future employers. Therefore, the *Optionskommune* can be considered as an innovative “lighthouse project”. It is not only beneficial to the local authority of Münster, but to the entire Münsterland region.

Even though this innovation is an instrument situated on a meta level it provides the context and structural framework for strategic and sustainable social innovations within the local welfare system: it can be considered a basic precondition to pursue an integrated local social policy that enables the administration to include labour market policy into their local governance approach. By integrating various stakeholders into inter-sector networks and trying to include local entrepreneurship as partners, a “city of well-being” can be created. The most challenging, but finally successful process, was bringing together different participants:

“We spoke different languages. The people of the social policy and the labour market area - they used the same words but told different stories. That was not possible in the past, working together on labour market policy focussing on the various target groups. [...] Being tied together because of the opting-model is very valuable.”⁷

Therefore, the most innovative aspect of the *Optionskommune* is the “chance of social policy and labour market policy in a city melting into unity”⁸. The *Optionskommune* opens up a potentially multi-purpose scope for integrated approaches addressing social problems (cf. MAMBA). Splitting funding between several social stakeholders is another positive outcome and a reason why the model seems to be a win-win situation for both the administration and social service providers.

7 “Man hat verschiedene Sprachen gesprochen. Die Sozial- und die Arbeitsmarktmenschen. Die haben dieselben Worte genutzt aber was anderes erzählt. Das gab es früher nicht. Dass man zielgruppenorientiert an der Arbeitsmarktpolitik [gearbeitet hat, C.R.]. [...] Da sind dann auch alle Beteiligten durch die Option organisatorisch gebunden an einem Tisch. Und das ist sehr wertvoll.” (Focus group interview IV, Chief executive of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband)

8 “Die Chance ist eigentlich das Innovative [...]. Dass in einer Stadt Sozialpolitik und Arbeitsmarktpolitik zu einer Einheit verschmilzt.” (Focus group IV, Chief executive of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband)

In terms of potential diffusion of the model, it must be noted that the *Optionskommune* is a specifically German model, which draws heavily on the German federal structure and the traditions of local self-government. Thus, it might be difficult to transfer it to other, more centralised states where municipalities lack the administrative capacities and experience. It would at least require stronger re-structuring and re-deployment of resources than was the case in Münster. In addition, the expected success of the *Optionskommune* in providing jobs more efficiently depends heavily on the availability of local networks between the administration and the local labour market.

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Prevention Visits

24.1. Short description

The concept of prevention visits was implemented by the Youth Office⁹. The intention is to visit all parents in Münster with a newly born child. The prevention team, responsible for coordinating and realising these visits, started its work in August 2008¹⁰. From a practical point of view, these prevention visits aim to assist parents with their children's upbringing. From a political point of view, these visits serve as an operative instrument to improve local child protection, based on intensive and early family contact.

In particular, the responsible local authorities hope to improve the relationship between families and the Youth Office as well as to prevent worst-case scenarios such as abuse or neglect of children or even infanticide (cf. the local media coverage from June 2008). The implementation of these prevention visits was an initiative of the Youth Office itself, particularly from the head of the office. The concept of these visits follows the so-called "Dormagener model"¹¹ of prevention visits, developed in 2006. The Youth Office adapted the concept to the situation in Münster. A specific aspect of this "Münster model" is that all families are visited, not only socially disadvantaged ones from poorer areas as is done in other cities.

24.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The participation in the family visits is voluntary for all parents. First of all, each family with a newly born child (these are about 2,400 per year in Münster) receives a letter of inquiry by the Youth Office. If they do not object, they receive a second letter in which the prevention team suggests an appointment. The concept offers different services. First of all, the prevention team informs the parents in an individual way about different issues relevant to parents: parental benefits, child care facilities and preventative health care offers. In this context, families receive information leaflets in line with the respective nationality of their child and the district of the parents' home. If desired by parents a midwife accompanies the visits.

9 The Youth Office is responsible for child protection (§1 Abs. 3 S.3 SGB VIII). To this aim, the office can intervene in families where the wellbeing of the children is threatened and can decide, as last resort, to take children out of their families. Because of this, the Youth Office has a negative reputation in Germany, which is aggravated by the role of the Youth Office during the Third Reich and in the German Democratic Republic. With its staff of around 1,400 employees, the Youth Office in Münster is the largest administrative unit within the municipality (Source: Youth Office Münster 2012: 163).

10 All facts about the family visits in the following subchapters without any designated sources based on the newspaper article "Jugendamt will jedes Baby besuchen" (WN 05/06/2008) as well as on the website of the Youth Office.

11 The so-called "Dormagener Modell" is the title of a local programme that aimed to develop instruments for preventing child abuse and intrafamilial violence. This pilot project was developed in the German municipality Dormagen in 2006. Many other municipalities were convinced of this new concept and adapted this model. Source: Website of Dormagen.

Furthermore, the first parent letter (*Elternbriefe*) is handed over to the families personally. These letters offer a total of 46 educational assistances (i.e. advice on the issues breastfeeding or protective vaccination). Dispatch to families is staggered over the period from the first month of life up to the 8th birthday of the child¹². These parent letters are conceptualised by the working group *Neue Erziehung e.V.*, a nationally organised NGO¹³. They are also available in many other municipalities, but not every Youth Office sends them to families for such an extended period. "This staggered dispatch is very expensive. But it is a very early help"¹⁴, explained an employee of the Family Office¹⁵.

One of the main goals of these prevention visits is to ameliorate the negative image of the Youth Office, amplified by the supra-regional media¹⁶. To underline this aim, every child gets a welcome gift from the Youth Office. This toy symbolises that the prevention team does not want to take the children away from their parents but it wants all families to benefit. Parents should get the impression that the Youth Office might be useful for every family member and in every (difficult) situation. **Families should realise that they can rely on the Youth Office as a service provider. Ergo, prevention visits are seen as a sort of "door opener" by the employees of the Youth Office.**

"About 10 years ago (...), the Youth Office had the image of a supervisory authority. If its employees detected any irregularities, they might take the children from their families. We have to get away from this image because we are service providers. Our job is to assist parents in educating and developing their children to happy and capable human beings (...). If you talk about these questions in a situation with positive connotations, parents will find it easy to remember even in stressful times (...). This is a door opener"¹⁷.

12 The description of the parents' letters is based on the website of the Youth Office.

13 The working group "Neue Erziehung e.V." was founded in 1946 by teachers in Berlin. After the period of inhuman National Socialist and fascist tyranny, the members of this NGO aim to develop a new conversational understanding of education. Source: Website of Arbeitskreis Neue Erziehung.

14 "Viele Kommunen verschicken diese Elternbriefe entweder gar nicht oder aber komplett als Mappe zur Geburt, weil das eine teure Geschichte ist, dieser gestaffelte Versand. Und wir sagen, es ist eine ganz, ganz frühe Hilfe." (Interview with a representative of the Family Office).

15 For the structure and aims of the Family Office see section 1.4 below.

16 Source: Interview with a representative of the Family Office.

17 "Jugendamt hat in Deutschland bis vor zehn Jahren (...) immer so das

24.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The prevention team is composed of six qualified employees working part time. As members of the prevention team, they are employees of the Youth Office. This underlines the main purpose of the prevention team that it should serve as ambassadors for the office. Volunteers, as in other German municipalities, would not have direct access to the services of the Youth Office, the head of the office explained. This is one of the reasons why the Youth Office decided to integrate the visits into the office itself. **Through funding the visits as part of the annual budget, they were institutionalised in a financially sustainable way.**

Each of the six employees should care for about 400 newly born children per year. They coordinate all appointments and visits. The Social Democrats criticised this ratio. They argue it would be impossible for six employees working part-time to care for 400 children¹⁸. During the year 2009, 2,069 families were visited, almost as many visits as were expected. Figures for the first year of implementation (2008) are not available¹⁹. Already in the development phase, there were difficulties in finding political majorities for the programme. Many politicians did not want the prevention team to visit families living in wealthy social environments as well. The head of the Youth Office explained: "Then I said, either all or none (...) child protection issues affect everyone (...) it is a visitation service, not an inspection service."²⁰ Today, the Youth Office is very satisfied with this programme. "That's the best programme we have carried out in 3 years."²¹

Image gehabt (...), die kommen kontrollieren und wenn die sehen, dass was nicht gut läuft, dann nehmen die einem die Kinder weg. Von diesem Image müssen wir einfach weg, weil wir sind Dienstleister. Wir sind dazu da, Eltern in ihrer Aufgabe zu unterstützen, ihre Kinder zu glücklichen, lebensstüchtigen Menschen zu machen (...). Wenn man in einer positiv besetzten Situation über solche Fragen spricht, dann fällt es Eltern sehr leicht, in einer stressbeladenen Situation sich zu erinnern (...). Das ist ein Türöffner." (Interview with a representative of the Family Office).

18 Source: "Jugendamt will jedes Baby besuchen" (WN 05/06/2008).

19 Source: Youth Office Münster 2012: 154.

20 "Dann habe gesagt, entweder alle oder keiner und Kinderschutzthemen berühren hier alle in der Stadt, da kann ich Ihnen die Zahlen geben und das ist ja auch ein netter Besuchsdienst und nicht hier ein Kontrolldienst." (Interview with the Head of the Youth Office.)

21 "Das ist überhaupt das Beste, was wir (...) seit drei Jahren machen" (Interview with the Head of the Youth Office).

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The local media praises the programme as “a good step²²”. For evaluation, Münster takes part in an empirical study about German municipalities that have introduced the instrument of prevention visits²³. With reference to the first results of the participating municipalities, as well as the high demand of this instrument by municipalities in North-Rhine Westphalia, the empirical study evaluates the instrument of prevention visits positively and sees it on the path towards a “regular offer” (*Regelangebot*) (Frese and Günther 2012: 251). According to the Youth Office, many families did not know about the services provided until the prevention team informed them about the different offers. Others call the Youth Office in order to ask when the prevention team will visit them²⁴. These experiences encourage the Youth Office to continue these prevention visits. With their fixed budget, they can be seen as an integral part of their prevention programme.

24.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

This social innovation supports the core value of prevention and especially the prevention programme of the Youth Office. “We have to begin with prevention and must be careful not to lock the stable door after the horse has bolted. This is our standard²⁵. The office aims to achieve public consensus by arguing to be preventing worst-case scenarios picked up by media, politics and society. At the same time, they had to convince local politicians that they do not want to control families. This process shows an innovative aspect: it was the Youth Office itself who started the initiative and implemented it against political resistance. Neither civil society, nor local politics had an active role in this process.

According to this aspect and the second goal of the prevention visits (improvement of the Youth Office’s image), one can infer signs of a change in welfare

governance: public administration increasingly acts as a partner for civil society (families), not as a hierarchical instance. Negative reactions in the beginning show that local politics and civil society perceived the Youth Office as an intervention authority (*Ordnungs-/Eingriffsinstanz*). The increasing number of prevention visits carried out over the last years (2009: 2,069, 2010: 2,314, 2011: 2,080)²⁶ shows the high demand of prevention visits by families. In a quarter of those prevention visits in 2010 (497), the Youth Office identified a high demand for advice, information as well as support. In more than 1,000 cases, the prevention team informed parents about the offers of local services focussing on child care (Youth Office Münster 2012: 87). This way, prevention visits have contributed to the intended image change of the Youth Office away from a controlling organisation to a service provider. In addition to this, the evaluation of prevention visits in different cities underlines the positive effects of the specific Münster Modell: parents participating in the study emphasise the positive effects of both working with employees of the Youth Office as well as visiting all parents in the city (Frese and Günther 2012).

Since its implementation 4 years ago, the instrument of the prevention visits has become firmly institutionalised within the field of local welfare politics in Münster. This is apparent in the merger of prenatal advice and the prevention team in 2010. In June 2011, the unit “Prenatal advice, prevention services and family visits” was founded. This step enables better networking between early years services and the expansion of existing cooperative governance structures (Youth Office Münster 2012: 85).

22 “Reicht ein Besuch?” a comment of the local journalist Karin Völker in WN 05/06/08.

23 The study of the Institute for Social Work has the title “Visiting parents – objective targets, concepts and impacts” (Aufsuchende Elternkontakte – Zielsetzungen, Konzepte, Wirkungen). Source: *Youth Office Münster 2012*: 86.

24 “teilweise rufen die hier schon an, wann kommen Sie denn.” (Interview with the Head of the Youth Office.)

25 “Das ist auch unser Standard: Mit Prävention anfangen, noch bevor das Kind in den Brunnen gefallen ist.” (Interview with the Head of the Youth Office.)

26 Source: Youth Office Münster 2012: 175. The decrease by 10 per cent from 2010 to 2011 is explained by the Youth Office with a job vacancy within the prevention team for 5 months (Youth Office Münster 2012: 89).

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Family Office

25.1. Short description

Each family is different and has different needs, problems and concepts of their individual family life (for example concerning child-care facilities or the reconciliation of family and job). In everyday life, it is sometimes not easy for parents to find a suitable contact person for their individual concerns and needs. "Surely it cannot be that everyone calls up the office in order to get a child care facility"²⁷, explained the head of the Youth Office. In 2003, the office for children, youth and families set up a Family Office, which forms part of the Youth Office. Its primary goal is providing advice with respect to family-related issues. The office understands itself as a kind of signpost through the jungle of German bureaucracy. Concurrently, the office is supposed to serve as a kind of "ambassador for the Youth Office"²⁸, fighting against the negative image of the Office. It is located in the same building. With its own outside entrance, the Family Office invites parents to enter:

"You don't need an appointment. You can leave the office without giving any personal data. That is the particular feature of the Family Office the clients appreciate."²⁹

25.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The employees of the Family Office understand themselves as service providers. "We are the 'citizens' advice office for parents and families"³⁰. During daily consultation hours and via the telephone they support people in difficult situations by putting them in contact with specialised social service institutions. Their clients range from the pregnant women who need advice about financial assistance, grandparents who are concerned about their grandchild, the uncle who asks about playgrounds in the city, to the mother who is concerned about her 16-year-old son skipping school³¹.

27 "Es kann ja wohl nicht sein, dass jeder kreuz und quer durch die Verwaltung uns immer anruft und sagt, ich will einen Kitaplatz, ich will dies, ich will das (...)." (Interview with the Head of the Youth Office).

28 Source: Interview with the Head of the Youth Office.

29 "Aber dieses Niedrigschwellige, dass man keinen Termin vereinbaren muss, dass man auch hier weggehen kann, ohne Sorge haben zu müssen, meine Dinge werden weitergegeben oder die ruft sofort die nächste Stelle an und vermittelt das weiter, das ist das Besondere am Familienbüro, was die Ratsuchenden sehr schätzen." (Interview with a representative of the Family Office.)

30 "Wir sind sowas wie die Bürgerberatungsstelle für Eltern und Familien." (Interview with a representative of the Family Office.)

31 Source: Interview with a representative of the Family Office.

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In addition, the Family Office enables flexible access to child care facilities and baby-minders. Furthermore, a representative of the local *Jobcenter* is integrated in the facility, providing advice in respect to employment issues.

The Family Office is highly frequented. Contacts with clients range between 5,000 and 6,000 per annum, of which 60 per cent are related to topics of child care, and 40 per cent to a wide range of topics, amongst those labour market topics or family crises (Youth Office Münster 2011). The Family Office plays a particularly important role for socially disadvantaged families in Münster. It wants to be perceived as a kind of “admission ticket” for any further contacts with the Youth Office, as a representative of the Family Office explains.

25.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The team of the Family Office is composed of two pedagogues. Due to their educational background, they are well positioned to detect the underlying problems of their clients. “Often parents feel when something goes wrong they are not able to localise the real problem”³². That is why the Family Office does not employ administrative staff who primarily hand over address lists. The employees of the Family Office see their function as a signpost for clients. Their job is to put the clients in touch with the right person in the right institution to solve their problems. This is to be achieved within a maximum of two contacts (by phone or personally) between the client and the Family Office. Staff also supports clients by establishing contact with specific institutions (e.g. counselling or child-care facilities).

Both employees consider networking a very important aspect of their work. Consequently, they cooperate with local politicians as well as with service providers (advice centres, family educational institutions etc.)³³ Due to existing networks and word-of-mouth-recommendation, the office is also well known outside the municipality.

32 “(...) manchmal ist es auch so, dass das Problem sehr diffuse im Kopf ist, die Familie spürt, bei uns läuft irgendetwas nicht richtig, aber man kann es jetzt nicht eingrenzen, es liegt daran oder daran oder daran” (Interview with a representative of the Family Office).

33 Source: Interview with a representative of the Family Office.

25.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The Family Office is the flagship of the Youth Office, presenting it as service provider. It can be seen as the starting point in this process of image change. Both Family Office and the prevention visits have very similar goals: improving the image of the Youth Office; more “customer focus” and expanding the prevention policy as a central pillar in local welfare policy. This new understanding is based on an increasing differentiation of social services on all political levels over the past decades. The Family Office underlines its new role as service provider and partner for the families by the fact that its employees are pedagogues, not administrative staff, and they maintain close relationships with other local stakeholders (from local politics and civil society). **Local welfare policy seems to work more and more in networks as opposed to operating in a hierarchical process.** This is also underlined by the establishment process, which was led by the highly embedded and active head of the Youth Office.

Unlike the prevention visits, the Family Office serves as a flagship for the whole municipality in presenting the city as a family-oriented city. In 2011, the Family Office received 6,641 enquiries (5,000 was the aspired number for 2011). Overall, the number of requests is rising continuously (from 5,421 in 2009 to 6,641 in 2011; Youth Office Münster 2012: 97). Implementing prevention policy is only one part of the daily work. Most requests concern child-care facilities and the issue of reconciliation of work and private life. The Family Office has turned into an important institution in the field of child-care politics. It is a kind of lighthouse that adds to the city’s reputation even beyond the municipality. Only 9 per cent of the municipalities in North-Rhine Westphalia have a Family Office, at federal level only about 3 per cent³⁴. “Münster has taken up the cause of the reconciliation of work and private life. This is the topic of the future *per se*”³⁵, a representative of the Family Office explains in an interview. This indicates the importance generally ascribed to the labour market in Münster.

34 In NRW verfügen neun Prozent der Kommunen über Familienbüros, bundesweit sind es nur ca. drei Prozent (Possinger 2010).

35 “Münster hat sich ganz groß auf die Fahnen geschrieben, die Vereinbarkeit von Familien und Beruf. Das ist das Thema der Zukunft schlechthin.” (Interview with a representative of the Family Office.)

The evaluation of the prevention visits, interviews with employees of the Youth Office and local media coverage regarding the innovations indicate the success of both measures in changing the image of the Youth Office and establishing better connections to families. This can ensure more effective protection of children as well as serve the different needs of families, while strengthening Münster's image as a family-friendly city at the same time.

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Osthuesheide neighbourhood

26.1. Short description

Osthuesheide is a neighbourhood consisting of several apartment blocks with about 800 inhabitants. They were built in 1963 by a private company and have since been used by the British army. Gradually, the apartments have been sold to private investors or individual owner-occupiers since the late 1970s. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, a “circular and cumulative process of degradation”³⁶ was observed: the low standard attracted mainly tenants and owners with few resources and necessary investments were omitted. As a consequence, several apartments became uninhabitable and as a result, poverty and a high fluctuation of residents have become symptomatic of this area.

In a report concerning the preparation of a renovation programme following the declaration as an area with special need for renovation (*Sanierungsgebiet*) by the city council in 2005, the fragmented ownership structure and lacking financial capacities of many owners were identified as the main obstacles for private investment. Legally, only owners' associations (*Eigentümergeinschaften*, WEG³⁷) were able to make decisions on major investments. Two of these decided in favour of investments, while a positive decision in the third and biggest (128 units) lacked a majority.

Therefore, a public company was formed in 2006, *Wohnungsgesellschaft Große Lodden (WGL)*. The company was commissioned to buy flats until those willing to invest had a majority in the respective owners' association. In 2010, the third owners' association opted – with WGL representing almost 50 per cent of the units – for substantial investments.

26.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

In a first approach, the municipality tried to counteract the negative housing situation and reputation of *Osthuesheide* by means of social work and social services. This, however, only resulted in very limited success: it did not further the identification of inhabitants with the neighbourhood and failed to promote significant improvements.

Consequently - based on the problem analysis - the owners were identified as the main addressees of public efforts: (a) financial investors should be either forced to invest by majority decision or driven to sell their flats; whereas (b) individual owner-occupiers should be convinced of joining the pro-renovation fraction and be enabled to carry the financial burden.

36 “Der zirkuläre und kumulative Degradationsprozess” (V/0686/2005).

37 Wohnungseigentümergeinschaften are associations of all owners of an apartment building or a housing estate. In yearly assemblies, they decide upon e.g. renovation/modernisation measures, contributions to a maintenance reserve fund, etc.

In WEG I and II, with a high share of owner-occupiers, the municipality initiated a moderated process. The general aim was to foster decisions for renovation without further financial engagement of the municipality. The owners were assisted - following an empowerment approach - in developing realistic investment and modernisation plans. Regarding WEG III, some owners considered the net costs³⁸ of the renovation a financial problem. Therefore, for the first 4 years a subsidy of 100 euros per month was offered by WGL. As an alternative option, owners could sell their flat to WGL at 4,000 euros above market value³⁹. The third option - reducing the monthly payment by work contribution during the renovation process - was not chosen by any tenant.

The aim of the renovation was not only to improve the living situation for existing tenants but also to attract new and well-to-do inhabitants to the area⁴⁰. The common catchphrase for this is "to create a (healthy) social mix"⁴¹. The underlying assumption is that those in a worse socio-economic situation will indirectly benefit from this mixing process. It can be argued, however, that this concept does not strike at the core problem of poverty/ inequality but merely changes the settings in which it exists.

26.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The direct intervention of the municipality was limited to a few measures improving the quality of the surroundings as well as changing the name of the neighbourhood, in order to improve its reputation⁴². Involvement of the city in purchasing units - as initially intended - was soon considered inappropriate. The influence obtained through the acquisition of a low number of flats was remote and there were concerns that the municipality would be in danger of being

38 Each owner-occupier has to pay approx. 230 euros per month to amortise the collective loan for the renovation, saving about 30 euros in energy costs, resulting in a net burden of 200 euros per month.

39 WGL offered to pay 19,000 euros instead of an estimated market value of 15,000 euros per unit in WEG III.

40 "Siedlung Osthuesheide/Bonnenkamp: Nachfrage ist da" (WN 14/7/2012).

41 This phrase was found with some variations in several council debates, some party programmes and a number of WILCO-related interviews.

42 "Angelmodde: Osthuesheide: Kein neuer Name ohne Renovierung." (WN 17/09/2010).

legally liable in the event that the owners' associations were unable to repay their debts.

In order to avoid this, the separate company (WGL) was founded as a subsidiary of the communally owned *Wohn+Stadtbau*. This company was supposed to gain a majority share in WEG III, where both the need for investment and the number of flats owned by corporations were highest. The close connection between the established public housing company and the new WGL allowed for the obtainment of a substantial loan for the renovations, since *Wohn+Stadtbau* offered other houses as guarantees. In the short term, the WGL needed to invest a high amount of money in order to buy and renovate the flats⁴³. In the long run, however, these investments are expected to be profitable in terms of a sustainable income (rents) or through a resale.

According to the complex statutes of the owners' associations and housing ownership laws (*Wohneigentumsrecht*), one single decision for the whole area of WEG III (128 flats) had to be taken. As a public support programme for renovations was due to be discontinued, a decision was taken quickly by simple majority. Court cases - arguing that a qualified majority would have been necessary - are still ongoing, but have been rejected in the first instance⁴⁴.

26.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Both the moderated process in WEG I and II and the renovation in WEG III represent a governance innovation in Münster and probably even in Germany⁴⁵. Interventions in the ownership structure of neglected neighbourhoods have not been executed before, especially not to such a high degree in terms of financial volume. However, both the representatives of the WGL and of the Municipal Office for Housing do not observe a paradigmatic change in housing policy. According to the representative of the Municipal Office for Housing, a long-term re-communalisation of housing stock is not necessary. It would suffice to

43 5.8 million euros; 46,000 euros per unit contrasting with 15,000 euros current market value per unit in *WEG III*.

44 "Klagen abgewiesen: Osthuesheide wird saniert." (MZ 25.11.2010.)

45 Regarding the moderated process, one single blueprint reference example can be found in the small city of Stade. This however was a model project funded by the Bundesland Niedersachsen, while in Münster it was carried out without external funding (cf. Bartkowiak 2008).

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take up an intermediary role, for example by buying neglected blocks and reselling them to private owners based on a contract including obligations regarding the future development of the neighbourhoods⁴⁶. This underlines the predominance of market mechanisms in combination with a certain level of municipal control.

This reliance on market mechanisms was only broken up in the case of *Osthuesheide*⁴⁷ due to the state and reputation of the neighbourhood threatening the overarching image of Münster as an attractive location for private investments. This perception activated a broad number of stakeholders and led to the acceptance of public intervention.

Additionally, consciousness has been growing for the interaction between public transfer payments and the lack of private investment. The representative of the municipal office for housing issues calls this process “capitalisation of social rent”⁴⁸. He explains that if the rents for recipients of transfer payments are paid regardless of the state of the flats, this can pose a disincentive to investment. Some financial investors owning neglected flats are even actively seeking such tenants. Especially if the payments are made directly to the owners, reducing payments in case of seriously neglected apartments could be used to press for investments and renovations, which would offer another form of indirect influence on the housing market.

Most stakeholders consider the *Osthuesheide* renovation programme highly successful and a sustainable solution to the underlying problems. According to the municipal representative, a number of other communities facing similar problems⁴⁹ are greatly interested, especially in the moderated process in *WEG I* and *II*. An organised transfer of knowledge might be a starting point for diffusion processes. The process in these units was ruled by only a small number of preconditions: the owners were able to shoulder the lion’s share of the costs themselves, a majority for the

renovations was easily obtained, and the involvement of the community remained low.

The process in *WEG III* was a lot more demanding, however, and as such will be more difficult to reproduce. The possibility to obtain credits at low interest rates depended both on the declaration as *Sanierungsgebiet* and on the ability of the *Wohn+Stadtbau* to offer its existing stock as guarantee. The willingness of existing owners to either renovate or sell their flats was another prerequisite. Finally, the point in time was crucial: at that time, a renovation was still possible, while other seriously neglected housing might already be in a condition that only allows for its destruction.

46 For example, in the case of *Kinderhaus-Brüningheide*, a larger housing complex in the north of Münster, the city has prepared for possible engagement and has already bought one of the most neglected blocks.

47 The municipality is also intervening in other city areas, which are already run down or threaten to deteriorate further in the near future. All of these seem to underly the same logic to intervene in order to maintain the image of Münster.

48 “Kapitalisierung der Sozialmiete” (phone interview with the representative of the municipal office for housing issues).

49 The degradation of the housing stock of housing associations and large private investors is a common problem in several German cities.

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Hafenforum

27.1. Short description

The *Hafenforum* was a broad moderated citizen participation process carried out in 2010 and 2011, concerning a plan to reshape Münster's harbour area and the surrounding densely populated *Hansaviertel*. The *Hafenforum* and its repercussions represent a new episode in the swelling conflict in terms of urban development projects within the city of Münster. It could be an innovative form of public dispute management to establish early stakeholder involvement (of residents, local merchants, etc.) to prevent possible resistance.

The process is situated in the context of a strong pro-growth coalition focusing on large-scale prestige projects on the one hand and dwindling public resources on the other. Therefore, the need to attract private investors is constantly increasing. At the same time, citizens' awareness levels concerning the effects of property led urban planning – which are clearly visible in the city – seem to be on the rise, as indicated by an increase in public conflicts around such topics. This awareness surfaced in the opposition of local merchants and residents towards the plans of two private (main) investors, backed by the local administration, to transform old industrial compounds in the harbour area into high-end housing facilities. Another point of contention was the induction of a shopping centre as well as big car parks into the surrounding areas.

Left-wing parties picked up on the local peoples' apprehensions and reached a decision in the city council⁵⁰, calling for the *Hafenforum* to precede any further formal decision-making processes about the area. This call for a public consultation process on the neighbourhood's future resulted from the fact that neither the city council nor the administration had full disposal rights to the areas affected by the investors' plans.

The *Hafenforum* attracted hundreds of participants in a number of open sessions and workgroups. The administration engaged the local public relations agency *bürofrauns* to organise, moderate and document the process. It was furthermore agreed that the Committee on Urban Development, Urban Planning, Traffic and Economy (ASSVW, *Ausschuss für Stadtentwicklung, Stadtplanung, Verkehr und Wirtschaft*) should decide upon the projects after the end of the process. Through this, the existing Masterplan Stadthäfen, which outlines the long-term development concept for the wider harbour area (approved by the city council in 2004) should be modified.

⁵⁰ The Green Party (Die Grünen/GAL) and smaller parties achieved consent of the Social Democratic Party and thereby reached a majority decision in the council against the votes of the Liberal and Christian Democratic Party.

27.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

In many cases hearings and counselling processes are obligatory in urban planning processes. However, the *Hafenforum* is a new way of addressing a public conflict in the city of Münster, since it extends the mandatory citizen involvement substantially and tries to create an opportunity for a meeting between developers, neighbours and other stakeholders prior to formal decision-making.

Once the resolution was taken to hold the *Hafenforum*, the main political stakeholders in the ongoing development process - namely the Social Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party - wanted to include critical stakeholders as quickly as possible. This seemed to be a measure to avoid a potential referendum on the plans⁵¹. The Green Party, on the other hand, has a stronghold in the concerned area and saw itself as a resident advocate. In addition, they wanted to posit their opposition to the current logic of urban development carried out by local legislators and administrators.

Three open forums were held with 200 to 400 participants each. Information about investors' plans was provided, questions could be asked and ideas communicated. In addition, working groups on specific topics (set by the administration) were held, in which a small number of 30 participants each could participate. Nominally, the participants of the *Hafenforum* should discuss perspectives for the harbour area, concluding in an update to the city's *Masterplan Stadthäfen*. But given the actual situation - with an investor plan on the agenda - it was obvious that the *Hafenforum* would mainly focus on opposition towards and alternatives to this plan.

This ambiguity resulted in diverging expectations, which makes the evaluation of the success of the *Hafenforum* difficult. While some citizens expected to be able to contribute to factual decisions and be integrated in actual planning processes, other residents and investors expected a mere information event. Meanwhile, political stakeholders never wanted or could not relay any legislative power, but saw a great chance to "get in contact" with the citizens in the forum.

51 It should be mentioned that both parties suffered an emphatic defeat in a referendum, following an extensive open conflict about a planned city music hall just 2 years prior.

27.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Even though it is not uncommon to call upon the services of private enterprises in participatory processes, the engagement of *bürofrauns*, an agency for "communication, planning and marketing" in this highly controversial political discussion process is crucial. Its role as well as the entire process was discussed publicly in a highly controversial manner. While some praised the participatory quality and openness of the forum, others criticised the same procedure as too dominated by certain stakeholders. In addition to this, administration representatives rejected some individual suggestions as impossible for technical or financial reasons.

In the eyes of some critical participants, the process thus had strong top-down and paternalistic traits. Representatives of different associations criticised: "We were told what is possible and what isn't, but not why"⁵², and "I've got the impression that the plans presented in the beginning were only slightly modified and shall now be pushed through"⁵³. These statements, uniting a spectrum of quite different stakeholders, illustrate a widely shared impression of a pseudo-participatory character of the forum.

As a reaction to these controversies, all parties agreed to hold talks as a follow-up to the process, involving the forum's directing committee, the administration, investors and critics of the *Hafenforum*. However, judgments on the quality and success of the process continue to diverge. Despite this the ASSVW passed the plans of the investors with some gradual changes - the shopping centre was downsized and the housing project approved with the obligation to include 30 per cent of social housing. The *Masterplan Stadthäfen* was changed in several minor aspects. The proposal was passed by a broad majority of Christian Democrats, Liberal Democrats and Social Democrats. In contrast, some representatives of the Green Party and the five participating associations expressed massive critique regarding both the way in which the *Hafenforum* sessions were conducted and documented by *bürofrauns*, as well as the ultimate decision of the committee, as

52 "Uns wurde mitgeteilt, was geht und was nicht, aber nicht, warum das so ist" (Rainer Bode, Initiative ZukunftHafen, in WN 26/10/2011).

53 "Ich habe den Eindruck, dass die Pläne, die zu Beginn vorlagen, nur leicht abgeändert wurden und nun durchgezogen werden sollen." (Norbert Fiedler, Das Nieberding e.V., in WN 26/10/2011.)

it would not in any manner reflect the actual discussions⁵⁴. Furthermore, even though the Social Democratic representative in the committee commented positively on the *Hafenforum*, his counterpart of the Green Party is quoted as saying that the administration “willingly falsified the results”⁵⁵.

27.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The *Hafenforum* is an outcome of growing demands for participation at the local level and growing frustration about the one-dimensional doctrines of local decision-making. However, as several politicians stated, the given means of participation – mainly allowing for resistance against proposed ventures – make it difficult to realise projects. Therefore it appears necessary to involve stakeholders, including radical opponents, at an early stage of planning, as the “political price” (and probably also the monetary) of failure through a referendum is high. Therefore, the municipality attempts to involve citizens early if resistance against a project is anticipated. The *Hafenforum* was a special case, however, due to the number of citizens involved as well as the prolonged duration of the participation process.

Conflicts are likely to arise, especially in cases of urban planning and the field of basic public supplies. However, they may also occur in social policy in a narrower sense. Nonetheless, the heavy and ongoing controversies regarding the *Hafenforum* point to the fact that if a topic is as controversial as this, even involving stakeholders in a moderated process may not solve or calm the conflict. This holds especially true if, as in this case, matters seem predetermined or are presented without a viable alternative. This lack of openness regarding the results might have been the biggest flaw in this case because expectations of politicians, investors and citizens diverged significantly. The lack of neutrality of the administration and the assigned agency *bürofrauns* was another point of contention. This suggests that while opposition seems to be rather easily organised, the development of

realistic alternative plans for urban development is a lot harder to achieve by participatory processes.

It can be concluded that the aims of such a participation process should be made as clear as possible in order to avoid discontent and frustration. This holds especially true for processes where the level of emotional involvement is high. A clearer legal framework might be helpful despite its potentially limiting effect as regards the flexibility of the methods.

The *Hafenforum* affected the political local landscape in so far as it split opponents of the project into more radical groups and those willing to compromise towards a modified concept. In fact, the formal decision in December 2011 reflected one of the main aims of the local social democratic housing policy: increasing social housing, especially in areas close to the city. It was obviously a negotiated compromise between the administration, investors and Christian Democratic, Liberal Democratic and Social Democratic Parties, opposed by the Green Party.

It is unknown what consequences the experience of the *Hafenforum* will have on local politics in the future. Obviously, it could not solve the strategic dilemma between large-scale urban planning with regard to the whole city on the one side and resistance against them by citizens from the affected neighbourhoods on the other.

General trends

Some general trends linking the innovations studied herein can be observed. The innovations point to a different understanding of the role of public administration. It is increasingly seen as a service provider with a strong focus on its clients. Therefore, one of its increasingly important functions is the empowerment of citizens. Contemporaneous with this change the role of NPOs in the local interplay of stakeholders is undergoing a transformation as well, i.e. they are gradually focusing on networking with different kinds of stakeholders from all sectors of society.

54 It is necessary to underline that data collection only encompasses the time frame until the beginning of 2012. In the meantime, the controversial debate about the development of the harbor area continued, where the results of the *Hafenforum* and the political independence are used strategically as arguments.

55 “die Ergebnisse des Hafenforums bewusst verfälscht” (Helga Benink, Green Party, in WN 13/12/2011).

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Conclusions

The innovations presented above are not only local examples for innovative projects and undertakings in Münster, but rather contain lessons for innovators and social entrepreneurs in other contexts. Those lessons will be analysed in the following sections: first, the general context or window of opportunity for innovations in Münster will be used to generate a categorical framework with which the role of public stakeholders can be typified. Afterwards, the lessons to be learned from Münster regarding the sustainability and diffusion of innovations will be expounded.

Windows of opportunities for innovations

The above description and analysis of innovations undertaken conveys important insights into the available windows of opportunity for social innovations and social entrepreneurs in Münster. It demonstrated that the coalition formed around the initial innovation - establishing the competitiveness and investment frame in the 1990s - still exerts important influence on social policy today. It is wielded through the dominance of the main paradigm as well as through the broad networks of political, administrative and private stakeholders.

Municipal stakeholders – politicians as well as members of the local administration – are acting as facilitators for social innovations if they can be connected to the overarching frame. Nonetheless, it seems that in most cases the municipality was not willing or able to provide funding or give other active support. Instead, they are trying to secure funding from other institutions or political levels (as in the case of MAMBA, *Optionskommune* or the private investments in the harbour area). Generally speaking, this cannot be seen as a *laissez-faire* style of politics as the municipality is a very active player in the field of local welfare policy. In the case of *Osthuesheide*, the communally owned *Wohn+Stadtbau* even intervened financially on a comparatively high level in order to achieve the renovation of the neighbourhood, despite this being a measure of last resort. The active intervention in this case seems to have been derived from the fact that urban development is one of the key issues for the municipality in accordance with the overarching discursive frame. The two innovations in the field of

family policy (the Family Office and the prevention visits to families) were financed by redeploying resources within the annual budget.

Therefore, the intervention style of communal stakeholders mainly seems to be one of selective intervention: subsidiarity is preferred wherever possible, while the core values of the coalition are pursued by active engagement, if necessary. The Youth Office, for example, did not attempt to municipalise the different services in order to achieve clearer structures. Instead, the different institutions maintain their respective spheres of influence, while the Youth Office acts as a signpost for citizens. The *Hafenforum* follows the same logic, since the plans of investors are supported by most communal stakeholders. As resistance by other stakeholders was to be expected, they sought to prevent a failure of the plans through a moderated process while keeping their own engagement low.

Regarding their effect on the local welfare system, the innovations studied herein serve two main functions. On the one hand, some innovations (e.g. the Family Office, prevention visits, MAMBA, and, in parts, the *Optionskommune*) aid in viewing clients in a more comprehensive way. There is an attempt to address their different problems by competent and locally embedded stakeholders and organisations. On the other hand, the participation in and access of citizens to municipal processes shall be strengthened (*Hafenforum*, *Osthuesheide*). Through both functions, the strengths and assets of citizens and small-scale communities shall be fortified and utilised for local welfare policy.

From these insights follows a view of the community as a “spider in its web,” which exerts influence in selecting innovations and undertakings for support. Within the community, the role of the original discursive coalition remains important. The maintenance of the dominant frame and the main stakeholders in the coalition ensure continuity. On the other hand, this leads to a certain saturation and rigidity of the network, which until now seems to remain largely unnoticed by the coalition. In the future, this might hamper the adaptive capacity and innovativeness of the local system regarding newly emerging challenges.

Sustainability and potential for diffusion

The innovations studied in Münster also demonstrate some relevant factors in regards to the sustainability of innovations that can be applied to other settings and innovators. In the following, those general lessons are outlined.

One of the most important aspects is *sustainable funding*. Some of the innovations in Münster (e.g. the Family Office, the prevention visits and the renovation process in *Osthuesheide*⁵⁶) have been issued with sustainable resources, either from the municipality itself or through guarantees by communal enterprises. The *Optionskommune* is a special case, since funding is granted by federal level according to specific regulations⁵⁷.

On the other side are innovations funded on a project basis, such as MAMBA. Its existence largely depends on acquiring follow-up financing after the end of the grant from the European Social Fund (ESF)⁵⁸. Hitherto, even though the project is considered a success in Münster, no local stakeholder has signalled the intention to provide funding from 2014 onwards. Apart from the need to cut public expenditure this might be associated with the fact that aid for refugees is not a core aim of the dominant coalition (i.e. competitiveness).

This assumption leads to another factor for sustainability: *continued support by local stakeholders*. The broader the network supporting an innovation the easier its maintenance will be. This can be observed in innovations in the field of family policy, which have been installed by a broad coalition of supporters and which are solidly established as permanent institutions. The process of the *Hafenforum*, in contrast,

56 The Osthuesheide is special, in that an income – either through rents or through a resale of the procured apartments – can be expected in the long run. However, in the short term it required a substantial financial engagement by the communal WGL

57 Basically, federal funding for labour market integration measures is allocated by the same formula to all municipalities. It is based on the number of jobseekers within the responsibility of the local Jobcenter, weighted by the overall share of population receiving basic social security benefits (*Grundsicherung*). Thereby, municipalities with a high percentage of the latter receive a higher sum per jobseeker. In an *Optionskommune*, expenses are directly granted by and booked into the federal state's budget, and not co-administered by the Federal Labour Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*). Sources: www.o-ton-arbeitsmarkt.de/o-ton-lexikon/eingliederungsmittel; http://www.kreise.de/_cms1/images/stories/pdf/sgb%20ii%20gute%20grnde%20option.pdf.

58 It is noteworthy that even in a rather well-off city such as Münster the ESF plays a role in the funding of social innovations.

has been widely criticised and has not resulted in a broad consensus about the future of the harbour area. Ongoing debates about the development of the neighbourhood can be expected. Results of the consultation process will not be a reliable outcome on which to build future policies. Instead, it can serve as an example from which to learn for future consultation processes. Regarding MAMBA, the broad alliance for refugees in Münster points to the possibility that a long-term solution for the project might be found. A potential connection point might be the *Optionskommune*, which offers the possibility to integrate MAMBA into the broader framework of labour market integration.

Diffusion

One aim of the WILCO project is to investigate the potential diffusion of innovations. This encompasses both the transfer to other cities and regions as well as the application of an innovation to other target groups. Drawing on the experience of innovations in Münster, which factors need to be considered in the transmission of innovations to other contexts and/or target groups?

Probably the most important result of the research in Münster is that possible innovators need to assess the *local discourse* coalitions in their respective context and try to find linkages to the main frames and prevailing problem perceptions. This can help with the creation of a network of supporters and might even help to secure funding for an undertaking. If the innovation cannot be connected to the particular dominant frames and goals, it will at least be a lot more difficult to establish support structures. In the case of a strong, closed coalition, a lack of consideration for the discursive frames can even obstruct an undertaking altogether.

Pleading the case of social innovations and enterprises requires active and *persuasive social entrepreneurs* or supporters fulfilling this function, who can present their ideas in the prevailing local discursive context and as a possibility to further the main goals of important local stakeholders. They are even more assertive if they have good connections to different societal sectors (politics, civil society, administration). For example, the innovations in Münster regarding family policy were implemented by the Head of the Youth Office who is well connected in the city. The po-

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litical resistance in the conceptualisation phase of the prevention visits against the inclusion of all families into the scheme was overcome by the persistence of the main promoter and her discursive justification of the project. This underlines the general necessity for perseverance and networking.

Another obvious common factor regarding the diffusion of an innovation is that there is a need for *funding*. As mentioned above, connecting to the local discourse and gaining access to local networks can facilitate access to funding. Another possibility (as the case of MAMBA shows in Münster), is to approach external stakeholders – i.e. other political levels or philanthropic institutions – for funding.

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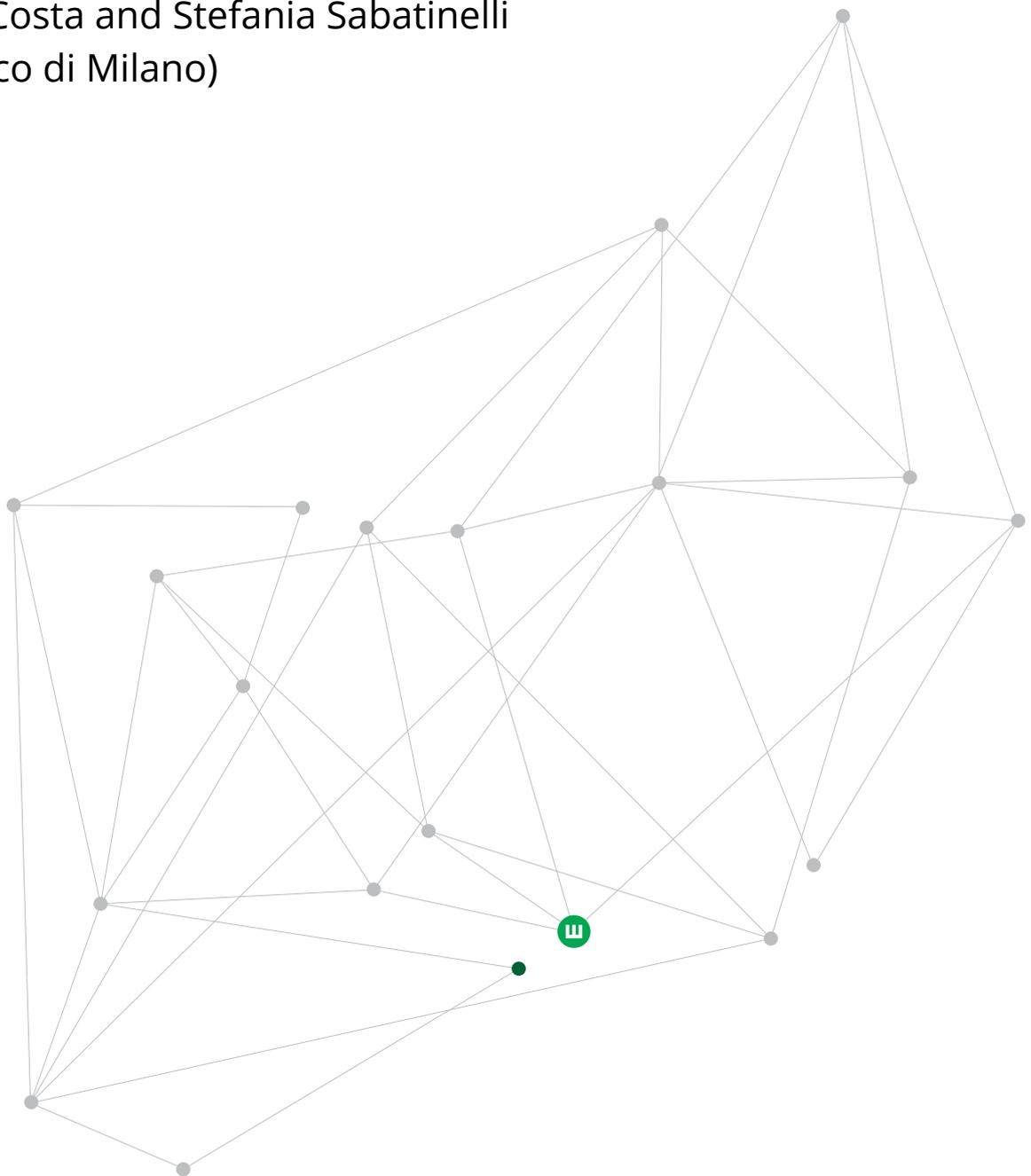
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IT Italy

Brescia

Giuliana Costa and Stefania Sabatinelli
(Politecnico di Milano)



IT

Brescia

Authors

Giuliana Costa and Stefania Sabatinelli
(Politecnico di Milano)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Child education
Employment services
Participation
Single mothers
Social housing

Brescia is a middle-sized city situated in the east of the Lombardy region, with 189,085 inhabitants¹. It is the main town of one of the twelve provinces of the region and the second largest municipality in the region by population. The metropolitan area counts around 500,000 inhabitants, and the province is the fifth most populated in the country. The strong ageing of the population has been partly compensated in the last decades by very important rates of migration (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012a).

The province of Brescia is the second in the Lombardy region, after Milan, both by demographic and by economic size (in terms of overall added value). The province is one of the most industrialised areas of the whole country (Provincia Brescia 2011), with a strong industrial vocation, mainly based on medium and small and family-based firms. The city has a long-lasting history as university site, with – presently (2013) - around 25,000 students.

In the post-World War period, Brescia was mainly governed by coalitions guided by the Catholic party (*Democrazia Cristiana*). Between 1948 and 1975, the municipality was administered by the same Christian Democratic Mayor, Bruno Boni, whose governments built many urban infrastructures (including some state-of-the-art projects and some controversial interventions). The predominance of the Christian Democrats in local governments continued until the political shock that invested Italy at the beginning of the 1990s, as a consequence of the major corruption scandals known as *Tangentopoli*. Since then, the municipality was governed for many years (1992-2008) by centre-left coalitions and then (2008-2013) by a centre-right wing coalition, including the localist Northern League. In June 2013, a centre-left wing coalition won the municipal elections.

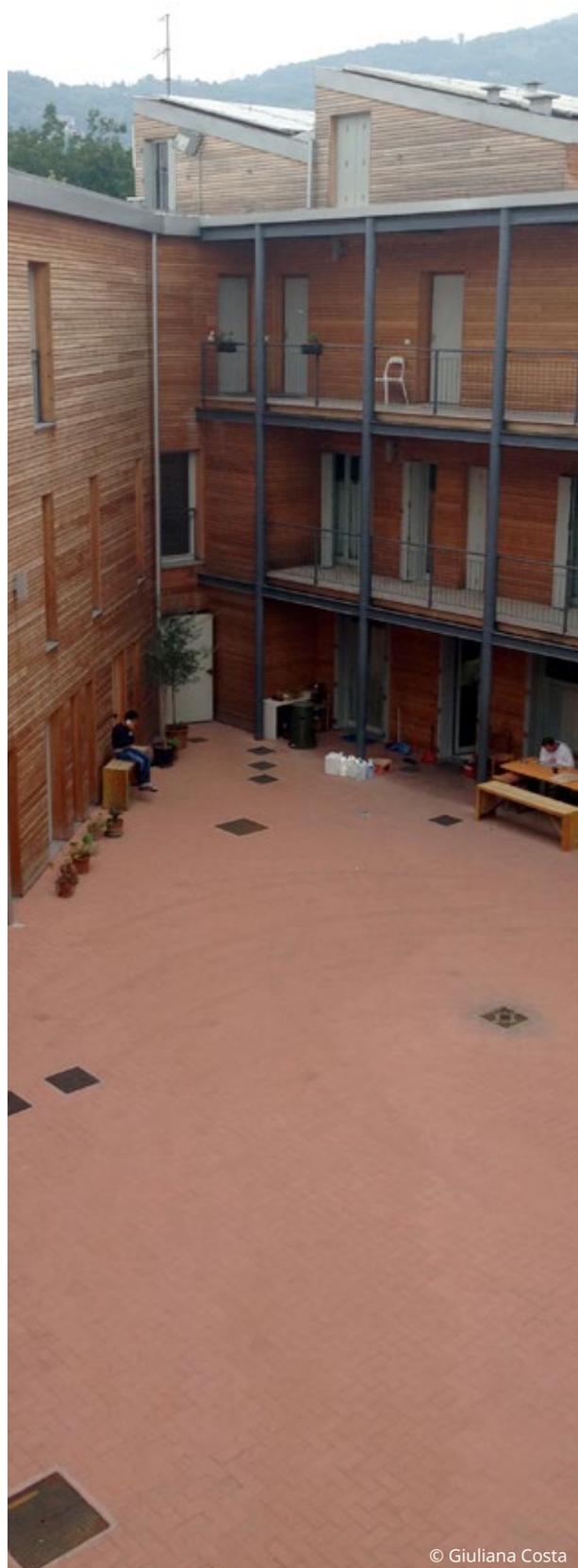
The municipal welfare model has been conditioned in the last two decades by the Lombardy regional framework that, since the introduction of direct elections of regional governors, has developed a quite strong quasi-market approach in an increasing number of policy fields. From the point of view of social solidarity, Brescia has a consolidated tradition of civil society organisations, especially expression of the social-Christian world, e.g. many Catholic third sector agencies and a capillary network of social cooperatives. During the 1980s, a provincial consortium of social cooperatives was created (*Sol.Co.*, whose acronym means “furrow”). The contribution of cooperatives to the development of the city is clearly visible in the residential areas built in the 1960s in the urban periphery

¹ 1 January 2012 (<http://demo.istat.it/>).

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The present report presents and analyses cases of social innovation in three areas of Brescia's local welfare. The first one deals with employment (re)insertion of specific groups of the population; the second one with activities in favour of families in conditions of need (including monetary and in-kind support, care and support services); the remaining deals with housing inclusion of different target groups. As will be seen, the selected cases are quite diverse as to the type of stakeholder that initiated the programme or the project (public or third sector), and to the width of territorial networks involved, which often include also for-profit bodies.

Each case-study is based on interviews with representatives of the different stakeholders involved in the programmes², as well as on the analysis of available documents, official websites and press information and, in some cases, on visits of the sites where programmes are carried out.



2 We hereby thank all the interviewees who devoted their time to answer our questions: Beatrice Valentini, Silvia Bonizzoni, Claudio Perlotto (municipal social services); Giorgio Maione (former town councillor for Social Services); Fabio Baresi (Bimbo chiama Bimbo); Santina Katiuscia Bugatti and Achille Gasparotti (Provincia di Brescia); Margherita Rocco and Manuela Archetti (Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana); Alessandro Augelli (Informagiovani and Cooperativa Il Calabrone); Giovanni Valenti (Ufficio Stranieri) and Giovanni Boccacci (Centro Migranti).

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Servizio per l'Inserimento Lavorativo, SAL - Employment Insertion Service

28.1 Short description

The municipality of Brescia has been managing for two decades an Employment Insertion Service (*Servizio per l'Inserimento Lavorativo*, or SAL). It is a "second-level" service that only takes on persons signalled by either public social services or by services run by third sector bodies with long-lasting collaborative relations with the municipality. Like a few other municipal services (e.g. in Milan), the SAL was first created at the end of the 1980s to support the employment of disabled persons. For this purpose, the service used to work with a specific methodology: assessment of competencies; individualised follow-up, training and placement; traineeships or internships (i.e. subsidised work experience), with a relationship between the service and the firm; and mediation between the beneficiary and the labour market.

Since the half of the 1990s, this methodology has been applied to other target groups, too: first to beneficiaries with severe social vulnerabilities (i.e. homeless people), and later also to applicants and beneficiaries of the municipal social services, like people with addiction, former convicts, single mothers, long-term unemployed, people aged over 50 years, etc. Generally, all basic and specialised social services, and also third sector ones (such as Caritas), can present to SAL their users with employment potential.

The number of users of the SAL service has tripled in the last decade, even more so since the impact of the financial crisis on the real economy and the labour market. In 2010, the service dealt with 421 persons; 69 per cent of them were Italians; more than half are disabled, including seventy-two psychiatric patients previously in the charge of the Local Health Agency. Since the current economic crisis has worsened, municipal social services are confronted daily with desperate persons in need of income support, whose utilities (gas and electricity) have been cut, and whose main request is "a job". Both social workers and municipal council members define the income need as "an emergency" that goes beyond the possibility of local authorities to tackle it with its resources.

A specific voucher (*dote* is the Italian term used to indicate this kind of measures in the framework of the Lombardy region social interventions³) has been managed by the SAL in the last 3 years. The “Dote Investing in Expertise” (the official name of the voucher is in English; from now on we shall refer to it as “IIE”), was introduced and financed by the province of Brescia and reserved for two groups of unemployed people with particular difficulties in finding a job:

- > persons aged over 45 years;
- > single women with family charges.

The social innovation character here lies in the definition of a measure with the aim to work with the municipal SAL and to facilitate the (re)insertion into the labour market of particularly fragile groups of jobless people.

28.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The employment insertion activity of the SAL is based on personalised paths that are organised around three main phases:

- > preliminary actions (CV drafting, competence assessment and guidance in the active research of jobs);
- > training (professional training groups, on-the-job training, apprenticeship);
- > support in hiring (subsidised jobs in cooperatives or firms, extraordinary post-hiring interventions, in order to mediate conflicts or strengthen skills if necessary).

A traineeship compensation payment is foreseen. In cases where the trainee received a municipal monetary benefit, the compensation payment substitutes it (see Costa and Sabatinelli 2012a).

For beneficiaries/applicants whose personal situations do not allow for professional training, “social traineeships” are developed. They are a sort of voluntary activity with educational content, aimed at giving them (back) a social role, enhancing their self-esteem and “justifying” the monetary benefit they receive on the

3 The *dote* (literally endowment or dowry) is the voucher tool used for the development of a quasi-market approach in the provision of employment services (after introducing it in other policy areas), imposed by the Lombardy region to provinces and local providers (Sabatinelli and Villa 2011).

basis of an informal social contract. These social insertion experiences may be a first step that - after a positive conclusion - leads to a real labour-market insertion project, following the same steps described above.

Since the beginning of the current economic crisis, the personal fragility of applicants has increased, as well as the duration of the insertion period. SAL officers therefore tend to develop longer traineeships, also due to the augmented difficulty in (re)inserting the applicants into the labour market.

First of all, it should be considered that the genesis of the voucher “Investing in Expertise” is rather typical for the Italian context: some funds were available since 2007 from the Lombardy Regional Agency for Education, Training and Employment (ARIFL); a project was drafted and a target identified on the basis of the accessible money, i.e. 350,000 euros from regional funds plus a 20,000 euro contribution by the Province of Brescia⁴, rather than the other way round. This contributed to limit the process of programming. The objective was to cover unprotected segments of the population, particularly at risk of unemployment in general terms, and even more so in these years of crisis.

The general framework was given by the regional voucher system (Sabatinelli and Villa 2011). The specific model of functioning was inspired by the provincial voucher system for the targeted employment-insertion of the disabled⁵. The measure, operating since 2010, was introduced to all municipalities in the province, but it was defined in its details in strict collaboration between the province and the municipality of Brescia (and particularly with the SAL office). The distribution of resources concentrated in the provincial capital: thirty vouchers were reserved for the city of Brescia, while forty-seven vouchers were available to the other 205 municipalities of the province. All applicants were selected by the municipalities (and by Caritas in Brescia, as explained below), and were already beneficiaries of local social services. This helped to further qualify the target group of this measure as cases with a particularly high level of fragility.

Each of the smaller municipalities of the province could apply only for one voucher. The municipal ser-

4 Residual funds were individuated later on and used to integrate this amount and finance eight more vouchers.

5 In the province of Brescia the targeted employment-insertion of disabled people concerns 200 persons a year, of which 100 forms the basis of national norms on compulsory hiring of disabled persons (national law nr. 68 introduced in 1999).

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vices were in charge of the selection of the candidate, then vouchers were attributed to municipalities on a “first come first served” basis. Beneficiaries of this voucher were persons signalled by basic social services (in the case of single mothers the municipal Children’s Office or third sector bodies, such as Caritas). Selected persons applied in agreement with SAL for a voucher to pay for a package of training and employment services and tutoring. The aim of the measure was to give beneficiaries tools to be more able to deal with the labour market (again). Besides basic transversal skills, as CV-drafting and active job-research techniques, the objective was to give the beneficiaries the opportunity to achieve specific educational and/or training results, and to enhance their competences. Examples are getting a driving licence or completing professional courses to become carers for the elderly with basic socio-health qualifications.

The quota of vouchers reserved to provide income support for the beneficiaries was considered too low by the Municipality of Brescia to allow them to sustain the (re)insertion path with dignity. An additional difficulty arose from the fact that the voucher system foresaw that the benefit was only paid at the end of the whole period, once it was certified that the project had been accomplished in all its parts (municipal report on liE voucher).

In order to tackle these shortcomings, the municipality of Brescia signed an agreement with the local Caritas, to collaborate on the management of this measure. Caritas selected a third of the applicants for Brescia city, and contributed to finance an extra income benefit for all the Brescia beneficiaries, granting 600 euros per month income support for 6 months (of which 400 euros were paid by the municipality and 200 euros by Caritas). As far as the provincial coordination knows, no other municipality found additional resources to complement the liE measure. Involved firms were not obliged to hire the inserted person at the end of the apprenticeship period. The project foresaw a rather generous bonus in case of hiring: 500 euros for a 6-month contract and 1,000 euros for a 1-year contract. Even though this bonus was doubled with municipal resources in Brescia, it proved to be rather ineffective. The firms involved opted for rather shorter contracts, all the more so in this time of recession, even though this meant losing the extra payment. The beneficiaries of liE vouchers in Brescia municipality were fifteen men aged over 45 years and

fifteen women with family charges (mostly immigrant single mothers). Half of the beneficiaries were Italian and half foreigners.

A vast majority (90 per cent) of participants were involved in training courses. More than half (seventeen out of thirty) were involved in a job experience in a firm or cooperative (traineeship). Twenty-one persons were hired after the traineeship, but most of them (sixteen) with a short-term contract (less than 6 months). Only four persons were hired with a contract lasting between 6 and 24 months, and one beneficiary was hired on a permanent basis. The province management defines employment outcomes as “not exciting, but interesting”. Municipal social services underline, though, that short-term contracts, although useful in principle as an enrichment of individual CVs, are nevertheless tricky, as they might in fact imply a worsening of personal weaknesses, because fragile cases find it particularly difficult to manage insecurity and anxiety.

Because most available jobs have atypical working hours, the municipal Children’s Office has organised case-by-case baby-sitting services, involving a relative, a neighbour, or another mother in the charge of the Children’s Office, with the payment of a reimbursement. As a result, most vouchers given to single mothers actually activated two women at a time. This is an important result that draws on the role of child care solutions as a lever to increase female employment. It is even more important as a possibility for municipal social services to offer a job to women who otherwise would be hard to place, especially in times of crisis.

28.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The municipal SAL staff are made up of two municipal employees (civil servants) who work in cooperation with the other sectors of the municipal social services. The collaboration does not only consist of the signalling of potentially employable users, but also in the overall identification of their personal resources and needs (see for instance the consideration of, and answer to, child care needs mentioned above). A reorganisation was carried out recently in order for the municipality to only keep direct responsibility for the coordination of activities, while all other tasks, including case-management, were outsourced to an accredited private employment agency.

The service traditionally works in partnership with social cooperatives linked to the municipality by an agreement; one of them is specialised in employment services for the disabled, the other one for persons with social disadvantages. Since the mid-1980s the municipality has an agreement with local social cooperatives that they can obtain contracts to develop outsourced activities for the municipality, such as maintenance of green areas, cleaning services, data-entry, etc., under the condition that they hire persons signalled by the social services. This allowed SAL to include work experience in the individualised path developed for each user, making a stock of protected job experience placements (around fifty per year) available. However, this agreement has been contested in the last years, as it goes against the possibility to sign outsourcing contracts at the lowest price possible, which has been difficult to defend in a period of heavy budget constraints.

To manage the liE vouchers, partnerships with accredited private job centres needed to be developed further. Interestingly, the evaluation of SAL is that not all private job centres are ready to support paths of integration for persons with fragile profiles at present, and municipal services had to provide strong tutoring of the individual cases even when these were in charge of the private bodies. The smaller municipalities of the province who do not have an internal employment service comparable to SAL needed to establish partnerships with (mostly private) employment agencies.

28.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The measure originates in a project developed by the Province of Brescia, in close connection with the employment insertion service of the Brescia Municipality (SAL). The aim was to manage most of the available resources in the provincial capital, due to the concentration of province population there and to the relatively higher weight of the labour market. As we have seen above, the other municipalities of the province did have the possibility to participate, but only forty-seven vouchers were available for them; thus less than a quarter of the remaining municipalities were able to benefit from the measure, obtaining only one voucher for one selected beneficiary each. This means that the measure was basically an “urban”

policy, specifically implemented in the Municipality of Brescia, where it could count on particular municipal services with specific experience in the field, on trained staff and consolidated routines in order to be implemented. The smaller municipalities had to externalise the case management to private accredited bodies and, despite the province claims to have kept the application procedure as simple as possible, many of the municipalities that did apply had severe difficulties in approaching the instrument, characterised by rigid online procedures. This calls for some caution in applying the same standardised procedures to different, albeit close, or even neighbouring, contexts.

Although the project is virtually still in place (a few vouchers have not been closed yet, since some of the individual activities are still running), it has in fact expired, as the fund has been used up, and no other resources have been destined to this purpose. This makes the whole measure a sort of an unintended experiment that would certainly need more resources and more continuity in order to have a real impact in terms of:

- > long-term social and professional (re)integration of beneficiaries;
- > institutional learning by the involved public and private bodies.

The “accidental” experimental feature would have also gained much more value in presence of a systematic monitoring of the implementation. On the contrary, evaluation was not officially and compulsorily required in the procedure. Brescia was the only municipality to produce a synthetic report on the results, and there was no systematic collection of feedbacks from the smaller municipalities, where the space for institutional learning was in principle wider, since in many contexts this was the first and only case, or one of the rare cases, in which a measure with such contents, objectives and procedures was ever implemented.

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Bimbo chiama bimbo - Child calls child

29.1. Short description

The association “Bimbo chiama bimbo” (child calls child) stems from the solidarity activities carried out at the end of the 1990s in favour of Croatian children hit by the war by a group of families close to a parish in the Brescia neighbourhood of Mompiano. In 2004 it was officially created as an association of volunteers. At the end of 2011 it counted 395 volunteers, committed to social, cultural and leisure activities. Its main target is the support of children and their families, through projects and collaborations with neighbourhood and municipality stakeholders, including schools. The objective is to sustain a “careful, supportive, respectful development of the children” (Associazione Bimbo chiama Bimbo 2012).

Interesting from a social innovation point of view is the attempt of the association to tackle different but inter-related needs of households with children in an encompassing way: the income need, the child care need, the parenthood support and socialisation need, the need for personal support and social relations, the need for social psychological counselling and the need for integration and participation of the young.

29.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The different activities and services developed to tackle the needs of families can be grouped around three main areas:

- > peer-to-peer and specialised family support;
- > solidarity-based shopping;
- > child education and care⁶.

⁶ Other activities carried out by the association include: study help; *Pedibus* (initiative to collectively walk children to and from school, in order to reduce the private use of cars for short itineraries active in various municipalities in Italy); vegetable gardening with children; leisure and socialisation activities for families; *Scuola-Mestieri*, apprenticeship project; various initiatives for self-financing of the association (e.g. selling handcrafts); and solidarity with Croatian households.

Peer-to-peer and specialised family support

La Porta Accanto (“Next door”) is a service by families for families, in an attempt to support families in need in an encompassing way. Keywords guiding the service are receiving with a non-prejudicial attitude, listening (in order to be able to walk in others’ shoes), helping with immediate basic needs, and tutoring to regain autonomy. It was first born as a mutual help service, but has evolved during the years and is now coordinated by six employed workers.

The main available resources are:

- > a front-desk for families who turn to the association in search of support;
- > listening (350 meetings/year), with the presence of an educator;
- > services available for free, also thanks to a network built with other territorial stakeholders;
- > a 2,000 euro monthly budget to be distributed among families in need;
- > “Supporting Families” (*Famiglie d’Appoggio*) sustain other families in temporary condition of disadvantage, in order to help them carry out some everyday activities (caring for children for a few hours, taking them to or from school, shopping, going to medical examinations, talking with children’s teachers) or achieving educational objectives (building a social network for those who have no relationships in the place where they live; achieving new abilities; school and relationship-building support for children). It is in fact a mutual help programme – mediated by the association with training, mediation, and the support of a psychologist – in which the supporting families also learn. Twenty-two families are supported in this way yearly.
- > *0-12 un anno per cominciare a crescere* (“0-12 a year to start grow up”) allows, since 2011 and thanks to a regional fund (24,000 euro/year), to support thirty families with new-born children for a year, to distribute fundamental goods (food, hygiene products, pharmacy vouchers and strollers), and to support mothers through a psychologist and a cultural mediator.

Solidarity-based shopping

A solidarity-based Food Store (*Magazzino Alimentare*) was opened at the beginning of 2000. Beneficiaries are households in severe economic need and indicated by municipal social services or by the “Next Door” service of the association, or sent by other local associations. These families receive a voucher to be spent once a month in a space that resembles a mini-supermarket, for a value that varies according to family size and conditions. Households are met one by one by a secretary who keeps a personal and individual relationship with them. The voucher allows for a monthly shop for non-perishable food, cleaning products and personal hygiene. Also, since 2010, a weekly distribution of fresh food is organised: the beneficiaries are around 150 households, signalled by the Next Door service, plus the thirty households with new-born children part of the 0-12 regional project described above; the number of beneficiaries has increased in these years of crisis. The volunteer-run food store opens four afternoons a week and on Saturdays, to facilitate the beneficiaries who work during the week. Twenty-eight unpaid collaborators guarantee this service, including young volunteers from the parish and Scout groups. Products to be distributed come from food collection organised by volunteers (products donated by private citizens at the exit of supermarkets), from selective wholesale purchases in big stores, or from a yearly agreement between Caritas and AGEA⁷. Fresh products are bought at forfeit price from other local social cooperatives and associations producing fruit, vegetables and dairy products. The municipality pays a contribution to cover the cost of vouchers of beneficiaries selected by its social services, but the agreement has been reduced year after year, justified by the municipality with the reduction of available resources.

In another building of the association a large store (*Guardaroba*, “wardrobe”) collects used clothes and shoes, for men, women and children, together with a sector for cradles, strollers, toys and other stuff for babies, toddlers and children.

Around 500 users come from the whole city and even the province of Brescia. Most of them have two or three children. The clothes store is open three afternoons a week and on Saturdays. It is managed by fifty volunteers working in weekly shifts, including some adolescents. Given the high demand, and its increase

⁷ National agency on behalf of the European Union for the support of agricultural production.

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in connection with the crisis, the shifts of volunteers to manage the service have been widened and the users are asked to make an appointment. A welcome office is available, to establish a personalised relationship with users, and a small separate space is prepared where volunteers play with children while adults choose the products they need.

Child education and care

The cooperative provides a service for families with children aged under 3 years (*Centro Zero Tre*, or “0-3 centre”), where children can live an educational experience with their parents or grandparents or child-minders, and other children, in a stimulating environment. The service aims at supporting the cognitive and emotional development of children, and the enhancement of relationships between adults and children, among children, and among adults themselves. It also aims at the confrontation and prevention of problems related to early childhood. It is open two mornings and three afternoons every week, for three hours. Around sixty families regularly attend the service (around ten children a day, divided in shifts); some other families have used the service on an occasional basis. The activities are mediated and organised by an educator, supported by assistants and volunteers. Some of the volunteers are mothers or grandmothers who used the service in the past or who are currently using it. The volunteers’ group reflects the heterogeneity of the (adult) users, including two men and five persons of immigrant background.

The initiative was inspired by a similar centre in Brescia, founded by the Catholic third sector stakeholder Caritas (*A piccoli passi*, or “tiny steps”). A national law (LN 285/97) has been financing projects for children carried out by local networks since the end of the 1990s, including parenting support and integrative and innovative child care services, promoted by public or non-public bodies (Costa and Sabatinelli 2011). The main strength of such services is the possibility to include families whose young children do not attend other services, such as day-care centres, and who might end up socially isolated in the delicate period of the early years of parenthood; especially, if they do not have a strong family and primary network where they live. The so-called integrative services, although slowly increasing, are still rather marginal in Italy, with a coverage rate of children aged under 3 years of 1.6 per cent in Italy and of 2.4 per cent in the Lombardy region (ISTAT

2013). Thus, such initiatives constitute an innovation in those territories (meaning also neighbourhoods) where they are lacking.

A service called *Babysitting di emergenza* (“emergency babysitting”) is organised by the cooperative to take care of children aged from 18 months to 6 years in the periods when day-care centres and kindergartens are closed. The principal targets are single mothers and families who cannot count on the family network for everyday child care. It is open in the summer and during the Christmas holidays from 7.30 am to 7.30 pm, in order to cover the differentiated working hours of parents. The aim of the service goes beyond mere baby-sitting. It intends to build an educational project, and a quality relationship with the children, although it is based on a time frame that is much shorter than in day-care centres, and in spite of the broad age range of attending children. Activities are based on specific routines: a wide outdoor space allows a variety of activities, especially during the summer. Staff include educators, assistant educators and volunteers.

In 2011, sixty-eight children were enrolled, with thirty-five of them attending every day on average. Six educators worked in the service, providing 1,500 hours of work, twenty hours of coordination, 20 hours of training and 6 hours of supervision. Fifty-eight volunteers aged between 13 and 17 years support educators. During the winter holidays the inside space allows a smaller number of children (twenty-five) to be received, and thus also fewer staff and volunteers are enrolled.

This service is the most expensive for the association, as it costs 40,000 euros a year. Families pay a weekly income-related fee, and, based on an official agreement, the Municipality of Brescia generally pays the fee for households with very low incomes or deprived conditions. In 2012 such coverage was nevertheless not granted, due to cuts to social expenditure in connection with national austerity programmes. Later, the agreement was reactivated, but the municipal contribution was fixed at a lower amount.

This service does not only have educational and socialisation value, but clearly also takes a crucial reconciliation function, since it covers exactly those (long) holiday periods in which - since education and care services are closed - many families hardly know to whom to entrust their children when they work. With the same spirit, the association recently started a programme to receive children aged from 2 to 6 years on

Saturdays (opening hours from 8 am to 8 pm). Especially (although not only), children of working parents are welcome; here the reconciliation objective is either direct for parents who work on Saturdays, or indirect for parents who work during the week and must devote Saturdays to run personal and family errands.

29.2. Internal organisation and modes of working

The association is – by nature and definition – mostly managed by volunteers. Nevertheless, as some of the activities have grown in a rather massive way, a core team of employed workers was established (six persons), to grant coordination and professionalisation to the organisation, although the bulk of the work continues to be carried out by volunteers.

A peculiar feature of the association is the involvement of teenage volunteers (aged 13-17 years). Young volunteers who commit themselves to at least four hours a day in the babysitting service, but who are not yet professionally trained, are considered “assistant educators”, also with the aim to train those who could work as educators in the association in the future; adolescents with a low-income family background receive a small reimbursement.

Many members of the families who receive support from the association are also involved in activities for the maintenance of the association structures. The site where the association is currently located, for instance, was provided by the foundation of a Catholic body - the *Congrega di Carità Apostolica* - but it was autonomously restored, almost entirely by volunteer work. Alternatively, they are engaged in specific initiatives, according to their competences and skills. This approach is oriented at emphasising reciprocity and circularity of help, and reducing the dependency and feelings of passivity that may lead beneficiaries to sentiments of shame for their condition of need and stigma for their position of persons who receive help. Obviously, it is also aimed at reducing the costs of functioning of the whole association and of its single services.

29.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The association is strongly embedded in the neighbourhood where it was created. The families who founded the first nucleus of the present association,

after having come together for a solidarity project out of the city and of the country (in Croatia), later decided to commit also to local solidarity projects. They chose a rather peripheral neighbourhood (in the north of the city), comparatively deprived in terms of social infrastructure. The association is in fact very well known in the neighbourhood. Yet, as long as the activities of the association grew, increasing numbers of people in need from other areas of the city began to turn to the association.

The activities are carried out thanks to a territorial network of several stakeholders from the neighbourhood, the city and the province, including many third sector bodies, such as associations, cooperatives, foundations and parishes, but also public authorities and services. The sources of financing are diversified.

The main resources come from:

- > *5xmille*: 5 per cent share of the amount of the taxes on personal income that taxpayers are free to target to bodies carrying out socially useful activities (e.g. various non-profit activities, scientific research). The association is one of the main receivers of this quota in the city of Brescia;
- > agreements with the municipality, implying financing in exchange of the destination of part of the resources/services to beneficiaries signalled by the municipal social services (e.g. for the food store and the 0-3 centre);
- > agreements with Caritas and local foundations;
- > donations from supporters, which can also take the form of continuative bank transfers;
- > self-financing activities (like a small market of handcraft products);
- > voluntary work (see above).

The connection with the municipal social services does not only consist of the funds that the municipality devotes to the association to support some of its activities. There is a mutual signalling of cases of persons in need between the municipal social services and the association. Some of the cases are managed in a coordinated way by municipal social workers and the employees of the association.

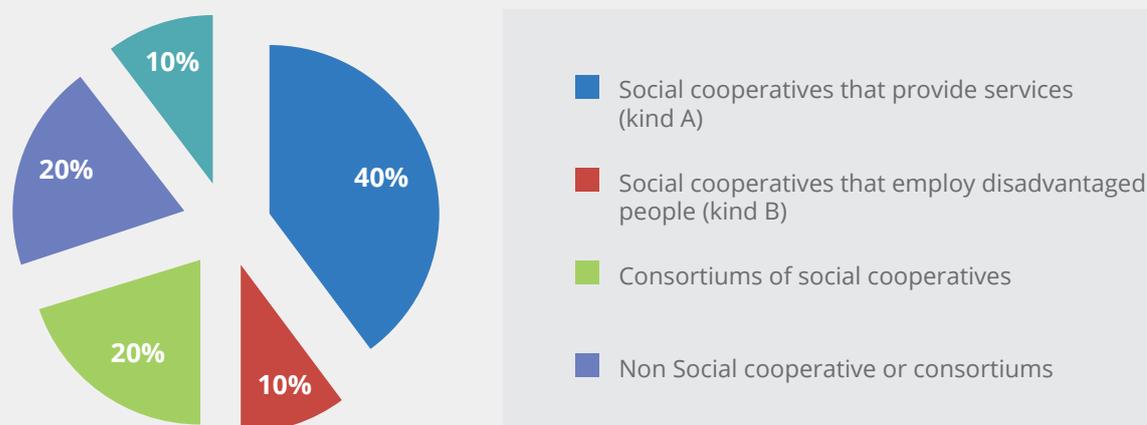
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“Via del Carmine 15” project

30.1. Short description

The project was developed by *Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana* (ISB, Brescia Social Real Estate Agency in English). ISB is a consortium of cooperatives born in 2001 with the aim of developing social housing projects, both supporting the participating cooperatives to do it and developing its own projects building new apartments or recuperating buildings to devote to social target populations. ISB also builds for its affiliated social cooperatives (to host their workers or to host their activities). In any case, social cohesion is one of the most important criteria that guides ISB in its activities. ISB is composed of social cooperatives (A and B, the first ones offer services, the second ones include “weak workers”, such as psychiatric patients, former prisoners, etc.), a consortium of cooperatives, other kinds of cooperatives and banks, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Composition of Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana. Source: Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana 2013.



The subjects affiliated to ISB in 2013 are *Cerro Torre Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus*, *La Rete Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus*, *Il Calabrone Società Cooperativa Sociale Onlus*, *Consorzio Acli Solidale*, *Cassapadana*, *Consorzio CGM Finance*, *Consorzio Acli Duemila*, and *Cooperativa sociale Margherita CVL società cooperativa sociale Onlus*. The value of real estate belonging to ISB (all devoted to social activities and social housing) in 2012 was around 12 million euros.

Compared to other stakeholders in the field (such as big, medium and small building cooperatives) ISB is in economic and financial health. Revenues amount to around 300,000 euros per year. Both assets and revenues grew significantly in value during the last years because of the increase in assets devoted to the core activity (social housing).

From 2002 till now, ISB developed many different projects working with a lot of different agencies (municipalities, affiliated and not affiliated cooperatives, third sector stakeholders). At the beginning, they were only temporarily hosting problematic people who did not have any other housing opportunities. ISB gives tenants the possibility to access new and furnished apartments at modest prices (compared to the market) and offers personal services that permit them to reach housing autonomy. In half a decade, ISB has in fact pluralised its housing stock in order to propose different levels of apartments and solutions: from emergency solutions for evicted families or for homeless people, to secondary solutions and permanently let apartments to stabilise users in their housing needs. ISB operates in favour of different target groups (according to kind of families, age, their origin and their problems). ISB owns the buildings (or part of the buildings) where social housing projects are developed, is the social manager and the provider or developer of a multiplicity of housing and personal services. Social housing for ISB means renting with modest prices (for example the “rent to buy” formulas are not used).

ISB also has a whole building to host immigrant families who moved from Il Carmine, the historical centre of the city. A huge requalification project in the last decade pushed many people, mostly immigrants, to other parts of the city. Here, rents are quite below the market levels ones. ISB works with them with the same philosophy that will be explained below. Two specific recent projects of ISB will be analysed here, both located in Il Carmine, the historical centre of Brescia.



Figure 2 - Via del Carmine 15 building- Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana for single mothers and single women.

The social housing project implemented in Via del Carmine 15 was developed to cope with the housing needs of single mothers who were referred to ISB by Brescia Municipality, mostly women with young and very young children who experienced domestic violence and who were trying to be independent from their partners. Most of them were immigrants from Eastern Europe. In 2009, an ISB building was refurbished and fourteen apartments were rented to single women or single mothers with young children. They range in size from 50 to 80 per m². Rents are quite below free market ones, about 60 euros per m² (which in the Lombardy context is called *canone convenzionato*). Tenants hold personal rental contracts with ISB.

From 2009-12, the condominium hosted mostly single mothers (80 per cent). In the smallest apartments three single women live together and in the biggest one a whole family with three children and one single earner started to live. At the end of 2011, Contrada del Carmine hosted three families, six women with young children and five single women (in total twenty-eight persons; thirteen Italians and fifteen migrants). During 2012, four (out of fourteen) apartments have been occupied by new dwellers, in most cases because the previous ones moved owing to better life and work conditions (they got married or bought a house). This project did not suffer from arrears in rent payments.

30.2. Conceptions of and ways of addressing users

The Via del Carmine ISB social housing project conceives of users as normal people who need a nice, beautiful and peaceful place to live in, and not as “people with difficulties”. All inhabitants are very well known by ISB, who chooses its tenants one by one. ISB manages its tenants very carefully, helping them in whatever they need, considering them as “partners” of the project and the housing initiative. Some of them can use special resources (counselling services) from the project *Intermezzo* (literally “between acts”) financed in 2011 by *Fondazione di Comunità Bresciana* (“Brescia Community Foundation”) to support housing awareness of those who are in personal trouble. These cognitive resources gave light to a high mobilisation of inhabitants to help each other, to find solutions to personal needs with reciprocal help and to the decision to define “real condominium delegates”, showing how democratic will can rise in contexts characterised by high diversity but where common goals are recognised as being in place.

In this project, as well as in other ISB social housing initiatives, contact with former, current and future individuals and families tends to be longer than in other contexts. They are considered tenants rather than clients. In other contexts and projects single mothers with children are only hosted temporarily and do not receive help with other support or case management.

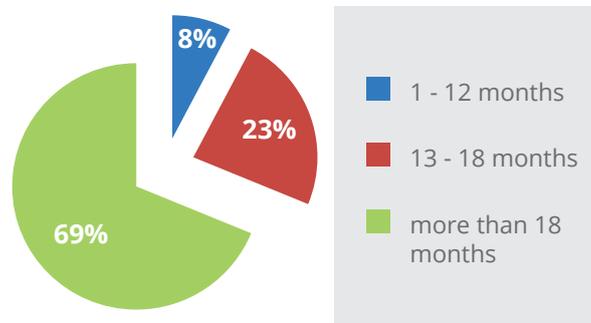
30.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

One of the more innovative aspects of this specific project with regard to the internal organisation is that a lot of energy has been invested in “building self-organisation capacities” in those who live in the building, at least in the first 2 years. It could seem a paradox that the social manager had to intervene to support self-organisation, so this statement needs to be explained. It has to be considered that those who live in this “social condominium” come from many different countries and have different backgrounds. The building is located in a neighbourhood that is now attractive to middle-class households (as a gentrified part of the city) and is to some extent gentrified, but bears a long-standing stigma attached to the high presence of immigrants, drug dealers, prostitutes and so on.

The social manager is a young woman who is the connection between inhabitants of the building and the owner/general manager, ISB. She lives in the building as a tenant and assures that dwellers’ voices are heard, that problems find a transparent and efficient solution, or that auto-organised cleaning activities work well for all. This young girl is a social operator who works for ISB and who can “keep an eye” on the whole building and its inhabitants’ needs.

Most tenants have long rental contracts, as can be seen in Figure 5. Short contracts are related to special tenancy arranged with Brescia Municipality (Social Services Division) or due to tenants’ needs. More than 50 per cent of tenants have quite modest incomes, between 8,000 and 17,000 euros per year, and are eligible for public housing. More than 30 per cent have relatively high incomes (30,000 euros per year), which also led to a social mix in the building from an economic point of view.

Figure 3 - Contracts in Via del Carmine 15, by number of months. Source: *Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana 2013*.



30.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

As stated before, this specific social housing project has been developed in agreement with Brescia Municipality (*Assessorato ai Servizi Sociali*) albeit following own strategic objectives. Theoretically, the agreement consisted of the fact that ISB would apply moderate rents and the municipality would guarantee rental payments in cases of arrears or insolvency of tenants. As a matter of fact, this did not happen when a person (sent by the public administration) was unable to pay. ISB just did not receive that money. Interaction with the local public welfare system is not very strong because the project functions well and because it works without public funds.

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Fare e abitare - Doing and living project

31.1. Short description

This project was also developed by Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana. *Fare e abitare* is a very small but quite innovative project devoted to young people (aged 18-30 years) who want to leave their family and live independently. Two apartments (100 per cent furnished) are available, one for two young people and the other for four of them. They are located in a little building now owned by ISB which was bought apartment by apartment (one thanks to a bequest to ISB).

Rents are about 140 euros per month plus expenses, total 200 euros per month per person. Dwellers pay quite low rents but have to activate themselves for the city or for the neighbourhood through voluntary activities, be they cultural (for example through events that promote integration among migrants and "autochthonous"), social (for example offering help to migrants during daytime moments) or pro-environmental (for example doing urban gardening).

The project idea was launched and then implemented by ISB and one of the affiliated cooperatives, "*Il Calabrone*". The cooperative is also the social manager of "*Fare e Abitare*" following its mission.

31.2. Conceptions of and ways of addressing users

Initially, ISB wanted to simply devote the two apartments of the current project to cope with young people's housing needs because in Brescia policies to support young people's housing inclusion are very weak. After some discussions with the municipality director of policy sector on young people that decided to support the project, it was decided to turn to a wider project in terms of scope, even if no further resources were dedicated to it. Through "*Fare e Abitare*" ISB launched an "ideas event" for the city, inviting interested young people to apply, bringing projects for the neighbourhood (Il Carmine) or for the city in some way assuming that "young people are not the needy but those who have resources and capacities to share" with the rest of the population.

IT

Brescia

Categories

Employment
Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

The project aims are the following:

- > To activate young people in the city, asking them to develop value-added activities and giving them stable accommodation.
- > To increase the quality of living in the neighbourhood with low-cost activities that can bring strong social cohesion.
- > To promote co-habitation as a lifestyle among young people in this specific historical moment, characterised by the need to reduce land use and new constructions.

These aims should be reached all together. The innovators have been inspired by international cases that have been studied in detail. They look at experiences in Manchester in the UK, where young districts have been done to support their working activities and partially their housing needs. They also worked with Italian academics who are also involved in developing policies for young people.

"*Fare e abitare*" received sixteen projects from different groups of potential co-habiting persons. Almost all projects are related to the neighbourhood where the dwellings are located, in "Il Carmine". The content of those projects declared as winners are:

1. To promote moments to eat together in the neighbourhood to support friendship and relationships among neighbours. The neighbourhood is "Il Carmine", where there are a lot of migrants (who live there but mainly work there running mostly ethnic commerce activities). The project is called "*Parla come mangi*" that can be translated as "talk as you eat" following a very well-known popular adagio. Partners of the project are the local ethical purchasing group (*Gruppo di acquisto solidale*) and Brescia University.
2. To promote cultural activities in Santa Giulia Museum and in the Verziano prison. This project is supported also by the local university. The winners are four young girls; one of them is serving a term of imprisonment, sleeps in prison and has permission to work outside the prison during the day and have an apartment to use in these hours.

31.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

One of the more innovative aspects of the project is the way by which users have been recruited. A call for projects was launched in August and was closed after 2 months, receiving sixteen projects and applications. Young people are considered as resources for the community and not just "a specific target", a concept that has an impact on the way of working because the social manager not only has to recruit dwellers and manage their insertion into the apartments, but has also to help and support them in developing their project, which implies further and more collaborative work among "formal operators" and "informal facilitators and agents" as the selected dwellers are.

Dwellers had not been chosen directly by ISB but had to pass through a selection mechanism that obliged all the involved stakeholders to conjugate their aims with the others', giving life to a positive and synergic outcome.

31.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The role of the Brescia Municipality (*Assessorato Politiche Giovanili*) in this project is quite marginal although they have formally supported it. The municipality has offered an office and a person who made telephone calls to promote the project and has involved the "*informagiovani*" (a special service for young people who look for jobs, information about working or studying opportunities, etc.) to publicise it. No funding has been provided.

The call for projects was been launched under the following partnership: ISB, Brescia Municipality and *Cooperativa Il Calabrone* (affiliated to ISB and the manager of the local *informagiovani* counselling and information service for young people who look for work, study opportunities, etc.). The competent town councillor has declared that the public support for the project goes along with "our initiatives for employability and access to credit [...] because housing and housing autonomy are the instruments through which the young people liberate themselves from the family dependence [...] the project shows that rights have to be thought with duties".

The emphasis put on the project by public officers is high even if no substantial public resources have been invested in it. The social manager thinks that the interaction with Brescia University and with the prison, as well as with one of the principal museums of the city (Santa Giulia) through the winning projects, will enhance the possibility to collaborate in the future within the same scheme (ISB provides new apartments and call for projects) or in other relationships as participating to financing opportunities, etc.

As a critical point, it is considered that rents (at the time of writing, about 140 euro per month plus expenses, total 200 euros per month) are too high for young people that have to share their home. Even if 200 euros is a low price to live in Brescia, in order to really help and support young people, housing autonomy costs should be significantly lower. Another critical aspect is that the two-room apartment is too big and has too many common spaces that do not allow enough privacy for its dwellers. This aspect informs future other opportunities that will be provided to young people.

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Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

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Una casa in più - One house more project

32.1. Short description

The project has been developed by a very small cooperative, the Cooperative *Scalabrini Bonomelli*. The cooperative was born in 1990 as a building cooperative, acknowledging migrants' needs voiced out in the Brescia Diocese Secretariat for Migrants⁸ (*"Segretariato Migranti della Diocesi di Brescia"*) from 1981 onwards. The cooperative's mission was, from the beginning, to find housing solutions for migrants (which, in those years, arrived quite massively to Brescia), assuming that this could be a good starting point to support their autonomy and their social inclusion in the hosting city⁹. The cooperative had the aim of creating conditions of social inclusion for migrants, avoiding the development of neighbourhoods inhabited by migrants only. Furthermore, **the cooperative was born to increase the "cooperative spirit" (in the sense of working and participating in cooperative activities) in migrants**, present not only as members of the cooperative but also in the directory board. The cooperative worked on identifying apartments, restructuring them and then renting them to migrants, also encouraging autonomy and the social and economic growth of dwellers.

In 2005, the cooperative transformed itself from a building cooperative to a social cooperative to pluralise their activities, focusing also on prevention and interventions in case of migrant hardship. The cooperative has many relationships with public agencies and with the local church.

The project *"Una casa in più"* was developed in 2003/2005 thanks to a special regional programme that financed housing solutions for migrants. The migrants officer of Brescia at that time invited the cooperative to participate in the call for developing something that had already been experienced in Bergamo by a very big migrant housing cooperative, *"Casa Amica"*, whose good projects have been copied by others in Lombardy across the years. The Bergamo cooperative also responded to the call. The idea was to identify apartments that could be rented to migrants with long contracts of 10 + 10 years with the formula *"patto di future vendita"* ("rent to buy") in order to permit them to have a good accommodation, to pay rents below market prices and to have the opportunity to buy the dwelling at the end of the period.

⁸ Now the "Diocese Centre for Migrants".

⁹ Following the most intelligent positions found in the literature, which state that migrants have to be at least supported through housing inclusion and that no other policies should be developed for them.

The project has been appreciated pretty much by academics working with migration issues and who were quite influential in regional decision-making. Even if the first evaluation of the Lombardy region was negative, at the end the cooperative *Scalabrini Bonomelli* received 500,000 euros to develop the project through the participation to the call by the municipality of Brescia.

The cooperative identified fifteen apartments to devote to the project, half of them to let at normal rents, and the other half with the rent-to-buy formula. Monthly rents were and are around 500 euros (*canone convenzionato*), and the price to pay at the end of the 20 years, transforming dwellers into homeowners, around 1,500-3,000 euros. This rent value incorporates also a capital part (to buy the dwelling month by month) and is higher than normal rents applied by the cooperative. As a matter of fact, one of the goals of the cooperative was to generate a consistent cash flow to invest in other similar projects.

32.2. Conceptions of and ways of addressing users

The project has been considered as very innovative because for the first time migrants were targeted as possible buyers of houses through contracts that permit them to rent for 20 years paying a sum that is, in part, an anticipation of capital. The project acknowledged that migrants would stay for long years in the city, would adopt in the middle term the same housing strategies as Italians (be homeowners) and that they would need stable housing accommodation.

Thanks to the window of opportunity presented by regional funding, this formula could be applied to migrants. The latent aim of the project was also to make dwellers more responsible for payment of rent and for the good maintenance of the cooperative housing stock. Migrants, once inserted into cooperative dwellings, tended to assume that they had a "right" to them, without respecting duties attached to the possession of a home. This project permitted to some extent the reversion of this behaviour, clarifying with dwellers, and potentially future owners, the terms of their insertion in the housing stock.

32.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The project "*Una casa in più*" in some way changed the way of working because it inaugurated this small but crucial activity of supporting migrants in their way to homeownership. The cooperative had to structure its capacity to interact with banks and funding stakeholders, as well as supporting migrants in accessing credit opportunities.

32.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The project has been financed by the Lombardy region with 500,000 euros. The cooperative has been invited by Brescia municipality to participate to the regional call and had to work with it to prepare its candidacy. Afterwards relationships had been very weak, and no special support has been given by the local stakeholder to the project or to the cooperative, which continues to insert very slowly migrants into the public housing stock, facing all the problems related to the scarcity of housing opportunities. In other words, the project "*Una casa in più*" did not create better conditions for the cooperative activities in the following years and the project has not been replicated by the cooperative or by the Municipality.

The principal critical aspects of the project are related to its timing, not to the main ideas of it. At the beginning of the 2000s, migrant home ownership rates were almost double (22 per cent) than current ones (12 per cent), they were the highest in Italy. So the project was well contextualised, aiming to support stabilisation of migrants in the city through an assisted pattern to homeownership. The project contemplates a very long period to rent and then buy, 20 years, which from one side was the necessary base to permit people to buy their own dwelling, but from the other side creates uncertainty attached to changes over a long period, especially in the migrants' lives. In the last 5 years, the scenario changed pretty much. Many migrants are going back to their countries of origin. Not all the apartments destined to be bought with the 20-years renting formula have been allocated, because this span of time has been considered too long at that time by potential dwellers. Originally, eight apartments were devoted to the rent/buy formula, but two of them have at the end been devoted to normal rent.

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Conclusions

The quite different cases of social innovation presented here suggest some conclusions in relation to financing, duration of projects/programmes and networking.

The scarcity of resources, especially in these years of crisis, is a recurrent element in our cases. Need (and also applications) for income support, employment insertion, housing inclusion and other kinds of help have enormously increased, in the face of scant, and surely not enough, dedicated resources. Resources for social policies have been severely cut at the central level, and transfers to local levels have been drastically reduced as well. Moreover, Italian municipalities are heavily constrained by the inner stability pact that – in order to respect European fiscal parameters – impedes their spending over certain thresholds, even if they do have money. As a consequence, many programmes and projects, both directly managed by public services and outsourced to non-public stakeholders have been reduced, and agreements with third sector ones have been downsized, and/or the renewal of their financing has been delayed (as in the case of the 0-3 centre, see section 2.2), or fixed-term projects have not been prolonged or renewed (as it was the case of the Voucher investing in expertise, see section 2.1).

Some interviewees underline how, in some specific cases, the “spending review” has led to useful and positive reorganisational processes, without necessarily being detrimental to the contents and quality of the service.¹⁰ These changes may raise protestations, until beneficiaries verify they have not lost quality or quantity of intervention.

Nevertheless, such positive examples should not shadow the fact that **there is a clear need for continuity and stability (and even increases) of financing for new and for consolidated services that, even when provided by non-public stakeholders, do intercept cases in need.** If funds are not adequate for the objective, the impact of the measures can be really marginal, even if their content is innovative in their context. Furthermore, they risk not even representing an opportunity for institutional learning for the stakeholders involved, as the example of the small municipalities in the province of Brescia,

having to mobilise in order to manage only one single voucher for labour market (re)insertion, shows (see section 2.1). Also, the capacity to use windows of opportunity, which becomes more and more important in a context of limited resources, needs time to be developed by stakeholders. Moreover, it should be implemented without losing a long-term and context-based perspective.

Some specific considerations are worth drawing on the cases on housing inclusion, which we selected as paradigmatic of this “new” issue in the Italian context. Social housing initiatives are expanding, but remain very small regarding their capacity to offer dwellings at a modest rent compared to growing housing needs. Social housing projects are sometimes intended as substitutes for public action and not as complementary to it, which poses problematic issues. Moreover, very often local public stakeholders (as municipalities) use social housing projects as “flagships projects” to show that “something is going on” or better “we are doing things” but then, after an initial engagement, they fail in supporting these projects with other means (for example, filling the gaps and providing a fast track to access public resources in case of individual drop-outs in the social housing projects).

Social housing projects are quite vulnerable from the economic financial point of view. They are exposed to a variety of oscillations in housing and land markets, in the political context, in the mix of promoters’ activities. Normally, social housing projects can be feasible if they can count on favourable conditions, be they in terms of land use or concession, public or generous private funding (that do not have to be paid back). Moreover, they have to be mixed with “pro-market” or “in the market” initiatives which provide the resources to finance social housing activities. If at least one of these two conditions is not in place, projects do not even start.

Social housing projects fostered by private stakeholders normally work for the “grey” part of the market, for those who are not poor enough to be eligible for the public housing stock (which, anyway, would not automatically imply to access it, as it is very scarce, see Costa and Sabatinelli 2011; 2012a and 2012b) and are not wealthy enough to stand in the market. It is very rarely that private stakeholders work for the poorer because they would be obliged to apply very low rents that would not remunerate their investments. The only channel through which it is

¹⁰ An example is given by the new modalities introduced for the public transportation of disabled people, not analysed in this report.

possible to develop social housing for the most needy is very conspicuous public funding for its construction and management, which is quite rare in the actual context. Operating for the grey part of the market can be a good solution for operators (who are experiencing the economic crisis in the normal market) because they can intercept some public financing and can, at the same time, cope with the housing needs of specific groups of the population (such as members of housing cooperatives, people signalled by social services, etc.), but in any case, they are not able to respond to housing hardship situations.

A mismatch between projects and needs is observed. Housing needs are frequently long-term needs, so that what was thought to be a temporary solution (even if not an emergency-based one) becomes a permanent housing insertion. Social housing projects, as well as public housing ones, have a low turnover in terms of users/dwellers: even if those who apply for social housing projects are invited (if eligible) to apply also for public housing, because of the scarce production of new dwellings and the very low turnover of the existing dwellers, they tend to occupy these apartments for many years, preventing other persons to benefit from this (temporary in principle) opportunity. This specific problematic aspect was positively managed by *Immobiliare Sociale Bresciana*, who decided to pluralise its mission and length of contracts in an innovative and useful (for dwellers) mix.

As a way of conclusion, and given this problematic scenario, it is worth stating that innovation is happening in Brescia. Not all analysed projects are sustainable and have the possibility of being replicated, but most of them show that stakeholders learn from experiments (in the case of social housing, they can be quite costly ones) and evolve in their capacity of structuring or focusing their activities.

The territorial networking and collaboration between public and private stakeholders has a long-lasting tradition in Brescia, but quite some margins of improvement are observed. In some cases, in fact, relations are limited to rather narrow ways of cooperation (e.g. specific agreements on financing parts of services), which are furthermore currently endangered by the shrinking of resources. The scarcity of available means would call for more synergic collaborations, overcoming the potential barriers due to the defence of the legitimate organisational identity of existing bodies.

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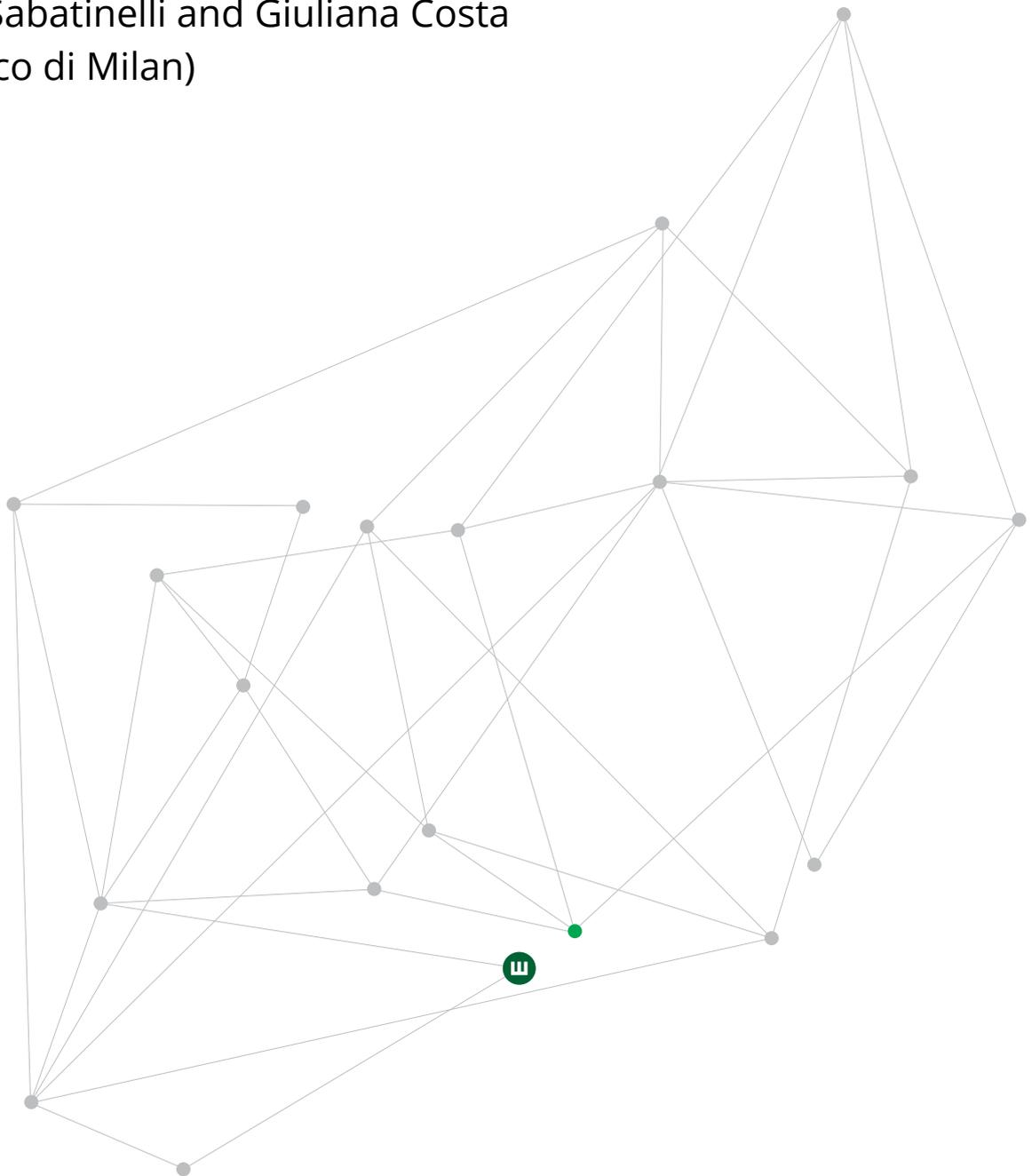
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IT Italy

Milan

Stefania Sabatinelli and Giuliana Costa
(Politecnico di Milan)



Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Child education and care
Empowerment
Family needs
Micro-credit
Participation
Social housing
Social investment

Milan is the capital city of the Lombardy region. The economic and financial capital of Italy, it is a rich and economically dynamic context (see Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). One of the vertexes of the former industrial triangle with Gène and Turin in the Fordist era, it was one of the main destinations of internal migration from southern regions during the period 1950-70. Employment demand was very ample, and employment represented a key element for the social inclusion of migrants, to acquire social citizenship and pursue social mobility. A deep-rooted legacy, since a medieval (religious) reference defines the “Milanese citizenship” as a status that anybody coming to the city could obtain by contributing to its welfare through work. Also thanks to the wide possibilities of social inclusion through employment, Milan has a long-lasting reputation of social solidarity. Since the end of the 1970s, female employment and activity rates have increased more than the national average, also thanks to the concentration of service-based activities in the area. The shift to tertiary and advanced tertiary sectors is the major characteristic of the city economy at present.

From the political point of view, after a rather long experience of centre-left local governments during the 1970s and 1980s, the city was deeply shocked at the beginning of the 1990s by the wide, national corruption scandals known as Tangentopoli (Bribes City), shaking the image of the city as the “moral” capital city of the country, also as opposed to the opacity of Rome as the place of national institutional and political powers. After the political collapse of the early 1990s, and the introduction in 1993 of direct elections of mayors¹, 20 years of centre-right local governments followed, first with a Northern League majority, then with mayors from Berlusconi’s party. Such coalitions have boosted the use of some new public management instruments, especially the contracting-out or privatisation of provision of public and welfare services. This fit coherently with the regional frame that was being developed in the same years, emphasising the setup of quasi-markets, the freedom of choice of users, and the use of cash-for-care tools such as vouchers. Also relevant in this period was the political emphasis on security issues, coupled with a rhetoric against immigration flows, a tightening of rights of access to services for irregular immigrants, either due to local initiatives (child care services, school canteens, etc.) or national (healthcare).

In spring 2011, a radical change in the local administration took place. First, the primary elections within the centre-left coalition were won by a leftist outsider candidate mayor, Giuliano Pisapia, who proposed a participatory definition of political programme and campaign, and who later won the municipal elections against the outgoing centre-right mayor. This emphasis on participation is one of the key elements of the municipal coalition’s action. For instance, two editions of the municipal “Forum of Social Policies” have already taken place, and a first edition of the Forum of Youth Policies (“MI Generation Camp”). This approach is reflected in some of the programmes analysed here.

¹ For municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants, based on a two-ballot system.

The financial and economic crisis, which first burst in 2008 and is still ongoing in Italy, hit the city rather sharply, due to the high concentration of firms in the urban and suburban area. An increase in unemployment and inactivity rates, in the applications for state unemployment benefits, in the use of short-time work schemes, in the use of temporary instead of permanent contracts is observed (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). In addition to the existing municipal social assistance schemes, non-public stakeholders, such as the Milanese trade unions and the Catholic curia, have been active in creating solidarity funds and distributing forms of support, monetary and in-kind, to individuals and families hit by the crisis.

Some expectations in terms of economic and labour market development are placed in the coming International EXPO 2015, the only project to promote the local economy of some relevance in recent years. Delays in the implementation are observed, also due to disagreements in the definition of the projects; the selection of the involved areas and the type of public-private relations in their purchase and management, and their future use; and conflicts among institutional levels about the distribution of competences. Infrastructural works were also jeopardised by the scarcity of resources due to the economic crisis and the constraints of the European and national stability pacts.

Between inertia and small innovations, Milan needs to find a way out from the crisis and recession, and a (new) place in the changing world (Bonomi 2008; Lodigiani 2010).

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The three social innovation cases presented here predominantly concern three different policy areas: Milan Welfare Foundation (Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano, or FWA) relates to income support and labour market integration; Maggio 12 (M12) regards early childhood education and care policies and services; Fondazione Housing Sociale FHS concerns housing policies. Nevertheless, as will be seen, in each of the cases, overlapping, trickle-down effects and synergies with other policy fields are observed, pointing at directions for integration among programmes and sectors. The role of the municipality of Milan differs in each of the three cases, as we shall see, ranging from being the promoter of the project (M12, section 2.2), to being one of the founding members of a public-private foundation (FWA, section 2.1), to being part of a wider network involved in programmes initiated by a large non-profit stakeholder (FHS, section 2.3). In all the cases analysed, the relationship between public, private and third sector stakeholders is a prominent issue.

The following paragraphs present the three cases analysing:

1. the story of the single case;
2. the types and contents of programmes developed and the way needs or demands are addressed;
3. the patterns of organisation of the bodies partaking in the initiatives; and
4. the embeddedness of the projects in the local welfare system and its evolution.

Each case study is based on interviews with representatives of the different stakeholders involved in the programmes, as well as on the analysis of available documents, official websites and press information².

² A foundation is a body made up of a capital aimed at pursuing a specific goal, either directly, through its organisation, or indirectly, by financing other subjects that also pursue the same goal.

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Milan

Categories

Related to all policy fields

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Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano

33.1. Short description

The “*Fondazione*³ *Welfare Ambrosiano*” (FWA) was created by a heterogeneous core of both institutional and associative stakeholders: the Municipality of Milan; the Province of Milan; the Milan Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Handcraft and Agriculture; the three main Milanese trade unions (CGIL, Camera del Lavoro Metropolitana; CISL, Unione Sindacale Territoriale di Milano; and UIL Milano e Lombardia). After being announced in 2007 by the former Mayor of Milan, and created in 2009, the foundation really initiated its activities only in 2011 under the new municipal administration. The long gestation was due to “technical difficulties”, mainly related to the possibility to pay loans to citizens, for which it was necessary to define agreements with the banks. The foundation pursued an agreement with the National Association of Banks, but this attempt failed. The present municipal administration blames on the former mayor and councillors’ scant political will and resilience to rapidly tackle the problem.

The foundation was initially created after the impulse of Milanese trade unions that wanted to make available to the City a capital of 6 million euros, accumulated during the 1970s as part of collective bargaining. Originally meant to implement social development projects, and particularly to support women’s access to the labour market, due to difficulties in coordination with local bodies this capital had never been used. In the framework of the foundation, two-thirds of the available budget is destined to support innovative local welfare initiatives that are being designed and developed together by the members of the foundation and with other third sector bodies, such as Caritas Ambrosiana and *Fondazione Cariplo* (a big bank foundation⁴).

The foundation has the mission to support individuals and families who either live or work in the city of Milan, or who have a firm, or want to open a firm operating within the administrative boundaries of the city, disregarding their place of origin and their previous or current type of working contract, and who are in conditions of temporary need for various reasons (job loss, illness, etc.). These could be either persons who are not protected by existing, category-based social protection measures, and therefore are exposed to new forms of social exclusion, or persons or families who do not live in disadvantaged conditions, but who – due to temporary and unexpected difficulties – risk falling into real poverty. The aim is not, then, to substitute existing institutions assisting long-term

³ A foundation is a body made up of a capital aimed at pursuing a specific goal, either directly, through its organisation, or indirectly, by financing other subjects that also pursue the same goal.

⁴ The Italian bank foundations have an overall capital of 50 billion euros. In 2010 they carried out more than 30,000 social interventions, for which they paid 1,400 million euros. These interventions can integrate existing measures, and can also be innovative, but they cannot substitute the “traditional” welfare (Ferrera and Maino 2011).

situations of need (such as long-term unemployment). Rather, the aim is to intercept short-term risks of workers or jobless people who experience exceptional economic problems that often have serious long-lasting negative effects for the whole household. For instance, “families with budget problems may make decisions, such as the interruption of children’s education, that they would not make in other circumstances, and that may affect the future of family members on the long run, since they are hard to catch up later”.

The targets of the foundation’s measures are therefore all persons living or working in Milan with economic difficulties that make it impossible for them to make ends meet. The definition of the household is flexible, and for instance disregards whether the applicants are married, separated or cohabitating. This reflects a secular orientation of the foundation and of its members, which distinguishes it from other bodies, especially confessional ones, acting in the area. Two fundamental features of the foundation’s action are the active approach and the rotation in the use of funds. The active approach is reflected in its slogan: “we help you to help yourself”, which underlines that the commitment of the recipients to project their own path to solve their problem is understood as necessary. The *rotation in use of the funds* is obtained – as we shall see – by privileging financing tools such as micro-credit, as opposed to non-repayable financing; this choice is specifically due to the will of the involved trade unions to create an economic capital for the city that could last in time.

33.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The foundation intends to answer emerging social needs and reduce economic precariousness. At present, this purpose is basically pursued through the promotion of guarantee funds to favour access to credit, via the micro-credit tool (Yunus 1998).

The first goal of the foundation was in fact to build instruments to overcome one of the main negative effects of the present financial and economic crisis, i.e., the credit crunch, which prevents many individuals with few resources to access to bank loans despite of the deservingness of their need conditions and/or of the feasibility of their projects. FWA favours the access to micro-credit of the so-called “non-bankable”

persons, that is persons who have slight or no chance to access bank credit, due to lack of guarantees and/or to a past record of “bad payers”.

Two types of micro-credit are foreseen:

- > “social credit”, reserved to persons who – especially, but not only because of the crisis – can hardly afford expenses such as the payment of university fees of their children, or unexpected health expenditures;
- > credit for self-employment, to overcome an unemployment or under-employment or harshly precarious condition.

The access to micro-credit is promoted through a network of selected local bodies that operate as territorial “front-desks” intercepting existing needs. At present, eighteen front-desks are operating, mainly managed by trade unions, but also by social cooperatives, associations, parishes that are not among the members of the foundation (e.g. ACLI, Legacoop, etc.). New front-desks are going to be opened, with a “light accreditation system”. The idea was not to create new structures or offices in addition to the existing ones, but rather to ask those organisations that already deal with poverty and vulnerability in the city to become the “working branches” of the FWA.

These bodies are asked to stand “moral surety” for the families that they introduce to the foundation. They carry out:

- > *First screening*: during the first interview, information about the micro-credit programme is given to the applicant and, at the same time, information about the applicant is collected.
- > *Orientation*: applicants may be addressed to other welfare agencies (managed by public or third-sector bodies), that may be more appropriate for their case.
- > *Take-up and counselling*: if after the first interview the case appears to have a profile that fits the requirements to access micro-credit, a second interview is organised with an expert of the Bank Volunteers for Social Initiatives association (*Volontari Bancari per le Iniziative nel Sociale*, or Vo.b.i.s.)⁵. In this interview, an analysis of the need

⁵ An association of retired bank clerks, created in 2009 to favour the financial inclusion of “non-bankable subjects”. The experts assess many variables, such as personal story, income situation, family situation, social context and territorial relations, in order to estimate whether the recipient may overcome his/her economic problem thanks to the loan.

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and/or of the project is carried out, a feasibility study is formulated, a work plan is outlined.

- > Monitoring and tutoring: moral and bureaucratic support is provided throughout the development of the project.

The capital to be lent is between 2,000 euros and 20,000 euros per applicant. On the basis of the preliminary inquiry, the front-desk “presents” the application to a commission of the foundation that may or not approve the project. If the project is approved, FWA issues a guarantee of 80 per cent of the capital. With this guarantee, applicants can make a request for credit to one of the banks that have signed the agreement with the foundation⁶, that will treat the application within 30 days and – in the positive cases – allocate the money.

The loan is basically granted on the basis of a trust relationship. The interest rates are much lower than the average bank rates, and differentiated by type of credit: 4 per cent for social credit (against an average rate for credit to persons of 11.21 per cent according to *Banca d'Italia*) and 6.5 per cent for self-employment credit (against an average rate of 10.25 per cent of credit to firms). The duration of repayment is such that should allow sustainability for everyone: during the first year only interest is repaid. The repayment of capital begins after the first 12 months and can be spread over up to 6 years. In case of insolvency, the foundation covers up to 80 per cent of the capital.

Since the first loans have been granted 1 year ago, repayment is beginning in these months; therefore, it is too early to evaluate the degree of solvency, and the reasons of possible insolvency. However, a monitoring system has been organised to assess the results and introduce changes if needed.

A preliminary evaluation of the applications received in the first 12 months of the programme has been carried out. Between October 2011 and November 2012 772 applications were received, 73 per cent for social credit and 27 per cent for self-employment (Bramanti and Spina 2012). In December 2012, of all presented applications: 30 per cent had received the credit; 54 per cent received a negative evaluation by the technical committee of the foundation, because

of lacking requirements or excessive indebtedness; 9 per cent were reoriented towards other social services because of non-sustainability of the loan; those remaining were still under evaluation. Only 9 per cent of applications forwarded to banks are further refused.

Applicants are rather balanced by gender (57 per cent men and 43 per cent women), but diversified by age (33 per cent are aged 41-50 years; 26 per cent 31-40 years; 22 per cent 51-60 years; while those aged over 60 years represent only 6 per cent of applicants). Applications of young unemployed living with their parents are generally refused as not corresponding to the profiles of beneficiaries that could overcome a temporary difficulty with the FWA's help. 76 per cent of applicants are resident in the municipality of Milan.

Among social credit applications, the main reasons identified are housing expenses, debt discharge or reduction and family needs, followed by training expenses, health expenses and mortgage loans. Indebtedness of the household is behind most of the applicants' situations, together with the job loss of one of the family members, or the presence of atypical contracts (Mallone 2012). The amount awarded is rather moderate: 54 per cent of applications for social credit are in the lowest amount range, between 2,000 and 5,000 euros. As to demographic characteristics, 57 per cent of social applications are made by Italian citizens (Bramanti and Spina 2012).

Applications for self-employment credit concern start-up projects in 31 per cent of cases; in a larger number of cases they are due to economic difficulties, or need to purchase goods or services, of already existing activities. The amount paid is higher than in the case of social credit: 38 per cent of self-employment applications are between 17,100 and 20,000 euros. Most applications for this kind of credit are presented by Italians (71 per cent). The selection for self-employment micro-credit is rather strict: around 30 per cent of applications are accepted (Mallone 2012). As a sign of commitment, applicants need to create a firm, operating in Milan, before receiving the answer from the foundation committee, and that means for them to face up to an expenditure, albeit minimal. In self-employment credit the counselling activities developed by the operators and volunteers also aim at building some business culture and awareness in the recipients.

⁶ At the time of writing: *Intesa Sanpaolo, Banca Prossima, Banca Popolare di Milano and Banca Popolare Commercio Industria*; other agreements are in progress.

33.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The different orientations, traditions and interests of the founding members of the foundation is reflected in the negotiations about objectives and programmes. Trade unions have a tendency to privilege initiatives for standard workers; the chamber of commerce is inclined to promote the creation of new firms; the municipality is more willing to search for overall solutions to problems that concern the general citizenship.

Also, the distribution of positions reflects the heterogeneous composition of the members. The president of the *Fondazione* is the mayor of Milan, while political competence is devolved to the town councillor for Employment, Economic Development, University and Research; the vice president is indicated by the trade unions, while the general director of the foundation is a member of the council of the chamber of commerce. The governance of FWA is dualistic: a steering committee (*Consiglio di Indirizzo*), named by members and chaired by the mayor, and a management committee, named by members and by the steering committee. A technical-scientific committee, formed by academic and institutional experts, evaluates applications and formulates proposals.

The agreement with the banks about micro-credit proved to be a very difficult coordination issue that took a long time to be solved. Even with those banks that did sign the agreement, procedures are not smooth yet. Although an answer to the credit request is in principle due within 30 days, banks tend to expand this time very often and for long. The agreement with the banks was complemented with an agreement with the Lombardy Anti-usury Foundation which contributed a supplementary insurance of 30 per cent of the capital to the project, thus de-facto widening the available resources. The FWA charter foresees the possibility to collaborate with external bodies, and negotiations in this sense are already ongoing. The access-to-credit activities of FWA are possible thanks to the voluntary contribution of the Vo.b.i.s network (see above). The foundation also counts on the counselling of *Permicro* (<http://www.permicro.it/>), a company specialised in micro-credit targeted at entrepreneurship.

Common procedures are shared among all the members of the network and all the front-desks

on the territory. Training and update meetings are organised for this purpose. The front-desk operators have attended a specific (2-day) training course to be prepared to carry out social tasks of welcome and listening. The foundation carried out a rather wide communication plan, advertising its micro-credit activities via the local press, Internet, flyers, and the network of local public and third-sector welfare agencies⁷. Among the persons who applied in the first 4 months, 71 per cent knew about the project from the press, 18 per cent by word of mouth and 11 per cent (mainly Italians) from the internet (Mallone 2012).

33.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

In the words of its founding members, the foundation intends to go back to the historical Milanese solidarity tradition and update it to issues currently at stake, as well as methods of intervention and patterns of governance. In this sense, the FWA seems to be an innovative experience deeply rooted in the local context. The head office is located in a periphery area, *Quarto Oggiaro*, a symbolic choice to underline the approach to improve and enhance the role of the working-class neighbourhoods out of the city centre. The programmes developed by the foundation are defined as relevant by the promoters, since few tools are available for public subsidised loans, whereas access to credit is a major concern due to the credit crunch that followed the financial crisis.

In the words of its director, the foundation can and must become a laboratory for social innovation, a place for the exchange of experiences and practices, and the study of original solutions. In addition, for the competent city councillor, the challenge of the foundation lies in the “degree of project innovation” that it will be able to develop. Accordingly, the aim of the foundation at present is not to enlarge the available capital, but rather to collect and elaborate ideas and proposals to exploit as best as possible the available resources. In this perspective, the collaboration with other territorial stakeholders is wished for (Percorsi Secondo Welfare 2011).

Born as an anti-crisis initiative, the foundation is currently envisaging its role also beyond the (hopefully close) end of the recession. New projects are on the go. A programme has just started that aims to

⁷ See for instance the website of the foundation: www.fwamilano.org

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anticipate the payment of short-time work schemes to concerned workers, since the bureaucratic procedures generally take several months before the benefits are effectively paid⁸. The foundation will then be paid back by the National Social Security Institute (INPS), thus maintaining the approach of the rotation of resources.

New projects in progress aim at revising and updating – after a proposal of the trade unions – the nineteenth-century tradition of mutual approach of the *Società di Mutuo Soccorso* (friendly societies)⁹, in order to try and fill the gaps of the Italian category-based social protection that leave workers with atypical contracts and most of the jobless uncovered. Other initiatives are being studied in the health field.

The foundation also promotes the analysis of local social problems, via seminars, training courses, fellowships and prizes. Up to now, FWA has promoted three doctoral fellowships (financed by private sponsors) aimed at comparatively studying urban poverty, with a focus on weak groups such as migrant women and the young, and the experiences of micro-credit, its functioning, types of applicants and territorial impact. These initiatives are not only aimed at deepening knowledge on related themes, but also more specifically at assessing the FWA projects' results and, in the future, what the citizens have learnt about the functioning of the micro-credit tool that is new for the Milanese context.

⁸ http://www.fwamilano.org/index.phtml?Id_VMenu=101

⁹ A famous case based in Milan was the Friendly Society of Railway Workers of Northern Italy, now named "Cesare Pozzo", after one of the first and most influential presidents of the association.

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Maggio 12 – Nuovo Manifesto Pedagogico per la Città

34.1. Short description

Investing in and reorganising the early child care services system was one of the programme points of the campaign for mayor Giuliano Pisapia in the winter/spring of 2010/2011 (Costa and Sabatinelli 2013). The commitment of the new administration for a more inclusive, open and plural city was intended as a frame of intervention also for this policy field. In a typical “social investment” approach (Morel et al. 2011), expenditure on education and early education is understood to be an investment for the present and future wellbeing of the city and of the citizenship.

Such a commitment stems from the acknowledgement of the transformations that have occurred in the life conditions of Milanese citizens and families in the last decades. First, the working conditions of parents, and especially of mothers, have deeply changed, with high requests in terms of flexibility and hard fatigue to reconcile work and family time. Secondly, family structures have diversified, and bear different needs: from needs that concern babies and children to needs that concern disabled adults and dependent elderly. Besides, the presence of children with foreign parents steadily increases (around 20 per cent). All these changes originate new social and educational needs and demands.

In this context, a debate was launched stemming from the idea that childhood services have an educative mission, as opposed to being an assistance task. According to Maria Grazia Guida (vice mayor with competence in education until January 2013) “it was since the mid-nineties that the city council did not organise a table to reflect and update the pedagogic model to which our child services should refer to. We want to put the child back at the centre of the city life”.

The project “*Maggio 12*” (May 2012, initially named after the deadline of the first year of participated planning) aimed exactly at promoting cultural debate and confrontation with all services’ workers, educators, families and experts, as well as with all the citizens on the themes related to the Child Education Services of the Milan Municipality. The widest participation of all “souls” of the city – civil, social and professional – was considered necessary by the promoters.

A team of experts was appointed to work on the project, including pedagogues, psychotherapists, neuro-psychiatrists, paediatricians, journalists and third-sector representatives. The team was committed to draft a new “pedagogic manifesto” for the city, to re-elaborate in an innovative way orientations and directions, re-formulate pedagogic guidelines, and inspire the re-organisation of municipal education services and the overall education system. The experts participate for free, which is relevant in a period of economic crisis and severe budgetary constraints.

34.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

In the case of “*Maggio 12*”, it is difficult to separate the contents of the programme from the governance pattern, even for analytical purposes, since the participative path is at the same time a style of coordination of stakeholders and part of the objectives to be achieved. In fact, the project was developed along a “participated path” involving all the almost 3,500 educators of municipal day-care centres and kindergartens, representatives of private bodies managing parts of the municipal services, representatives of private providers, as well as the families with children of pre-school age.

This path included a number of meetings, coordinated by the team of experts and organised at the neighbourhood level around seven main themes:

1. *Children as everybody's good and as everybody's responsibility.* Centrality of the child in the educative processes, to be promoted in a pedagogic and didactic humus, promoting its autonomy, proposals, freedom and rights.
2. *Public and private dimension of childhood services.* Solid synergies to be promoted among all stakeholders caring for children.
3. *Family as protagonist.* A focus on the role of the family in generating identity, even amid the huge contradictions that characterise contemporary years.
4. *Children with handicaps.* Goals: overcoming discrimination, promoting autonomy and proposals, supporting services' staff and improving the equipment of facilities.
5. *Children anyway, Italians or foreigners.* A focus on diversity as peculiar characteristic of the whole of mankind.
6. *Professional education and life-long training.* A focus on the importance of sharing, exchange and confrontation moments, especially among educators and teachers.
7. *Miscellaneous.* Diverse pedagogic reflections.

For each of the themes a number of meetings in the different city areas have been organised over the months. Synthesis contributions of all thematic meetings have been made available on the city council website. Each meeting counted the presence of around fifty people. According to some of the participants, the wide participation was due to enthusiasm towards the new course, as opposed to the centralist management of the previous administration, whose meetings were only informative and organised in a top-down way (see also section 2.2.2).

A public event was organised in May 2012, when the pedagogic manifesto was presented, together with the results of the thematic sessions, and where public debate was launched not only at the city level, but also at the national level, with the presence of representatives of other Italian metropolitan cities. The 2-day conference was titled *Maggio 12: bambini di oggi costruttori del nostro futuro* (May 12: children of today, builders of our future). The title clearly shows the adoption of a social investment approach (Esping-Andersen 2002; Jenson 2007; Morel et al. 2011). The declared inspiration is the theory of “ethical community” of the psychologist Howard Gardner (2007). This theory focuses on the idea that children feel that the community cares for them and, growing up, they will give back the care they received.

Vice-mayor Guida described the approach of the municipal administration as follows: “Caring for the youngest means caring for the future of the whole city”. The child is defined as a “good investment”, since the cities that have invested in children have largely gained in quality of life for all citizens. In the words of the municipal administration, then, a new start from children means giving back hope and future to a city that asks for development and social cohesion, despite the crisis and the divisions it is undergoing. “Looking at Milan from the point of view of

the youngest can help us see what does not work and has to be changed” (Guida 2012)¹⁰.

“Maggio 12” is understood as a sort of umbrella programme for various types of projects and initiatives, of different size and scope. Among the wide-scope objectives of the city council in this policy field we find:

1. The reorganisation of municipal early child education and care (ECEC) services (day-care centres and kindergartens).
2. The release of a new regulation for the ECEC services, the first revision since 1975.
3. The revision of the rules, procedures and criteria for the accreditation process of private ECEC services and for the agreement process (conventionamento) with accredited private providers to “buy” places in day-care services to be reserved to children on the waiting lists for municipal facilities.

Among the more specific projects currently ongoing is *Appunti per la città - Giardini scolastici* (Notes for the city - school gardens). This was developed from an idea of two associations (*Legambiente* and *ABCittà*) and promoted by the municipality of Milan, after the children of the city had asked city councillors, during the last International Day of the Rights of Children, to improve the school gardens. The project involves 4,500 children of sixteen schools. Nine gardens have been identified in nine municipal kindergartens (one in each neighbourhood of Milan), located in areas that suffer from a lack of urban green areas. In order to be selected, the kindergartens needed to be available to open to the neighbourhood (the gardens need to be accessible from a public street) and willing to undertake a re-design of the gardens, together with the children themselves who will work on the projects during the winter, and on the restructuring from the spring, together with teachers, parents and local associations. After the re-design, which will be carried out thanks to a residue of 600,000 euros from a national fund on childhood (law 285/97, see Costa and Sabatinelli 2011), these gardens will be opened to all citizens out of school hours. In this sense, school gardens become bridges between the services and the neighbourhoods, spaces for the construction

¹⁰ In the same perspective, a city council deliberation of a few months ago (not directly related to the M12 programme) has established that it must be allowed for children to play in the courtyards of condos, which had been hampered for decades. This was a zero-cost message to families with children that Milan is operating to become a child-friendly city, from where young families could possibly not feel obliged to escape.

of citizenship. This project has therefore not only material objectives (improving the green areas at the disposal of children), but also cultural objectives, developed along a path that keeps together “accountability, participation and environmental education” (as stated in the city council website).

Another small project, “Happy Popping” concerns the organisation of areas where mums are welcome to breastfeed babies in public places. This initiative is coherent with the approach of making of Milan a child-friendly (and mum-friendly) city.

34.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Coherently with an approach that defines childhood services as educational interventions, the municipal Directorate for Education has been reorganised and recreated, after a period of 30 years during which competences were split into separate areas. The municipal administration intends to pursue the continuity of provision for the whole 0-6 years age range, but institutional and legal constraints that overarch municipal regulations have limited this possibility up to now. The reform of the governance of education and childhood services also foresees the establishment of children’s city areas councils, consultative bodies that had been promised during the electoral campaign and that are currently being organised.

Specific to the M12 programme, as we have seen, the municipal administration claims the adoption of a participatory approach, a public dialogue and a listening path. Nevertheless, the organisation was reported to be insufficient, and the general objectives were not always clear to the different participants. Participating in the whole path was described as rather demanding in terms of time and organisation but – at the same time - some of the stakeholders felt excluded from the steps in which synthesis was made and conclusions were drawn. Moreover, it should be noted that some trade union organisations of ECEC services did demonstrate outside the theatre during the “May 12” event, denouncing that after a participative path that had lasted several months, no voice at all was given to them during the official event, and warning that staff working conditions may not be safeguarded in the organisational changes that the city council administration was about to apply to municipal ECEC services. Other stakeholders have defined this final public

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event as a “shop-window” kind of happening. Yet, the vice-mayor states that after the actual introduction of reorganisation, and the hiring on a permanent basis of quite a large number of formerly precarious educators (see below), the tensions with trade unions were overcome.

The municipal administration, under the impulse of the Milan town councillor and vice-mayor, has actively sought to establish a relationship with the town councillors of education services of the other Italian metropolitan cities. By the way, these are all women, and all part of administrations elected in the same year (in 2011, that is, in the midst of the crisis). This was built within the National Network of Italian Municipalities (ANCI), but at the same time, a specificity of the biggest Italian cities was maintained. A first result obtained was a confrontation with the national government about the possibility to bypass the Stability Pact for specific objectives and in presence of precise conditions. In the municipality of Milan this meant in particular the possibility to hire on a permanent basis around 150 precarious educators of municipal ECEC services. This contributed to relax the relationship between trade unions, educators and the municipal administration.

34.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The *Maggio 12* programme intends to innovate local policies and services for childhood and families, within the frame of steadily wide needs for reconciliation policies and services in the urban and metropolitan context (see Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). The recent crisis had ambivalent impacts on the needs for child care services for children aged under 3 years: overall demands decreased, since those who are jobless tend to take care directly for their children, but demands for care for babies and toddlers have instead increased, since those who do have a job tend to reduce their period of leave. All in all, the intention of the Municipal administration is to maintain (not enlarge, due to lack of resources) the traditionally wide core of direct municipal provision, point of reference also for private providers for quality standards and pedagogic projects, to be used as a sound basis on which to build well-balanced public-private relations, with a strong coordination role for the municipality itself.

May 12 is not intended to be a sporadic event: the municipal administration understands it as a space for continuative participative reflection around childhood issues. A second edition (May 13) has already taken place, during the year 2012/13 under the guide of the new city councillor Francesco Cappelli. Even more than in the previous edition, the aim is to involve not only the municipal educators, but the whole city, around the main theme of the ability to care for children. The reflection was organised around three topics:

- > *Milano e i suoi bambini* (Milan and its children) on the relationship between children and the city, on the knowledge of the different services available, their organisation, costs and features, and on the role of families and how to create an “educating community”.
- > *Vivere insieme nella pluralità* (Living together in plurality) on multiculturalism.
- > *Bambini comunque* (Children anyway) on social and cultural disadvantages.

The final event was a national seminar titled *La città si prende cura dei suoi bambini* (The city takes care of its children), in May 2013.

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Fondazione Housing Sociale

35.1. Short description

The *Fondazione Housing Sociale* (FHS) has been chosen as a case on innovation in housing policies in Milan even if its scope is regional and now, as will be explained, national. It is a pioneer experience that gave birth to the first ethical fund for social housing in Italy, anticipating ad hoc legislation and policymaking that has undergone a scaling-up process. It is considered to be a very interesting case by policymakers and by public and private stakeholders, because FHS expanded its activities since its creation and has been replicated around the country.

Here we will describe its genesis and development, focusing on a plurality of aspects, each of which can be considered as an innovation in local welfare, even if there are some critical aspects. So, the FHS will be presented as a whole, then we will focus on the description of the developed social funds, and, finally, we will illustrate very briefly some of the social housing projects launched by the foundation. Our analysis is based on interviews, internal and public reports, articles and other available materials on the web.

The FHS case has to be shortly contextualised. In the past years, a new form of social housing emerged in the Italian market. Contrary to what happens in other countries, until the beginning of the decade “social housing” was implicitly intended as the “public” component of this policy field. In many cities characterised by high housing or rehousing needs, many private housing initiatives have been developed to cope with (or to try to cope with) the scarcity of dwellings devoted to low and middle-low incomes, normally through the constitution of cooperatives and associations that promote self-building activities, buy and restructure private buildings for rent or sell at lower prices and get concessions from public agencies to remould and manage entire buildings with the same aim. Following local experiences, law 244/2007 defined a new typology of dwellings defined “residence of general interest destined to location”, non-luxurious real estate localised in municipalities with “high tension housing needs” and bound by contract to at least 25 years renting destination. The law introduces an important principle: dwellings destined to long-term renting, even if private, represent an economic service of general interest. They can be privileged by tax exemptions and by planning and economic support by public stakeholders (ANCI 2010).

One year later, The *Ministero degli interni* with the decree 22 April 2008, defined social dwelling (alloggio sociale) as “a unit for residential use in a permanent location aimed to reduce housing problems for individuals and disadvantaged families, who are not able to access to renting housing solutions in free market conditions”. The definition of “social housing” in the decree is quite general and can be actuated through: the imposition of a minimum number of dwellings rented at a “fair rent” for builders that use lands prior devoted to “standard services”; the free assign-

ment of municipal land imposing the construction of dwellings only devoted to rent at fair values (in any case lower than private market rates) plus municipal urban tax exemptions and, last but not least, the involvement of private stakeholders that privilege ethical investment aims and accept lower returns on investment. (Baldini 2010; Plebani and Merotta 2011; Gaimo 2011).

The issue of “social housing” is quite important in Milan because of needs pressure (there is an acute shortage of affordable dwellings in the city and the number of families that cannot afford to get into the private market is growing) and because it is one of the big cities where “trials of innovation” are taking place, thanks to the development of a web of stakeholders that are trying to promote public–private partnerships in order to enlarge the rental housing stock. Along with new stakeholders, traditional ones are involved in this effort.

35.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

FHS was founded in 2004 by the *Fondazione Cariplo*, the largest “foundation with a bank origin” in Italy. These foundations are a kind of private, grant-making foundation specific to Italy, set in 1991¹¹. *Fondazione Cariplo* has addressed the issue of disadvantaged housing conditions since 1999, contributing to the realisation of housing projects dedicated to the weakest segments of the population (homeless people, ex-convicts and ex-drug-addicted), mainly through grants to third-sector organisations (Barbetta and Urbani 2007, Urbani 2009). Aware of the limited amount of resources available in the form of grants, the foundation decided to experiment with innovative financing instruments based on sustainability and ethical investments (and no longer on grants) to expand the range of social housing projects involving other public and private institutions and stakeholders. A feasibility study carried out by the Architecture and Planning Department of the Milan Polytechnic (DiAP) confirmed the potential of the ethical investment of proposal of *Fondazione Cariplo*. The initiative thus took concrete

11 It “manages the assets gathered over 180 years by *Cassa di Risparmio delle Province Lombarde* to carry on its long-standing philanthropic tradition. *Fondazione Cariplo* aims at operating on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity, anticipating needs and fulfilling its special mission of being a resource that helps social and civil organisations better serve their community” (www.fondazionecariplo.it).

form in the social housing programme and the creation of the *Fondazione Housing Sociale*, instituted to implement the programme itself.

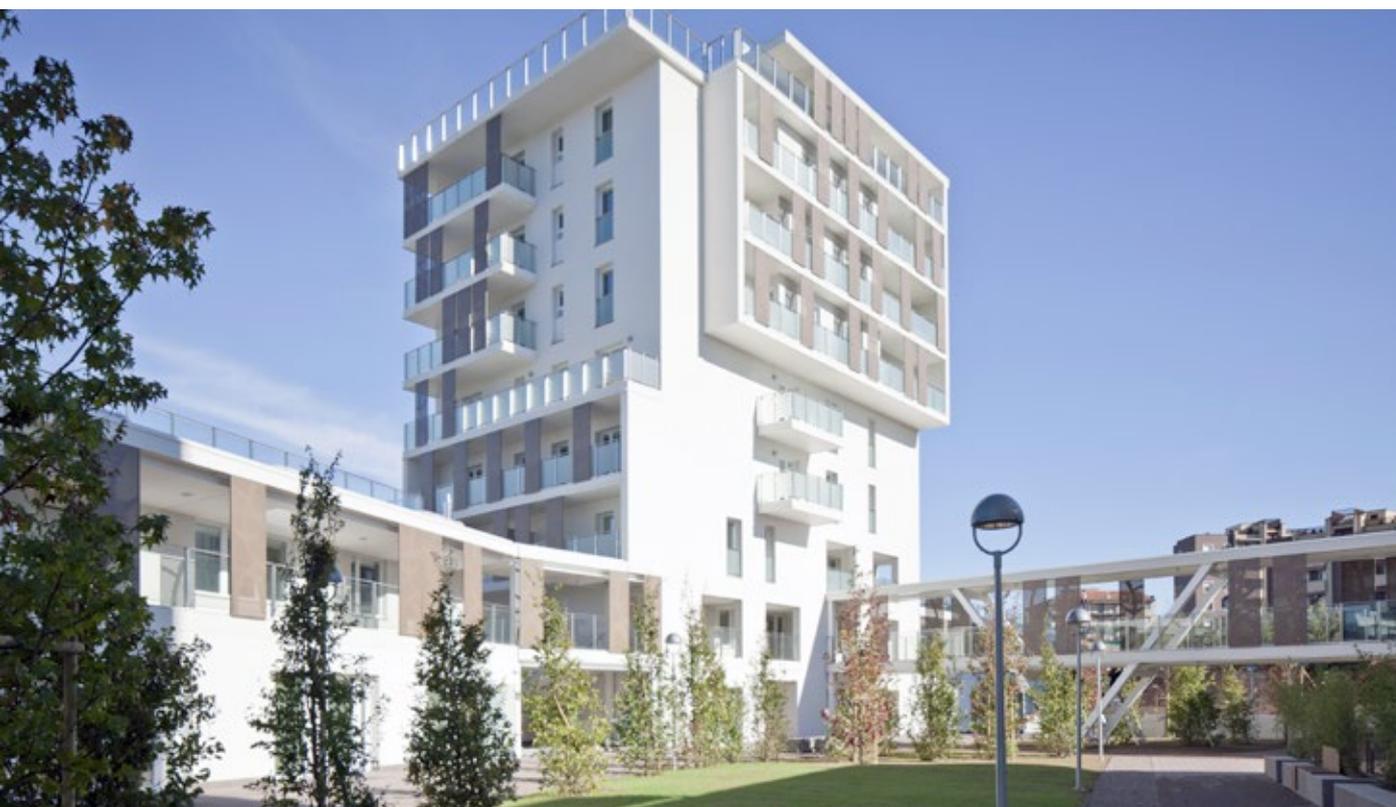
The social housing programme has a dual identity, according to institutional documents:

on one hand it is an economic enterprise providing for very significant levels of investment and thus requiring the definition of robust management methods that provide the necessary guarantees to private investors; on the other, it is an institutional enterprise aiming to produce not only initiatives but also, and especially, new organisational propositions and models that show how public administrations, the not-for-profit sector and private operators can become effective partners for addressing the issue of housing needs (FHS website)¹²

Created in 2004 by *Fondazione Cariplo* and supported by the Lombardy Region and *Anci Lombardia* (the association of Lombardy municipalities), the FHS is an active member in the Italian real estate panorama as an innovative stakeholder in the field of the so-called “modern housing policies” intended as a response to the problem of the growing gap between the housing supply (dwellings in the free market, mostly expensive and not affordable) and the actual economic means of Italian families. Although most Italians own their houses (more than 80 per cent), a strong demand of rental houses has arisen by the population unable to buy, to be homeowner. It is in this scenery that FHS steps in with a long-term strategy intended not only to promote access to housing by those who are in the grey area, those who are not eligible for public housing and at the same time, are not financially able to stand in the private market.

The mission of the FHS (at least in what is declared in their institutional documents) is also to ensure residents’ empowerment and their social integration. Such commitment has also meant promoting the building of new houses, but above all devising a new model of urban development proper to ensure a high standard of life for residents and for the neighbourhood in which its activities are inserted, thanks to special attention to proximity services, to the promotion of positive and solidarity relations among those who are directly involved in the projects (as users or neighbours) and to the development of social pro-

12 <http://www.fhs.it/eng.pdf>



grammes devoted to facilitate and improve cohabitation conditions.

The work of FHS developed along three main axes: promoting ethical financing initiatives, and in particular, real estate funds dedicated to social housing; testing of innovative, non-profit management models; and developing project design instruments to be shared among all sector operators and promoting public-private partnerships to develop their initiatives complementing the existing public housing policies and substituting them.

The first endowment by *Fondazione Cariplo* permitted FHS to move the first steps into the real estate world and thereby create an ethical fund, the *Fondo Abitare Sociale 1*, in 2005. It is limited to institutional investors such as public institutions, big firms and bank foundations. Its purpose was to finance the building of apartments and services to solve tenants' housing problems, supporting the public administration and the third-sector agencies' efforts in this direction.

The fund's aim was to give birth to affordable dwellings for students, elderly people, one-income families, migrants, young people, and more generally, those who cannot afford market prices to cope with their housing needs. According to what is stated in FHS

documents, "another portion of the fund is allotted to supporting projects inspired to the principles of the 'ethic estate finance', which specifies that no investment should be made in projects of buildings used for the trading and stocking of weapons, tobacco, alcohol and similar items"¹³.

The ethics of the fund was related to the fact that it was devoted to "non-speculative investors", assuring yearly returns in the range of 2-4 per cent plus inflation. These investors have been defined in interviews as "patient investors" (but also in the literature: Giamo 2011). The fund has a lifespan of 20 years and its management has been assigned to *Polaris SgR* (savings management firm) as indicated by legislation for all real estate funds; while the follow-up of social purposes obtained through the fund itself has been entrusted to FHS. The *Fondo Abitare Sociale 1* has been financed with 85 million euros by the following investors: *Fondazione Cariplo*, *Regione Lombardia*, *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti*¹⁴, *Banca Intesa San Paolo*, *Banca Popolare di Milano*, *Assicurazioni Generali* and *Cassa*

¹³ <http://www.fhs.it/eng.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.cassaddpp.it>. *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti* (CDP) is a joint-stock company under public control, with the Italian government holding 80.1 per cent and a broad group of bank foundations holding 18.4 per cent, the remaining 1.5 per cent in treasury shares.

Geometri with 10 million euros each and Telecom Italia and Pirelli with 2.55 and 2.45 million of euros, respectively (*Fondazione Housing Sociale 2009*).

In 2006 the *Abitare Sociale 1* fund was transformed into a new fund called *Fondo Immobiliare di Lombardia* (FIL), participated mainly by *Fondazione Cariplo* and FHS, along with the same partners of the first fund and other new investors such as *Prelios* and *Fondo Investimenti per l'Abitare* (see next paragraph, managed by *Polaris SgR*).

The whole system of social and ethical funds has further developed with the creation in 2009/10 of a "A National Real Estate Fund System" called "Fondo Investimenti per l'abitare" (FIA) managed by *CDP Investimenti SgR* promoted by *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti S.p.A.*, the Association of Bank Foundations (*Associazione di Fondazioni e di Casse di Risparmio S.p.A.*, or *ACRI* - actually directed by the president of *Fondazione Cariplo*) and the Italian Bank Association (*Associazione Bancaria Italiana*, or *ABI*), to build a platform for launching and support real estate closed-end funds and their activities.

FIA invest and will invest in social housing initiatives to increment the supply of affordable housing, both for renting and for selling, supporting and integrating public (national, regional and municipal) housing policies. The target of its activities is, as written above and as stated by interviewees, "the grey area of housing demanders", those who cannot access the free market but are not eligible for public housing (*edilizia residenziale pubblica*). Its geographical scope is very wide (the entire country) and its capital reached 2 billion and 28 million euros by March 2012; 1 billion given by *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti*; 140 million by the Italian Infrastructure and Transport Ministry; and 888 million by banking and insurance groups. It has a lifespan of 35 years with a possible extension of no more than 3 years. It will invest exclusively in real estate, and, until June 2012 it could participate with no more than 40 per cent of its total capital invested in each local initiative or social real estate development along with local funds (as the FIL one). From June 2012, due to the current economic and financial crisis (mainly to the credit crunch), participation could reach 60 per cent of investment in order to unlock planned initiatives by local funds and agencies around Italy that lack 2 or 3 million euros in most cases. From mid 2013 the participation can reach 80 per cent in case of projects that have a strong social orientation.

35.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Until 2011-12, FHS was organised into two main offices, the "finance area", focused on the financial structure of private social housing initiatives and on the management of associated implementation procedures (preliminary analyses, feasibility studies, negotiation support, financial structuring, financial planning, strategic partner search, governance and real estate market analysis); and the "planning and development area", specialised in urban and architectural design and also on the social aspects of the projects (e.g. design guidelines, local relations, social management and participation, occupant selection, service design, urban analysis, urban redevelopment and the legislative framework). With the creation of the FIA, the finance area has been absorbed and internalised by *Cassa Depositi e Prestiti*, which needed specific competences in this pretty new and complex corpus of policies, instruments and issues of and for social housing (it has to be considered that also the legislation is very recent).

Currently, within the National Fund (the FIA), FHS actively inspires the promotion and organisation of new local real estate ethical funds managed by different investment management companies (throughout Italy for initiatives with an aggregate value of more than 3.5 billion euros. FHS and *Polaris SgR* have been asked to operate as a technical advisors for many of these funds, with a "coaching" and sometimes, "scouting" role.

The evolution of the initial innovative idea of FHS and *Fondazione Cariplo* is huge in terms of scope, capitalisation and capacity to operate as a policymaker at national at local levels. Nowadays the FHS's aim is to be, as stated by the project manager of FHS, "an incubator of housing policies", therefore not only to promote the encounter of demand and supply of housing – particularly in favour of the weakest – but also to ensure, through its action, good life opportunities, integration, services and housing quality. Now that the system of ethic funds is solid, FHS, seated in Milan, will finally focus its attention in "developing community welfare programmes" (as stated in interviews) in its housing initiatives. It will fully experiment what FHS calls "sustainable communities". **In their words:**

The integrated management plan envisioned for these social housing projects proposes a process of com-

community building mainly addressing accommodation needs. The inclusion of people in disadvantaged circumstances is also favoured via specific projects that not only help meet the needs of their direct beneficiaries but also help strengthen the community identity, the network of interpersonal relations, and a shared feeling of a more sociable living dimension. This scenario entails the objective of achieving an appropriate social mix, i.e. a heterogeneous and balanced community including disadvantaged segments and a good range of diversity, implementing instruments and organisational methods that facilitate the management of cohabitation and community functions and safeguard its components. The social mix must be accompanied by a functional mix incorporating a variety of services into the residential context, contributing to improving the quality of life and ensuring services in the territory, oriented especially to help the most vulnerable. The development of a sense of identity and membership in the place where one lives is considered to be one of the most critical elements in providing incentives for active participation in community life, transforming the residents from simple beneficiaries of a service into active players in the determination of the quality of their condition and their context

(FHS website)

35.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

FHS's challenge is therefore complex: to encourage different stakeholders towards common goals, attracting investments for social housing projects, monitoring their results and developing management sustainable models that can be replicated in other contexts than the Milan or Lombardy one. Looking for sustainability in the Italian context means mainly finding economic and financial conditions that make social housing projects attractive not only for dedicated stakeholders (as FHS) or public ones, but also to private stakeholders. In this sense, FHS need and want to be fully embedded in the local welfare system, aware that its projects need to be supported by local authorities and partners that have (by mission or by convenience) the same long-term horizon for investments. According to what is declared in institutional materials and in interviews to FSH and *Fondazione Cariplo* executives, innovation is such when it becomes a practice and such practices may be followed by action models acquired by policymakers.

A brief presentation of the Milan projects developed by the "Fondo Immobiliare Lombardia" (FIL) will give some idea of how the interaction of the local welfare system takes place. It has to be considered that all these projects are developed with the Milan municipality in different kinds of partnership (use of public land, use of other public resources and institutional support) and that buildings are designed to ensure high energy technology and energy standards at a reasonable cost of construction and maintenance. The actual projects that are being developed (in construction if ex novo buildings or in action if implemented re-using spaces) are *Cenni di cambiamento*, *Figino Borgo Sostenibile*, *Maison du Monde 36*, *Abit@giovani*. Each of them is based in a different public-private arrangement and try to respond to different social/housing needs. It is important to point out that most of these projects have yet produced lived-in spaces; people have not yet entered the social housing buildings. Only *Cenni di Cambiamento* have been inaugurated in November 2013 and residents moved in. All these projects aim to develop communities of residents that organise themselves to manage their spaces and common life. The core idea is that this can happen when people know each other and with the help and support of social managers that can "accompany" residents to share some activities. All the projects are also based in the co-opting of an organisation that functions as "social manager".

Cenni di cambiamento

Cenni di cambiamento means "signs of change" in Italian. *Cenni* is also the road in which the social housing intervention is located. The title of the project plays intelligently with words and "speaks" about its philosophy. It was one of the first building realisations of FHS, 124 flats in the western part of the city. The main targets are young people, intended as newly formed families or singles who have just left their family. On the ground floor there will be premises assigned to social and community businesses, designed to improve quality of life and to encourage social contact among residents. The core of the project is the inner court, meant to become a small park and open to residents of the district, which includes playgrounds, a resting area and pergolas. On 30 March 2012, the apartments started to be assigned on the basis of a rent of 5000 euros for a two-room flat per year (that is less than 500 euros per month), thereby allowing low

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rents (publicly regulated) and high housing quality.

Almost half of the apartments are proposed with a rent-to-buy formula. The social manager of *Via Cenni* will be *DAR Casa*, a third-sector housing agency. In *Cenni* will be developed in cooperation with “*ARCI Barabba*” (a historical and very active association) a foyer for young people, for temporary housing needs (2/3 years of possible stay). Five apartments will be devoted to this specific target and a residents’ association will be created to promote self-organised personal services, such as taking care of children, supporting voluntary activities for and by neighbours, and so on.

MAISONDUMONDE36

This project’s aim is to recuperate a building located in *Via Padova*, n. 36, one of the most ethnically oriented streets (and neighbourhoods) in Milan. It is planned to offer 50 apartments with affordable rents to young couples, migrant families, students, workers and researchers with temporary housing needs that cannot cope with free market prices. The project aims also to offer better living conditions to those who already live there, and that constitutes “the historical memory” of this place. The logic is the same as that of *Via Cenni*, building and implementing an economically sustainable model of social housing experimenting new public-private governance and developing good housing quality. The historical building is being renewed, fifty apartments (different sizes) will be made, as well as collective spaces for “integrative services for living”, two commercial spaces (for shops) and an office on the ground floor. Work started in December 2011 and will be finished by March 2014¹⁵.

Figino Borgo Sostenibile

This project has the aim of valorising the social dimension of a borgo that still characterises the neighbourhood and support informal positive social relations. The programme consists of the building of 320 apartments to target young couples, families with many children, professionals that work from home and families that are available to host disabled people; and commercial spaces and spaces devoted to integrative services to residents.

Abit@giovani

Abit@giovani (www.abitagiovani.it) is a “diffused social housing project”. It is a new project developed by FHS with ALER Milan, the public housing agency of the city, and with the Milan municipality. Its aim is to recuperate and valorise single dwellings belonging to the public housing stock that, for many and different reasons, are not used or are empty. It stems from an original idea of Don Gino Rigoldi, a well-known priest who works in the city in many welfare services. The objective of the project is to identify 1,000 dwellings in the city. The first 250 have been already identified by the partners. They will be renewed and devoted to young people who will pay an affordable rent in which is embedded (if they wish) a buying component (in a rent-to-buy scheme). Residents will be allowed to buy these apartments at the end of the 8-year period. Single adults must be a maximum 35 years old, couples must have a combined age of less than 70 years. In the first part of 2013 a first call has been launched for the first apartments and more than 500 persons/couples have responded to it, in some way sharing the philosophy of the project that asks, here again, the availability to share time and common spaces and services to future residents.

¹⁵ The site of the project is: www.maisondumonde36.it

Conclusions

The cases of innovations presented here cover three areas of policy: income support and professional reintegration; early child care and education; and housing. A few elements emerge as relevant in all cases considered.

A first major issue at stake appears to be the amount of available resources as opposed to increasing and changing needs, a trade-off that the economic crisis and consequent austerity plans have sharpened. Social innovation also stems from the need to use scant resources differently, and/or not to abdicate to reflection around welfare issues because of the lack of resources. In the FWA case (section 2.1) an innovative feature has been the aim to implement a circular use of available capital. In the M12 case (section 2.2), on one side one observes the successful attempt of the municipal administration to unblock the use of available funds frozen by the rules of the stability pact, and to also put to good use meagre residual funds, to implement small-scale projects. On the other hand, it has aimed at initiatives that were low-cost from the economic point of view, but that promoted participation and public debate in view of a rethinking of the approach to, and a reorganisation of, the services' system.

A second element is in fact about participation and empowerment. In the FWA micro-credit project this is a major element, in that recipients are helped to overcome a transitory difficult moment mobilising also their own resources and being responsible of their personal project. In M12 the empowerment element is understood as inherent in the wide involvement of citizenship in the participative path that aims to give voice not only to the expression of needs, but also of proposals and resources.

A third element refers to inter-institutional and spatial relations. The difficulties of the Italian incomplete federal reform are evident in the conflicts among local, intermediate and central levels on the release of resources, on the definition of priorities, on the distribution of competences. The announced but never-accomplished reform of metropolitan areas leaves also the services and projects analysed here in an institutional limbo that reduces the potential synergies and scale effects in the use of (always scant) resources.

The experience of *Fondazione Housing Sociale* (section 2.3) and its pioneer ethical fund for social housing is a very innovative case in the Italian panorama. As explained, the creation of a special agency to develop social housing projects, detached from the bank foundation (*Fondazione Cariplo*) enabled the pluralisation of activities and a call for the participation and funding of strong institutional/financial stakeholders and put the issue/problem of lack of affordable and good accommodation on the local scene. The most positive aspects of this experience (that needs to be developed further for definitive conclusions in terms of sustainability) was the alignment of FHS policies to public ones, the enactment of public-private partnerships and resource pooling, the development of new models of social housing oriented to high building standards and to focused social mix criteria (which is possible because of the derogation of public dwellings allocation criteria) and, above all, the scaling up of the first ethical fund, which now is much wider and richer and the inspiration given to other contexts and groups of stakeholders around Italy.

The case of FHS has to be read considering that it is backed by a very big and rich institution. *Fondazione Cariplo* is the second biggest foundation in economic terms in the world, following the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. All the critical events of FHS could count on the resources of *Cariplo*, both financial as well as more intangible ones. Moreover, FHS could use some of the last empty plots to develop its projects, thanks to conventions with the Municipality of Milan. Social housing initiatives need in general a complex montage and the participation of different stakeholders to be attractive and compatible for private and public aims at the same time. Some observers state that FHS and the FIL are using their resources very slowly and that they are not risking enough to produce affordable dwellings, that they are using (as other operators) public resources (mostly public land) to produce too small proportions of housing to rent. Some critiques are more profound in the sense that they accuse subjects like FHS of draining scarce public resources from the most needy and deprived in the housing market. In a context of scarcity of resources for this policy sector, it is very difficult to cope with differentiated needs.

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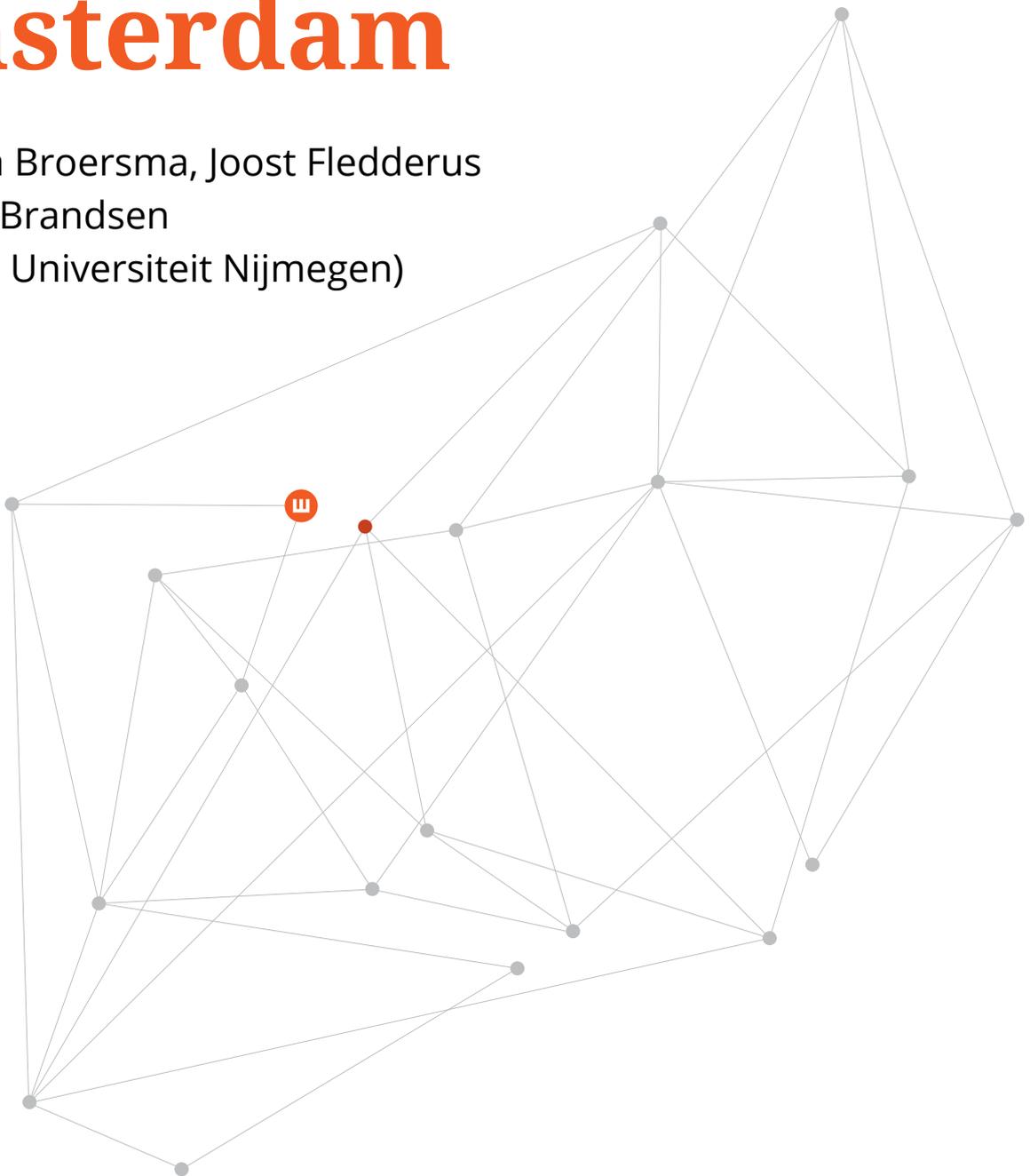
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The Netherlands

Amsterdam

Francesca Broersma, Joost Fledderus
and Taco Brandsen
(Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)



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Amsterdam

Authors

Francesca Broersma, Joost Fledderus and Taco Brandsen,
(Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Activation
Citizen initiatives
Diffusion
Housing corporation
Local governments
Local welfare
Participation
Social enterprise
Sustainability

In the Netherlands, it is often said how Amsterdam is “arrogant” and always wants to do things in its own way, and indeed, it is a city that is keen on having its own particularities. Internationally renowned as an open-minded, tolerant and progressive capital, Amsterdam also strives to uphold this image of being an “avangardist” city that tries to remain ahead of times, both in an international context and in the Dutch context. Despite its particular history, mentality and structure, there are broader (national/European) trends to which Amsterdam is not immune, as well as national policies and regulations with which Amsterdam too has to comply. All of this has repercussions for what are considered “social innovations” in Amsterdam and the way in which these develop at the local level.

One characteristic of the city of Amsterdam is that the Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*, or PvdA) has been the largest party in the municipal council since the end of the second world war, and the mayor of Amsterdam has been a member of the PvdA ever since. As several interviewees of WP4 also underlined, it is the PvdA that has long been calling the shots in Amsterdam and, accordingly, the value of equality has long played a critical role within municipal politics in the sense that “everyone should be treated equally”. Although the Liberal Party has been part of the municipal coalition since the 1990s, the idea that equality is a basic societal foundation remains a deep-rooted belief that has a significant influence on the political choices that are made in the city of Amsterdam. Municipal integration policies based on the concepts of “diversity” and “citizenship” also stress the fact that, regardless of one’s socio-economic status or cultural background, everyone is, above all, an “Amsterdammer”.

Another important feature of Amsterdam is that it is divided in city districts (*stadsdelen*). The first city districts were established at the beginning of the 1980s. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s more city districts were created, and others were fused together again, until, by 2002, there were fourteen city districts, all of which had their own council and aldermen. In 2010, however, the number of city districts was reduced from fourteen to seven, and currently there is a discussion about the elimination of city districts all together – not in terms of the territorial boundaries that they represent, nor of the tasks that they are responsible for, but in terms of having separate councils, aldermen and budgets. Amsterdam and city districts have thus been going through a whole series of reorganisations, which, every time, cause a sense of ambiguity for the administration and insecurity among its civil servants. Yet the number of civil servants in Amsterdam is proportionately still higher than in any other large municipality in the Netherlands: a study that was carried out in 2012 (Berenschot, 2012) claimed there were nineteen civil servants per 1,000 inhabitants in Amsterdam, while other large municipalities had an average of eleven civil servants per 1,000 inhabitants (the cost of which was estimated to be 7,900 euros per inhabitant in Amsterdam, against 6,400 euros in Rotterdam, and 4,400 euros in Utrecht and The Hague).

In functional terms, city districts hold a position that is very similar to that of any other municipality, and, especially, they carry similar responsibilities regarding the provision of local welfare services/facilities. Hence, depending on the coalitions within the district councils, city districts can also set their own priorities and give their own twist to the way in which certain welfare provisions are provided. On the one hand, the formation of fairly autonomous districts within a larger municipality enables these districts to provide more “personalised” services by focusing on the provision of specific services that are deemed necessary in a particular area. On the other hand, this means that in every district there are different services, different ways of organising these services and different welfare organisations providing these services. To this day, there is a particularly large number of actors involved in the provision of welfare services and the organisation of welfare within Amsterdam is rather compartmentalised.

A national policy that clearly marked the way in which Amsterdam implements welfare policies at the local level is the “Neighbourhood Development Programme” (*wijkaanpak*) that was launched in 2007, following which a selection of disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Amsterdam was classified as a so-called “attention area” (*aandachtswijk* or *krachtwijk*). Major regeneration projects have been carried out in these neighbourhoods ever since. The approach of the *wijkaanpak* is an integrated, more holistic approach towards neighbourhood regeneration: besides improving the physical environment, the *wijkaanpak* aims to enhance the broader “liveability” (*leefbaarheid*) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, *i.e.* to improve the social and economic environment too. Municipalities were granted additional governmental funds for the implementation of the Neighbourhood Development Programme, although housing corporations are largely responsible, both financially and logistically, for the completion of the programme. At the same time, in the *wijkaanpak*, citizen participation is key. Moreover, it encourages actors at the local level to engage in new partnerships with other actors that are operating within the same neighbourhoods. Finally, as the programme manager of the *wijkaanpak* at the municipal Service for Societal Development (*Dienst Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling*, or DMO) also underlined, the *wijkaanpak* is meant to be a learning experience, open to experimentation, that promotes

a change of culture, but that always stays focused on obtaining concrete results.

Another national trend that has affected the way in which welfare is implemented at the local level is the continuing decentralisation of welfare (and in particular care) policies from the central government to the municipalities. Next to the complete decentralisation of youth care services, more and more caregiving services that used to be part of the “General Act on Special Healthcare Costs” (*Algemene Wet Bijzondere Ziektekosten*, or AWBZ), and thus a (financial) responsibility of the central government, have been included in the Law of Societal Development (*Wet Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling*, or WMO) and are now the responsibility of municipalities. Although the central government supports local governments with these transitions, in times of crisis and increasing budget restraints, this basically means that municipalities have to do more with less. Furthermore, the WMO – a law that concerns the provision of services for citizens in difficult conditions, such as, for example, the elderly, people with a handicap or psychological problems, but also people with financial problems – stipulates that citizens should have an independent life and participate in society as much as possible. To achieve this purpose, municipalities are free to set their priorities wherever they feel there is a more stringent need for support. So far, generally, the municipality of Amsterdam has been responsible for the individual provisions that were part of the WMO and the city districts have been responsible for the collective provisions. Recently, in response to the decentralisation processes that are supposed to be completed by 2015, the municipality introduced a “new vision” of the WMO: the so-called “New Style of Welfare” (*Welzijn Nieuwe Stijl*). This vision is based on more self-responsibility and self-reliance - it expects the people of Amsterdam to look more for possible solutions to their problems within their own networks. Hence, the focus is now on collective provisions and informal support mechanisms – which are “happening” at the level of “the neighbourhood”.

In summary, due to the particular structure and history of the city of Amsterdam, it has an extensive and intricate network of separate and rather compartmentalised actors involved in the provision of local welfare services. Every district has its own (welfare) programme and organisations, and, due to the availability of sufficient funding/subsidies, all of

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Authors

Francesca Broersma, Joost Fledderus and Taco Brandsen,
(Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)

these actors have long had the possibility of working fairly independently from one another. Recently, the *wijkaanpak* and the ongoing budget cuts have encouraged all of the various actors to join forces and tackle societal problems in a more coordinated and more efficient manner. At the same time, financial “pressure” has also “made way” for the introduction of more targeted, and thus diversifying, policies. Hence, the organisations involved in the provision of welfare services in Amsterdam are increasingly “forced” to reconsider not only their (traditional) organisational culture, but also their entire approach.

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Buurtbeheerbedrijven - Neighbourhood management companies

36.1. Short description

Neighbourhood management companies (*buurtbeheerbedrijven*, or “NMCs”) in Amsterdam were an initiative of the housing corporation Ymere. In 2007, as part of the larger national Community Development Programme (“*wijk-aanpak*”), it was decided that in a selection of so-called “problem areas” – or “*aandachtswijken*” - large-scale urban renewal projects were to be carried out: in these neighbourhoods, a significant part of the social housing stock was to be demolished and rebuilt or renovated and sold on the private market. At that time, it was expected that it would take 10 years to complete this transformation. Ymere, which owns a large (if not the largest) share of the properties in some of these “problem areas” in Amsterdam, feared that during the renovation period these neighbourhoods would deteriorate even further. Hence, Ymere decided to set up an easily accessible service point in those neighbourhoods, where tenants/residents could go to if they had any questions or problems. These service points – which then came to be referred to as NMCs – were going to perform additional maintenance tasks, on top of the regular maintenance services that were already provided by the municipality or housing corporations in those neighbourhoods, to keep them “clean, intact and safe” and to ensure that the “livability” (*leefbaarheid*) would not degenerate in these neighbourhoods during their renewal. At the same time, NMCs would address (youth) unemployment in the neighbourhoods, as they would be set up as learning/reintegration companies for residents with a distance from the labour market. The first NMC in Amsterdam opened its doors in 2009 and by now there are five of them in different parts of the city (Oost, Osdorp, Noord, Slotervaart and Landlust).

Four years ago I got a call from a director (of one of the division of Ymere in Amsterdam), and he said to me “I want something in the neighbourhood, we are doing major renovations, and I saw in...” Where had he seen it? Arnhem I think. There they had these NMCs since longer already. “That’s what I want, I want something like that too”. That’s usually how things work with a director. I said: “That’s great Jan.” [...] And that’s how the whole idea of NMCs started. It was not entirely new, because it already existed in Arnhem, and in Deventer too they had been working with them

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before. [...] And well, then it became such a success... One director had said he wanted one of those NMCs, and then very quickly four other directors said: "we also want an NMC"

(Project leader, Ymere)

The basic framework of all the NMCs is the same: they all provide maintenance services in areas that are going through urban renewal, in order to keep them "clean, intact, safe" and "livable", and they all provide learning/reintegration places for persons with a certain distance from the labour market. Generally (although there are exceptions to this as, at this stage, some NMCs are more "advanced" than others), a NMC comprises four disciplines: 1) a technical team (*klussenteam*) – which carries out technical repairs inside the dwellings (owned by Ymere) in a particular neighbourhood; 2) a neighbourhood team (*wijkploeg*) – which helps keep the public spaces in that neighbourhood "clean, intact and safe"; 3) caretakers (*huismeesters*) – who handle social and physical problems in the neighbourhood; and 4) a receptionist (*baliemedewerker*) – who residents of that neighbourhood turn to for information/filing complaints. All four of these disciplines are (or could be) linked to learning/reintegration programmes for people with a distance from the labour market.

36.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

City districts, housing corporations, residents and the unemployed are all users of the NMCs in one way or another. We here focus the on the WILCO target group, i.e. the unemployed.

Initially, the idea was that people would stream in, and then, to activate the people they would first participate in one of those neighbourhood teams, and then if they work well then they can move on to the technical team. And then they can learn a real profession. And then they can get a regular job with us (Ymere). But then it turned out that those people who join a neighbourhood team, well... to put it bluntly, you cannot turn every nickel into a dime. [...] So then we thought: hey, maybe the technical teams – which require more skills, and where you go into people's homes, so you have to have more social skills too – let's focus those on young people

(Project leader, Ymere)

Today, the technical team in an NMC is composed of a professional – a mentor – and two young apprentices that are following an "all-round service staff" training programme that has been set up by Ymere itself in collaboration with a vocational school. During the apprenticeship the youngsters are paid the minimum wage plus 10 per cent. If they do well during their apprenticeship and if they complete the educational programme, the chances are fairly high that Ymere will hire them on a regular contract, since Ymere – much like many other housing corporations – is often looking to hire more "all-round service staff".

And those (apprentices) are boys that, well, also have a distance to the labour market, but more in terms of schooling – that dropped out of school. Or that had some problems with the police maybe, and they risk going the wrong way. [...] With the apprentices too, it's difficult. They also get more chances here than in a normal company. And they need that, because, well... you cannot treat them normally. [...] And it's not the target group for that. We all know that... that we need to be more tolerant with them. So that's what we do. And it works, at least with the technical team it works

(Project leader, NM)

Instead, the neighbourhood teams are composed of a professional – a front man – and between six and ten persons who are receiving social assistance benefits and whom the Municipal Work and Income Service (DWI) is trying to "reactivate". Neighbourhood teams are not focused on youngsters and participants can be of any age, but they often happen to be in their thirties and forties. The persons that are sent by the DWI to neighbourhood teams in NMCs have a relatively short distance from the labour market too (step 3 on the activation ladder), but while the "users" of the technical team are actually prepared to carry out a profession and often stream into regular employment, the "users" of the neighbourhood teams are prepared to first "get back into the rhythm". In this case, rather:

It's social activation you know. If you have been inactive for a long time, then you cannot even imagine that work can also be fun. So it is nice to see, that people, because they are sometimes semi-forced to do something, that they then say: "hey, I have colleagues!" – social contacts. "And I have a purpose to come out of my bed again". And they discover: "hey, this is actually ok". And: "I like this"... There were also people that said

at some point: "I want to do a horticulturalist course because I want to do something with gardening"... But that's really per person. Some people think it's ok as it is, they just want to hang around

(Project leader, Ymere)

Learning/reintegration programmes that are associated to the various disciplines of the NMCs are thus intended to stimulate people with a (relatively short) distance from the labour market. By working in a NMC, people have the opportunity to refresh basic skills - such as being on time, working in a team, etc. - but also to develop specialised skills and acquire new experiences so as to improve their chances on the labour market.

It's difficult, because they are people that have gone off track for a reason. And that do not work anymore. And have problems... So you have to take your time for this, to make the switch again, and tell them: "work is important, for you, but also for the people around you". And that's how we proceed, slowly slowly. [...] It's maybe crude to say, but in the end these people are usually dumped somewhere and they are just told: "do your thing". [...] And it is because we have a different concept here, that we are able to assist them better. Which is why they stay so long also. [...] It's important that we make it a broader experience (than simply collecting litter from the street), that one thinks: "Hey, do I like this? Do I want to continue with this?" And because we have so many different things to do, they usually like it. Not everything of course, but still they say: "yes, I actually do kind of like it here"

(Project leader, NMC)

36.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Ymere provides most of the funding for all the NMCs, but one of the conditions that was set by Ymere for the establishment of any NMC was that the respective city district be a partner in this kind of venture. Subsequently, arrangements have also been made between all the NMCs and their city districts - the city district gives a certain financial contribution to the NMC so that, in return, it can make use of the neighbourhood team for a certain number of hours. In this way, the city district is basically "hiring" the neighbourhood team to do part of the (simple) maintenance tasks in public spaces (e.g. fixing pavements,

collecting rubbish, looking after green areas, etc.). This kind of "exchange" with the city district occurs in all NMCs. However, as the NMCs also look for extra (income-generating) maintenance jobs, they may seal contracts with different types of clients too - depending on their location, in some NMCs the neighbourhood team is able to carry out more "commercial" jobs for private owners/companies than in others.

The housing corporation always supplies the leader/mentor of the technical teams. In contrast, the front men of the neighbourhood teams (and the receptionists, and the caretakers, and the project leaders of the NMCs, for that matter) are supplied by social enterprises that specialise in working with people who have a distance from the labour market. In some NMCs, however, depending also on how the relationship is/has been between the local division of Ymere and the city district, the relationship between the NMC and the city district is closer than in others. Subsequently, in the NMC in Osdorp, for instance, the city district supplies the front man of the neighbourhood team.

We've contracted partners that have experience in working with people with a distance to the labour market. And that is a different partner in every neighbourhood, just to make things more confusing. [...] Because we as Ymere are the initiators (of the NMC), but we don't have that much expertise ourselves to work with people who have a distance to the labour market. So what those partners do, they often deliver a project leader, who is there every day, and they take care of the people in those neighbourhood teams. And Ymere sends one of their employees - the guy who normally drives around in a van and comes to fix your tap - that one is now hired by the NMC

(Project leader, Ymere)

In all NMCs, the recruitment of persons that take part in the reintegration programmes linked to the neighbourhood teams goes via the DWI. The recruitment of youngsters that join the technical teams as apprentices, however, may happen through different partners. Although all youngsters that become apprentices in the technical teams are enrolled in an "all-round service staff" training programme, youngsters can be placed in such training programmes through various social enterprises. Depending on which social enterprise is operating in a particular neighbourhood, different NMCs may recruit suitable youngsters for

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the technical teams via different social enterprises. Similarly, the reintegration or work-experience programmes that are linked to the reception of the NMC and/or to its caretakers can be filled through different kinds of organisations that are trying to get people with a distance to the labour market back to work. The one criterion that is important for the selection of staff – or “users” – in all NMCs is that the learning/reintegration programmes be filled by people who live in the neighbourhood .

Overall, while all NMCs have the same targets and target groups, the way in which they are internally organised can be somewhat different from one NMC to another:

There is no format, of the practical things I mean. [...] It can be different everywhere. The goals are the same everywhere. And the set up, in terms of staff are similar too. But how you handle things, what tasks you do, that's different... Every neighbourhood is different, so every neighbourhood needs something different.

(Project leader, NMC)

36.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

We explicitly chose not to export them (NMCs) under Ymere's flag, because we also wanted other housing corporations that are operating in those neighbourhoods to join. But also because you are carrying out work for the city district, and if you really put your own stamp on it, then they will also tell you "it's your thing"

(Project leader, Ymere)

In fact, NMCs are constantly trying to get more and more actors involved that are providing some sort of (social) service within their neighbourhoods – be they from the municipality, other housing corporations, social enterprises, welfare organisations or even citizens. However, as yet, NMCs do not try to actually “take over” the functions of these other actors. In this respect, there have perhaps not been any radical changes to the local welfare systems as a result of the establishment of NMCs.

This is Amsterdam. In Arnhem they are much further. Because what we do in Amsterdam are merely additional tasks in the neighbourhood, on top of the regular maintenance (by the municipality). While in Arnhem they said "we are going to do all of the

maintenance of public spaces at the NMC". So there they actually drive around with the sweeping-car, and they collect the rubbish. That's the fear that people here have, that that is going to happen here too. [...] Here you see there is not enough political support for that. And in Arnhem everything is on a smaller scale, you have one municipality. Here in Amsterdam you have a lot more city districts, all with their own political alliances. [...] I also think it has to do with culture, in Amsterdam. The people from Amsterdam are of course extremely pig-headed. It's not an easy people to work with. [...] It's difficult to go up against the established order

(Project leader, Ymere)

As for the services provided by NMCs, these are perhaps not exactly “innovative” services: technical repairmen, “clean, intact and safe” services, and caretakers were already operating in these neighbourhoods long before NMCs were ever created. Likewise, there were already many other organisations/companies offering learning/reintegration places to (young) unemployed persons. As a matter of fact, the whole idea of NMC is perhaps not that “innovative” if we consider that similar companies already existed in other cities of the Netherlands. However, for Amsterdam, the innovative aspect of the NMCs is the way in which they bring different types of services together under one name, in one location, in the neighbourhood, and only for residents of that neighbourhood. In practice, trying to improve the living conditions in certain neighbourhoods while also trying to (re)activate the residents with a distance to the labour market in those neighbourhoods required innovative forms of collaboration between many different actors, including housing corporations, city districts, educational facilities, social enterprises and citizens. In this respect, NMCs have certainly “altered the relationships between actors and organisations in local welfare”.

36.5. Development and dynamics

Since the first NMC started in Amsterdam, the concept has been in constant evolution; in practice, the organisation of NMCs is a continuous learning process. Initially, for instance, the collaboration with city districts was somewhat difficult. NMCs had to find a way not to be perceived as “competitors” by other maintenance service providers that were already

carrying out maintenance tasks in the neighbourhood before the NMC appeared.

Often you see that at the management level (in the municipality) the idea (of NCMs) is very much supported, social entrepreneurship is of course a “hot” topic right now, but that at the implementation level, especially in the beginning, it encounters a lot of opposition...then the people from the municipality that normally do the maintenance, of neighbourhoods and streets, they see it as taking the bread out of their mouths. [...] We’ve had it that people would come, you know, one of those excursion of managers, and that the day before, they would throw rubbish on the streets on purpose. [...] I cannot prove it of course, but I am 99 per cent sure that it is people from the municipal cleaning services that did that. [...] They feel threatened. [...] They’re scared that if it becomes successful, that they are going to lose their jobs. [...] And also internally (at Ymere) I’ve encountered a lot of opposition. [...] Everything that is new or experimental encounters opposition in large bureaucratic organisations.

(Project leader, Ymere)

With time, however, actors operating in the neighbourhood understand what an NMC does, and how it is actually meant to assist them in performing their own tasks better. For instance, the cooperation between NMC and housing corporations other than Ymere has gradually strengthened – although here too there is still room for improvement.

Ideally we would have one location where everything is together, all the caretakers (from different housing corporations in the neighbourhood), that we all sit together, and can brainstorm, and work together much faster. But that is not really working in practice, because everybody wants his own image... and that’s a bit difficult. Also in terms of funding. Now for instance, Eigen Haard (another housing corporation) has a very small percentage of houses in this neighbourhood, their caretaker [...] holds consultation hours here (in the NMC) twice a week. And she pays for that, a small amount, so she can have a kind of “flash-office” here. And that works. But ideally we would all be sitting here together. Maybe that is something for the future.

(Project leader, NMC)

Yet the future of NMCs is still uncertain. Originally, the idea was that they would stay in the neighbourhoods as long as there were works in progress – the mo-

ment the renovation is completed, it should no longer be necessary to perform additional maintenance tasks. Moreover, at the moment, city districts are dealing with significant cutbacks. Because the NMCs seem to be so successful, however, they are currently thinking about how they could continue in case the city districts were to withdraw their funding:

There is money now. When we need something, there are reserves. At the city district, at Ymere, and everywhere really. That’s why this is possible. Because of course it costs money. [...] At the moment we do not have to make any profit...at some point, we might have to become independent. But that’s an entirely different perspective. [...] Ymere is very much of the kind to want to set up a project with residents, assist them in getting it running, and that then the residents themselves take over at some point. [...] But this... you cannot just change this. Then you get something completely different. I used to work for another company, at a facility-point. That’s an option. But then... if all the houses here become owner-occupied and you keep this (NMC) here, then you will start doing maintenance for the homeowners. That’s a completely different market. There you can ask money. [...] But then you are really commercial.

(Project leader, NMC)

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*Buurtwinkels voor Onderzoek,
Onderwijs en Talentontwikkeling,
BOOT - Neighbourhood Stores for
Education, Research and Talent
Development*

37.1. Short description

Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development (Buurtwinkels voor Onderzoek, Onderwijs en Talentontwikkeling, or BOOT) are an initiative of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool van Amsterdam, or HvA). The Community Development Programme (“wijkaanpak”), which started in 2007, raised the question about how the HvA – the largest institute for higher professional education in Amsterdam – could connect the knowledge and the competences of its students, teachers, researchers and network to the “problem areas” (“aandachtswijken”) in Amsterdam, in such a way as to contribute to the socio-economic development of these neighbourhoods. At the core of the wijkaanpak lies an intensified collaboration between governmental, for-profit and non-profit organisations. Meanwhile, the University of Applied Sciences aspired to be the university of Amsterdam, for Amsterdam. After discussion with the municipal Service for Societal Development (Dienst Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling, or DMO), the HvA came up with the BOOT concept, where students, under supervision of teachers and professionals, would provide certain services and activities for the residents in “problem areas”. In this manner, students would have the opportunity to develop practical skills and to apply the knowledge they acquired at the university, and they would do so in a way that would also benefit the residents in the neighbourhoods, either directly by offering services/assistance to them, or indirectly by offering services/ assistance to partnering (welfare) organisations.

The first BOOT was opened in 2008,

and we did that together with housing corporations. They gave us a premise so that we could really be in those neighbourhoods with the students. Because we also could have chosen to do it from here, out-reaching projects, from the University itself. But we deliberately chose to let those students actually live in those neighbourhoods as much as possible. [...] And the programme that they offer, that is decided by the residents themselves, and by the organisations that are in that neighbourhood. That can be the library, the ABN-AMRO, banks, medium-small businesses, but especially social organisations, like social councillors (sociaal raadslieden), social work (maatschappelijk werk), business one-stop shops (ondernemersloket). So it's not only focused on social work, but also on urban development [...] and on starting companies, on the guidance of medium-small businesses. So the range of services that we offer in BOOTs is very diverse. [...] But they have to be concrete services that benefit the residents themselves. Or the organisations in that neighbourhood that work with residents - that it works indirectly like that. That's actually the most important criterion that we have.

(Manager, BOOT)

By now there are four BOOTs in four different districts (West, Oost, Zuid-Oost and Nieuw-West) and a headquarters that is located within the university in the centre of the city. Various programmes of different domains of the university give their students the opportunity to do an internship for a minimum of 5 months and a maximum of 10 months, 4–5 days a week, at one of the BOOTs. These domains include, for instance, the Domain of Economics and Management (Domein Economie en Management, or DEM), the Domain of Technique (Domein Techniek), and the Domain of Society and Law (Domein Maatschappij en Recht, or DMR). Accordingly, various services are offered at BOOTs. The “standard” set of services that are provided in all the BOOTs comprises financial, legal and social consultation hours (and in most cases also a nutritional consultation hour), homework support for 6–10-year-olds, and an atelier for urban renewal. In addition, depending on the needs of the neighbourhood/residents/organisations, the BOOTs may also engage in different activities.

37.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

In reality, there are different kinds of “users” of the BOOTs. From the perspective of the university, the main users are the students – BOOTs are set up and supported by the HvA so that their students can gain practical experience and so that their teachers are more in contact with their work field. Ultimately, for the university, what matters the most is that through the BOOTs, they are able to educate better social workers for the future. At the same time, the students at BOOTs are also “used” by city districts and local (welfare) organisations to conduct research projects and/or to help them in their provision of services. Last, but certainly not least, BOOTs are meant to provide services to residents – in terms of knowledge/advice as well as activities/hands-on manpower. The fact that there are different kinds of users is perhaps one of the most appealing aspects of the BOOTs, but, as the following quotes indicate, it is also what makes it particularly challenging, since it is not always easy to combine different interests:

You are there with students, your purpose is to bring in assignments for students in higher education. And the neighbourhood and the partners quickly tend to see students as “welcome hands”. On that very practical level. And every time you have to explain that you are looking for assignments that are of a certain level for the students. And that those hands are also there - because I understand that the neighbourhood also wants to see those hands - but it's not volunteering that those students are doing. They do it all within the framework of their studies. There are points/credits involved. And it is difficult to always find a balance in that.

(Coordinator, BOOT)

See, students have to be guided by people who can give knowledge. Residents definitely have a lot of knowledge too, but they don't always have that academic character that is necessary for an assignment for the university. Thus, you have to find an organisation that fits with that, that is coupled to that. So you really want to introduce students into the world of residents' initiatives, and you want them to support that, but there has to be a professional framework on top of it for the student in order to guarantee the quality of the assignment. And that is a bit difficult sometimes.

(Coordinator, BOOT)

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For the WILCO target group – i.e. the residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods to which students in the BOOTs are offering their services so as to improve their living conditions – BOOTs appear to be an easily accessible point of information and assistance. While some residents, for one reason or another, may be more hesitant to approach “formal” services that are provided by more traditional (municipal) welfare organisations, they seem to be less hesitant to approach the (students in the) BOOTs for help. Moreover, residents who resort to BOOTs value the fact that students take their time to figure things out for them and that they try to offer more personalised assistance than that offered in other existing welfare organisations/associations.

As one of the users mentioned:

I noticed they try to make an extra effort on offering you information, but also on gathering information for themselves. You know, because it is different the approach when you work as a professional and it's different when you work as an apprentice. [...] The mind setting. Your mind is different. Because in one you feel: "Oh, I've done this. I've been through this. Oh, I've been through much worse scenarios than these". And when you are learning you try to avoid trouble, so you try to learn it properly so you won't advise wrongly in the future. [...] Because I think the previous time - when I was asking for advice on this kind of things - was with the Juridische Loket (another organisation that provides legal advice for free). [...] And it's the approach that you have to them, it's like...I went only to the centre of Amsterdam, and the way that they are covered in a cage, that gives you another approach. They don't offer you any coffee, you just pick a number...

In fact, that on average 350 to 500 residents visit the various BOOT locations every week clearly indicates that residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods appreciate the existence of a BOOT in their vicinity.

What I find most surprising is how many residents still make use of the services. Because in the beginning something may be interesting, or a hype, or that you want something different than social councillors that are in the office of the city district because you have a certain relationship, a certain history with them. But that now, 5 years later, there are still people coming to BOOT West to have their tax form filled in by students there - I never expected so many people

to systematically come back every week. New people, the same people, we also have ninety children in every BOOT that come back every week. Some children have been coming for 4 years now, and for 2.5 hours per week they get help with reading, writing, and they get courses about eating healthy, about bullying, about professions... You don't know this on forehand. At the time I did think: students will learn something either way. Even if you put them in front of a window in one of those neighbourhoods, next to a mosque, a Turkish coffeehouse, in front of a square that is being renovated...well, they've learnt more in half a year of looking out the window than they probably would have learnt at school. But that residents also would see the added value of it - that was a very big surprise.

(Manager, BOOT)

On the whole, so far, BOOTs are focusing more on “simply helping” the residents than on “actually empowering” them by teaching them new skills. The most “empowering” approach that is applied in the BOOTs is perhaps the homework assistance that they provide to young children, as this will, in the long run, enable these children to perform better in school and thereby also later on in life. During the consultation hours though, residents are mainly perceived as “clients” that come with specific questions that need to be answered, by the students. However, BOOTs too realise that the “new style of welfare provision” tries to encourage people to come up with solutions themselves and/or in their own networks. Although (students working in) BOOTs do attempt to stress this idea of “self-reliance”, it is something that is not always very easy to accomplish in practice.

Students of social work and service provision also learn during their studies about the “new style of welfare” and self-reliance and all that, and it's all woven into the consultation hours. And we'll be training them for that more and more throughout the year so they pay extra attention to it – that they look at the background of a person and what kind of network there is around them. How is that network and can people make use of that? But it's not always that easy. Or it is not easy to organise. With some people yes, but there are also a lot of exceptions.

(Coordinator, BOOT)

We now also have consultation hours that are based more on giving people a fish than on teaching people

how to fish. So people come with their forms, and we try to explain them to them, but in the end they are filled in with someone else. Then that person leaves and thinks "oh that was nice". Next letter they get, well, that letter also comes to us. So we are looking for other ways of providing services, to be innovative in that too, in order to break that "revolving door" effect. Primarily by providing information, by giving courses... Migrants for instance often have their own network – migrant organisations. If we train people there who are in charge or who have a good relationship with a certain group of people, then they can explain how to fill in a tax form. So then you are building more of a kind of circulation of knowledge, rather than just having students do the work. Which can sometimes be like mopping with an open tap. [...] It's not like everybody has to do everything themselves always, but as much as they can yes. Not just because it is cheaper, but also because people really like to understand things themselves. In the end it is just nice - people gain a lot confidence when they start to understand the letters themselves.

(Manager, BOOT)

37.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The way in which the BOOTs are internally organised is mainly decided by the HvA. The HvA delivers most of the staff for the BOOTs (be they students, teachers or mentors), it supplies the bulk of the funding (most of the participating "domains" at the university contribute a certain amount of money to be able to pay for the staff and the necessary equipment), and its academic schedule decides the timeframe of the activities that are carried out in the BOOTs.

City districts gave us the Neighbourhood Implementation Plans (Buurtuitvoeringsplannen) – the BUPs – and those are actually the plans that were made when they got the extra money from Minister Vogelaar (for the "wijkaanpak"). And with their regular occupancy they did not really have the means to implement those plans. So that's what we mainly started working with. So we got input concerning content. But the concept itself, and the organisation, and moving students and teachers from the University to there, that has been a very internal process within the HvA.

(Manager, BOOT)

However, in most cases housing corporations provide the location, and the city districts pay the fixed costs such as gas, electricity, water and Internet. In some cases BOOTs have set up a so-called "neighbourhood partner agreement" (*wijkpartnerovereenkomst*), which is an agreement between the BOOT and partnering organisations, in which BOOT promises to provide certain services in return for a location/compensation of the fixed costs. In other cases it is the city district itself that asked for a BOOT to be set up, and thus also provides a location for them. By now all BOOTs have a "standard" set of services that they provide, but they also carry out additional services/activities depending on the specific needs and desires of residents and organisations in the neighbourhood: "It's a bit like a menu, where you can choose: I want a BOOT with the standard set of services. But if you want BOOT to carry out extra projects on top of those, for which other people need to be hired, then that is also financed separately" (Manager, BOOT).

The modes of working, though - in terms of the services that a BOOT offers - are very much based on the needs of the neighbourhood in which a BOOT is located. In fact, BOOTs seek to fill the gaps in welfare provision that are left by other (municipal) welfare organisations that are already active in the neighbourhood – either by offering specific types of services, or by targeting specific groups of residents. To be able to fill this gap and to adjust the services that are offered by BOOTs to those that are provided by other organisations, close collaboration with existing (welfare) organisations in the neighbourhood is crucial.

The students actually offer extra services, in addition to the existing offer. We discuss it very well also so that they do not do the same thing just around the corner. That there are not more office windows than there already are, but that we look at things that "Vluchtelingenwerk" (an association for refugees) is dealing with, or what the "sociaal raadslieden" (social councillors) are dealing with, the "Formulierenbrigade" (a brigade that helps people understand/fill in forms)... And then, in consultation with those organisations we make a programme, so that they (i.e. the students) offer supplementary services. A lot of times the professionals come to BOOT to guide the students. That is the whole idea – that we do it together, with the residents and with the professionals of the neighbourhood.

(Manager, BOOT)

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We now have very steady collaborations with organisations, so by now half of the clients come through other organisations, because their waiting rooms are full, and we are a reliable partner. So we share their caseload. But the existing contacts, how we built those up during the first year - because then we had much less direct working relationships with other organisations - that just happened with trust that came via via.

(Manager, BOOT)

37.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

As BOOTs focus on providing welfare services that are not yet being offered (enough) in a particular neighbourhood, there is a strong interaction with the local welfare system in the different neighbourhoods in which they are located.

You try to collaborate a lot with existing organisations that already do a lot of work, to see: how can we work together, and especially, how can we support you in your work? If you were to start a BOOT and you provide a financial consultation hour, for instance, it could be that a welfare organisation thinks: "Hey, what are they doing here? [...] Are they our competitors?" So you try to look for that collaboration as much as possible. That you say: "No, we are doing something different than you, and we support you as much as we can by sending people to the right organisations". The clients that we help, those questions are actually very practical, material questions. And when the questions become deeper and more complex, then we want to redirect them to our partners in the neighbourhood. So the collaboration with existing initiatives - both of residents and of organisations - is very important.

(Coordinator, BOOT)

In fact, the most innovative aspect of BOOTs is the binding role that an educational facility like the HvA - as a "fresh" and more "neutral" actor in the field of welfare provision - plays between different (welfare) organisations that are operating within the same territorial boundaries, yet not necessarily cooperating much. When BOOTs first started, for many welfare organisations that were already in those neighbourhoods, this was a difficult transition to make, as they had been used to providing a particular service in a particular way and they were generally very much

focused towards the inside - on their own activities/organisation. BOOTs bring many of these different, so far disconnected, actors together, which not only provides a clearer overview of the facilities/services that are present in a certain neighbourhood and of those that are lacking, but it also stimulates all partnering organisations to have a more "outward look".

The most important is that we chose not to - even though we had those Neighbourhood Implementation Plans - fill in the Neighbourhood Store with "ok this is what we are going to do". [...] We invited a lot of organisations that, at first, didn't understand what... because it was all a little...when it's an offer you can't refuse, when it is too good to be true - that makes people uncomfortable. So when you ask community workers: "well, just tell us what you want us to do", and not just a little project, but structurally, long-term, fulltime students...well, they thought: "what is this?!". They were a bit afraid that we were stealing the bread out of their mouths, like they were going to become redundant. So you have to give it a lot of time to build up a trusting relationship. And, the most important - and in that you can educate other organisations a bit too - is that you put the residents at the centre of it all. Because it's actually a bit weird that you would see this as competition... You have been put there with money from the government to carry out services for the residents. So if you can do that better with someone else's help, it is a bit weird if you wouldn't want to do that. But well, that is something that with the Community Development Programme ("wijkaanpak") was... a cultural process also. Organisations were very much turned towards themselves, and well, they had to start working more result-driven. They were very busy with that internally, like "Oh, we have to start registering. Or registering more. Counting heads. And how many people do we have to talk to in one hour?"... While, the point of the "wijkaanpak" was that you would bring your forces together to solve societal problems. [...] And I think that we...because we were there, and we were independent - so we were not part of the municipality, or of housing corporations, or welfare organisations - we tried to get everybody to turn a bit more towards the outside. Yea, they were kind of forced to collaborate more. And, well, that's still going very well now actually

(Manager, BOOT)

37.5. Development and dynamics

BOOT tries to bring together all the various actors that are active within a neighbourhood and maintain a closely cooperating network of partners. Not only it takes time and effort to gain the trust of local (welfare) organisations but, as the following quote underlines, it is also a necessary to convince the HVA and the city districts to “think outside of the box”. In practice, a constant challenge for a BOOT, which seeks to reflect the dynamics of (fast-changing) neighbourhoods, is that its functionality requires a certain degree of flexibility.

Both the university and city districts are bureaucratic environments. And they are very much framed in what they do. So you have to try to lure them to step out of those frames. And with a bit of steering and willingness, persuade them that collaboration is always possible somewhere. [...] Sometimes I meet people who are too much into those frames and who only see impossibilities in terms of collaboration. And I try to challenge them during a conversation - with somebody from the city district or with a teacher. [...] And that sometimes requires quite a bit of creativity.

(Coordinator, BOOT)

Flexibility is required not only from all the partnering organisations, but it is also required within the BOOTs, as they are reliant on the funding of these partnering organisations. In fact, the entire BOOT concept is based on non-profit-making growth-model, which may be difficult to maintain in a future where all partners are facing budget cuts. Hence, BOOTs too are constantly looking for ways to innovate themselves, so they can still somehow offer their services in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The difficult thing is that there are so many different parties involved - which is our starting point, and we are very proud of that - but every party also has its own interest, a different agenda, and they typically think short-term. Not that they have a short-term vision, but they can only make plans for a year, because the availability of money is decided on a yearly basis. So that means that I am very dependent on that, and my team has to react to that very flexibly and dynamically. [...] I can't tell these people: “I am going to invest in you for the next 10 years, and this is going to be our growing model, and if you just do your jobs well, then it will all be fine”, because other people decide

over our destiny. But that is because we are there where there is a need for it. And if that need is no longer there, or if people are no longer able to invest in that, yea, then you should leave actually. [...] So that support is very important.

(Manager, BOOT)

At some point the city district is going to pull itself back more, simply because they are not getting any money for this anymore. And then you have to look at how you can, with certain projects, creatively... how you can keep this going, without costing more money, but that you still grow. In reality it is a very weird growing model, because the better we perform, the higher the cost because we have no income. So the more people come, the more it costs, rather than the more income you have, which is how it normally works. [...] So you have to look how you can create an exchange system with existing partners, so they can keep their costs low by using students. So that you do bring that innovative influence of students in that organisation, in that neighbourhood. So that, eventually, what we are doing now, that it can stay. It will change a bit. Now of course we have a very anonymous, neutral attitude. And if we are going to be linked more and more to other organisations you lose that a bit. But well, you also have to look how you can survive. And we are especially busy with looking how residents - because there is of course a lot of knowledge also with residents, and time, unfortunately these days also with people who are highly qualified, but that are unemployed - to look how they can guide the students for a part. And then all we need is a location. But that would be great, matching the trend that residents themselves are looking for themselves how to organise things.

(Manager, BOOT)

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Buurtmoeders Catering - Neighbourhood Mothers Catering

38.1. Short description

Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is an initiative of three girlfriends who live in Nieuw-West - one of the areas that the “wijkenpak” has defined as a so-called “attention area”.

Within the framework of the “wijkenpak” residents may apply for funding for so-called resident initiatives. And we saw that a lot of international women – of our international background – came together and somebody had the idea to apply for a cooking book. And they made that cooking book. In the neighbourhood, with all those residents - women that live there made their own recipes, with pictures and all. But that’s where the story ended. And we thought: see, that’s such a pity! There are a lot of subsidies that are invested into those kinds of things, but they don’t have a structural character. What you really want is that those women are trained...and that that idea of the cooking book is professionalised. And that those women structurally gain from their initiative. Within the neighbourhood. That was the beginning of it all. So we thought: well, why wouldn’t you ask those women that made the cooking book if they want to structurally offer their cooking activities – in the form of a catering service?

(Project initiators)

In fact, the start of the catering project is related to the initiators’ own experiences, as women of Turkish and Moroccan descent who have regular jobs themselves, and strongly support the idea that women should be financially independent so as to be able to develop themselves in whichever way they like to. The initiators saw, however, that, to this day, many women (in particular, but not only, women of Moroccan and Turkish descent) are still reliant on either their husband’s income or on social assistance benefits, and that existing re-integration and/or emancipation initiatives fail to successfully address this particular issue. They therefore thought of professionalising certain “basic” activities that these women do, and of establishing a kind of (cooperative) platform that women can join to make/raise their own income by doing that which they do best – in this case: cooking.

If you look at it anthropologically also, the generation before us at least, [...] they were taught how to cook ever since they were little children. And to care. So you could say that those women have been learning how to cook their whole lives. And to be good in what they do. Also concerning caring, towards your parents, your children, your husband. It’s part of your identity. Those are core competences. [...] Everybody has a talent, their own strength let’s say. Well, in

business you talk about competences then. Well, look at this! And what you see is that there is a mismatch in society, or at least in the municipality, that they do not approach those women on the basis of what they can do really well. [...] When they see a woman with a headscarf, then that's often perceived as "pitiful". And stupid. That's the first prejudice. And then they also talk to them as though they are deaf and dumb. They just can't look past that. It's not an accusation! But that's how it is – those are the facts. Often not knowing Dutch well, or wearing a headscarf, well, that means you're stupid, incompetent. While those women can do a lot.

(Project initiators)

The idea of Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is that mothers, or, more broadly, women in the neighbourhood, collectively form a catering service. Every mother/woman is specialised in certain dishes, but alone they would not be able to take on large orders. Together, they can. Neighbourhood Mothers Catering therefore seeks to coordinate women who would like to have a bit of an extra income and brings them together,

and those women can, from the beginning, work from home – their kitchen has to comply with certain conditions – but they can cook their best dish from home. And sell it. So then they are not being pitiful, they're not holding their hand up, but they are making a product that companies, individuals, governmental organisations, can buy, and order.

(Project initiators)

38.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The way in which Neighbourhood Mothers Catering addresses its "users" – in this case the mothers/women of the neighbourhood – is by focusing on the capacities that these women already possess, rather than on those that they are lacking. As the following quote also indicates, Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is clearly following a capacity-building approach:

It started from a kind of frustration also that women, or mothers – and then especially those with a lower education – that they are often approached on the basis of what they cannot do. They cannot speak Dutch well; they do not have any qualifications; etc. And you see that social initiatives, or organisations that play a

role in that, that they try to emancipate women and give them a role in society from that perspective. [...] While we think that financial independence can play a big role for the emancipation of mothers, of women, and for their role in this society. And so also for their integration. [...] In the end, every person has a talent. And those women too. So go and look at what they already can do, and try to help women develop themselves from that perspective.

(Project initiators)

The women that take part in Neighbourhood Mothers Catering are recruited mainly via via - through the personal networks of the initiators, or because somebody heard about the project and approached the initiators asking if they could join. Sometimes it takes a bit of convincing for women to participate, as many of those who are receiving social assistance benefits – one of the groups of women that Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is targeting - are afraid they may be penalised if they were to engage in (paid) catering activities.

The first question is often: "is something going to happen to my benefits? Are tax offices going to come after me? Or is DWI (the municipal Work and Income Service) going to get mad?" [...] They are terribly afraid. Because, especially when you are talking about people on benefits, [...] those people are financially less well off. So the risk for them is simply too big, whereby they are also very anxious and hesitant to act. Until we explain that "it does not necessarily have to affect your benefits". Which means that you are limited to... or rather, that you say: "you have the opportunity to go until..." - rather than talking about limitations - say that they have the opportunity to earn up until x amount of money extra. And that could just be that little bit of support and space that these women need to discover themselves in another way. To give them that bit of self-confidence. And perhaps that then they will take that step towards...even just a part-time job. That is also secretly the thought behind it all.

(Project initiators)

If women decide to participate, though, the kind of guidance that they receive depends on the personal circumstances of each and every one:

Guidance can be in any kind of form. [...] Take the simplest form, and that's a lady for whom doing the groceries is already a pretty big step. A person like that is guided in how to do her groceries. How should

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you conserve your receipts? What is important, and why is it important? How do you declare your costs? What are the costs that you made? [...] Then we look at the dish – delivering on time, the quality requirements... So it goes from those simple kind of things – the guidance – to how do you make an invoice? We have ladies that are self-employed, but that maybe do not know much about the administration yet. Or who find that a bit scary. Well, then you have to explain to them, or you organise a course on how to handle your administration. [...] And, in addition, we also consider the acquisition of clients, and getting in touch with clients – the matching – as a form of guidance. Because those women are often not able, or they are not part of circles from which they can get assignments. And we do. We can switch between their world, and the world in which we are. And we couple those two. We are able to couple those two worlds, and get assignments/orders out of them.

(Project initiators)

Indeed, there are different kinds of women who participate in the Neighbourhood Mothers Catering project. Some do it as a regular job; others see it more as a way of making a bit of extra money. By now there are three women who, with guidance (for instance, concerning food safety issues and/or administrative issues), have managed to become self-employed, and are thus acting as a kind of supplier/subcontractor of Neighbourhood Mothers Catering – meaning they also send in a job application for every order that they do. There are approximately ten women who receive social assistance benefits and when they participate in the completion of an order for Neighbourhood Mothers Catering receive an additional “compensation for volunteering” (*vrijwilligersvergoeding*). For these women:

...there is maximum, something that we always keep in mind, because you cannot ask those women to work every day because there is a certain maximum amount that you can give to people for volunteering. They cannot go over that, or they will get in trouble.

(Project Initiators)

And, last but not least, there is a group of women that is perhaps not receiving social assistance benefits and “that is not too ambitious, but that does like it to get a compensation for volunteering every now and then because all the small bits help. And so they also do a catering job every now and then” (Project initiators).

38.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

From the very beginning, the project initiators intended Neighbourhood Mothers Catering to be a cooperative that would fund itself – they were going to guide the professionalisation of the women’s cooking services, and the profits that the catering orders would generate would be used to pay the participating women. However, to get the project started, the initiators took part in a competition that enabled them to get a hold of 5,000 euros.

To start (in 2011), we - as the board of the Association of Neighbourhood Mothers in Amsterdam (Stichting Amsterdamse Buurtmoeders, or STAM) won a prize from the municipality of Amsterdam. That was within the framework of the Women-Monitor. Which showed that a lot of women, especially women with a Turkish and Moroccan background, were not working, that only 27 per cent was working. And that many young women, between 20 and 60 years old, didn’t work, and were not financially independent. So we then applied with the Neighbourhood Mothers concept, to win that prize. And we won the main prize of 5,000 euros. With those 5,000 euros we set up the association, the website, the material and well, basically paid for the initial costs.

(Project initiators)

When they won the prize, in fact, they were “simply” three single individuals - the association (STAM) did not exist yet. At that point, the initiators resorted to a friend of theirs, who happened to be a logistic consultant, to set up the association and get the project started. As the quote below indicates, setting up the association was a strenuous process, yet one that eventually turned out to be worthwhile:

We got this kind of lotto-feeling, you know, you get a card on which it says 5,000 euros, and then you think: ok, what now? Very nice and all, but how are we going to get that money? It says so on the card, but it’s not yet on a bank account. And then it turned out...because we had this idea of a cooperative, where those women would work together. You know, one is good in making desserts, the other can make a good soup, and another can make a good steak. Well, you don’t just want a steak. And you don’t just want a dessert. But if they do it with the three of them, than you can serve the client in its totality, and three women have

a job. Well, that's of course a great idea. But, how are we going to organise this? And then, one of the conditions of the subsidy giver – because it was of course just a hidden subsidy, they may call it a prize, but it's just a kind of subsidy – and you cannot give that to a company, it has to be an association. [...] So I took it on me to set up that association, to figure that out. So I set up the association, and well, there is so much hustle and bustle that comes with that, you cannot even imagine. So before you can even start doing something... But then we also saw chances: if you are going to set up an association, then don't just do it for catering. Let's then try to expand that whole concept of catering – because it all started with cooking, because those women can often cook really well – maybe you can expand that whole idea to other branches too, like child care, care...you could set up Neighbourhood Mothers Care. Or something like an atelier we thought, because maybe those women can repair clothing or sew really well too, you know, sowing curtains, or whatever. It was very much based on our own experiences too: I don't feel like sewing my curtains, you don't have the time for that if you are working full-time. And I don't even know how to. But those women do. So why would you not just buy each other's services? So that's how the whole idea grew. And that's how we realised that the burden of having to set up an association, that that was also an opportunity to make it even bigger. So then we thought: this whole thing of the association is actually a good thing. Because the association can approach the women, and help them. And then you can place them in different branches, where they can develop themselves. And then you can start those other projects through the association as well.

(Project leader)

At the moment, Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is still “a project” of the association STAM, which, in turn, is composed of the three initiators. The board of STAM does, however, due to the lack of time and knowledge on specific items, resort to professionals from time to time, whom they manage to pay out of the turnover of the catering service (the project leader being one example hereof). In practice, the board of the association is extremely hands-on: from marketing to administration, from the trainings of the women to the delivery of their dishes – all of it is organised by the board of the association together with the project leaders they hire, and, increasingly, also

with other (welfare) organisations. As a matter of fact, STAM is now, in collaboration with a social enterprise located in Nieuw-West, in the midst of turning the “project” into an actual “cooperative”:

The association remains, and her goal, i.e. guiding, supporting those women. But Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is now going to be part of a cooperative. Because in a cooperative you can make profit. In an association you can do that, but it's different, legally it's a different structure. And for that cooperation we deliberately looked for a collaboration with Coffeemania, because Coffeemania has a status whereby it can offer women a traineeship (“werktestplek”) [...] Because at the moment we don't have that yet, and Coffeemania can add that – offer traineeships to those women.

(Project initiators)

Noticeably, the approach towards Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is mainly commercial. In practice, the board of STAM has a business minded view – the idea is that the women cook, STAM assist the professionalisation of the process, and the women subsequently sell their services. In this manner, it is also supposed to fund itself. That STAM wants it to be in the form of a cooperative is to make sure that the profits that are generated also come back to the participating women rather than to any stakeholders. At the same time, the board of STAM also realises that they are targeting a particular group of women, who thus also requires a particular kind of approach. Hence, “success” is measured in relative terms:

From day one, I think our approach was different, it was more of a business approach. After all, we say that we want things to be lasting. We don't want to be a 1-day-fly. We don't believe in that. But we do believe in different approaches. For a woman for whom getting a volunteering compensation of 20 euros is already a huge financial independence – because those women really exist – then that's fine no? You don't have to push that woman – also because it is not realistic – to become self-employed. That doesn't work. There are different situations, and it's important that you approach people according to their situation, and help them from their position. Because we always say that they have to be able to, they have to want to, and they have to be allowed to – those three things always have to come together.

(Project initiators)

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38.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Let's be honest... I don't think the municipality is accessible. You have to take a whole lot of steps just to see, to understand how it all works, to figure out if there are any funds available anywhere. And then you still have to figure out how to get access to those funds. And what is also new for us...see, we come from regular businesses. And we don't know that whole municipal, participation, association, projects, programmes, one city district here, the other one there... Really, when we entered into this whole thing we were business minded. So we thought, ok, you have the municipality, then you probably have a few departments, and then there is a fund, on which hundreds of parties are living, and then they divide that money. But it turns out to be more complicated than that. So that's also something that we are slowly discovering. [...] It's not transparent - while the entire world is basically screaming for transparency, towards everyone. So, as far as I'm concerned, this whole thing...(i.e. the municipalities and the world of subsidies) it's not transparent, or not accessible.

(Project initiators)

In reality, Neighbourhood Mothers Catering is a project that was started by single individuals in reaction to the current re-integration/emancipation programmes/initiatives, which they think often do not approach women in very a positive or sustainable manner. Although they got a (subsidised) prize to get the project started, the interaction with the municipality was, especially in the beginning, minimal. Moreover, it was an initiative of women who are not all that familiar with the world of subsidies, and who never intended the existence of the catering service to be dependent on municipal grants – they want it to be a self-funding cooperative that will thereby be able to have a more lasting impact.

However, STAM does collaborate with social enterprises and (welfare) organisations that have similar goals – i.e. helping women to gain a certain level of financial independence - or that could somehow help them in the organisation and functionality of the catering service. For example, to know the steps they had to follow to professionalise the cooking services they have made use of the “Ondernemershuis” – a municipally funded service that provides informa-

tion and advice for starting enterprises - and for the delivery of the dishes they have sought to collaborate with other associations that are working with people with a distance from the labour market (e.g. *Stichting Fietsdienst*). Moreover, they realise that they are operating within a particular (bureaucratic) setting where certain rules and regulations apply, which they need to adhere to if they wish to expand their initiative:

That's why I got in touch with Coffeemia, to see if we could work with them...because they have the possibility of taking on women with social assistance benefits...they also have people that can guide them in that. Because we had some talks with Pantar (a municipal re-integration service), and they thought it was a great initiative, and they had quite a few women that wanted to do a traineeship (werktestplek) while keeping their social assistance benefits...but there were all sorts of conditions attached to that. They had to have a traineeship with so many hours of guidance. So I thought: what, do they have to come and do this in my kitchen at home then? [...] And then you have to comply with all sorts of ARBO-conditions. [...] So if I put them behind a table and a chair, they say “eheh”, because there has to be a desk, and a certain chair, and I don't know what else more. Well, we couldn't offer that. And then what, I have to guide them? Yea, sorry, but I have other things to do too. I can't do that. So yea, those are the kind of things that I was up against. Then you do not have the possibility of helping those women that you actually want to help. But they can do that here (at Coffeemia), because they are open, the staff is always around, the kitchen meets all the requirements, and they also have – it's part of their whole concept – they have a lot of people that are doing some sort of re-integration programme here. So they can do that too. So then we thought: well, that's a nice addition, we can work together in that.

(Project leader)

38.5. Development and dynamics

The driving force behind Neighbourhood Mothers Catering have been individual residents who wanted to come up with a sustainable, lasting concept that would help women gain a certain degree of financial independence, at their own pace. A remarkable aspect of the project is the fact that there were no professional municipal/social workers directly involved in the set up of the whole project. This means that the startup of the catering service has been a “learn-as-you-go” kind of process that perhaps took more time than the initiators ever anticipated, but it also means that it is a concept that keeps evolving, and that remains open to developing itself further. Finally, it is a concept that its initiators firmly believe in, and which they are eager to expand, both in terms of the kind of services they could “sell”, as well as the locations they could “serve”.

We are constantly looking for: what can we do now? Thinking about new kinds of collaborations...looking for chances and possibilities. And grabbing whatever comes our way. [...] The way this whole thing started also – the thought that: why does everything have to be temporary? Why can't we all think a bit more long-term for once? Set up lasting things so that people can do things a bit longer also. And enjoy their own accomplishments longer too. Otherwise it's huge peaks and valleys, where the valleys become even deeper, or harder. And if you have that thought, then it's not smart to take every step that you want to take so quickly, without thinking it through. So we deliberately chose to take it easy. So not take on 100 neighbourhood mothers immediately, give them hope, and then say “oops sorry, didn't work”.

(Project initiators)

We want to expand the concept further. That's why we do it at the neighbourhood level... We want to build the website of the cooperation in such a way that you as an individual, man/woman, two-earner households, that do not have the time to cook a healthy meal, that they can buy a subscription with a Neighbourhood Mother in their neighbourhood, and that they can get a healthy meal twice a week for example. [...] So that you have Neighbourhood Mothers in every neighbourhood that do not only handle large catering orders together, but also on a smaller level, cook a healthy meal for the neighbourhood. [...] It stimulates

the social cohesion within such a neighbourhood too, the interaction between a highly educated two-earner household, and their neighbour with six children. And that's how you hope to have an effect on those children too, that they get in contact with each other. [...] You hope that those children [...] maybe go and visit the two-earner household once. And that the child says: “hey, I want that too. And what he does, I can maybe do that too”. [...] And another side-effect, one of the main ones, is of course that those children see that their mother is working. And that she is earning money. That's a really good example. A lot of children don't have that. [...] Because we still think, despite all these idealistic things about emancipation – super! – still, a mother is a different kind of example for the children. [...] Fathers also participate, but mummies have a bit more visible of a role. That's why it is important for the mother to set a good example. And show that working is part of you, of who you are, and of who you are going to be. And that you are developing. Seeing other things. That's a richness. The more knowledge, the broader your horizons. We really see that as a kind of richness. And if children see that in their mothers, then they will start thinking “that's normal”.

(Project initiators)

Our plan is to make it much broader, as an association. [...] There are a lot of easily accessible branches in which these women can play a role and be financially independent. So we thought, ok, catering, caring, well, child care. [...] And like that there are some other branches of which we think that they are easily accessible, and it's not too much of a hassle to guide women into those branches. And the intention at some point is to scale it up. We started in Nieuw-West, but we also want to scale it up to other city districts of Amsterdam. And if possible, also to other cities in the Netherlands.

(Project initiators)

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Conclusions

Sustainability

Undeniably, financial contributions by the municipality/city districts played a role for all three social innovations that were presented in this report. Without the financial support of the municipality (and the additional funds that were available for the implementation of the *wijkaanpak*), all of these social innovations would have been more difficult to set up, and perhaps some would not have been set up at all. However, whilst the availability of governmental funding may stimulate/fasten the start up of social innovations, in times of “crisis”, continuous budget cuts, and general instability, it is questionable to what extent municipal funding also benefits the sustainability of these innovations.

An important aspect of the larger framework of the Neighbourhood Development Programme is the explicit emphasis of the municipal *wijkaanpak* on “result-driven” projects – if a certain social innovation is considered to be successful, it will continue to be supported by the municipality/city districts, both politically and financially; if not it will be considered “an experiment” that failed, but that was a good “learning experience” nonetheless. In welfare provisions that are especially innovative in the way in which they bring different actors together, there are bound to be many different goals. To assure the continuation of a particular innovation it is therefore important that there is some sort of understanding, or at least compromise, between the various actors involved about what those “results” should be. Regarding the “success” of BOOTs for instance, what some actors may deem to be the main goal, others perceive to be an “extra bonus”.

In general housing corporations and city districts are very happy, because with a minimal investment they do obtain quite some results in a neighbourhood. And then, “results”, that’s something you have to be careful with, because it is very difficult to measure some things. Also the children that have been with us for 4 years now: is it really measurable that they have become better at math and language? We are trying to measure it now, but I am always very careful with this, also because I do not look at it like this. It would be great of course! But the fact that these children have structurally been coming for 2.5 hours, and have been working with the students, that is a result on its own

already. And that’s how we look at it too - that a lot of the things that we are doing, the dynamic between students and residents, that creates a lot of things that are very difficult to measure. And that’s why you have to be careful not to get involved with huge organisations with a lot of money, because...well, that’s not of these times. And you shouldn’t do that either, because for that you cannot clearly indicate what the investment is worth. So you have to keep it very informal, and especially (focus) on the fact that it’s the students that are developing themselves. That’s where the win-win situation is at for BOOT: that we have a better view of the working field, and that students can develop themselves within that field. And everything that this concretely adds to a neighbourhood, things that make a neighbourhood better, well that is a welcome bonus of course.

(Manager, BOOT)

For innovations that rely on municipal funding, “success”, and thus sustainability, is partly determined by the municipality, who wants to see tangible results to justify investments. A noteworthy difference between BOOTs (and Neighbourhood Mothers Catering) and NMCs in this respect is the extent to which they depend on governmental support. In the case of NMCs, city districts are providing funding on a structural basis. In the case of BOOTs, city districts are important sponsors as well, but the financial reliance is far less structural - proportionately the HvA invests much more (funding, personnel and time) than city districts. The HvA thus also has a greater right of say in the “right to existence” of BOOTs.

As for NMCs, the main goal for the housing corporation is to provide a service/information point for the residents in areas that are being renovated, and to be more visible/accessible - as a large, and otherwise more “distant” organisation - in those neighbourhoods. And in this regard, NMCs are indeed successful - which makes them a worthy investment for the housing corporation. The fact that, on top of that, they can also organise this in a way that creates traineeships and activation programmes for people with a distance to the labour market is an added bonus for the housing corporation, whose primary focus is still the (physical) renovation of the neighbourhood. Instead, city districts may be more interested in the re-integration trajectories that NMCs offer to (young) residents with a distance to the labour market. Even though housing corporations are now also expected

to contribute to the “liveability” of neighbourhoods, considering the (traditional) division of (welfare) tasks between different kinds of actors, city districts (and the organisations they subsidise) are still more focused on the social and economic development of a neighbourhood than housing corporations. The fact that merely two youngsters at a time can follow a traineeship in a technical team, and that of those two, one might get a job in the regular labour market, may not be considered enough of a “success” by the city districts - at least, not in proportion to their investment. Yet, within the present construction of NMCs, city districts are crucial partners. In a context where funding is directly linked to performance, which, in turn, depends on one’s perspective, the sustainability of NMCs is most at risk.

Of the social innovations that were presented here, the importance of the availability of municipal funds for the functioning and the sustainability of a particular innovation is thus most striking in the case of NMCs. However, since the municipality and city districts have been known to be dealing with budget restraints for some time now, “social innovators” are generally also constantly innovating themselves in that regard too, preparing themselves for the fact that there will be less municipal subsidies to resort to in the future. Hence, what is equally important for the sustainability of social innovations (and perhaps even more so than financial support) is that the municipality and city districts support change, first of all administratively, but also “culturally” - culturally in the sense that the local governments must play a leading role in steering and stimulating a change in the traditional patterns of behaviour of the organisations that are involved in the provision of welfare services.

Furthermore, in a city with such a large and divided public administration, the challenge is not only to bring about movement among third sector welfare organisations and “novice” actors on the scene, but also to change the attitude of its very own public sector, and then especially of its civil servants. At the moment, as a result of a long-standing history in which the public sector has been subdivided into many very specific clusters, civil servants too are still very much anchored in certain modes of thinking and/or doing. As the case of Neighbourhood Mothers Catering in particular also suggested, to stimulate sustainable social innovations, the public sector too needs to “go with the flow”, so to speak.

That's the difficult thing – on the one hand people want to do all sorts of things, and on the other hand there comes a civil servant from the municipal Work and Income Service and says: “Yes but you are retracting yourself from the labour market, and you are not allowed to do that”. And if they get paid even just 100 euros, they immediately get penalised on their social assistance benefits, so people lose all their motivation. In that sense the Netherlands is a bit weird, the system... People are hindered from taking any initiative. Also in the neighbourhood – at the moment you hear a lot about how citizen initiatives are the solution for the lack of municipal funds. But then when citizens take initiatives, they have to make all sorts of budgets and those budgets have to be according to all sorts of rules. While, these are volunteers, they cannot make such complicated schemes...yet it all has to be professionally all of a sudden. And well...that's where it clashes. Something goes wrong there.

(Assistant Professor, Dept of Political Science, University of Amsterdam)

Diffusion

To assess the potential for diffusion of social innovations, one must look at what kind of actors initiated a particular project, and, especially, what interests and rights of say they have. In terms of the kinds of actors involved in the social innovations presented here, within the Netherlands, if the willingness is there, all three could be diffused to another city. In fact, there are already concepts in other cities in the Netherlands that are similar to those of NMCs, BOOTs and Neighbourhood Mothers Catering. Outside of the Netherlands, though, some of these social innovations may be “easier” to introduce than others. NMCs are the most “typically Dutch”, considering the role that housing corporations play herein. Yet, similar constructions could be envisaged in contexts where local governments are in charge of both employment and housing policies, and are able to match different policy-fields at the local level. The BOOTs - for which the motivation and the driving force comes from more “common” educational facilities – are perhaps a type of innovation that is more likely to be diffused in an international context, and, as a matter of fact, already is:

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We talk a lot with other educational facilities - like Regionaal Opleidingen Centrum (ROC, Regional Education Center) In Holland, the University of Applied Sciences in Nijmegen - to see how they could do that within their own context. And that gives us a lot of interesting information. So there are also other BOOT concepts in other parts of the Netherlands, who do it in their own way. That fits with their university; that fits with the needs of the residents that live in those neighbourhoods. And that is a movement that I think has been very good, to see how higher educational facilities can do more than just education in the traditional way. But how can you really use that exchange with the city? And that's a trend that you see in the whole of the Netherlands, even in Europe.

(Manager, BOOT)

What certainly helps the diffusion of social innovations that were discussed in this report is the existence of an extensive network of third sector (welfare) organisations and the presence of local governments that take on a leading and steering role. In the case of Amsterdam, the fact that there are already many local welfare provisions in place means that knowledge and personnel are often there, but it is a matter of coordinating efforts more efficiently. While local governments may not be able to provide financial support the way they used to in the past, it is all the more important that they remain active in bringing scattered and disjointed (welfare) organisations closer together. In Amsterdam, although the public administration surrounding welfare provisions is bulky and fragmented, the fact that it is a capital city that wants to “set an example” in the Netherlands also puts pressure on the administration to be innovative and dynamic. In other words, politically, a change of (organisational) culture must be supported, and encouraged.

Last but certainly not least, especially now that local governments are increasingly calling on citizens to be self-reliant and take on more individual responsibilities, it is critical that the inhabitants of a city support the social innovations. With regard hereto, in addition to having certain “institutionalised” structures, Amsterdam is also “blessed” with a particular social structure – its people are generally “social” and “entrepreneurial” at the same time. In recent years, the entrepreneurial attitude has perhaps become more pronounced, yet the people of Amsterdam (many

of whom are highly educated) also have a long-lasting history of “active citizenship” (think of the local squatting movement) and the desire of individual citizens to want to “mean” something for a fellow-citizen is still strong. In reality, despite the fact that Amsterdam is often externally perceived as arrogant and perhaps even uncooperative, it is, internally, still fairly solidarity-based and social. As the case of the Neighbourhood Mothers Catering showed, at a time in which local governments are retrenching, “social” and “active” citizens are vital for the emergence of sustainable social innovations. The challenge for local governments is to be (administratively) responsive and (politically) supportive of such societal dynamics.

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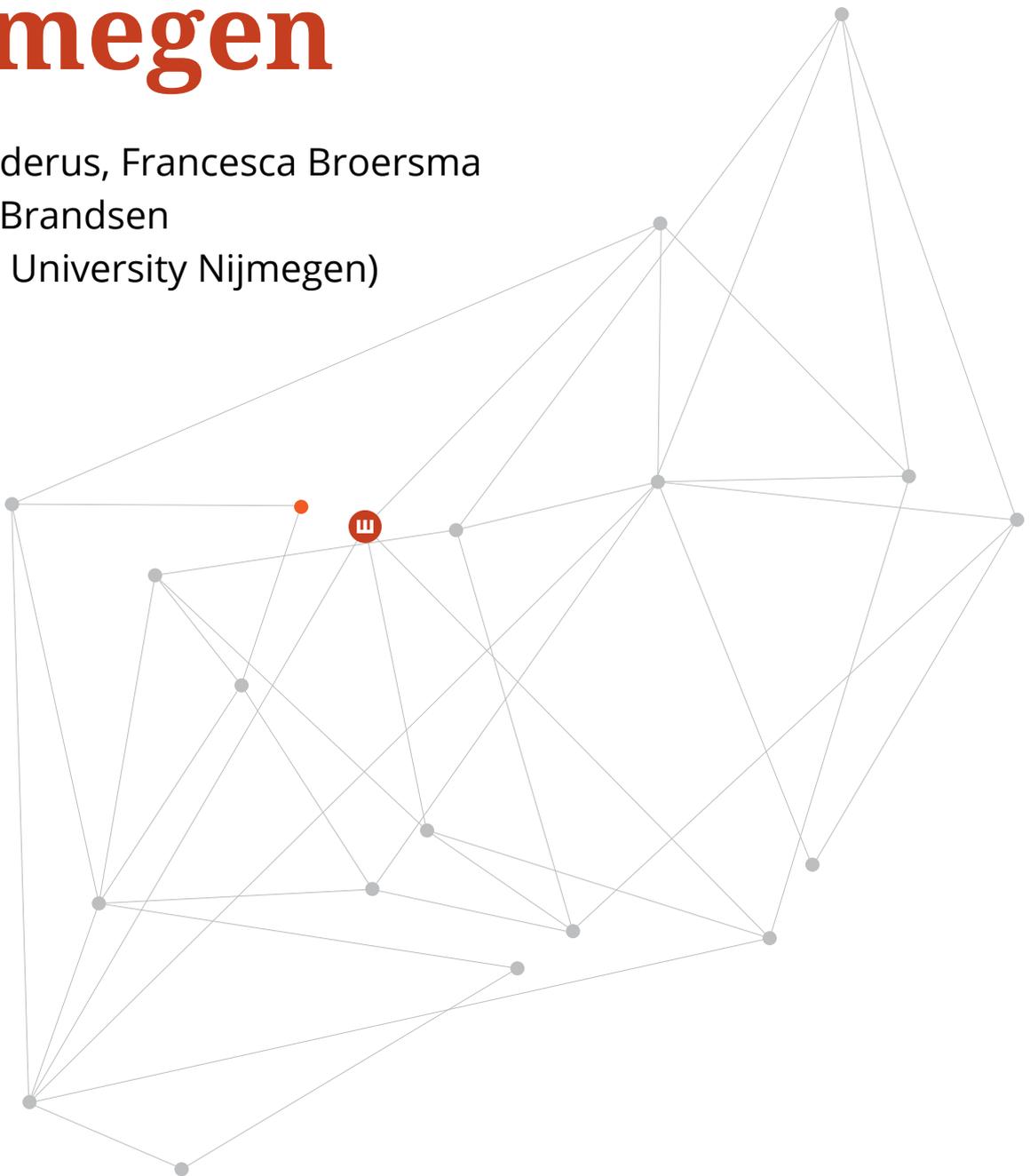
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The Netherlands

Nijmegen

Joost Fledderus, Francesca Broersma
and Taco Brandsen
(Radboud University Nijmegen)



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Nijmegen

Authors

Joost Fledderus, Francesca Broersma and Taco Brandsen
(Radboud University Nijmegen)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Co-production
Diffusion
Empowerment
Governance
Local welfare
Municipality
Neighbourhood
Networks
Participation
Social cohesion
Sustainability

Over time, a strongly left-wing political culture emerged in Nijmegen. Its key values related to the protection of the less well off: solidarity, equal opportunities to participate in society and the urge for an “undivided” city. Over the past few years, a fear of increasing divisions between residents in the periphery (roughly the west and the areas around the canal) and other areas (north, east and centre) brought these discourses to the foreground. What these discourses mean for the “innovativeness” of the city is rather ambiguous. For some, Nijmegen has been always a front-runner when it comes to social renewal because of the progressive and entrepreneurial spirit that appears to arise from politics and the university. For others, however, **the city has too long been a “caressing” state, while sometimes an “innovative kick” might have been better.** The need to take care of the less well-off has led to a comprehensive local welfare system with a passive role for the recipients of that help, they argue. Yet, now that Dutch municipalities are facing big financial cutbacks, the maintainability of such a system is threatened. Moreover, there are broader (national/European) trends, as well as national policies and regulations, which undeniably have an influence on the way Nijmegen organises its local welfare. To begin with, as elsewhere in the Netherlands, the “Neighbourhood Development Programme” (*wijkaanpak*) has changed the role of housing corporations in neighbourhoods and paved the way for experimentation. Furthermore, ongoing decentralisation of welfare, especially in the field of care, has an impact on thinking about how and by whom welfare policies should be implemented. Finally, perceptions of the rights and obligations of people on income support have also changed.

In 2007, the so-called *wijkaanpak* was launched. Throughout the country, forty disadvantaged neighbourhoods were labelled as so-called “attention areas” (*aandachtswijken* or *krachtwijken*). For these neighbourhoods, extra financial resources were made available. Especially in the larger cities, such as Amsterdam, this had a significant impact on neighbourhoods because major regeneration projects could be initiated. In Nijmegen, however, people were surprised to hear that national government appointed one of its neighbourhoods (*Hatert*) too. The general belief was that Nijmegen did not have problems on the same scale as the larger cities. Nevertheless, the *wijkaanpak* did have an impact on Nijmegen because it influenced the role of housing corporations within the field of neighbourhood regeneration. Not only did they become responsible, financially and logistically, for the completion of the programme, the *wijkaanpak* also consisted of an integrated, more holistic approach towards neighbourhood regeneration. Besides improving the physical environment, the *wijkaanpak* also aims to enhance the broader “quality of life” (*leefbaarheid*) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, *i.e.* to improve the social and economic environment too. Furthermore, citizen participation and partnering with local organisations were main themes in the *wijkaanpak*. Accordingly, projects such as “A Future for Everybody” and “Sirocco” are best understood against the background of the *wijkaanpak*. Housing corporations now take up initiatives in the social

domain in addition to their “core business” of providing affordable housing:

For example, we let people in Hatert write and perform a theatre play that is paid for by the corporations, I think 40,000 euros. Back then they said, are you completely insane, we are not going to pay that. Eventually they did invest the money. But they thought that was very distant from what they were supposed to do and sometimes it did hurt. But now, particularly about investing in the social domain, corporations are more and more convinced that investing in that domain also adds value to their real estate. Not that that would be their primary goal, but it is for them an important factor to keep doing their job. To keep providing sustainable social housing.

(District manager)

Another national trend that has affected how welfare is implemented at the local level is the continuing decentralisation of welfare (and in particular care) policies from central government to municipalities. In addition to the complete decentralisation of youth care services, more and more caregiving services that used to be part of the General Act on Special Healthcare Costs (*Algemene Wet Bijzondere Ziektekosten*), and thus a (financial) responsibility of the central government, have been included in the Law of Societal Development (*Wet Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling*, or WMO) and are now the responsibility of municipalities. Although the central government supports local governments with these transitions, in times of increasing budget restraints municipalities have to do more with less. Furthermore, the WMO – a law that concerns the provision of services for citizens in difficult conditions, such as, for example, the elderly, people with a handicap or psychological problems, but also people with financial problems – stipulates that citizens should have an independent life and participate in society as much as possible.

To achieve this purpose, municipalities are free to set their priorities wherever they feel there is a more stringent need for support. Although the first parts of the WMO reform are expected to be set in early 2014, and the complete form in 2015, the municipality of Nijmegen chose to start right away with restructuring local care arrangements in a fashion that resembles the basic idea of the new law. In a policy plan called “Solidarity, together, and solid”, the municipality points out the most important priorities of the new

(local) WMO policy: focus on vulnerable groups, self-responsibility, “community reliance” (*samenrezaamheid*), inclusive society, personalised services and de-compartmentalisation and prevention before cure. These things come together in what the municipality has called “social neighbourhood teams” (*sociale wijkteams*), of which pilots started in 2012. These teams consist of professionals with different specialisations, often from different organisations, and are supposed to create a network of caregivers at the neighbourhood level. According to a neighbourhood manager of the municipality, the idea of social neighbourhood teams denotes a radical change:

The experience is that residents of a neighbourhood are often able to solve a lot of things together, without the need of professional assistance. There is a big, natural preparedness to do something for somebody else, if you are asked to do so. The social neighbourhood team builds a broad neighbourhood network of people, associations and organisations that want to do something for their neighbourhood. ... That is the youngest development we are experimenting with. I expect that will be a revolution. We have of course the advantage of the WMO; I really think that that is going to mean a revolution.

(District manager)

Parallel to the developments in the field of care, when it comes to income support measures, such as social assistance, new or announced national laws and regulations also emphasise that everybody should participate in society, whether you are handicapped or unable to find paid work for example – such as the possibility of obliging people to do a “returning favour according to capability” (*tegenprestatie naar vermogen*) and the to be introduced “participation law” (*Participatiewet*). Again, municipalities carry the responsibility for getting as many people as possible “active”, but their financial means are severely cut. Since Nijmegen has been investing in expensive subsidised labour in the past decade, a radical shift was needed. In an attempt to still offer people a chance of a job, the concept of “work corporations” (*werkcorporaties*) was introduced.

Accordingly, these developments, in combination with the historically strong focus on taking care of the weak, pose a real challenge for the city of Nijmegen. However, as all three innovations in this report indeed attempted to increase the role of citizens, a shift seems to have been made, albeit not without hurdles.

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Work corporations

39.1. Short description

In the summer of 2011, several so-called “work corporations” (*werkcorporaties*) started operating in the municipality of Nijmegen. These work corporations aim at re-employing social assistance (*Wet Werk en Bijstand*, or WWB) receivers with a considerable distance from the labour market by offering them a place where they can combine work and education. Basically every entrepreneur can initiate a work corporation, as long as it complies with a few conditions: it should offer people a chance to develop themselves (mainly through education); the service or product delivered should have societal relevance (which may be interpreted very broadly); and a work corporation should be able to be self-sufficient. Also important is that working at a work corporation should have a temporary character; this means that after a maximum of 2 years, people should leave the organisation. Because of this, it really differs from forms of subsidised labour in the Netherlands, where people could be employed for more than 10 years.

The concept of work corporations was introduced in the city by the local Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*) in their party programme of 2010. In just two sentences, the party expressed the need for the development of work corporations in order to preserve subsidised jobs. It mentions a particular foundation (Foundation Dagloon) as an example, which successfully provided jobs for homeless people, by doing contractual work in the urban upkeep service sector for, *inter alia*, the municipality and a big garbage collection company. When the Labour party formed a coalition with the Green party (*GroenLinks*) and the social-liberal party Democrats '66 (*Democraten '66*) in 2010, work corporations were included in their common manifesto. Here, the concept was seen as an instrument that could better constitute the outflow of beneficiaries to work than subsidised labour. Still, no detailed plan about what was regarded as a work corporation was developed yet. In March 2011, a policy plan was published which made the idea more concrete. Work corporations were explicitly considered as a new re-employment scheme to “modernise” subsidised labour (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011).

The need for rearranging re-employment services was given by the financial cutbacks that were imposed by national government. In fact, the municipal budget of 26 million euro for re-employment in 2012 would be brought down to 13 million euro in 2013 and eventually to 8 million euro in 2014 and thereafter. Hence, in order to “realise the ambitions” of the municipality with respect to reemployment, the municipality was forced to adapt their current policy in an “innovative fashion”. This meant the reduction of subsidised jobs to zero, the creation of work corporations and cooperation between municipal organisations that were dependent on subsidised employees. Yet, it was believed that work corporations should not be seen as a one-on-one replacement for subsidised jobs. A

work corporation should operate at the intersection of business and civil society. This can be seen as one of the innovative elements of the project. For the municipality, the possibility for a re-employment organisation to earn money is the particularly new aspect. For the organisations that are familiar with subsidised labour it is especially the educational facet, the emphasis on personal development, and responsibility for outflow to work, which break with tradition.

Work corporations are not new in the Netherlands. The idea was used for unemployed youth between 2004 and 2008 in three Dutch cities, financed by a European Social Fund (ESF) subsidy. Yet, the municipality of Nijmegen clearly states that it does not work with a “blueprint”. Rather, it has been trying to develop a flexible model which suits the locality of Nijmegen, and which could be changed according to experi-

ences through time. Especially important here is the recognition of existing organisations that are already executing certain programmes with characteristics of the work corporation concept. The involvement of these organisations from the very beginning led to the start of six work corporations in October 2010: “We have actually written the plan how work corporations must look like during the discussions with those [interested] organisations” (Mark van der Velden, policy advisor). Now, there are over ten work corporations active in Nijmegen.

Table 1 provides some examples. Most work corporations are part of larger welfare organisations, but a few private companies also started a work corporation. Some are based on a particular method which is used in other cities in the Netherlands as well.

Table 1. Examples of work corporations in Nijmegen

Work corporation	Short description
Social Work Inter-Lokaal (<i>Maatschappelijke Dienstverlening</i>)	20-25 users, giving help to low-income clients of the migrant organisation <i>Inter-lokaal</i> in combination with higher secondary vocational education
World Cooks (<i>Wereldkoks</i>)	20-25 users, cooking and serving food in a restaurant in combination with lower secondary vocational education
Solar Train (<i>Zonnetrein</i>)	3-6 users, driving a solar-driven tourist bus in combination with gaining a bus driver’s licence
Bike-work (<i>Bike-werk</i>)	6 users, repairing bikes in combination with higher secondary vocational education
2Switch Green & Maintenance (<i>2Switch Groen & Klussen</i>)	30-35 users, doing maintenance in neighbourhoods, mainly around social housing in combination with several courses
Fashion with a Mission (<i>Mode met een Missie</i>)	20-25 users, sewing clothes for a fashion line in combination with lower secondary vocational education
Craft Square (<i>Ambachtsplein</i>)	5-15 users, traditional master-apprentice relationship learning a particular craftsmanship in combination with lower secondary vocational education
Dar & Breed, urban upkeep services (<i>Dar & Breed onderhoud van parken</i>)	4-6 users, maintaining municipal parks

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39.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

For the municipality, the most important aspect of the work corporations is that after a year or two users will gain sufficient skills to be able to find a job on the regular labour market. The municipality distinguishes several types of clients, with differing talents and capabilities. It states that for every individual it should be judged whether working in a work corporation is the most suitable re-employment strategy, and, moreover, whether the available work suits the client, since work corporations also differ from each other (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011). Thus, there is some level of personalisation involved: not every person that receives social assistance benefits is automatically qualified to join a work corporation. This personalisation is represented in the composition of the group of users of different work corporations. For instance, Fashion with a Mission attracts mainly women (of whom many are single parents), while Green & Maintenance, Bike-work and Solar Train consist only of men.

The professionals and managers of the work corporations generally agree that education and teaching “technical” skills is important, but attaining social skills is at least as essential. This includes the basic elements of being an employee, such as getting in on time, asking for a free day or planning holidays, calling in sick, *etc.* But it also means learning to cooperate with other participants, taking responsibility and being an active employee. This might be somewhat more important for participants who have had no education at all and have not worked at all during their lives, compared to users who have already completed some education, such as the participants of Social Work.

Most work corporations would prefer to have intrinsically motivated participants. Therefore, almost all users of the different work corporations must have an intake conversation or sometimes even an official job application. Most work corporations wanted to know whether potential participants like the activities that come along with the job they would be trained in and whether they would like a regular job in this particular profession. Two important reasons for selecting on intrinsic motivation were mentioned: (1) it is almost impossible to complete the programme successfully without a certain passion or preference for the profession; and (2) the performance target that has

been set for outflow to work cannot be reached with unmotivated workers.

Lack of capabilities often does not matter at most work corporations (or is even a “requirement” in terms of educational level). Exceptions include working at Social Work, which requires a certain level of social skills and language fluency, and Solar Train, which requires an affinity with driving. For the corporation Green & Maintenance however, even motivation is not that important. The manager of this work corporation acknowledged that this makes it sometimes difficult, especially if you want to get users a regular job. On the other hand, he said that some people enter with great reserve, but after 12 months they like it so much they actually would like to stay even longer. A project leader from World Cooks also noted that a slight form of pressure would not be wrong, if that is necessary to persuade participants: “It is always possible that someone finds out after a couple of weeks that it is not so bad after all”, she says. However, in the case of the reverse scenario – a participant lacks any form of motivation – sanctions may be given. Users sign a contract with the municipality where basic rights and obligations are described. A sanction could include a (temporary) reduction of the received benefit – for example if a user has repeatedly not shown up. Until now, this measure has been rarely used. Some project leaders noticed that it would be useful to have more options to put pressure on users, for instance, when a participant is absent for a longer period. Yet, one user complained because he voluntarily applied for a work corporation, and had to sign the contract after a few weeks working there. Because he was not urged to participate by the municipality, he was astonished to find out his benefit could be stopped if he did not comply with the rules.

People enter work corporations for different reasons. One participant of Fashion with a Mission said the opportunity to get a diploma was the most important motivator for her to participate. A diploma would give her more chance on the labour market, she thought. For another participant of Fashion with a Mission, the work corporation is just a step to a higher level of education. Yet another client, who thought her chances on the labour market were already very small because of her relatively high age, especially values the social contacts at work and the rhythm of a working life. Professionals emphasise as well that having colleagues to chat with is very valuable for people who

have been unemployed for a long time. Moreover, for some participants, just the fact that they must change things at home to be able to go to work – for instance, arranging child care – already ensures that their world broadens.

Most work corporations try to encourage an ordinary work environment with a manager (or project leader or mentor) and his or her employees. Participants who were interviewed therefore regard themselves mainly as employees, although they don't receive salary (they keep their social assistance benefit plus a 600-euro bonus after half a year). However, a user (of World Cooks) said he likes to see himself as a student, being occupied with learning rather than with work. At the same time, many project leaders also try to create a safe and lenient environment – as a project leader from Fashion with a Mission said “if they cannot succeed here, then where can they?”. Users indeed said that they appreciate the absence of work stress (although this might differ between work corporations) and that they feel they could ask and tell anything to the project leaders.

In general, the concept of work corporations stems from the idea that people who are in need of guidance in their search for a job are still able to generate income. In this sense, the municipality looks at what clients of social assistance are capable of rather than what they cannot do. This is clearly represented in the vision of the Craft Square, which takes empowerment as its main goal: guiding participants to develop the feeling that they are in control over their own life, the confidence that everything will be all right and the sense that they can do something about their situation.

39.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

If an existing organisation or a new organisation wants to become a work corporation, a starting grant will be appointed after approval. Instruments that are used for the re-employment of participants (such as coaching and education) are also financed by the municipality. Structural overhead costs and non-structural development costs must be compensated by the income the organisation earns by selling the services or products it offers. In the first 1.5 years this will be partially funded by the municipality, but after 2 years, this should all be covered by the work corporations.

The concept of work corporation does not apply to for-profit companies – all profit should be invested in the reintegration of the clients.

There are a few possible types of work corporations. A first type is a “traditional” work corporation. Such an organisation tries to get people back to work through work experience and education. A second type is called a “broad” work corporation. Here, “activation” is part of the organisation as well. Activation is especially suitable for people who have not worked for a long time and who really need to develop certain basic social skills in order to do regular work. A third type only focuses on this activation part, and could be considered to be a recruiter for the other two types of work corporations. In practice, most work corporations are the traditional type, because this form is best suited to generate income. Nevertheless, work corporations that involve activation too, such as Green & Maintenance, could be beneficial, since work corporations then “organise basically their own breeding ground to assure outflow to their own work corporations” (Policy advisor).

At a basic level, three parties are involved in a work corporation: the work corporation itself, the municipality, and (often) an educational institute. The responsibilities for the first two parties are clearly described in the development plan of the municipality. The work corporation is involved with the selection of participants; creates a personal re-employment programme/development plan for the participant; guides the participant during the development process; and provides education/training. The municipality has the primary role in the recruitment of participants, if possible in cooperation with the work corporation; provides required facilities for the re-employment programme according to the WWB act and other regulations; and monitors the output target (in terms of outflow of clients). The municipality makes a contractual arrangement with the work corporations. The content of the contracts is not always the same. Some work corporations have to comply with a performance target – for example, 66 per cent of all participants must find a job or follow a higher level of education after they finish the programme of the work corporation. Other work corporations do not have to fulfil any targets. This could depend on the characteristics of the participants or the sector people are trained in. For instance, the labour market for bus drivers and bike mechanics is fairly good compared to

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the fashion or clothing branch. Therefore, the municipality might expect higher rates of outflow for work corporations in the former sector than for the latter. Project leaders however do not always understand why there are differences in the contracts between the work corporations and the municipality.

Almost every work corporation cooperates with an educational institute or provides an internal educational programme. Often, the study programme has a duration of 1 year, sometimes 2 years (e.g. Social Work and Bike-work), but there are also educational programmes that are more flexible, such as getting a bus driver's licence, which could be done in a much shorter period. Educational institutes are sometimes involved in screening the participants to assess if they have the desired educational level. Many work corporations provide extra language courses for participants who have difficulties with speaking, writing and reading Dutch.

The internal organisation of the work corporations differs per work corporation. Often, participants work for approximately 25-30 hours per week, of which about 8 hours are in education. Educational programmes are followed at the workplace if possible – teachers attend the work corporation instead of the other way around. How participants are helped with developing the practical, technical skills differs. Sometimes, general guidance, specialised help and project management are divided between different persons, but sometimes multiple functions are carried out by the same person (e.g. Fashion with a Mission).

39.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

As noted, the municipality has involved existing organisations active in the field of subsidised labour or re-employment services to develop a plan for work corporations. For several work corporations, such as Green & Maintenance, World Cooks and Social Work, the launch of the plan actually meant just a continuation of their policy. This could mean the impact on the governance of the local welfare system is not particularly high. Nevertheless, the emphasis on generating income and the outflow to regular work has led or still has to lead to some changes in the management of these organisations. The necessity of generating income will put more pressure on organisations to look for potential buyers of their product or service.

Sometimes, the municipality is the biggest or sole commissioner of the service, as is the case with Social Work, because it is in its interest that the service is delivered. In other cases like Green & Maintenance, a housing corporation is the biggest client because they benefit from the service (maintaining their buildings), but also because participants of the work corporation may be renters of their housing.

Yet, **what probably has more impact on the governance of the local welfare system is the shift of responsibility for re-employment from the municipality towards the organisations in the field.** In particular, organisations that were used to working with subsidised employees are now required to think quite differently about the future of the participants. Re-employment was never something these organisations had to worry about. Many work corporations recognise the importance of close collaboration with the specific economic sector to be able to assure outflow to regular work. For example, Bike-work cooperates with a big cycle company because they are in need of employees. Hence, participants in that work corporation have high chances of finding a job there. Solar Train has close connections with the taxi sector, so that it can send its recently schooled drivers directly to employers.

The concept of work corporations is still relatively new and the municipality clearly maintains that there is room for development. There have already been a few points of discussion which may lead to some changes in the future. First of all, several work corporations complain about the lack of flexibility of educational programmes. The Regional Education Centre (ROC), which provides secondary vocational education, is currently unable to deviate from the general start of educational programmes, which is September each year. This means that for several work corporations (e.g. World Cooks and Fashion with a Mission), in September the first group will exit and an entire new group of participants will enter. This could have a negative impact on the continuity of the company, since a group with relatively many capabilities will be replaced by an inexperienced group of users. Possibilities to increase the flexibility of the ROC are being investigated.

Secondly, cooperation between the work corporations will have to be improved, say some managers. As the manager of Solar Train argued,

Everyone has the same assignment, and if you have to purchase certain services, why won't you buy it at a fellow work corporation? For instance, if the train has to be painted, why wouldn't I let it be done by men of 2Switch [Green & Maintenance]? And if 2Switch has to drive from point A to B, why won't they be transported by our train? We already have a concrete cooperation with World Cooks, because they also offer arrangements which include a ride with our train, while we can offer an arrangement which includes dinner at World Cooks. Then you will strengthen each other.

(Manager, Solar Train)

A manager of World Cooks thought the cooperation between work corporations can be very useful if a participant is not entirely happy at his current work corporation: "if someone is somewhere else and he says he would like to cook, well then they just have to call us. That little network has to be more visible". She also wanted the municipality to assist more with regards to achieving re-employment. Many work corporations expressed their doubts whether they can really realise the expected outflow to regular work. They often lack the experience in getting in touch with the regular labour market. This knowledge is available at the specialised departments of the municipality, they argue.

A fourth potential problem is that there is a tension between the performance targets and the type of clients that are selected by the municipality. It could be that if the performance targets are difficult to reach, work corporations could request a higher entry level in terms of social skills and intelligence. Then the question would be whether the original target group enters the work corporation.

The municipality wants to take enough time to see if the concept can develop into a successful instrument. Hence, at least all current work corporations will continue in the near future. It is too early to say something about the "success" of work corporations. The municipality will carry out an evaluation at the end of 2012. Currently, project leaders are satisfied how things are going right now, particularly when it comes to the personal development of the participants. The number of work corporations is now set at sixteen. The municipality especially hopes that more private companies will be interested in forming a work corporation by offering single learn-work trajectories.

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A Future for Everybody

40.1. Short description

Housing corporation Portaal, together with the municipality of Nijmegen, started the project “A Future for Everybody” in 2009 because the province (Gelderland) reserved money for the development of “innovative living arrangements” within a larger programme. It was not stated clearly what was meant by “innovative living arrangements”, but the focus had to be vulnerable groups. For Portaal, it was about participation in the broad sense – participation in the local community as well as contacts among residents.

The plan is directed at the neighbourhood of *Wolfskuil* (Wolf's Hollow), which is located in the city part *Oud-West*. It was built partly in the period 1910-20, and partly after the Second World War. Relatively many people with a weak or vulnerable socio-economic background live here. The mean age is higher than average and there is a larger share of ethnic minorities than in the city as a whole. Social cohesion is under threat because of great distance between native residents and ethnic minorities, but also between “traditional” residents and newcomers, a lack of involvement with the neighbourhood, and nuisance on the streets, particularly by youths. However, there are some signs that the quality of the social climate is slowly increasing (Gemeente Nijmegen 2012).

The central goal of the project is to involve residents in the restructuring of the neighbourhood. In collaboration with residents, ideas should be developed about innovative forms of housing pertaining to themes such as welfare, care, education and work. The project entails the rebuilding of a square and the development of houses for mentally ill residents as well as for elderly residents. There are also plans to build dwellings especially for the elderly of ethnic minorities, in combination with houses for youngsters and/or teen mothers, in order to stimulate the interaction and integration between these groups. There are two important sub-goals: (1) to have a process aimed at connecting the needs of residents, active societal partners and entrepreneurs; and (2) to experiment during the process with stimulating residents' own responsibility and entrepreneurship of vulnerable people. Since a lot of building plans had to be postponed because of the economic crisis, the focus is now especially on the social sub-goals. In general, the project fits the spirit of the new WMO law of societal development very well (see Introduction).

The project is divided into several phases. The first phase consists of employing a process manager, who is hired from an external consultancy company. In the second phase, this process manager makes an inventory of demand and offers in the neighbourhood on relevant issues. The next phase is designated to involve residents, front-runners, active societal partners such as the professional soccer club *Nijmegense Eendracht Combinatie* (NEC), entrepreneurs and (potential) end-users of the real estate in the development of innovative ideas. Then, it is decided whether the innovative forms of housing are feasible, and the sixth and last phase is appointed to implementation. The two last

phases are not executed yet. The municipality of Nijmegen and Portaal have set up the project together, but in the second and third phases the municipality is the main party, while in the fourth and fifth phase the housing corporation leads the project. In the last phase, both parties will deal with implementation and completion. The entire project costs around 150,000 euro, where 25,000 euro is contributed by Portaal and the municipality, and 100,000 euro is funded by the Province of Gelderland. The greatest part of this money used to pay for the process manager.

40.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

In the project plan it is stated that residents of the Wolfskuil, along with the “end users” of innovative forms of real estate, have to come up with concrete plans for the realisation of these innovations. They also should have a role in the development and implementation phase and have the final responsibility in daily practice after implementation. One of the basic principles of the project is to “make use of everybody’s talent and the focus on what is possible”. The project leader of Portaal underlines this: “It is not about doing everything for big groups of people, especially not that. It is about facilitating that they can do it by their selves”. How residents are seen exactly becomes clear in the way they were involved in the “goodbye” festival of a central, old square that was about to be demolished and rebuilt:

What we did is to say goodbye of the square with a lot of residents, where we also [involved] an artist and a poet from the neighbourhood, and a family who baked Turkish pizzas. [...] It was more in the direction of co-production, as in communicating about how was the neighbourhood, back then and now. We tell stories, you could tell your own story. There were different people who did something, made a product of the neighbourhood. Former residents were invited too, so it starts with thinking from the viewpoint of the resident, what would it mean for him or her? Next to resident they were a producer too that day.

(Process manager)

Hence, residents are regarded as co-producers rather than passive consumers. The idea is that people do something because they can experience direct benefits to themselves and to others. The head of the Hobby Centre said “the power of entrepreneurship,

the power of creating something on your own; that is important for the neighbourhood”. The process manager argued that it would be great if someone were to come into the Hobby Centre practising his or her hobby, and to see the same person as a small entrepreneur some time later. This is exactly what happened with one of the residents. He was the father of the family who baked Turkish pizzas (*lahmacun*) at the square. He received some help to buy a covered mobile stall, to sell his pizzas throughout the city regardless of the weather. This allows him to make some extra money next to his subsidised job. He also became a member of the neighbourhood committee as the only resident of foreign descent.

40.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The process manager started with a so-called “neighbourhood safari”. This is a method to get familiar with the neighbourhood by talking to residents and professionals, to come “behind the front door” of role models, but also of vulnerable persons. All these people were asked what they do in the neighbourhood, how they experience that, what needs to be done, what do people need to achieve that, what are their intentions, how do they work together, etc. Some people were asked to help with the so-called *Kuul* contact week, along with professionals from the most important organisations in the neighbourhood. During this week, residents and professionals paired up to consult other residents about their concerns, their needs and their willingness to become active in the local community. A total of 102 people were consulted. One result was that people would like to have more contact. It appeared to be that people have great willingness to do something for the neighbourhood too. Another very important outcome was that many networks exist in the neighbourhood which are not easily visible.

It was not only the social networks of residents that mattered. The network of local organisations was also crucial in encouraging participation. The project leader of Portaal emphasised this:

There is no longer any organisation that can do this on its own. You need cooperation on neighbourhood level with the most important stakeholders, to create a network in order to protect the most vulnerable areas. And at the same time, that regular networks keep an

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eye on other networks, for example women of migrant origins who cook every week. Actually there are two things, cooperation with other organisations and searching for networks you don't know.

(Project leader, Portaal)

Hence, different organisations play a role in the project. Investments are made in a so-called Hobby Centre, which is a place where residents can practice their hobbies and come together. The intention is to turn this centre into a so-called “neighbourhood factory”, which is supposed to become self-sufficient by delivering particular services or products by and for residents. Foundation Dagloon is also involved in the project. This foundation gives homeless people the opportunity to work for a small reimbursement. They were asked to help with demolition work. In the same vein, people who are mentally ill participate in cleaning back alleys and maintaining playgrounds. Although attempts were made to involve ethnic minorities too, it appeared difficult to reach them.

40.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The most important impact on the governance of the local welfare system in Nijmegen would be that the intentions of the project demand a change in attitude from professionals and local administrators. Stimulating the involvement of citizens can be facilitated, but also hindered by them. This was underlined by the process manager:

An aspect in which I am now... is what is the role of partners and the role of the government, or the role of Portaal. Because they can help or bother a lot. They can really discourage you taking up the initiative. For example, a group of residents would maintain a piece of ground. They ploughed and sowed the ground together and grass and flowers started growing and what happened one day... the municipality came and they mowed and straightened it. So goodbye initiative. [...] It is about that public official, or those few officials, that they are willing to listen, that they are very patient, because a delay will come, it will be difficult sometimes. And that they believe that those citizens can do a part themselves. And that they don't take over, but that they only facilitate and keep their tasks clear. Then it might be successful.

(Process manager)

For Portaal, this requires a shift in culture. In the case of the goodbye festival of the square, the housing corporation would have done it completely differently in the past, the process manager said: “Portaal in this case, and the municipality would say, well, we order catering, place a draft and the Alderman says his story, done.” In the interview with a resident, it becomes clear that such a shift requires time. When he requested a permit to start his small pizza business, the municipality stumbled over rules and regulations and granted his request only after many phone calls and letters. Also, he notes that “housing corporations only think about themselves”. Still, the project leader of Portaal argued this situation is no longer feasible. Recent changes in policies and thinking oblige Portaal to think beyond its own organisation, which was rarely done before.

I think that the recognition of the presence of networks and that they are everywhere might be the most important discovery. But you have to look for them. Maybe that is the most innovative, how basal it might sound. Consciously searching for networks within groups you never hear or see, we never did that, neither the municipality.

(Project leader, Portaal)

Linked to this is the aim to connect traditionally active societal organisations to less obvious partners, such as entrepreneurs, the soccer club NEC and educational organisations. The process manager managed to bring a group of entrepreneurs together who meet a few times per month. They agreed to provide some services for weak groups in the neighbourhood for free, such as free painting lessons. Bigger companies, such as a bank, a supermarket and a health insurance organisation are involved too, although it is not clear yet what their exact contribution would be.

During the project the idea of a so-called “neighbourhood factory” developed. This factory would resemble a trust as it is known in the UK. Portaal saw an example of such a neighbourhood trust a few years ago and they would like to see if it can be realised in Nijmegen. To further develop this idea, the Hobby Centre was chosen as the location. It is believed that is a place where everybody feels welcome. In the factory, several main aspects of the project have to come together: participation, getting together and a sense of ownership. Also, local entrepreneurs and artists should be given space to get involved in the factory.

The process manager and project leader of Portaal explain how it would work:

Wouldn't it be great if that former shoe factory becomes a neighbourhood factory, where you can develop activities for and by the neighbourhood. Where the idea is with each other, for each other. So the people have to be owner of that neighbourhood.

(Process manager)

Residents have to manage and maintain a neighbourhood centre. If everything goes well, they have to generate income from this and one way or another they should reinvest this money back into the neighbourhood. You can do that in different ways. You could talk to people, those women who come together every week to cook something, well let's sell those products. [...] But you can think of everything, people can work with local entrepreneurs, cleaning of back alleys, organising activities. Maintenance, which is now the responsibility of the municipality, could be handed to such an organisation. What we [as a housing corporation] do in the living environment could go there too, so there are plenty of opportunities.

(Project leader, Portaal)

According to the director of the Hobby Centre, the idea of a self-sufficient neighbourhood centre has two causes. First, the dependence on subsidies from the municipality is a cyclical problem: you can only plan a few years ahead, because you never know what is going to happen when a new executive board is installed. Secondly, it would increase independence of the demands of the municipality. If they give a subsidy, they often would like to keep control over the way the money is spent. Still, it could be that in the first stage of the factory some professionals of Portaal will be part of the management, delivering knowledge and competence to support the development of an independent organisation.

In the end, to have a successful neighbourhood factory, the role of residents is of great importance.

The director of the Hobby Centre thinks that the neighbourhood factory stands or falls with the sense of ownership. Residents should be aware that a neighbourhood factory not only provides services or products for them, but they are a part of it: "It means that people don't have to think like, this is what we get subsidy for, no, we have to work together for it, just like other companies. [...] This [the Neighbourhood Factory] is not a company with a pure consumer and a producer, it is a co-production" (Director, Hobby Centre).

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Sirocco

41.1. Short description

In 2009, three Moroccan fathers in Nijmegen saw that successful “neighbourhood father” projects were running in other cities in the Netherlands. Together with a local welfare worker from Tandem Welfare they visited such a project in The Hague to see how it was organised. The fathers thought that such an initiative could be carried out in their neighbourhood, Hatert, too - older residents should be able to give other senior residents a feeling of safety if they frequently walked around the area. Their seniority and attachment to the neighbourhood would give them the authority to warn youngsters if they were causing problems. A “district manager” from the municipality very much approved of this idea and gave permission to work out a plan. Because Hatert was on the list of so-called “attention areas”, the municipality had access to national funds through which the project could be subsidised. The municipality, however, asked for several conditions to be met before the project could start: firstly, the project had to involve not only Moroccan fathers but men and women from different backgrounds; and secondly, the group of residents had to consist of at least ten residents. Hence, the Moroccan founders and the welfare worker started recruiting volunteers and, eventually, around fifteen people joined the Sirocco team.

Although it was not a necessary requirement for participation, many of the participants were unemployed. Among them were native residents, but also people from diverse ethnic minorities. Once the group of participants had been formed, a more detailed plan was worked out, together with the participants. Officially, the goal was formulated as follows:

“To improve the quality of life and safety in Hatert, to improve the communication with and between residents, to increase social control in the area, to form a bridge between parents and (their) youngsters, to motivate youngsters to work on good future perspectives”.

Subsequently, the participants were given walkie-talkies and red jackets with a Sirocco logo to be recognisable and started walking through the neighbourhood in pairs. Their task was to engage in conversation with other residents and report any affairs concerning safety and public order to the neighbourhood police officer. The idea was that the Sirocco volunteers would merely deal with small, simple things. Volunteers would, on the basis of their equal position, talk with residents about issues on liveability of the neighbourhood.

The group took surveillance training provided by a regional educational centre. This consisted of basic competences, dealing with walkie-talkies, clothing, rights and obligations, *etc.* There were also meetings to encourage team building. After a few weeks of training, they hit the streets.

In the beginning, the project was considered very successful. Residents as well as shop owners were positive about the Sirocco surveillance teams. Aldermen, council members and political parties expressed their appreciation for the initiative. Sirocco was even awarded a prize for best neighbourhood initiative from the local Socialist Party in 2010. There was also plenty of positive media coverage from the local newspaper and television. Nevertheless, at some point, the tone around the Sirocco project changed. For instance, some shop owners started complaining that the volunteers were giving them instructions on what to do and what not. There were also incidents where some teenagers intimidated the volunteers. Furthermore, cooperation within the group of participants did not always go smoothly. In short, positive comments turned negative.

Two elements in particular seem to have contributed to the escalation of problems. First, (partly) because of all the positive attention, (some) volunteers slowly shifted away from their original tasks and extended their responsibilities to other issues. For example, they were doing rounds inside shops instead of staying on the streets. Secondly, it was difficult for the professionals to explain to the volunteers that they had to stick to simple tasks, as well as signalling problems that existed in the personal lives of participants. For instance, cliques were formed within the group which made it hard to make pairs. Also, some volunteers had already experienced conflicts with youngsters in the neighbourhood before they entered the Sirocco team. The project was finally stopped in 2011, when one of the participants of the Sirocco project received serious threats from young residents. Although an attempt was made to restart the project later on with a new group of volunteers, this failed.

41.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The underlying assumption of the project was that older residents have a certain amount of authority that will allow them to adjust the behaviour of younger citizens. In the official reaction of the mayor and the executive board it was stated that this “ideological” framework appeared to be unachievable. For the former project leader of Tandem, the actual goal of Sirocco was broader than this: “Actually, our intention, and also that of the people, was that if you are visible and you are interested [in other people] and you start

communicating, to get in contact with residents and youngsters, you have already won 80 percent” (former project leader, Tandem).

For Tandem, it was about supporting and facilitating people who want to contribute to “neighbourhood society” by stimulating contact and communication among residents. In the case of Sirocco, this happened to be in the field of safety, but it could be on any topic. Yet, the municipality might have had more concrete ideas about the merits of the project. As the project leader of Tandem said: “A Department Safety or Surveillance will look at it from an entirely different perspective. Contribution to safety, contribution to quality of life, the big words, contribution to decreasing vandalism and things like that” (former project leader, Tandem).

Hence, the initial goal of the project was lost over time and there was a process of goal displacement. The former district manager agrees that in the end, the activities of the volunteers did not match the essence of the project anymore. For him, the essence was: “That people who live in the neighbourhood get the feeling that there are people in the public space who have a personal empathy for the well-being of residents and have time for a little chit-chat about everything, but meanwhile looking out if everything goes well” (former district manager).

According to the district manager, similar projects elsewhere perform better because volunteers stay out of the picture. Residents should keep an eye on the neighbourhood, but problems should be solved by experts. During the project, volunteers were sometimes seen as “amateur substitutes” of police officers or supervisors. Perhaps some of them indeed felt like semi-professionals.

41.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The final responsibility for the project was laid at the former Alderman of Neighbourhood Issues. The project was co-financed from the so-called “integral safety budget”, which meant that mayor was partly responsible as well. The district manager of Hatert was responsible for finances, support and communication with other parties in the municipality. He had a lot of meetings with the project leader of Tandem. If requested, he was present at meetings with the project leader and the volunteers. It was agreed that both

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he and Tandem arranged external communication. Tandem was responsible for setting up the project. They used their network and contacts to involve more volunteers than the first three initiators. They also had to bring structure to the group concerning dividing tasks, education, work schedule, appointments, communication within the group, evaluation, financial accounting and making the group independent within 3 years. Other organisations involved were the (neighbourhood) police and the Surveillance Department, a subdivision of the police. In practice, the volunteers hit the streets every day from the afternoon until the evening. They had weekly meetings. Because one of the volunteers had worked as a supervisor, he helped with the coaching of other volunteers.

41.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Sirocco shed light on the relationship between citizens' contributions and the regular work of professionals. At the beginning of the project, it was not defined what to expect from the volunteers. Volunteers started to do things they were not supposed to do and/or which should have been left to professionals. According to the project leader of Tandem, **regarding volunteers as substitutes of qualified workers placed too much of a burden on the participants.** The high expectations conflicted with the voluntary character of the project:

For example, [when the municipality says] "doesn't there have to be a signed contract", then I think, what are you doing? You get high expectations and things go wrong. You see that a lot by the way, if people want to do something in the neighbourhood and they are confronted with the funder. The funder can't say "that's a nice idea, here's the money and we'll hear from you how it went". [...] Now it is right at the beginning, giving money, [then] rules, rules, accountability, accountability. How does that relate to activating people who want to do something?

(Former project leader, Tandem)

A similar problem appeared in the attempt to restart the project. This time, the conditions of participation were tightened. The first three initiators, especially, did not want to join under these new rules. Eventually, it was impossible to create a new group of substantial proportions. At least in part this could be

explained by the high expectations that were written down. Hence, making regular policy of civil initiatives may give tensions:

If it's made policy, know what you ask. You can ask a lot of residents, you can ask a lot of citizens, but if it is regarded as an instrument for your own goals, instead of for what the residents want, where do they benefit from themselves, how do they want to shape their lives in their streets or neighbourhood. If you don't take that as your starting position you get all kind of issues.

(Former project leader, Tandem)

In the end, a lot has been learned from *Sirocco*. The district manager still believes in these kinds of projects, as long as there is good professional guidance and professionals and residents understand each other:

But I do know that the management has to be a lot... especially when it concerns safety, that you really need to be on top of it. You cannot do it without a professional, a supervisor or a neighbourhood police officer for example. Otherwise it will develop as it has developed now. [...] Professionals and residents have to trust each other for 100 per cent, whether it is on the field of safety, communication, work and income or anything. If professionals and residents can reach out to each other from that specific angle – for the residents it is what they know about the neighbourhood because they live there and for the professionals it is their expertise on that field. If you bind that together, it runs very smoothly.

(Former district manager)

For the former project leader of Tandem, citizen participation will be difficult to realise when projects become associated with just one particular topic. Safety is a topic which is especially hard to make the responsibility of residents. For example, heavy criminality cannot be handled by volunteers. Hence, it might be a strategy to connect a thing like safety to a broader topic of liveability. Residents could play different roles to contribute to the liveability of a neighbourhood. When it comes to safety, actions of residents will too easily conflict with work already done by other professionals, the project leader argues.

To summarise, several lessons can be learned from the Sirocco project:

- > Tasks of volunteers should be clear.
- > The relationship of the task of volunteers and tasks of professional organisations should be clear.
- > Media attention and high expectations can affect the attitude of volunteers.
- > Professionals should be able to steer volunteers in their tasks and group process.
- > Motivations of volunteers can be ambiguous.

Conclusions

Sustainability

Although all innovations were, at least at the start, dependent on public funding, an explicit wish exists among members of all three projects to continue even if financial resources dry up. However, this urge to be self-sufficient was driven by different logic. Work corporations would prefer to earn revenues of their own because the municipality lacks financial resources to provide extensive re-employment instruments. To be self-sufficient as a work corporation is a necessity rather than a choice. In the case of A Future for Everybody, it was not only the uncertainty of receiving continuous funding that inspired the project management to develop a self-sufficient “neighbourhood factory”, but also reluctance to be dependent on a single funder. Hence, the independence of subsidies will safeguard the sustainability of innovations on the one hand, while it may give more control for the initiators of innovations on the other. Nevertheless, these kinds of projects may always require some professional guidance at the front end, for instance, when it comes to knowledge about certain rules and regulations. The money needed for this kind of project management now comes partly from a housing corporation. Since housing corporations are suffering big losses due to a housing market deadlock, lowered house prices and increased rental income levies (and sometimes risky investment strategies), it remains to be seen whether they still find it valuable to invest in “social sub-goals”.

One legacy of these projects seems to have been a shift towards the acceptance of a more active role of citizens. The idea is that co-production between citizens and local agents will increase the effectiveness of services and simultaneously improve social cohesion in neighbourhoods (see Fledderus *et al.* forthcoming). This movement requires a cultural adjustment within professional organisations, which makes it even more evident that it is innovative indeed. For housing corporation Portaal, the shift to more resident involvement was made very consciously. They agreed that their traditional approach no longer fitted current times. However, Sirocco would not have existed if residents themselves did not express their wish for such a project. The alderman responsible was not in favour of citizen participation in neighbourhood safety at that time, but political support was given since the initiative came from residents. It might be for this reason too – *i.e.* the fact that it was not the choice of the police and municipality – that the project encountered problems. Upgrading the community component in mixed welfare systems often ends up in failure because organisations “do not speak people’s language ... or they put people under pressure by demanding too much co-production and compliance” (Evers and Ewert 2012: 18). In particular, the propensity of professionals and municipal workers to pull welfare issues towards themselves seems to be tenacious. This may especially be the case when it concerns areas where it is believed that citizens do not have sufficient skills or authority, such as safety:

Yes because then people have to come up with things and then eventually it turns into a administrative idea, or a municipal idea and then there is of course an outburst when something happens and then it is left to the institutions. And safety, especially when you look at it isolated, that is a terribly difficult thing to make it something that belongs to the neighbourhood, because there are so many catches involved.

(Project leader, Tandem Welzijn)

A Future for Everybody might perform better in this respect because it shows characteristics such as “learning, collective rethinking or behavioural changes” (Evers and Ewert 2012: 18). While this project actually failed to reach some important targets concerning the development of real estate, it provided soil for new initiatives. Hence, at the end

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of the day, sustainability of the projects itself does not seem the ultimate goal. Rather, it is about the wish that fundamental ideas for solutions for societal problems survive.

I think, the fact that the municipality has given a follow-up project to the process manager, and Portaal probably will start with that social innovation of that trust... That indicates that at least the cooperating partners in this have turned their vision completely. Their vision is a lot different, at least by the people who are involved in this project, than before. Because we really have seen the importance of that participation. And we always say that but here we are really doing it.

(Project leader, Portaal)

In the case of Sirocco, it was about the idea of having residents take care of problems in their neighbourhood themselves, rather than having organisations and institutions come over and solve issues:

You can approach it like hey, you are the resident in the neighbourhood. Well of course that does not matter that you identify with that neighbourhood and that you can do all sorts of things there, but that for example people can live in the neighbourhood and there are people who play a role in the neighbourhood to give form to that community. But then you approach it from a whole, then you also see it more like if you want something, what would you then like? Also because of the idea the one has to do with the other. The same if it is a mess on street and litter and rubbish, what ... do you say yes that will clean the Dar [waste company] or do you want to do something with that, do you want something to do with schools, do you want something with neighbourhood rangers.

(Former project leader, Tandem)

The Alderman of Work and Income explicitly says that work corporations are used as an instrument to introduce a new way of thinking – and that that should be considered as the most innovative feature of the new policy:

The innovative part is that you give all stakeholders in the field a role. Not like somebody has an active role and somebody else a passive one. In my eyes everybody has an active role. [...] We kind of break the taboo... everybody can think something of it and say something, but also take his responsibility. But that is

how it should go. Otherwise you get a situation where society says: "jobseekers at social services, that is the responsibility of the municipality". Jobseekers who say: "yeah I get a job from you". (...) Well that is what I try to break through this way of working, and such a work corporation is a means (to do so).

(Alderman of Work and Income)

Furthermore, the analysis suggests that **innovative ideas at a higher level provide an inspiring environment for new ideas on a lower level**. It was found that more complex – or "governance" – innovations (work corporations and A Future for Everybody) go hand in hand with innovations in approaches and instruments. The several work corporations all have distinct features and some of them may be treated as innovations themselves. This includes new forms of education, innovative ways of connecting the labour market to disadvantaged job seekers, and unorthodox ways of making revenues in a social context. Within A Future for Everybody the unconventional instrument of a "neighbourhood safari" was used, while the *Kuul* contact week could be regarded as innovative too.

Finally, the selection of innovations does not represent "best practices". In fact, Sirocco shows how the course of development of innovations can be fairly unpredictable: it is both a prize-winning and a failed project. In the other cases, it is still unknown whether the projects can effectively be regarded as a "success". Because work corporations have been promoted as a promising instrument by the Alderman, it is politically sensitive if success (in terms of getting people back to work) cannot be proven. This could threaten the sustainability of the policy:

Politics is of course, yes they want to score fast, because within 4 years it has to be a success. Yes that is sometimes contradicting with yes, the development of an instrument, the learning during practice before you get results. And moreover, in this present situation, it is regardless of which instrument difficult to reach an outflow rate of more than 30 per cent, or well, 40 per cent. So it is especially the art to keep persisting, every time again. But that is very complicated for politics. Because especially now, in March there are elections again, you feel that in everything. There have to be results now.

(Programme manager, Work and Income)

They are innovations because "they present

themselves as promising, rise aspirations and attract hopes for better coping strategies and solutions”, not just because they work “better” than old arrangements (Evers and Ewert 2012: 3).

Diffusion

The examples of work corporations and Sirocco can be seen as “prototypes”; models that have been found in different countries and cities and have already proven to work (Evers and Ewert 2012: 6). Work integration enterprises, to which work corporations belong, are described in the literature as “real” enterprises because they deliver goods and services for (social) markets, yet they are “social” enterprises because they also create opportunities for work and social inclusion (Nyssens 2006). A project like Sirocco has been preceded by many other neighbourhood father projects. The first project with Moroccan fathers patrolling through the neighbourhood started in 1999 in Amsterdam. Since then, same types of projects have been spread all over Europe. They have also been documented relatively well (for example, de Gruyter and Pels 2005). In the case of Sirocco, it was indeed a project in another city that got the attention of some residents in Nijmegen. The former project leader of Sirocco explains this “idea phase”:

First of all, you see those things appear elsewhere in the country. Amsterdam is of course an example of that, of neighbourhood fathers. With other projects we were also already busy to involve people in their own environment, the liveability, well actually we have always done that as welfare work. In this case, the question was raised, in other parts of the city by the way, about can we not do something with neighbourhood fathers. From the assumption that Moroccan fathers, if you let them carry it out in a relationship with the youngsters, that there is the acceptance of their authority, a presumption. That has not been proven according to me, not at all. But that is an argument right? That it is used throughout the country.

The available funds and goals of the *wijkaanpak* then spurred the project. Also within A Future for Everybody, ideas have been picked up from elsewhere, but this does not mean these ideas are accepted just like that.

And that such an innovation or idea happen to come from Portaal in Nijmegen, that that is widely accepted

in Portaal while a colleague of mine went to England 2 years ago to see what is up with that trust, back then it was said here “should we do that, are we ready for that, do we want that and should we do that?”. Slowly the recognition starts to grow, in the whole organisation of Portaal, that these innovations are very important to us and that they have a clear value, for our client and for us too in that sense.

(Project leader, Portaal)

What is striking, however, is that innovations do not use any blueprint to mimic what is already out there. This implies that innovations, although they can build on prototypes, are rarely copied just like that. The factor of societal support might play a role here. For example, to be able to assure the development of work corporations, the municipality had to involve some local front-runners and specialised organisations. The absence of a worked-out plan gave room for these organisations to steer the decision making.

Interestingly, all three innovations differ in origin. The concept of work corporations was coined by the municipality of Nijmegen. Sirocco is a clear example of a bottom-up initiative of residents. A Future for Everybody, a complex neighbourhood revitalisation project, was initiated by Portaal, a housing corporation in Nijmegen. Yet, regardless of which actor initiated the project, in the end they are dependent on the support of stakeholders. In particular, the support of citizens will increasingly be important if the trend towards individual responsibilities and self-reliance continues. In the case of work corporations, a municipal policy advisor noted that it is already becoming more difficult to find clients who want to work at a work corporation. The concept of a “neighbourhood factory”, a kind of trust managed by residents for residents, is obviously completely dependent on active residents. When people tried to give Sirocco a second chance, the initiators were no longer motivated to continue. **The biggest challenge for local welfare policies may be to provide opportunities for citizens to co-produce solutions for social problems and to facilitate this active citizenship without taking over.**

NL

Nijmegen

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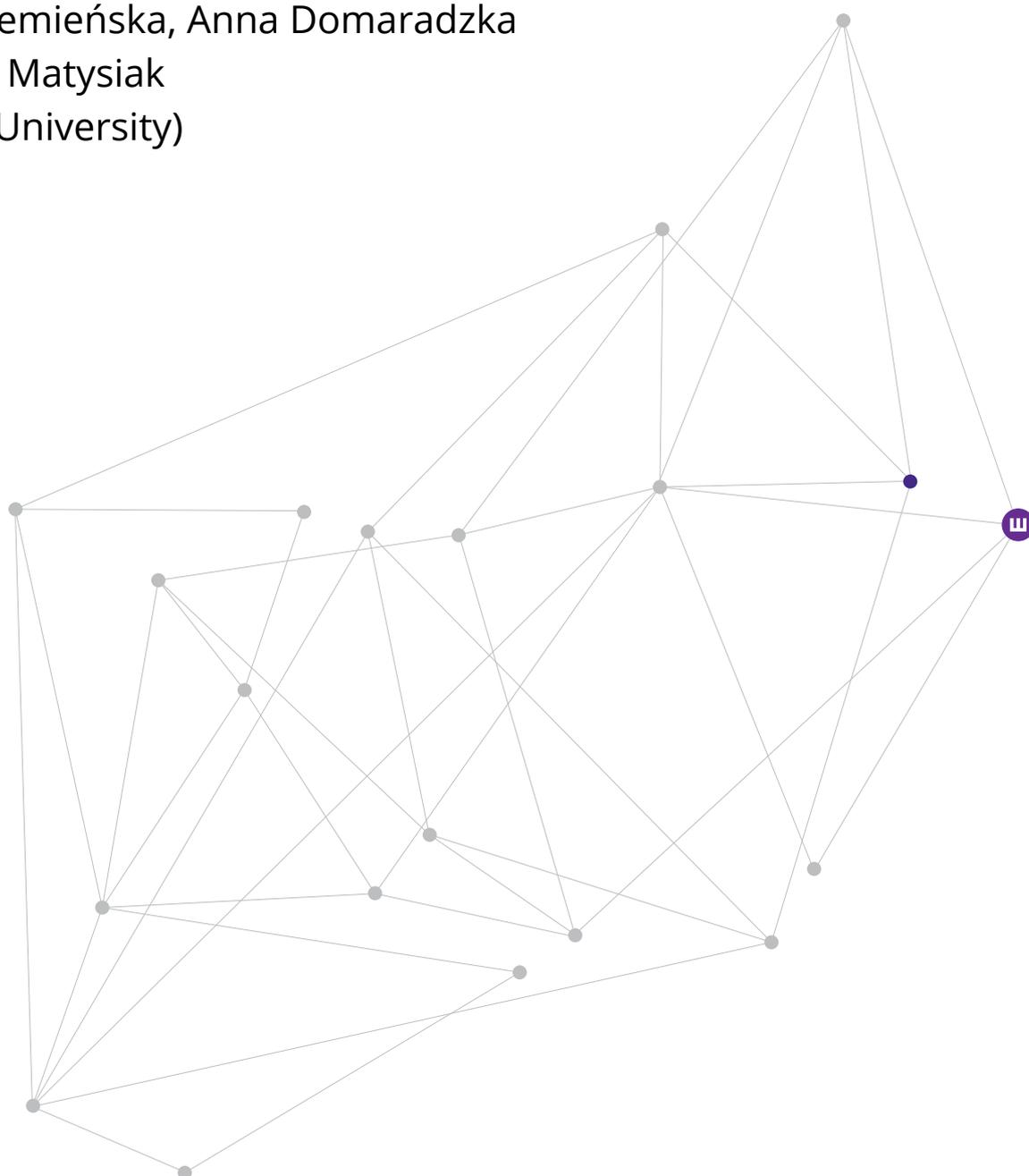
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Table 1 - Examples of work corporations in Nijmegen

PL Poland

Warsaw

Renata Siemieńska, Anna Domaradzka
and Ilona Matysiak
(Warsaw University)



PL

Warsaw

Authors

Renata Siemieńska, Anna Domaradzka and Ilona Matysiak
(Warsaw University)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Citizenship
Grassroots initiative
Labour market
Local government
Lone mothers
Participation
Social economy

Innovation is defined in many ways by social scientists, people connected with business or technology. Shortly speaking, it is a way to improve the systems that already exist, making them better, faster and cheaper (Iuri and Kuhn 1998). What means “better, faster, cheaper” depends on the area of interest. In our case it is social policy in local communities, including discussed and implemented innovations, which are expected to meet the needs of different segments of local communities. The innovations have different meanings depending on specific social, economic, cultural and political context.

Putnam (1993) stresses two fundamental points that have to be taken into consideration in studying how institutions and members of communities can collaborate to meet their goals:

1. *Institutions shape politics. The rules and standard operating procedures that make up institutions leave their imprint on political outcomes by structuring political behaviour.... Institutions influence outcomes because they shape actor's identities, power and strategies.*
2. *Institutions are shaped by history. Whatever other factors may affect their form, institutions have inertia and “robustness”*

(Putnam 1993: 8-9)

He also points out the role of features of social capital in the process of collaborations of governments, other stakeholders (e.g. third sector organizations (TSOs)) and individual members of local communities. Social capital is defined as trust, norms and networks shaped over time (Putnam 1993: 170; Sherraden et al. 2002). Social capital can influence the types of innovations proposed by different stakeholders and their chances of being accepted and implemented.

Warsaw is the capital and largest city of Poland. It is situated in central Poland, in Mazowieckie province on the bank of the Vistula river. It has a population of approximately 1.7 million (2010), and the Warsaw metropolitan area has approximately 2.6 million inhabitants. The area of the city covers 517 km², while the city's agglomeration covers 6,100 km². Warsaw is the ninth largest city in the European Union (EU) by population. The population density is 3,300 people per km². Warsaw is one of the largest sub-regions of Poland with regard to potential and economic development.

The social problems of modern Warsaw are strongly associated with its past. Seventy-five per cent of the city's infrastructure was destroyed at the end of World War II. The number of inhabitants dropped dramatically as a result of the war. Reconstruction of the city took place in the new, communist system. The new authorities decided to rebuild the city quickly. The act on expropriation, liquidation of private property of urban areas and the buildings that survived the war (on the basis of the so-called “Bierut's Decree”) meant, in fact, that they were taken over by the state and managed in accordance with the new political, social and economic plans. New urban



solutions often lacked any associations with the previous urban design. New residential buildings were constructed by the state and settled according to various schemes: the users often paid nothing or little.

After the political transformation in 1989, an attempt was made to reconstitute real estate property to the pre-war owners or their heirs, as well as at the privatisation of new buildings. This resulted in numerous problems, which are now influencing the situation of the city inhabitants and the perspectives for future development of public and private infrastructure. These factors led to the emergence of a particularly vulnerable group of inhabitants of Warsaw – those living in tenement houses belonging to the municipal housing resources, which are currently being returned to the pre-war owners of these buildings. In fact, the inhabitants are in conflict with the tenement house owners, as the city, which illegally took over private property during communist times, is not a party to any disputes or conflicts that arise.

The differences that exist in public discourse, as well as discrepancies between perceived needs and significance of problems encountered by different vulnerable groups, between their members and the municipal authorities, result in a certain degree of chaos in implementation of the social policy in the city and a situation, in which the inhabitants become animators of innovation. For instance, problems with the institutional infrastructure (e.g. related to child care) in Warsaw, particularly in the new parts of the city, constructed in the recent years, encourage the inhabitants to develop civic initiatives in order to engage the authorities in new investments and make sure that they will be available to those who need

them. A similar situation can be observed in the case of people living in houses being returned to their previous owners, when the tenants organise themselves to exert impact on the municipal authorities in order to cause amendment of legal regulations and make sure their interests are protected. Therefore, new solutions are often initiated by the inhabitants, who express their needs and point to ways that could satisfy them. Later on, these serve as a basis for the establishment of partnerships between citizens, TSOs and the municipal or district authorities. Sometimes, the scenario of innovation is different. The city shows initiative and searches for partners among the entities and organisations, mentioned above.

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MaMa Foundation

Child care is important in Warsaw due to recent demographic trends. As a result of demographic changes, the number of children at kindergarten age has increased, while the number of those older than grammar school students has been low; the number of the elderly has increased as well. In addition, migration between districts can be observed. In some districts (Mokotów, Żoliborz and Wola), the population is decreasing (as a result of the inhabitants moving outside the city, leaving apartments of low quality), while in the suburbs - Białołęka, Ursus, Wawer, Wesoła, Ursynów or Wilanów - the population is growing. Warsaw and its surrounding area are an attractive region to settle – migration factors will be increasingly important in determination of the demand for education services in the capital city. The number of children at kindergarten age is growing constantly. The subsequent years will be those of a baby boom – it is estimated that in 2013 there will be 40,000 children at kindergarten age. In Warsaw, kindergarten education at private and public kindergartens and kindergarten departments at elementary school is provided for about 90 per cent of children, which is a very high rate in Poland (the national average is 37 per cent, which is the lowest indicator of popularisation of kindergarten education in the EU member states).

In contrast, at present, the public debate in Warsaw and in Poland often mentions the “social disadvantages” of the employment of women and of cultural changes, which are based on a shift from a collectivist to an individualised culture, in which individuals prefer to satisfy their own needs and not to perform their traditional family duties. Conservative participants of the debate stress that women fail to meet their traditionally defined obligations, and the emerging partnership family model is a way of elimination of differences between the genders, leading to a crisis of masculinity. At the same time, research shows that, within Polish society, the accepted family model has been changing as well. The number of supporters of the model, in which the woman is to take care of home and children, and the man is to provide maintenance, has been decreasing (85 per cent of respondents in 1992, 79 per cent in 1995, 74 per cent in 1997, 74 per cent in 1999 and 69 per cent in 2002).

These processes have been accompanied by substantial changes in life aspirations. Women want to work not only to get a return of their expenditure on education. More often, they perceive the opportunity to attain self-fulfilment through work. In 2012, 46 per cent of men and 56 per cent of women disagreed with the opinion that housework could be as satisfactory for a woman as professional work. At the same time, 32 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women rejected the opinion that small children suffer when their mothers work (unpublished data, see WP2 and WP3 reports). In this situation, the female inhabitants of Warsaw are experiencing pressure from two opposing forces – the conservative discourse, putting emphasis on the significance of a mother’s care, while at the same time, they are expected to work, and, in many cases, they also want to develop their careers. Thus, the opinions of some politicians and the Catholic Church, formulated in the public discourse, are not consistent with opinions of the

majority of society and with changes in social roles of women and men in Poland, visible particularly in large cities, such as Warsaw. Outside feminist circles, there are only rare voices stating that a lack of professional activity of women and their contribution to household work do not have to be defined in accordance with the traditional category of a “housewife”, subordinated to her husband and children.

42.1. Short description

MaMa Foundation is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) established in June 2006 in Warsaw. It works for mothers’ rights in Poland by organising social campaigns, such as “O Mamma Mia! I cannot drive my pram in here!” – a campaign for adapting public space for prams and wheelchairs; campaigns for employees’ rights, such as “Horror stories”, which lists examples of dismissing mothers from their jobs; online help and workshops for refugee women and many more. Since October 2006, MaMa, together with Muranów cinema, has been organising “Baby at the cinema” thanks to which parents can watch films while their children play with baby sitters. This project is currently being transferred to other cities in Poland. The foundation also runs a mothers’ time bank, encouraging mothers to share the time and exchange support, e.g. in child care. Since 2007 the foundation supports local moms’ clubs by providing workshops for mothers, local leaders and representatives of local authorities. One such local moms’ club is located in the Targówek district, which is one of the most deprived areas in Warsaw. The activities of this club are financed by local authorities of the district and the public library of Targówek. MaMa Foundation promotes also the economic values of women’s housework.

42.2. Conceptions of ways of addressing users

The activities of the MaMa Foundation are based on the concept that mothers with small children are citizens with full rights like everybody else and that they should not be excluded from participation in the local public life due to cultural stereotypes (e.g. that mothers with small children should spend time mostly at home and its closest surroundings) or architectonic barriers (e.g. regarding the lack of public space for prams and places for changing diapers and breastfeeding). The ideas and projects of MaMa Foundation

are linked to such concepts as social economy and social cooperatives, grass-roots solidarity and mutual help and feminism. It was established by mothers of small children.

The crucial ways of addressing the foundation’s beneficiaries include social campaigns, campaigns for employees’ rights, workshops and training, legal, psychological and civil advice, artistic and educational projects for parents with children and publishing and research activities. For instance, since 2010, the foundation has been implementing the project “Warsaw Housewives’ Club” (*Koło Gospodyń Miejskich*). In cooperation with a group of experts (such as sociologists dealing with gender studies), the organisation has formulated recommendations for the Polish parliament on the economic value of work performed by women within the framework of fulfilment of their household duties:

We show and we calculate it precisely that housework performed by women, most often, in 95 per cent in Poland, is quantifiable and it is possible to calculate its precise value in money. At present, this is a salary of about PLN 2,800 – including the tasks that are performed on behalf of the family. So, this has a market value. We are introducing a new way of thinking about this. It is not all about paying women for doing housework, but about actually seeing this work, being able to notice it. To show that this is a part of economy, because this money, although virtual, is earned thanks to the tasks that the woman performs

(WP5.Care1)

“Warsaw Housewives’ Club” also includes workshops for women who are not working professionally. These are aimed at increasing the awareness of women in terms of partnership-based division of tasks at home and providing the participants with specific tools that will help them in negotiations with their husband or partner:

... the female inhabitants of Warsaw attend our workshops, there have been five editions conducted so far, and the interest is really great. Perhaps it’s because we invite psychologists and mediators to teach women how to make their partners clean up their socks, which, I think, is innovative. In fact, we are not afraid of the very trivial subjects, we provide the tools – very specific ones. These are not just the meetings to complain about how bad it is, but to learn certain things as well

(WP5.Care1)

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Also, we found the foundation's project "Moms' Cooperative - the social project on preventing women's exclusion from labour market and society" especially interesting. The main aim of the project is to support women, who are threatened with social exclusion, in terms of education, integration into the society and their future chances in the labour market. It includes both vocational and psychological training in order to strengthen the overall potential of its recipients. The project is addressed to about ten young and lone mothers from Warsaw, who gave a birth to their child before the age of 18 years and who are long-term unemployed (over 2 years, usually because of child care obligations). Also, the issues of possible domestic violence and conflicts with the law are taken into account. The specific activities within the project "Moms' Cooperative" included four types of educational workshops on social economy, social cooperatives, self-employment, marketing and promotion, folk art and psychological motivations. Currently, twelve young and lone mothers from Warsaw make up the cooperative, which creates, promotes and distributes regional and local handmade products inspired by folk art (toys, jewellery, accessories such as bags, cases for cell phones and iphones, souvenirs for tourists and office accessories – cases for laptops, covers for agendas and business cards holders, etc.). In the frame of the project, the design, creation and quality of products is supervised by experts from the State Ethnographical Museum in Warsaw. The members of the cooperative were chosen on the basis of their artistic skills and creativity. The idea of the project "Moms' Cooperative" emerged from the cooperation between MaMa Foundation with two other partners: the Orbis Hotel Group and the Accor Foundation. The social cooperative of young and lone unemployed mothers from Warsaw is claimed to be the first initiative of this kind in Poland.

42.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

As mentioned before, all the people who currently work for MaMa Foundation are women and mothers, so they have personally experienced various problems related to motherhood in Warsaw. Its chair is Sylwia Chutnik, a feminist, writer and certified guide to Warsaw, who has published several books well perceived by both readers and critics (*Pocket Calendar of Women*, *Little Girl* and *Women's Warsaw*). MaMa Foun-

ation currently employs two people (temporarily, within the projects) and on a regular basis cooperates with ten volunteers:

... we have a constant division of the structure, of course, this activity is also task-based, for specific projects, but we do our best to act on the basis of competences – each of us has a specific scope of duties and work. Of course, within the framework of this, there are specific activities.

(WP5.Care1)

It is also supported by various experts, e.g. lawyers, psychologists, trainers, scientists and artists, who take part in its activities when needed.

It has to be emphasised that, even when an initiative is directed only to adults, MaMa Foundation allows the participation of children or provides free child care during a workshop, training or meeting. The basic modes of working of MaMa Foundation are described as follows:

- > The Foundation cooperates on a regular basis with local authorities in Warsaw's districts in order to broaden mother- and child-friendly public spaces.
- > The members of its board, employees and experts participate in public debates and meetings and express in media their opinions on mothers' situations in private and professional life.

Usually, the foundation tries to spread its message in different levels of society at the same time, like in the case of the project "Warsaw Housewives' Club":

The initiative is, in fact, aimed at several social groups. The women – this is the workshop part, the society as a whole – some of the social campaigns and the recommendations, aimed at politicians representing all options in the Parliament and the local authorities, not only politicians, but also officers of specific departments or offices.

(WP5.Care1)

MaMa Foundation cooperates with such organisations and partners as the Association for Legal Intervention, ideologically diversified women's organisations, the Institute of Public Affairs (a think-tank research organisation), the Warsaw Municipal Office, local authorities at the level of Warsaw's districts, local politicians and the Warsaw Labour Office. Also, it participates in several third sector coalitions: the 8 March

Women's Agreement, the 11 November Agreement and the Coalition for Equal Opportunities. However, it has to be stressed that MaMa Foundation cooperates not only with structures having liberal or left-wing orientations: "We cooperate with various institutions; in many cases, these differ from us ideologically and politically, for instance, there are various Catholic organisations that deal with family issues. We look for coalitions whenever it seems that we can share an objective with anyone" (WP5.Care1).

MaMa Foundation's crucial projects are financed by the Accor Foundation (private sector), The Warsaw Labour Office (public sector), Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe (a public charity incorporated under the laws of the USA), the European Social Fund (ESF) (public sector; the MaMa Foundation takes part in the projects coordinated by the Warsaw local authorities). Apart from that, MaMa Foundation has a status of a public benefit organisation. According to Polish law on public good activity and volunteering, such organisations are allowed to receive 1 per cent of income tax from individuals, so they are tax-deductible organisations. To receive such status, an organisation has to be an NGO (political parties and trade unions do not qualify), involved in specific activities related to public good as described by the law, and be sufficiently transparent in its activities, governance and finances.

42.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

It seems that MaMa Foundation and its activities affected the local public discourse on mothers with small children as a group of particular needs and problems, especially regarding the participation in public places and city space. The foundation contributed significantly to growing awareness of the importance of mother- and child-friendly architecture and local public infrastructure related to culture and leisure. These issues were not seriously discussed before as mothers with small children were associated mostly with the private sphere and child care facilities. MaMa Foundation stresses also the important issue of work and care reconciliation by emphasising that motherhood does not have to be an obstacle to women's personal or/and professional development. Apart from that, it offers solutions in terms of employment and child care, which are alternative to those provided by public institutions. In the case of "Moms'

Cooperative", the project addresses a specific subgroup within long-term unemployed women – young single mothers – by using innovative means based on the concepts of social economy.

As for alternative ideas on child care, MaMa Foundation challenges the common belief that women on maternal leave usually spend time with their children at home. If they are not at home, mothers actually do not have much choice of where to go with a small child, except for the local shop, playground or relatives. The social isolation of young mothers results in the sense of loneliness and depression. Regarding these problems, MaMa Foundation leads several "local moms' clubs" in different parts of Warsaw, where mothers can come with their children, meet, exchange experiences and take part in workshops and training sessions, which are offered by the club. In this context, the activities of MaMa Foundation go beyond the common public debates on child care, which are concentrated on fees and places available in nurseries and kindergartens in Warsaw.

Also, it should be noted that the activities of MaMa Foundation are perceived with interest by organisations and institutions in other cities of Poland:

"Numerous similar organisations emerge, and we often share our experience, and some projects are implemented in other cities, for instance, the project "To the Movies with Your Child", but also the exhibition "Art of Mothers", well, things that can be shifted to other cities without us going there.

(WP5.Care1)

The project "Warsaw Housewives' Club" is being implemented in Berlin, and a female representative of the Ukrainian parliament has also displayed some interest in it.

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The Foundation for Development Beyond Borders

Warsaw, as the capital city and a metropolitan area, is a city in which many foreigners stay, live, work and study. Warsaw and Mazowieckie Province are the main areas of concentrations of immigrants in Poland, assembling more than 30 per cent of all foreigners who have been issued a residence permit in our country. Their number has been growing every year, and after Poland's accession to the EU, the dynamics of this phenomenon increased. Only the social and political transformation of 1989 influenced the possibility of a reevaluation of ethnic assessment and discovery or searching for the ethnic identity of individual minorities. The multicultural character of Warsaw is now very different from that of the pre-war period – it has been strengthened by the arrival of new ethnic groups – Vietnamese, Chinese and Africans – and inflow of people from beyond the eastern borders of Poland. At present, there are about 5,600 foreigners registered as permanent residents of the capital city (mostly Vietnamese, Russians and Ukrainians). As for other forms of residence of foreigners in the city, we can speak of tens of thousands – it is estimated that there are about 150,000 foreigners living in Warsaw right now, constituting 9 per cent of the entire population of the city. Foreigners living in Warsaw include Russians, Vietnamese, Africans, Hindus, Chinese, Ukrainians, Americans and citizens of many EU member states. Some come to Warsaw for a short time, for business purposes; others study at universities or search for a job. Some of them could be met around the main bazaars of Warsaw and in market halls. Some of them find jobs in construction, gardening and various services. Conversely, others are teachers, academic lecturers, doctors and artists. They are also the employees of many foreign companies having branches in Warsaw (see WP3 city report). At the same time, immigrants living in Warsaw who are EU citizens or highly qualified specialists are a minority. Most foreigners in Warsaw, that is citizens of non-EU countries, who are not refugees, who have not been granted complementary protection or permanent residence permit, are not offered any social support by the state. Such immigrants are one of the most vulnerable groups in the city, especially in terms of the labour market and housing.

43.1. Short description

The Foundation for Development Beyond Borders was established in 2006 by a group of Poles and Belarusians, who had recently graduated from the university. The main goal was to develop cooperation between activists from Poland and Belarus, but shortly the organisation changed its focus and set up activities to support immigrants in Warsaw, especially from Eastern Europe (Ukraine and Belarus). This change of interests was forced by the growing demand on the side of immigrants and the experiences of the founders of this organisation.

The role of the foundation is broadly described as follows:

From the East and from the West, we had seen the same border, which is why we decided to establish Foundation for Development Beyond Borders. The Foundation works to bring closer nations, societies and states of Eastern and Central Europe through sharing knowledge and raising awareness about common cultural background and common interests. The Foundation works to impact activity and participation of immigrants, which helps to foster bonds between nations and societies of the home country and the receiving country. Another important goal of the Foundation is to develop mutual contacts, as well as regional and international cooperation among the entities that also work to solve social, economic, cultural and legal issues. We aim to raise the professional level of authorities who are responsible for implementing active social policies and specialists who work for public or social services. It is also the Foundation's goal to promote the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe and the region as a whole.

(Foundation for Development Beyond Borders)¹

43.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The Foundation for Development Beyond Borders was established by a group of Poles and immigrants from Belarus. The activities currently implemented by the organisation are often strictly related to personal experiences of migrants – founders of this organisation:

And there was this time, we were finishing university, starting our new careers, and this was something new for all of us, a new field. Also, as some of us had experienced it very personally what Schengen was, and the difficulties experienced by foreigners, entering, for instance the labour market... there are many things that are related to existence of such people, who come over. It is like, well, it's because we all had to experience it and transform it somehow. On our own.

(WP5.Migrants1)

Now, the foundation implements two main projects: "Migration and Integration in Practice" and "Multidimensional challenges: researching the potential of integration of immigrants in Poland". Both of them

are co-financed by the European Fund for Integration of non-EU Immigrants and the state budget.

The aim of the first project is to run an advice centre for immigrants who arrive in Warsaw. The advice focuses on the issues of legalising their stay and work in Poland, which implies constant monitoring of the legislation concerning immigrants. The immigrants may contact the office, make phone calls and visit. Most often, they need legal advice in terms of interpretation of legislation that concerns legalisation of stay, mixed marriages, functioning of the labour market and relations between employees and employers, as well as searching for apartments in Warsaw. They are very often interested in getting assistance in translation of documents and legislative acts, as a great majority of these are only available in Polish:

These are in fact, starting with, it's anything, including legal matters. The problem usually is, you have access to information as such. You come here and you don't speak Polish. And the legislation, even though there is this act on Polish language, it is not applied in practice. And we are dealing with a situation, in which, these people come and they have to comply with specific legislation and they have no idea how. And there are many problems in this regard, because there are many people, who do the translations. We are not licensed to render legal services, this is consulting.

(WP5.Migrants1)

Apart from individual advice, the foundation also organises training for immigrants and workshops on functioning of the labour market, healthcare and the social insurance system in Poland. Another service of great importance is Polish language classes. The classes cover all levels, from beginners to advanced. Subsidised by the EU, the classes are addressed primarily to people who come from countries outside the EU and have lived in Poland for less than 5 years. Thanks to the subsidy, the price of the course is only about 75 euros for 3 months. Recently, the foundation has added English language courses to the scope of its services. This is aimed at strengthening the future position of immigrants in the labour market in Poland. Also, the foundation offers unique workshops on creative writing for immigrants who know Polish well, but would like to develop their literary skills. Another part of the project is to encourage migrants and their employers to describe their experiences on the Polish job market as part of a yearly competition.

¹ www.frog.org.pl/en/about-the-foundation/goals.html

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Related to all policy fields

Apart from that, the most recent news about how immigrants function in the context of Polish legislation is presented on a bi-weekly radio programme produced in cooperation with the Polish Radio "WNET". Also part of the project, the Discussion Club seeks to initiate debate about problems experienced by migrants and the ways to solve them. The club creates a more casual atmosphere for a conversation about issues that are of importance to immigrants. The recipients of these activities are mostly immigrants – citizens of non-EU countries, who do not have a permanent residence permit in Poland or whose status has not been regulated. Thus, these are foreigners not entitled to any support from the Polish state. At the same time, their countries of origin vary greatly:

... a great majority are citizens of Ukraine, that's for sure. Then we have a broad selection of members of the former USSR republics, including Belarus, Russia, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan. These are statistically significant groups. Then we have Africa, Asia, there is the community of China, Vietnam - there have been several people, although statistically, they are a bit more numerous in Warsaw. There are many clients from India, Turkey, Nepal, Bangladesh... There is an increasing group from Latin America. We have clients from Canada and the States and New Zealand, and Japan, and Australia.

(WP5.Migrants1)

It should also be underlined here that the project discussed is a continuation of earlier activities of the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders – the "Welcome Centre in Warsaw" project, which has become a model example of support on behalf of immigrants, and thus became a basis for functioning of this organisation. The Welcome Centre project, which was managed in cooperation between the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders, the Foundation for Social Diversity and the foundation "Our Choice", was aimed at creating a stable advice centre for immigrants living in Warsaw. Starting in April 2009, a team of specialists speaking Russian, Ukrainian, French and English offered free services to foreigners, including legal, job and psychological advice. Moreover, as part of the project, the team continued to offer advice services addressing specific needs of certain groups of immigrants – for example to the parishioners of the Greek-Catholic church at Miodowa Street or salesmen in Wolka Kosowska. The key element of the advice activities was issues related to obtaining work

and residence permits, but also functioning in Polish society and knowing Polish norms or customs.

The launch of advisory services at the foundation's office in central Warsaw was preceded by opening of several consultation and advisory units in those locations in which most immigrants could be encountered. This was sort of a strategy of "reaching out to immigrants", establishing contacts with them in places familiar and well known to them:

... we started to get duty-hours, sort of, like inspections. The Stadium of the Decade was a facility like that, there was also Wólka Kosowska, where we got this mobile advisory outlet. We would walk around and talk to people, asking about their problems. This was sort of an opportunity to go out, to look at how people respond to these things... and then there was the issue of establishing the consulting outlets in the Orthodox Church at Miodowa Street, in the Orthodox church at Wileńska Street. There were duty hours there, quite often, and later on we also tried with the ethnic eateries.

(WP5.Migrants1)

The second of the current projects of the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders is focused on research. The main goal of this project is to deepen knowledge about the integration of foreigners living in Poland by researching and analysing the current conditions of this process and editing a final report, which will serve as a compilation of knowledge about the problems and needs of migrants, used by key stakeholders who influence the integration of foreigners living in Poland. The innovative part of this research is that it treats the integration of foreigners as a process in a complex, inter-disciplinary manner, includes the pre-emigration phase, the conditions in the country of origin and an analysis of attitudes in the receiving society. This research was conducted on a group of migrants from former Soviet countries who, according to the official statistics, comprise the largest group of foreigners living in Poland.

Moreover, the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders is engaged in lobbying at the local and state administration level, it issues opinions on the changes introduced and postulated in Polish legislation on foreigners. In 2012 the foundation has also been actively engaged in lobbying on behalf of abolition for foreigners staying in Poland illegally and it conducted social campaigns to propagate abolition among illegal immigrants.

43.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The foundation's office is located in downtown Warsaw. The organisation rents the premises with office space, the consultation outlet and a room used for Polish and English language classes and the discussion club meetings. There are no full-time employees – at present, nineteen persons are engaged in projects on the basis of temporary contracts. The foundation also takes advantage of the services of several volunteers who offer translation services and can accompany the immigrants, e.g. during visits to various public offices or healthcare institutions. At the beginning, the activities of the foundation were not very formalised. Strong demand for consulting and advisory services for foreigners emerged in 2008, when Poland was included in the Schengen zone. This complicated the procedures of travel and legalisation of stay of foreigners – citizens of non-EU countries, who, at the same time, started to come to Poland due to its increasing attractiveness both as a transit country and as a final destination: "... at first, these consultations were different, not formalised. It was like this: somebody called somebody else and then you looked for someone, who had the experience, and it went like this – it was very much help-oriented" (WP5.Migrants1).

At present, the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders operates mainly on the basis of projects. The projects of the organisation (current and completed ones) are financed mainly by the European Fund for Integration of non-EU Immigrants (EIF), funds of the budget of the capital city of Warsaw and of other NGOs: Polish-American Foundation for Freedom and the Stefan Batory Foundation. Moreover, the sponsors include the Institute for Public Affairs and Microsoft. The organisation also takes advantage of support offered by various entities offering material help: the Second Hand Bank, the Office for Protection of Competition and Consumers, the Polish Association of Legal Education and the Forum on Behalf of Social Diversity. The Foundation for Development Beyond Borders cooperates with other organisations and institutions acting on behalf of immigrants in Warsaw, such as the "Our Choice" Association for Ukrainians and the Warsaw parish of the Greek Catholic church.

43.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

In a situation in which state social assistance is granted only to selected categories of foreigners, that is, persons with Polish citizenship, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection, as well as immigrants who have been granted a permanent residence permit in Poland, the operation of the foundation fills a significant gap. This is aimed at those foreigners who cannot count on state assistance; the most numerous group of immigrants in Warsaw and in Poland. Immigrants coming to Poland, including those who are culturally close to us, feel confused when they are forced to face the Polish legal system. They need help in getting through the jungle of legal provisions; at the same time, they need to be directed to the appropriate offices or institutions and told how to deal with specific matters. In particular, this is because immigrants from non-EU countries often come from small towns or villages, of a much smaller local scale. In the opinion of one of the beneficiaries of the foundation, an immigrant from Ukraine, this is the only place in Warsaw where assistance of this kind can be obtained:

Mainly, they come from Ukraine or Belarus. Regardless of the country, they need information. Legal information, it's difficult to do anything, when you are unable to speak the language, when you need information on normal jobs, apartments, and simply information from the lawyers, how to deal with the papers, what to do, simply, there can be many things, when you don't get paid, or you need a doctor... the "Welcome Centre" is the only place in Warsaw. Many people, who come here, are from small villages, there are people here, who don't know the Internet. Well, not everyone has a laptop.

(WP5.Migrants2)

The activities of the foundation are also well known at the level of state institutions and diplomatic services of the countries of origin of the immigrants living in Warsaw. As it turns out, representatives of structures of this kind are also not always able to solve problems pertaining to foreigners: "There are (also) people, who do not report themselves, but they are reported by others, or people in hospitals. We get a phone call from the consulate: "our citizen has fallen off scaffolding, what are we supposed to do?" (WP5.Migrants1).

PL**Warsaw****Categories**

Related to all policy fields

It is important that the abode of the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders, the discussion club, organised there in addition to Polish classes and social meetings, plays a very significant role of a space for establishing communication and exchanging experience with immigrants from different countries staying in Warsaw. Such places as the Greek Catholic Church or a restaurant managed by representatives of a specific ethnic group usually unite foreigners from specific countries. Lack of such space has been “noticed” only recently by employees of the city hall, who, in 2011, in consultation with more than ten TSOs working with immigrants, launched the Warsaw Multicultural Centre. It is difficult to predict what extent it will play a role in integration, as the centre does not have a permanent location, owing to lack of funds in the city budget.

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Team for Solving Social Problems in the Field of Housing

As already mentioned, after the political transformation in 1989, an attempt was made to return real estate property to pre-war owners or their successors, as well as to privatise the new buildings. This resulted in numerous problems, which are now influencing the situation of the inhabitants of the city. These factors led to the emergence of a particularly vulnerable group of inhabitants of Warsaw – those living in tenement houses belonging to the municipal housing resources, which are currently being returned to the pre-war owners of these buildings.

44.1. Short description

The largest (and perhaps the only) innovation in the housing policy of the city is the undertaking of negotiations between the representatives of the city and the tenant and squatter organisations, concerning the appointment of the Team for Solving Social Problems in Housing, Re-privatisation and Counteracting Homelessness and Social Exclusion. A project of this kind was been filed at the city council by tenant organisations 2 years previously; however, there was no response. In the opinion of the tenant organisations, this proves that the city authorities were never really interested in tenants and their problems and they did not treat them seriously. This may also be proven by the fact that in 2010, the Municipal Office initiated the “Warsaw Housing Meetings”, which were to serve as a space for discussion on housing problems and solutions to these; in the end, the city was only willing to present its point of view and it failed to take into account the opinions or objections of the tenant organisation representatives or to refer to the problems reported by them. As a result, all tenant organisations decided not to participate in the meetings, which were then suspended, as there was no one willing to attend.

Within the framework of changes in the housing policy of the city, in April 2012, the Team for Solving Social Problems in Housing, Re-privatisation and Counteracting Homelessness and Social Exclusion was established in the city of Warsaw, with representatives of the city and social groups and NGOs. The team’s aim is at proposing new initiatives and providing advisory services. Even though the fact that it has been established has been received positively by all parties to the process, our interlocutors have pointed out that the mere creation of the team does not mean that it truly has a say in the creation of policy.

PL

Warsaw

Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

44.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The aim of the team is to serve as an advisor to the city authorities in the field of housing policy. The team is there to represent all of the parties concerned, that is, the city authorities, the real estate management and representatives of tenants and of private building owners. Moreover, during the meeting, discourse was initiated on the most significant social problems and the possible solutions, which can be continued during the subsequent meetings. The issues of vacant buildings were discussed, as well as the compensation agreements, reprivatisation, informing tenants of the current reprivatisation processes, concerning the apartments inhabited and article 678 of the Civil Code.

44.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The organisation of the team is based on a series of meetings aimed at building dialogue between the parties concerned by the housing policy. All parties have given expressed their willingness to continue the dialogue. So far, it has been attended by:

- > The vice president of the Capital City of Warsaw,
- > Representative of the Social Communication Centre,
- > Representative of the Warsaw Tenants Associations,
- > Representative of the Tenant Defence Committee,
- > Representatives of squatter groups (*Syrena*, *Przychodnia*),
- > Representative of the Office for Social Justice (an NGO supporting tenants).

44.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The team has been established in response to the negative consequences of the return of the tenement houses in Warsaw to their former owners and their legal successors. Tenants, having no legal protection, are being removed under the pressure of rent charges being raised without any limitations, sometimes by threat or menace. The former owners and their successors, on the other hand, complain about the unclear criteria for return of the real estate property and the long-term proceedings. Their claims block city investment projects. On the other hand, specialised law offices and firms, which buy out the rights and claims to real estate property, have been operating with striking efficiency – regaining tenement houses has become a very profitable business. This situation results in very negative consequences for the tenants, as well as the city, as it damages the urban tissue and threatens the public interest.²

The team deals with housing management, including the municipal housing resources of the capital city of Warsaw, which also includes social building, reprivatisation and its social effects, counteracting social exclusion due to loss of apartment, management of vacant buildings in the capital city of Warsaw and building and developing new forms of dialogue between the local communities in the city of Warsaw and the authorities of the city.

² <http://hoza27a.pl/content/warszawski-okragly-stol-mieszkaniowy-w-3-godziny>

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Project “Become your own Boss in Poland”

One of the problems that Warsaw faces in terms of labour market policies is the insufficient use of young people’s potential, and a high risk of unemployment among them. About 50,000–60,000 people encounter problems of this kind in Warsaw. The employment services of Warsaw, coordinated by the Labour Office of the Capital City of Warsaw, implement a number of standard activities (similar to those in other parts of the country), as well as special initiatives to improve the situation on the local labour market. The standard activities include a job agency, vocational consulting, training for the unemployed, cooperation with employers, organisation of training, apprenticeship and intervention works, subsidies for workplaces or funds for initiation of business activity.

However, thanks to the available European funds some new projects have been implemented, which allows for a more innovative approach. One of them addresses directly the issue of young people going abroad to work and often hesitating as to whether they should come back to Poland, in fear of unemployment.

45.1. Short description

The project “Become Your Own Boss in Poland” is the only social project in Poland aimed directly at emigrants, who have decided to get back to the country in order to register their own businesses in the capital city. According to the Director of the Office for European Funds of the capital city of Warsaw, which implements the project:

This is the only project of this kind in Poland, encouraging emigrants to return to the country and establish their own business. Thanks to support from European funds, we are able to help these people in making important life decisions and at the same time support the labour market in Warsaw.

(Director, Office for European Funds, Warsaw)

In order to apply, it is necessary to have a good business concept and fill out the forms available on the web page of the project. It is also necessary to file copies of two documents, confirming one’s stay abroad.

The project “Become Your Own Boss in Poland” is implemented together by the Municipal Office of the Capital City of Warsaw and the College of Finances and Management in Warsaw. It receives additional financing from European funds, within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme, action 6.2 “Promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment”. The value of the project is PLN 1 780 441, and its implementation ended in April 2012. The participants, who receive funds for the development of their businesses within the framework of the

project, are obliged to maintain business activity from the date of its commencement for at least 12 months.

Recruitment lasted from 27 September until 29 October 2010, and participation in the project was free of charge. Thirty-one participants took advantage of training and consulting during the first stage; out of these, twenty-three received additional financing for the best business ideas and they continued to participate in the second stage of the project, including the training and consulting programme. In September 2011, the authors of the best business plans were congratulated personally by the commissioner of the EU for Employment, Social Affairs and Integration, Mr László Andor. The cost of financing of this project was almost PLN 1.8 million, and it is designated mainly for establishment and functioning of new, innovative companies, owned by Polish re-emigrants in Warsaw³.

45.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Apart from non-returnable financial support of up to PLN 40,000 for the establishment and running of their own company, participants of the project "Become Your Own Boss in Poland" were granted an additional facility in the amount of PLN 1,126 per month, payable for 6 months after the commencement of their business activity. Earlier, they went through professional trainings, workshops and individual consulting, getting ready to start business activity. After establishing their company, they could take advantage of consulting for the first year of operation.

The project participants were of age, not active professionally (not working and not registered at the labour office as unemployed), who had returned from economic emigration, residents of Mazowieckie Province and willing to open their own business in Warsaw. The offer was directed, in the first place, towards emigrants aged over 45 years, returning to or entering the labour market for the first time after giving birth to and raising a child, and those emigrants who have lost their jobs other than through their own fault.

45.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The project was implemented together by the Office for the Capital City of Warsaw and the College of Finances and Management in Warsaw. The office was responsible for the formal and financial aspects of the project and recruitment, while the College took care of implementation or ordering of training or consulting tasks.

45.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The main objective of the project "Become Your Own Boss in Poland" was to get the project participants ready to start their own business activity by updating and raising the level of knowledge and professional skills necessary to launch and operate their firms. The project is an innovative support tool for those who, unable to find a good job in Poland, had emigrated due to economic reasons. The project offered a chance to encourage some of those people to return, and to provide them with work opportunities upon their return.

The project objectives were implemented by a training and consulting programme on administrative and legal aspects of establishing and maintaining a business operation, workshops to shape interpersonal skills and individual consulting. Thus, the support for each of the twenty-three participants was very much individualised and it resulted in the establishment of twenty-three firms rendering services of a very diversified nature, fitting well within the context of the local market.

Conclusions

Factors that influence local welfare policy in Warsaw include (1) historical heritage of the second world war and legal decisions made during 1944-90 (the period of so-called socialist rule); (2) present conflicts between the governing liberal party Civic Platform and parties in opposition: the populist Law and Justice party and the leftist Democratic Left Alliance present in the city council; (3) conflicts between local government of Warsaw and groups of citizens interested in solving particular problems in some ways; (4) citizens'

³ www.zostanszefem.vizja.pl/pl

initiatives to help people having special needs (e.g. young mothers, immigrants) (grass-roots initiatives); (5) external financial support given by the EU.

The historical heritage of the second world war and legal decisions made during 1944-90

One of the major important factors influencing the housing policy in Warsaw is the “Bierut Decree” and its long-lasting effects. To efficiently rebuild Warsaw in the aftermath of the war, the authorities issued a legal act that allowed for the ownership of the land within the city’s administrative limits of 1939 to be taken over by the municipality, with ownership of the buildings to remain in the hands of their existing owners. The Bierut Decree was issued in 1945 and has remained in effect, continuing to constitute the basis for determining former owners’ rights. As the result of the political changes after 1989, former owners have gained opportunities of getting their properties back or receiving compensation from the city. The city as well as the state budget has to guarantee the funds to compensate property owners according to the current value of the building. This means that a big part of city budget is spent on compensation, adding to the existing deficit. It is also necessary to be aware that Polish cities are characterised by a very high density of housing (third from the bottom in Europe; only before Bulgaria and Romania; Eurostat 2012).

The effects of the Bierut Decree are also visible in the case of communal housing belonging to the city, because around a quarter of the city housing resources are located in buildings that may be subject to reprivatisation. The reprivatisation process also creates tensions between tenants and private tenement house owners. Reprivatisation of buildings with communal housing generates the biggest conflicts, because some private owners, after regaining their property, try to exchange the low rent paying clients of the welfare system for income generating ones.

In this situation in Warsaw, two organisations were established that deal with protection of tenant rights – the Committee for Protection of Tenants and the Warsaw Tenant Association. Both emerged as a result of the protests of the inhabitants of tenement houses, the owners of which had raised the rent charges. The organisations do not have the financial support of any institution. We may assume that the

length of their existence is determined by the results of their activities.

The other side of the conflict is represented by the Polish Union of Property Owners, which argues that the authorities of Warsaw are blocking the return of real estate property taken away from the owners on the basis of Bierut’s Decree. Despite their efforts, tenants’ associations are the weaker side of the conflict and have not yet been able to gain a satisfactory solution. Their actions can be considered as part of process of building participatory democracy on the local level in Poland. One of the effects of their protests on the housing policy of the city was that in April 2012, the Team for Solving of Social Problems in Housing, Reprivatisation and Counteracting Homelessness and Social Exclusion was established in the capital city of Warsaw, with representatives of the city and social groups and TSOs. The team is aimed at proposing new initiatives in housing and providing advisory services to the local government.

Present conflicts between the governing liberal party and parties in opposition

The conflict has purely political character. As analyses show, in some cases the parties do finally reach agreement, like in the case of the perception and solving of the problem of care of children. The city council is of the opinion that the child care problems in Warsaw can be solved by (1) building new public kindergartens; (2) entrusting child care services to private entities; and (3) child care implemented by public-private partnerships. However, since 2007, only six new public kindergartens have been established in Warsaw. A cheaper and more flexible solution is to “buy out” non-public nursery and kindergarten places, which the parents can use in the same way (in terms of recruitment and charges) as the public facilities. Such a solution has been applied in the district of Bemowo. Another concept is to implement public-private partnerships.

PL

Warsaw

Conflicts between the local government of Warsaw and groups of citizens interested in solving particular problems in some ways

The third partner of the conflict are grass-roots organisations such as the association of the parents of small children, who established the “Voice of the Parents” association demanding lowering fees in kindergartens and crèches in Warsaw. The action gained the support of the opposition parties in the city council and was successful and led to withdrawing the most problematic regulations. In the debate considering the age at which children should start school education, another association is active. The association “Ombudsman for Parents’ Rights” was created *ad hoc* by group of parents advocating maintaining the age of 7 years instead of 6 years, which was recently proposed by national government as a starting age for primary education. Later on, the leaders of association also created the Foundation for Parents’ Rights. The association “Voice of the Parents” is active mainly in Warsaw, while the other is present in various cities around Poland (e.g. leading social campaigns) with their headquarters in Warsaw. The organisations do not receive financial support of any kind; only some political support as in the case described earlier. Public opinion is divided on the issue. Both associations are typical protest organisations, which, more or less successfully, try to influence the decisions of national or local government concerning the allocation of financial resources or changing the education system.

Citizens’ initiatives to help people with special needs.

In the area of child care, we have to point out the creation of MaMa Foundation, also a grass-roots initiative, like the ones mentioned earlier. **However, its goal is not to influence a situation through protest, but to fill some type of vacuum in welfare policy. Its activity is addressed to young mothers, both those who are working and those who are not.** In the case of the latter, the foundation tries to activate them by the creation of social enterprises/cooperatives, which are giving them opportunities to make some money and to create a psychological effect: readiness to work instead of staying home. MaMa Foundation was able to get some modest financial support from local govern-

ment and through it access to the financial support of the ESF. The foundation also received high level of support and visibility in local and national media. There are attempts to set up similar activities in other Polish cities. We may assume that the existence of the foundation has rather good perspective to maintain their activities in longer period of time.

Another example is related to the situation of immigrants. Immigrants as a group are recipients of activities undertaken by the City Hall and its subordinate institutions. The Office for Education of the Capital City of Warsaw implements projects in the field of integration of immigrant children in Polish schools, often cooperating with TSOs, that work with immigrants. However, according to the regulations, only some distinguished groups of immigrants have a right to social assistance: refugees, persons subject to complementary protection, immigrants with Polish citizenship and foreigners who have a permanent residence permit. The city authorities help the immigrants to solve housing problems, although to a very limited extent. The support of labour offices gains very little interest of immigrants (see reports WP3). **A special category of immigrants – refugees and foreigners who have been granted complementary protection, are the only groups authorised to systemic integration support in Poland, which includes financial support, Polish language classes and counselling on the labour market. The remaining, most numerous, groups of foreigners in Warsaw may only count on TSOs to supporting them within the framework of their projects.** As for the immigrants’ need to learn Polish, this demand is met by TSOs, offering courses free of charge or much cheaper than commercial entities, adapted to the level of advancement of the participants. Such courses are organised by the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders, the Polish Humanitarian Action and the “Fu Shenfu” immigrant centre. Apart from learning the language, the courses offered by TSOs provide immigrants with opportunities to build relationships with others. Many courses include not only regular classes, but also discussion meetings, watching movies together, *etc.* At the same time, TSOs are beginning to offer lessons in the English language. In the case of the Foundation for Development Beyond Borders, Polish and English language classes are a part of the overall support offered to immigrants in Warsaw: from legal assistance and support in dealing with any individual matters to training on the func-

tioning of the Polish labour market, healthcare, the social insurance system, *etc.*

It is necessary to underline that the activities of the TSO to help immigrants have, to a large extent, a grass-roots character. The interesting example is the initiative of a group of lawyers who found that the existing welfare system working through national and local agencies do not provide the help needed by deprived groups, including refugees and other immigrants, especially in terms of dealing specifically with legal issues and law regulations. Therefore, they started at the beginning to advise and help informally and later transformed into the TSO (Association for Legal Intervention), getting some financial support from the city government. This initiative was highly welcomed by immigrants.

External financial support given by the EU

European funds are one of the major drivers of both infrastructural and social development in Poland nowadays. Active labour market policies as well as lifelong learning activities are one of the important areas supported by ESF. Therefore, it is not surprising that the financial support given by the EU, especially in the frame of the ESF and the European Fund for the Integration of non-EU Immigrants (EIF) is the important factor in the context of the sustainability of the discussed local initiatives. For example, in the case mentioned of TSOs helping immigrants, applying for EU funds is crucial for their projects, as they receive irregular and partial support from the city. Resources of the European Fund for the Integration of non-EU Immigrants (EIF) allowed for intensification of activities aimed at integration. Due to a lack of a clear integration policy in Poland and existing restrictions on social assistance available for immigrants, the fund actually replaced the state activity in this regard. Similarly, the support for social cooperatives like the one established by MaMa Foundation is possible thanks to the projects realised by Labour Office and based on ESF money. However, there is a risk that the initiatives based mostly on these funds may lose sustainability in future programming periods when the European Commission introduces some changes in the structure of the EU funds. On the other hand, in Warsaw, EU money supports the great majority of the activities against unemployment implemented by local welfare institutions (such as the Labour Office),

TSOs and private entities, which usually offer training and courses for various categories of unemployed people. The consumption of EU funds is enormous in this field, but it is difficult to define and evaluate the real effectiveness and utility of such services.

In conclusion, we observe the building of a participatory democracy in Warsaw and the creation of TSOs often based on individual initiative. This phenomenon are characteristic of Poland because of significant mistrust of government and its agencies (WVS 2012, unpublished) and historically proven experience, that citizens are the most successful if take their problems into their own hands. Simultaneously, we have to point out that sensitivity to social problems and the described activities are conducive to social cohesion. The last decade shows that the governmental agencies responsible for social policy are becoming more understanding (with the support of the European Commission) to identify important problems in the city and meet the needs of different social groups. At the same time, protest groups and organisations, which play a significant role in shaping local welfare policy, constitute the important new "partner" also present in the social life of cities of stable democracies (Koopmans, Rucht 2002). As in many other countries, commercialisation of services take place, which may polarise local communities, dividing them according to income and the type of social networks that different groups have at their disposal.

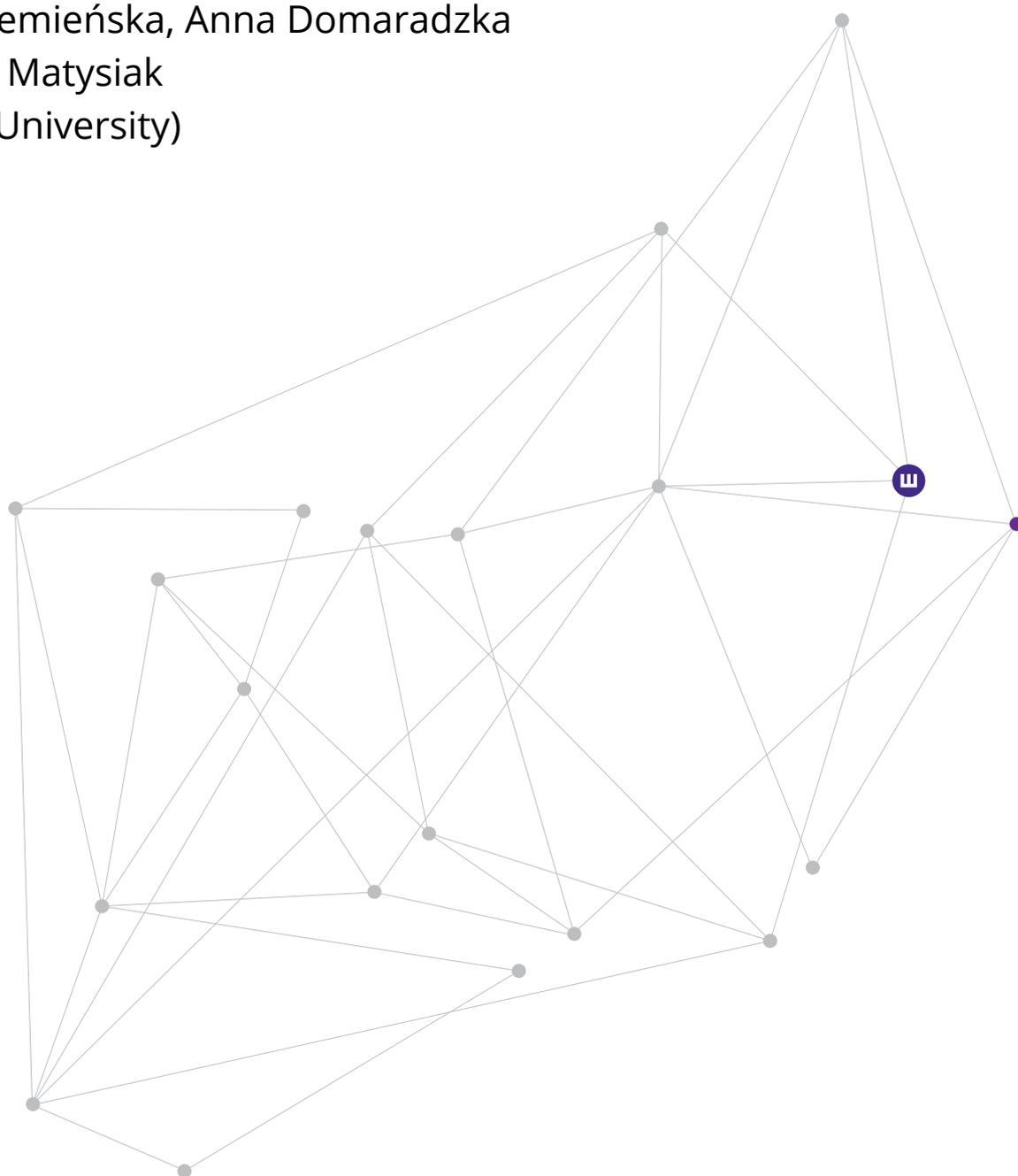
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PL Poland

Plock

Renata Siemieńska, Anna Domaradzka
and Ilona Matysiak
(Warsaw University)



PL Plock

Authors

Renata Siemieńska, Anna Domaradzka and Ilona Matysiak
(Warsaw University)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Citizenship
Labour market
Local government
Local initiatives
Local welfare system
Participation

Innovation is defined in many ways by social scientists, people connected with business or technology. In short, it is a way to improve the systems that already exist, making them better, faster and cheaper (Iuri and Kuhn 1998). The meaning of “better, faster, cheaper” depends on the area of interest. In our case it is social policy in local communities, including discussed and implemented innovations, which are expected to meet needs of different segments of local communities. The innovations have different meanings depending on the specific social, economic, cultural and political context.

Putnam stresses there are two fundamental points that have to be taken into consideration when studying how institutions and members of communities can collaborate to meet their goals:

1. *Institutions shape politics. The rules and standard operating procedures that make up institutions leave their imprint on political outcomes by structuring political behaviour.... Institutions influence outcomes because they shape actor identities, power and strategies.*
2. *Institutions are shaped by history. Whatever other factors may affect their form, institutions have inertia and ‘robustness’*

Putnam 1993: 8-9

He also points out the role of features of social capital in the process of collaborations of governments, other stakeholders (e.g. TSOs) and individual members of local communities. Social capital is defined as trust, norms and networks shaped over time (Putnam 1993: 170; Sherraden *et al.* 2002). Social capital can influence types of innovations proposed by different stakeholders and their chances to be accepted and implemented.

Plock is the historic capital of Mazowsze, located in the northwestern part of Mazowieckie province (Ciechanowsko-Płocki sub-region according to NUTS-3 classification) approximately 110 km from Warsaw. According to the Central Statistical Office, at the end of March 2012, the population of Plock consisted of 124,553 permanent residents (Central Statistical Office, National Census of Population and Housing 2011).

The most substantial economic growth and increase in the number of inhabitants were observed in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result of political decisions of central authorities of the People’s Republic of Poland, a petrochemical conglomerate was established in Plock, as well as other industrial plants (such as the Harvesting Machines Factory, Cotex Knitted Goods Factory and the River Dockyard). This resulted in massive migration to Plock, mainly of young people from the nearby rural areas. In the early 1960s, prior to commencement of the industrial investment projects referred to above, the population of Plock amounted to only 34,000 inhabitants, while in the late 1980s it reached 122,660 (Central Statistical Office, National Census of Population and Housing 1988). Plock became a significant

industrial centre of the region of Mazowsze – mainly large, state-owned industrial plants shaped the local labour market. The economic crisis of the 1980s and system transformation slowed down the development of Plock. Restructuring and change of ownership of industrial plants took place. The petrochemical conglomerate was transformed into PKN Orlen SA (Polish Oil Company Orlen) and it has remained the dominant employer in the city. Other plants have been privatised and the employment rates have been significantly reduced. Some, like Cotex, employing mainly women, declared bankruptcy and discontinued operation. Nevertheless, the industrial sector is still of significance – in year 2010, those employed in industry and construction constituted 40 per cent of all employees in the city (Kansy, Sierandt 2010: 75).

New solutions are often initiated by the inhabitants, who express their needs and indicate ways in which they could be satisfied. Later on, these serve as a basis for establishment of a partnership between the citizens, TSOs and the municipal or district authorities. Sometimes, the scenario of innovation is different. The city shows initiative and searches for partners among the entities and organisations, mentioned above.

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The Plock Council of Seniors

One of the most significant issues associated with child care in Plock is the insufficient number of kindergartens and crèches. In the case of kindergartens, as in Warsaw, this is not the problem of kindergarten places as such, but their distribution in the city. Insufficiencies are observed mostly in the dynamically developing districts further away from the city centre, which are the preferred place of residence for young families with children, e.g. Podolszyce. In Podolszyce, the number of children aged 3-6 years registered as residents is 516; however, child care institutions offer places for 190 children (data as of March 2011). Secondly, mainly parents of 3-year-olds encounter the problem; most older children in Plock benefit from kindergarten education.

In Plock, kindergarten education at private and public kindergartens and kindergarten departments at elementary school is provided for 88 per cent, which is a very high rate in Poland (the national average is 37 per cent, which is the lowest indicator of popularisation of kindergarten education in the EU member states). It seems that insufficient supply of crèche care is a more serious problem – there are only three public crèches in the city and two non-public crèches. According to the city officials, the small number of non-public crèches is due to the fact that in the light of the legal provisions that had been in force until recently (e.g. concerning the standard of rooms, in which child care services are provided), it used to be much easier to open a kindergarten and obtain EU funds for this purpose than to open a crèche for the youngest children:

First of all, EU funds were used for the kindergartens. It is true that this boom of non-public kindergartens was due to the fact that there were funds first for the kindergarten facilities, which over time are transformed into full kindergartens. There were no such provisions for the crèches. Only the budget funds, and everyone knows that these are not sufficient to do anything. As a result, non-public kindergartens and kindergarten facilities emerged faster than some babysitting services or mini-crèches.

Focus interview, Plock,

The representative of the Department of Education and Culture, City Hall

At the same time, in the interviews conducted with the councillors, representatives of NGOs and journalists, the problem of care of the elderly was also visible. This pertains mainly to healthcare, including recognition of specific needs of the elderly in terms of healthcare and the broadly understood social support, beyond education and cultural offerings of universities of the third age:

There are few organisations that deal with healthcare of the elderly. There is the University of the Third Age. There are combatant organisations and so on, which, for instance, organise the social activities for the elderly, using their skills, engaging them in education. There are few organisations that deal with healthcare of the elderly, their problems, and

their lives. Moreover, there is no overview of the situation: we don't know how many of them are lonely, whether they need additional care or someone who would at least visit and talk to them. There are no organisations like that. As for care of the lonely, there are three organisations here, in Plock. Us (the Polish Committee for Social Assistance), the Polish Red Cross and the Foundation for the Elderly, and we are the only ones to provide care

Interview no.8, Plock, The representative of Polish Social Assistance Committee

There are two care homes in Plock¹, which is insufficient because of the increase in the elderly population. Moreover, there are no social assistance homes in the city, which would provide constant institutional care of the elderly. The six public social assistance homes in the district are dispersed over smaller towns, the number of places is limited and, according to our respondents, the waiting lists are very long. The interviewees did not mention private care homes in Plock or in the surrounding area. According to one of the respondents, diversified institutional forms of care should be complementary with care provided to the elderly by their family members. Making the family exclusively responsible for care may result in illness and limitations to public control of the real situation of the elderly, who can be treated poorly by their relatives in some situations:

(...) We do not know how the elderly function in the family environment. We do not know whether they feel comfortable with the family, whether they are important to their relatives, whether there is good care, whether there are any problems, or the elderly person is there only because they receive the old age pension or disability pension and they are being abused. Sometimes, things are disclosed, but these are unusual situations, when, for instance, somebody living in the same apartment building and says this and this is happening at the home of this elderly lady, and the social worker goes there for an interview, but, in general, we don't know about the situation of these people

Interview no.8, Plock. The representative of Polish Social Assistance Committee

¹ A care home is a form of long-term stationary care. The homes provide 24-hour healthcare, consisting of treatment, care and rehabilitation of persons, who no longer require hospitalisation and who have been through the entire process of diagnosis, surgery, who, nevertheless, due to their health, disability and lack of ability to function at home require constant supervision of professional personnel.

The above statement indicates that no complex diagnosis has been provided for Plock with regard to the situation and requirements of the elderly inhabitants of the city. Although time-management initiatives for seniors are being implemented (such as the University of the Third Age), from which only certain groups benefit, insufficient healthcare and social support are a more serious problem.

46.1. Short description

The Plock Council of Seniors has been operating since 3 October 2012. Its members have been appointed based on the instruction of the President of the city of Plock. The Council has ten members (eight women and two men). Nine of them are active in the elderly community and represent the key institutions established to provide them with support; the tenth is a councillor representing the President of the City of Plock.

The Council is a consultative and initiative-forming body of the President of the City of Plock on affairs pertaining to persons above 50 years of age. The objective of operation of the Council is integration, supporting and representation the elderly community and influencing affairs that concern all inhabitants of Plock.

46.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The detailed tasks of the Plock Council of Seniors are as follows:

- > presenting proposals to define the priorities of tasks and activities on behalf of the elderly in Plock;
- > initiation of undertakings aimed at social integration of the elderly and satisfying of the needs of this social group;
- > engaging in activities aimed at taking advantage of the potential and time of the elderly on behalf of community initiatives, particularly in the field of culture, sports and education;
- > issuing opinions on local legal acts pertaining to the situation of the elderly and affairs presented to the Council for issue of opinions by the President of the City of Plock;
- > consulting on affairs concerning the elderly, in particular, with regard to social assurance, healthcare, social assistance and care;

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- > aiming to restore and strengthen social bonds between generations².

Until today, in total, eight meetings of the Plock Council of Seniors have been held. During these meetings, the following topics have been discussed: social assistance with particular emphasis on support and assistance for the seniors in Plock; ability to introduce changes in the functioning of the public transport system in Plock (on the basis of analysis of results of the questionnaire conducted among the seniors in the autumn of 2012); health prevention among the seniors, planned for Plock for year 2013; possibilities of creation of a geriatric clinic in the city in the future; concepts for activation of the senior community of Plock³.

Meetings of the Plock Council of Seniors are attended by external guests, representing institutions that are of significance for the issues discussed by the Council, including the Ombudsman for the Disabled at the Municipal Office of Plock, representatives of the Polish Red Cross and the Polish Committee for Social Assistance, president of the Management Board of the Public Transport System in Plock, director of the Municipal Centre for Social Assistance, manager of the Department of Support and Social Rehabilitation at the Municipal Centre for Social Assistance, Director of the Local Office of the National Health Fund in Plock, Vice President of the Management Board of the State Healthcare Institutions and the Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection.

The activities of the Plock Council of Seniors include the action "Friendly places for seniors". It is organised by the Council and the President of the City of Plock. The main objective of this action is to promote places and institutions that are friendly to seniors, operating in Plock. Mostly, these are cultural, education, recreation institutions, cafes, shops, drugstores, public institutions and other facilities that satisfy the needs of the elderly by adapting their architecture and offering products, services and discounts for this group, and places, in which the elderly feel comfortable and well. The action is addressed to all institutions interested in obtaining the certificate "Friendly places for seniors". Such facilities are granted the certificate and marked with a special graphic informing of the reward. The institution applying for the certificate should meet the

following criteria: have an offer addressed specifically to the elderly, maintain and develop this offer, reach as many seniors as possible, provide discounts for seniors, make sure that the architecture and interior design and equipment match the needs of the elderly, be open towards the needs of the elderly and meet their expectations, become a place that is often visited by the elderly, while providing access for all age groups. The decision on granting of the certificate is made by the jury consisting of the President of the City of Plock and the Plock Council of Seniors. Visits to the places and verification of applications are dealt with by the contest commission, consisting of representatives of the Plock Council of Seniors⁴. So far, fifteen institutions have been granted the "Friendly places for seniors" certificate⁵.

According to one of the respondents, the plans of the Plock Council of Seniors include development of a programme for social activation of the elderly based on the concept of inter-generational exchange of experience, which, at the same time, will allow for diversification of child care services available in the city:

(...) The elderly, who are lonely and have a lot of time, who are healthy and able, will take care of children at home, in those families, which, for instance, are unable to send the children to the kindergarten, because, for instance, there are no vacant places. So, these persons will not only take care of the children, but they can also share their knowledge, educate, teach the children some skills that they have, which, for instance, are being forgotten, such as knitting and decorative paper cut-outs. The elderly can do many things, which we sometimes know nothing about

Interview no.8, Plock, the representative of Polish Social Assistance Committee

2 http://www.plock.eu/pl/dzialania_rady.html.

3 http://www.plock.eu/pl/informacje_biezace.html.

4 <http://www.plock.eu/pl/aktualnosci/details/article,2494,1,1.html>.

5 <http://www.krpradio.pl/news/wiadomosci-lokalne/1350-w-plocku-jest-pietnascie-miejsc-przyjaznych-seniorom>.

46.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The Plock Council of Seniors does not have the status of a self-governing legislative body, as it performs consulting functions. The councillors of the Plock Council of Seniors are representatives of the following entities: Association of Catholic Families of the Diocese of Plock, the Polish Diabetics Association, the Polish Association of Old Age and Disability Pensioners, the Sclerosis Multiplex Association, the Association of the Children of War in Poland, Plock Association for Assistance on Behalf of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease, the Association of Combatants and Former Political Prisoners of the Republic of Poland, the Association of the University of the Third Age in Plock, the League of Polish Women. The tenth member of the Council is a representative of the President of the City of Plock – Proxy for the Affairs of NGOs.

Members of the Plock Council of Seniors are also invited to meetings with representatives of public institutions at various levels. In April of this year, upon invitation by member of European Parliament, Danuta Hübner, the Council visited the Parliament. The visit was dedicated mainly to the activity of the Commission for Protection of Natural Environment and the Commission for Public Health and Food Safety ENVI⁶.

A significant aspect of operation of the Plock Council of Seniors is referring directly to the opinions of the elderly inhabitants of the city. For instance, proposals of the Council concerning changes in functioning of the public transport system have been developed on the basis of a questionnaire addressed to seniors.

46.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The Plock Council of Seniors was appointed by the City Hall as the space for communication between the city authorities and representatives of the senior community – persons acting on behalf of the seniors are familiar with their various needs. In the light of the statement of the President of the City, the Plock Council of Seniors is also supposed to initiate solutions and activities aimed at improvement of the situation of the elderly inhabitants of Plock: "2012 is the

European Year of Activity of the Elderly and Inter-Generational Solidarity. It is a great moment to appoint a Council, which will not only speak of the problems, but also propose specific solutions"⁷.

The Plock Council of Seniors does not deal directly with the problems listed above, which are associated with insufficient supply of healthcare for the seniors living in Plock. It differs from the former dispersed initiatives, which are mainly aimed at social activation of the elderly. The activities of the Council so far remind us, to some extent, of the projects of the MaMa Foundation in Warsaw, which has the aim of providing urban spaces that are friendly for parents with small children. During the first term of office, the Plock Council of Seniors also focused on "friendliness" and availability of various places to seniors and facilitating movement around the city. Involvement of representatives of local communities at the local authority level may contribute to the recognition of the real situation of elderly inhabitants in Plock and to the development of a systemic strategy of improvement.

6 http://plock.gazeta.pl/plock/1,35710,13770856,Plocka_Rada_Seniorow_odwiedzila_Parlament_Europejski.html.

7 <http://portal.plocman.pl/aktualnosci/powstanie-rada-seniorow,25879.html>.

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The Russian Community Association

The scale of foreign migrations in Plock is significantly smaller than in Warsaw. The available statistics from the National Census of 2002 only for presents the diversity of Plock inhabitants according to the declared nationality being Polish or other, which probably includes both immigrants and minority representatives⁸: 309 individuals out of 128,361 in total indicated that their nationality was not Polish. According to the Municipal Office in Plock, in 2010, 131 foreigners were permanent residents of Plock, representing about 0.1 per cent of all permanent residents. In this group, 110 persons were citizens of countries outside the European Union. These were mainly citizens of Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Armenia and Mongolia. **Based on interviews, the actual number of immigrants in Plock may be at least three-times higher. Due to the lack of formally registered immigrant organisations in Plock; it seems that local immigrants are doing their best to “remain unnoticed” (see WP3 Report for Plock).**

A specific phenomenon in Plock is the wave of female immigrants - women coming from of the former USSR countries, who came to Plock in the 1970s together with their Polish husbands – mostly engineers, sent to the USSR to work as representatives of the Petrochemical Conglomerate. These women have lived in the city for many years; some of them attend the prayers and meetings organised by the Orthodox Church in Plock. However, they do not constitute a compact immigrant community – most of them have been granted citizenship of Poland. Another specific group are the Poles of Russian origin, living in Plock – children of Russians who settled in Plock during the partition period (19th century).

In the light of interviews with two female migrants – a Russian and a Ukrainian - the most significant problems encountered by immigrants in Plock include the language barrier, difficulties in finding jobs and reluctance of the Poles to accept them.

47.1. Short description

The Association was officially registered in 2007 as a branch of the “Russian Community” association established in Warsaw. The members include mainly Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians, as well as some Poles, although only a few. Most of them have registered because their spouse was an immigrant.

The Association was established by one of the Poles of Russian origin, descendant of Russians, who came to the

⁸ In Plock, we are dealing with a relatively significant population of Romani people, as well as some representatives of the Jewish minority.

city during the partition period. The initiative, as it turned out, has met the expectations of modern immigrants from the East, in particular, female citizens of the former USSR, who came to Plock in the 1970s:

I had been thinking about an association like this for a very long time. My grandma often told me how difficult the situation for Russians was at the time, how lost they felt. They only met at the Orthodox Church. I remember this from my childhood. This is why I wanted to create a group of people, who could meet, talk in their mother tongue, exchange experiences and remarks, and celebrate together.⁹

The future of this initiative remains unclear. The leader – a female immigrant from Russia – has moved to another city and there is no candidate to replace her in the position.

47.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The organisation performs many functions that are of significance for immigrants: it organises cultural events, preserves the cultural traditions, builds the image of the immigrants from the East and communication with the Poles and other immigrants in Plock, as well as helping newcomers find jobs or apartments. Members of the association have also participated in trips to Russia and Belarus, organised by the central office in Warsaw. The cultural events organised include the “Russian Days” and evenings dedicated to Russian writers: “(...) we have organised so many meetings, and the “Russian Days” 2 years ago, and an evening dedicated to Tolstoy. Everyone prepared something, some articles to be read, and we presented a film about the writer, and it all worked beautifully” [interview P.9]. Information on the Association was distributed mainly by the local press – the organisation members have published articles in *Tygodnik Plocki* and in the local edition of *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

47.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The “Community” consists mainly of the elderly, old-age pensioners; the number of young people is very small. In year 2012, there were 25 members, including approximately 10 active members. The

⁹ http://plock.gazeta.pl/plock/1,35681,6969289,Kawalek_Rosji_w_Plocku.html.

Plock branch of the Russian Community Association covers its current expenses mainly via member premiums. These funds are designated for organisation of meetings for the members; buying coffee, tea, cookies; and covering travel costs of guests invited to meetings and trips associated with participation in meetings organised in Warsaw. The Association may not collect funds for its operation (e.g. from the Municipal Office), since, as a Plock branch of an organisation with the central office in Warsaw, it does not have legal standing. Therefore, the funds for organising large undertakings come from Warsaw, they are booked and settled there: “(...) the association in Warsaw, they engaged in some projects, financed by Moscow or the Russian consulate. And we got some little bits out of these. But the money, they got it, they made the settlements” (Interview no.9, Plock, the leader of the Russian Community Association).

Members of the Association used to meet in the private apartment of the president or at local cafes, while the large cultural events, such as the Russian Days, were organised at the Municipal Office of Plock. The members use their own resources to deal with organisational affairs – their own cars, computers and phones.

47.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The Association has been considered to be innovative as it is the only initiative, so far, aimed at immigrants living in Plock and implemented by them. Activities of the organisation are aimed at a specific group of immigrants – those from the East (Russians and Ukrainians). At the same time, the Association works on behalf of the Russian minority of Plock, that is, the descendants of Russians, who came to the city in the 19th century.

According to the president, cultural and assistance events are particularly needed by immigrants, who, to a certain extent, feel torn between Poland and their country of origin, who have not been able to find a place for themselves in Polish society and who still do not want to return to their homeland as, in their opinion, they have not succeeded as immigrants. Such persons particularly need the support and the space, in which they could feel more comfortable.

The activities of the Association, however, has not attracted substantial interest of immigrants living in

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Plock. Their reluctance is not overcome even by the fact that it is managed by immigrants from the East themselves and persons of Russian origin, who could provide assistance in their life problems:

The ones who have problems, the ones whom I almost tried to force, they are the ones who refuse to come to us. Even though they have problems, they have no jobs; they prefer to stay at home. I know they've been unemployed for years, they have the time. I wanted to get them involved in some tasks for which I have no time, and they could. No, they will not come. And later on, they blame me for calling them and disturbing them.

Interview no.9. Plock, The leader of the Russian Community Association

Immigrants from Russia and Ukraine, living in Plock and the surrounding area, who have attained a higher material status, are not interested in getting involved in the works of the Association either. They do not want to provide financial support for the organisation. Other persons, particularly those, who are in mixed marriages, try to assimilate in the Polish majority as much as possible and they prefer not to transfer their cultural and national traits to their children:

I had this encounter a year ago, this lady, Wiera, said: 'What do you want from me?' I said, 'Perhaps your daughter would like to come to us; we organise trips to Moscow for Russian language courses, for kids from mixed families.' And she said, 'Get away from me!', loudly, so that everyone in the store could hear her, 'my daughter is not Russian, you better remember this'

Interview no.9. Plock, The leader of the Russian Community Association

At the same time, Poles living in Plock are not interested in the Association either: "(...) we received some phone calls, inquiries, several persons came over, they came here looking for wives, the Poles, and there were some other strange phone calls and that was it" (Interview no.9, Plock, the leader of The Russian Community Association).

Activity on behalf of immigrants in Plock is not easy due to the specific local traits associated with small-scale migration in general, the phenomenon of illegal migration and the diversity of the groups of foreigners that came to the city during various time periods. **Due to their unregulated status, illegal immigrants are afraid to get involved in any social initiatives.** On the other hand, immigrants – particularly females – coming to Plock from the East in the 1970s and at present believe it to be a good strategy to become part of the Polish majority. This does not mean, however, that initiatives on behalf of immigrants are not needed in Plock. Quite the opposite, a greater number of various initiatives, with more active support of the city authorities, could make the immigrants noticeable as one of the groups of inhabitants having specific needs in terms of social support.

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City Social Housing Society

Housing is one of the important social policy issues in Plock and a topic of numerous newspaper articles as well as city council debates. The scope of the problem is much too big for the city budget to be solved easily, and many critics say that the housing policy of the city is chaotic and neglected, without clear vision or direction. As former vice president said at one of the council meetings: "... 2,000 families face this problem, often having no permanent residence address. So, today, an attempt to provide 100,000, 500,000, 1 million zlotys will not bring any effect at all." A representative of the local press stated that this problem is encountered by even more people than shown by official statistics: "Officially, there are 7,000 families waiting for apartments in Plock. In fact, nobody really knows how many people are waiting" (Interview no. 2, Plock, journalist of the local newspaper).

These statements illustrate the scale of problems associated with housing in Plock and lack of perspectives for solving them. The tenement houses in the Old Town are particularly problematic; they are in very bad condition and are inhabited by poor and marginalised persons. These are areas in which various problems and social pathologies concentrate, resulting in the creation of a kind of ghetto. In this context, it is particularly significant to introduce innovative solutions, giving a chance for improvement of the housing conditions of Plock inhabitants.

48.1. Short description

The Social Housing Societies are social developers appointed by the commune, whose work is focused mainly on construction and renting houses for the purpose of implementation of the housing policy of the commune. The CSHS of Plock is the largest company of this kind in Mazowsze region and one of the largest in the country.

CSHS, apart from construction of rental flats for persons of low income, try to build apartments for sale on the basis of commercial credits. In 2013, CSHS offered ten apartments at 3,900 to 4,200 PLN per square metre. After calculation of total costs (instalment, service charges, etc.), these prices were comparable to those on the market.

48.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The CSHS offer is addressed to less affluent inhabitants, who cannot afford to purchase or rent an apartment on the free market. Before construction starts, the Society establishes a list of potential inhabitants. **Prior to commencement of the investment project, the so-called "participation" fee is collected as participation in costs of construction.** When the flats are ready, they are rented to those who participated in the costs of construction. As they remain the property of the city, those flats cannot be purchased, but the tenancy rights can be inherited. The

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future tenants of CSHS buildings must return their current council flats or pay the participation fee, in the order of 20-25 per cent of the value of the flat.

The rental fee also contains the service charge and the loan incurred by the Society for construction of the apartments. Buying the apartment occupied is not possible – the tenant leaving the Society may only regain their contribution, which, in fact, constitutes about 30 per cent of the market value of the apartment. Considering the fact that the rent at CSHS is not much lower than in a housing cooperative, these apartments are not as attractive as they could be (Marek Wielgo, *Czynszówki na trudne czasy - czy warto do nich dopłacać?* "Gazeta Wyborcza", 30 April 2013).

48.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The activities of CSHS are a response to lack of apartments at prices that would be affordable for an average citizen, or a citizen who is unable to make a living. According to the act on local self-government, the commune must provide a place to stay for its inhabitants – one of the methods of implementation of this task is construction of apartments for rent. CSHS has built almost 2,000 apartments of this type. These are designated for rental, and the tenant provides a participation fee. On this basis, they become entitled to move in; also this right can be transferred to someone else.

The 2,000 apartments were constructed with the assistance of the National Housing Fund of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (National Economic Bank). This is a target fund of the state, designated for loans to Social Housing Societies for construction purposes; inhabitants repay these for many years in their rental fees. Apart from the 2,000 apartments provided on the basis of the participation formula, CSHS has constructed several facilities to be sold on the free market. These are additional activities and up to now, they have not been successful – the apartments constructed in this way are characterised by high prices per metre and the number of potential purchasers is low.

At present, the National Housing Fund is no longer in operation because of EU provisions, which prohibit the activity of this type. Therefore, CSHS is waiting for other programmes to be launched. Several dozen council flats are currently being constructed on the land plots belonging to the CSHS. It is planned that in the late 2013/early 2014, the president will dispose of

more than 60 new council flats ready for the inhabitants to move in.

A problem associated with operation of the CSHS is the fact that, as the inhabitants have to repay the loan incurred for construction in their rents, the monthly rent is relatively high (even twice as high as in housing cooperatives). When one of the tenants fails to pay, CSHS must pay interest to Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego for them, which amounts in several hundred thousand zlotys per year. This is why CSHS is looking for additional sources of income.

48.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

CSHS as a company owned 100 per cent by the commune treasury, established by the City, and is well embedded in the local welfare system. The City Council plays the role of the general assembly of shareholders of CSHS, making decisions with regard to activities to be undertaken by the company. The housing policy, including the operation of the CSHS, is under the direct supervision of the President of the City and constitutes one of the priorities of city's investments. As described by the President of the CSHS:

CSHS is a company, but it is not like we are a separate structure, we are an extension, an executive arm of the president of the city of Plock and we implement the policy developed by the president of Plock and the council of Plock. So what if it's a company? It makes it easier to manage

Interview no. 5, Plock. The vice-director of City Social Housing Society

This, however, does not mitigate the problem associated with lack of the sufficient funds for construction of subsequent apartments. **Attempts made by the CSHS to obtain means from the sale of development apartments on the free market have not brought the expected results because the prices of the apartments are too high.**

In general, opinions concerning the activity of CSHS in Plock are divided. It has been pointed out that the current prices of apartments offered by the company do not differ much from those available on the market, and the quality of construction is rather low. In response to lack of interest in new apartments in 2013, the opportunity to buy the apartments in instalments is to be introduced: the purchaser will pay 30

per cent of the value of the apartment, while the rest of the amount payable is to be distributed over the period of 5-20 years, depending on the ability of the purchaser to make payments. It is significant that the first instalment, as well as the interest rates, can be negotiated, and in the case of any further problems with repayment – it is possible to reach agreement with regard to temporary suspension of payments. Unlike banks, the CSHS does not require any property documentation and those who have their own funds (not from a bank loan) for the first payment qualify for purchasing an apartment.

CSHS has operated in Plock for a long period; the first apartments were offered in 1998, and the last 3 years ago, as an apartment for rent. Afterwards, the operation of the National Housing Fund was discontinued. Thanks to the act of 2010, which allows for sale of these apartments to inhabitants at market prices, CSHS plans to regain some of the invested money. The funds remaining after repayment of the loan can be spent only on housing construction; thus, if any interesting central or municipal programmes emerge, CSHS will contribute to these, building new apartments and the associated infrastructure.

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Project “Together for Revitalisation”

49.1. Short description

The project “Together for revitalisation” lasted for almost 15 months, encompassing more than 100 inhabitants of the Old Town of Plock. The project, funded mostly from EU funds, has been managed by the City Social Assistance Centre. As it has been underlined, it was a pilot project – one of 20 of this kind, implemented in the country.

The aim of the pilot project was to develop a general model to be implemented by other cities and communes. Plock could participate in the contest for funds, because it met the key prerequisite – since 2005, it has implemented its own revitalisation programme with some social partners.

49.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The project was focused on inhabitants of the Old Town: the poor and marginalised due to low education levels, addiction, unemployment, crime, etc. Revitalisation was to include renovation of old buildings, squares and streets, but also “bringing back to life” the local community, who were often marginalised. The project encompassed 100 people, half of these aged 15-25 years.

The entire programme had a budget of more than 1.6 million zlotys, divided, more or less equally among the two partners selected by the City Social Assistance Centre on the basis of a contest: the Professional Development Institution and the Association “Innovation Centre for Information Society”. Within the framework of these funds, the Social Assistance Centre provided trainings on social competences and skills, including psychological education workshops and sexual education/family planning courses, as well as a community centre, where integration classes for the youth could be organised. The second partner – the Professional Development Institution – organised professional courses, while the ICIS was responsible for activities for the youth (sports, arts, photo, filmmaking and dancing), making of a film on the participants and painting of murals on old tenement buildings – some of these were designed by young people participating in the programme.

49.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The City Social Assistance Centre in partnership with the Professional Development Institution and the Association "Innovation Centre for Information Society" has been implementing the programme "TOGETHER FOR REVITALISATION – pilot programme for social revitalisation of the Old Town of Plock", co-financed by the European Social Fund. The main purpose of the project is social revitalisation of the Old Town in Plock by providing support to at least 100 persons threatened by social exclusion and engaging in activities to animate the local community.

The target group of the Project was defined as 100 persons threatened by social exclusion, living in the Old Town of Plock, beneficiaries of social assistance provided by the CSAC in Plock, at least 50 per cent of all participants were young people aged 15-25 years.

Within the framework of participation in the programme, various forms of activity have been planned, such as:

- > social reintegration (workshop);
- > social reintegration – animation (sports, film and dancing classes);
- > social and professional reintegration (courses and trainings); and
- > organisation and maintenance of the community centre;

The classes offered to the youth included sports, such as kickboxing, filmmaking, dancing, art, e.g. graffiti, and photography. Professional courses were also offered in areas such as artistic make-up, animation, flower arranging, cosmetology, haircutting, construction, engine-driven forklift truck driving, catering, cash register management and computer skills.

49.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

As a result of this project, several backyards have been renovated; small gardens have been established, with sandpits for the children, etc. The inhabitants themselves care about their new backyards and add some new features such as swings, flowerbeds, fencing, etc. Moreover, several participants found jobs after the professional courses that were organised in the project. Now the CSAC is searching for money to continue these activities.

Owing to the fact that the project was based on the partnership of three local institutions, it offered a wide choice of services, matching the needs of the inhabitants of areas that were most threatened by exclusion. The project leader was the CSAC, which is the major institution responsible for social assistance, implementing several projects financed from the EU funds. The joining of efforts of the CSAC and the Professional Development Institution allowed the project to provide participants with assistance and education as two complementary fields.

However, the most significant effects were of the ICIS association work, which introduced real changes in the community of the Old Town based on participation. Working together on the establishment of local green areas, the inhabitants started to feel responsible for the appearance of their community, they started to protect it actively and add new components to it (such as swings for the children, made by one of the inhabitants). The backyards, which were formerly uncared for, became the spaces in which children and adults could spend time and relax in much better conditions than before.

PL
Plock

Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

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Foundation “Grant Fund for Plock”

The situation on the labour market has been one of the main problems encountered by the city authorities. Most activities, implemented by the labour market institution, are based on spending of EU funds for professional training and consulting for the unemployed. Unfortunately, many of the solutions introduced bring only temporary or no results. Training activities are organised in areas that often fail to match the skills or interests of the participants, as well as the market demands. Some attempts have been made to cooperate with employers to identify the skills they are searching for; however, this is not systemic cooperation.

A problem, which has been mentioned in many interviews, is the weak connection of the largest local employer – PKN Orlen Corporation – with the local labour market. The establishment of the corporation resulted in substantial inflow of external inhabitants, who are not interested in the future of Plock. According to one of the interviewees:

Thanks to construction of Petrochemia, it became a large city, and what happened? The entire Steelworks came to the city, mostly people, who could achieve nothing at home, who had no education or no skills or abilities. The local people feel no bond with each other, they are unable to unite or defend the local community. They do not treat Plock as their own.

Interview no. 2, Plock. Journalist of the local newspaper

In the context of significance of PKN Orlen for local development, the “Grant Fund for Plock” Foundation established by the corporation in cooperation with the City to support the local initiatives through grant contests is a positive development.

50.1. Short description

The “Grant Fund for Plock” is an initiative of the Municipal Office of Plock and two corporations operating locally - PKN ORLEN S.A. and *Basell Orlen Polyolefins* - established in 2003. **Cooperation with two large founders is based on social business responsibility.** The main objective of the Foundation is to work to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants of Plock.

According to the Vice President of the City of Plock:

The ‘Grant Fund for Plock’ Foundation combines the potential of the public and private sector who have the enthusiasm and ideas to act on behalf of the local community. The scope of projects implemented owing to the grants has been very wide. The activity of the Foundation is all the more valuable as it allows for rewarding initiatives that are focused on such areas as culture, sports or education, as well as the difficult issues of social assistance or unemployment. Success of the Grant Fund depends on people who are willing to work, who act on behalf of the inhabitants of

our city. We have learned many times we have many people like this in Plock. It should be kept in mind, too, that the initiative has been successful thanks to companies engaged in social issues – PKN Orlen and Basell Orlen Polyolefins. The Foundation is for people with ideas.

So far, five contests have been held; on 20 February 2013, another was announced, in which organisations could compete for grants of up to 25,000 zlotys; the total amount of funds is 300,000 zlotys. All organisations that have their headquarters or branches in Plock may apply. What is important is that all the projects must be focused on the city and its inhabitants. The projects may be related to various fields, including social and educational work, sports, and environmental protection. Every potential beneficiary may file an unlimited number of projects.

50.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The Foundation announces cyclical contests for NGOs of Plock. According to the statute, it provides financial support for projects on behalf of: a) raising of the level of education of the inhabitants of Plock, b) counteracting social and economic exclusion of persons threatened by such exclusion, c) increasing public security, d) preservation of the historic heritage and development of culture and art, e) increasing the quality of social assistance, f) improvement of the condition of the natural environment and raising awareness of the inhabitants of Plock in this regard, g) increasing the attractiveness of Plock in terms of tourism, social relations and economy, h) popularisation of recreation and sports, i) supporting the economic community and undertakings aimed at economic growth of Plock, j) strengthening of European integration and international cooperation and j) acting on behalf of healthcare and promotion of healthcare.

The Foundation supports the organisation of workshops, training, lectures, seminars, exhibitions, reviews, trade fairs, concerts, meetings, contests, creation and operation of community centres, clubs, locations for meeting of local groups, publication of information materials, including audio-visual materials, archiving of knowledge, creation of databases and other innovative activities aimed to integrate and develop the local community.

50.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The “Grant Fund for Plock” Foundation is an initiative of the Municipal Office of Plock, PKN ORLEN S.A. and *Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o.* and is a national-scale innovation. The initiative was undertaken within the framework of social business responsibility and care of the local government for development of the local NGOs.

The legal deed establishing the foundation was signed by representatives of the Founders – the Municipal Office, PKN ORLEN S.A. and *Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o.* - on 15 December 2005. The initial capital of the “Grant Fund for Plock” Foundation amounted to PLN 1 million. The city provided PLN 600,000, PKN ORLEN S.A. – 300,000, *Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o.* – 100,000. The Foundation took over the name and tasks of the Grant Fund for Plock. On 24 March 2006, the Foundation was granted legal standing and was entered in the National Court Register – Register of Associations, other Social and Professional Organisations and Public Healthcare Institutions.

Owing to the systematic support of their Founders, the Foundation has conducted five grant contests, supporting the NGOs of Plock in implementing 130 projects comprising in total more than PLN 1.7 million.

50.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The history of the Foundation goes back to 14 October 2002, when representatives of the city authorities, PKN ORLEN S.A. and the United Nations signed the letter of intent concerning establishment of the “Forum for Plock”. The project was aimed at inclusion of local businesses and social organisations in cooperation with the local government on assessment and updating of the “Strategy for Development of the City of Plock until 2012”. For 6 months, almost 50 local organisations, representing businesses of Plock, NGOs, the inhabitants and the local government cooperated to create and define the development priorities for the city. The works were concluded in June 2003 by approval of the “Strategy for Sustainable Development of the City of Plock” and signing of the declaration for cooperation on behalf of achievement of objectives of the strategy.

PL Plock

Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

Another innovative initiative, which emerged during the works of the Forum for Plock, was establishment of the Grant Fund for Plock in May 2003, on the initiative of the Municipal Office of Plock and PKN ORLEN S.A. The Fund was supposed to provide the financial basis for NGOs of Plock working to support the Strategy for Sustainable Development. The initial capital amounted to PLN 1.1 million – 500,000 provided by PKN ORLEN S.A. and 600,000 by the city. The project was supervised by UNDP. The role of UNDP was to facilitate communication between the private and the public sector. They also supervised the activity of the Fund and provided consulting. As the works were in progress, another business partner joined the project - Levi Strauss Poland. Thanks to financial support provided by all three entities, the Fund developed three editions of grant contests, in which 121 grants were awarded for the total amount of almost PLN 2.1 million.

After three editions of the contest, the UN decided that its role as the project administrator was over and the Fund was ready to be handed over to the local community. Therefore, the Founders (the city of Plock, PKN Orlen S.A) and the new partner – *Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o.* - and UNDP representatives worked to create a foundation that could take over the activities of the Grant Fund for Plock and support the development of the local community. Levi Strauss Poland withdrew as a Founder due to formal reasons.

Both companies engaged in activity of the Grant Fund for Plock have underlined that their support for this initiative is due to their willingness to support the local community, as well as the prestige associated with participation in such a unique project:

The Grant Fund for Plock Foundation is a unique example of a public-private partnership in Central and Eastern Europe. Participation in such an exceptional initiative allows the partners to support, plan and monitor the development of very significant projects on behalf of the inhabitants of Plock. Being a founder is not only prestigious, but also a responsibility, and active participation in projects is aimed at improvement of the living standards of the local community. I believe that the more people that are willing to cooperate, the more benefits there are in it for all beneficiaries.

Representative of PKN ORLEN

Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o. is a company of Plock, and apart from its business operation, it strives

to support the development of the region in which it operates through participation in many social projects. One of these is the Grant Fund for Plock, which offers many opportunities in such fields as sports, culture, education and many others. The Fund is also a platform for exchange of information on opportunities in the region for many interesting initiatives. The Company assumes social and business responsibility for the affairs of Plock, as has been proven by our participation in the Fund, of which we are proud.

Representative of Basell Orlen Polyolefins Sp. z o.o.

Conclusions

There are a number of factors that influence local welfare policy and social innovations in Plock:

- > characteristic of the city and scope of its legal decisions and responsibilities;
- > recent economic and social developments in Plock; and
- > types of local and external “stakeholders” initiating innovations.

Characteristic of the city and scope of its legal decisions and responsibilities.

Plock is the historic capital of Mazowsze, located in the north-western part of Mazowieckie province (Ciechanowsko-Płocki sub-region according to NUTS-3 classification) approximately 110 km from Warsaw. According to the Central Statistical Office, at the end of December 2010, the population of Plock comprised 124,727 permanent residents; among these, women constituted 52.4 per cent (Central Statistical Office, Local Data Bank). In terms of population size, Plock is counted among medium-sized cities. Plock is a city with county rights (NUTS-4), which means that the scope of its tasks differs from that of the communes. Due to its status as a township, the tasks of the city of Plock include maintenance of public education institutions, implementation of a family support policy, as well as assisting the disabled (District Family Assistance Centre). On the other hand, the tasks of the city include maintenance of the road infrastructure, the water supply, sewage and sanitary systems, social assistance (maintaining of care centres and institutions), public housing, maintenance of elementary schools,

kindergartens (nursery schools) and other education and care institutions, social, medical and legal assistance for pregnant women.

As a township, Płock is responsible for independent financial management within the scope of its budget. The main sources of income for the city are taxes, charges and other receipts, income from the city property, a general subsidy from the state budget, as well as special purpose donations for implementation of ordered tasks and for additional financing of own tasks (Statutes of the City of Płock 2008). In the case of the city of Płock, in year 2010, 65 per cent of its income consisted of internal income. At the same time, the share of own income of Płock in overall income is similar to the average for all cities in Poland (Central Statistical Office, Local Data Bank).¹⁰ In Płock, there are several universities and colleges, including the branches of The University of Warsaw and Warsaw University of Technology¹¹. Companies play important role in the city, being providers of workplaces and helping solve different problems related to the city. The companies cooperate with local authorities and other local stakeholders to solve some of the most important problems of the city.

Recent developments in Płock: transformations of the local labour market

The local labour market and economy in Płock, like the national level and economy of the Ciechanowsko-Płocki (Ciechanów-Płock) sub-region, reflects the growth and slowdown trends associated mainly with accession of Poland to the EU in 2004 and the global economic crisis of 2008-9. Positive impact of membership of Poland in the EU is indicated, among other things, by the GDP values per inhabitant. **Płock can be referred to as a city of industry and services, while the role of the agricultural sector is small. The highest investment expenditures of Płock companies in 2009 were observed in the industrial sector.** In 2009, in Płock, 69 per cent of all employed inhabitants worked in the private sector, and 31 per cent in the public sector (Central Statistical Office 2010).

¹⁰ Among other companies, Polski Koncern Naftowy Orlen SA has its headquarters in Płock; the city is also home to production plants of the American company Levi Strauss, as well as many other companies with a share of foreign capital: Hoppenstedt Bonnier Information, Bildau & Bussmann, Adler Poland, A. Schulman, Dr Oetker Dekor.

¹¹ (www.ump.pl)

In years 2000-9, the percentage share of the unemployed among the professionally active population decreased substantially in Płock. Reduction of unemployment after the accession of Poland to the EU was caused by migration abroad to search for jobs. At the time, the local press of Płock reported "insufficient number of employees", particularly in professions requiring low qualifications and/or manual labour. In 2010, the registered unemployment rate in Płock amounted to 10.9 per cent, and in the case of the Ciechanowsko-Płocki sub-region and on the national level it was equal to 15.6 per cent and 12.3 per cent, respectively. The available statistical data show that social groups that are more threatened by unemployment in Płock are women, young people, the elderly – persons aged 55 years and above – and persons with lower education. The same tendencies can be observed at the national level, as well as in the Ciechanowsko-Płocki sub-region.

Over the last 10 years, Płock has been characterised by a substantially higher share of women among the registered unemployed in comparison with the sub-region or the entire country. The problem of unemployment pertains mainly to women who had been employed before (Mackiewicz 2009). The closing of some factories in the last few years where women have been employed caused the increase in their unemployment. Nevertheless, due to fluctuations in the economic conditions, the number of women professionally out of work grew systematically in the years 2000-9.

Outflow and inflow of population from and to Płock (migration)

Despite of relative attractiveness of Płock in the context of the Ciechanowsko-Płocki sub-region, the city is unable to stop the outflow of the population, which mainly migrates to Warsaw or abroad. In Płock, in the years 2005-9, the balance of migration abroad for permanent residence was usually negative, and the balance of temporary migration abroad was positive. The immigration from abroad, earlier mainly from the Soviet Union, after 1990 from Ukraine, Belorussia and the Far East (Vietnam, China), is small. These immigrants do not have very active organisations and their own centres.

PL

Plock

Typology of initiators of social innovations in Plock (and their examples)

City authorities using EU funds

The situation on the labour market has been one of the main problems encountered by the city authorities. Most activities, implemented by the labour market institution, are based on spending of EU funds for professional trainings and consulting for the unemployed.

Cooperation between the city authorities and local enterprises. The "Grant Fund for Plock" is an initiative of the Municipal Office of Plock and two corporations operating locally - PKN ORLEN S.A. and Basell Orlen Polyolefins - established in 2003. Cooperation with two large founders is based on social business responsibility. The main objective of the Foundation is to improve the quality of life of inhabitants of Plock. Another innovative initiative, which emerged during the works of the Forum for Plock, was establishment of the Grant Fund for Plock in May 2003, on the initiative of the Municipal Office of Plock and PKN ORLEN S.A. The Fund was supposed to provide the financial basis for NGOs of Plock working to support the Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Cooperation among city institutions, NGOs and inhabitants (with support of the European Social Fund). The project of social revitalisation of the part of Plock inhabited by populations endangered by social exclusion is an example of cooperation among city institutions, NGOs and inhabitants. The City Social Assistance Centre in partnership with the Professional Development Institution and the Association "Innovation Centre for Information Society" has been implementing the programme "TOGETHER FOR REVITALISATION – a pilot programme for social revitalisation of the Old Town of Plock", co-financed by the European Social Fund. However, the most significant were the effects of the ICIS association work, which introduced real changes in the community of the Old Town based on participation. Working together on the establishment of local green areas, the inhabitants started to feel responsible for the appearance of their community.

Grass-root initiatives are basis of activities of nongovernmental organizations. The associations whose activities

are aimed at a specific group of immigrants – those from the East (Russians and Ukrainians) - demonstrate that grassroots initiatives form the basis of activities of nongovernmental organisations. At the same time, the Association works on behalf of the Russian minority of Plock, that is, the descendants of Russians, who came to the city during the 19th century. According to the president, cultural and assistance events are particularly needed by immigrants, who, to a certain extent, feel torn between Poland and their country of origin. The activities of the Association is managed by immigrants from the East themselves and persons of Russian origin. Activity in Plock is not easy due to small-scale migration to the city, illegal migration (immigrants are suspicious) and diversity of the groups of foreigners, who came to the city over various time periods. However, a greater number of initiatives with more active support of the city authorities could make the immigrants noticeable as one of the groups of inhabitants having specific needs in terms of social support.

Support of the national institutions for Plock NGOs. The aim of the Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy is to secure the position of NGOs as an integral element of the new child and family care system. Consequently, government policies are geared toward developing local community-based infrastructure to support families in the proper discharge of their responsibilities for children. The centre provides children with round-the-clock permanent or temporary care and also secures the necessary livelihood, developmental needs of the child.

Spreading social innovations brought from other local communities. The City Social Housing Societies are social developers appointed by the local authorities. Their work is focused mainly on construction and renting houses to implement the housing policy of the commune. The CSHS of Plock is the largest company of this kind in Mazowsze and one of the largest in the country. The CSHS offer is addressed to the less affluent inhabitants, who cannot afford to purchase or rent an apartment on the free market. The flats are rented to those who participated in the costs of construction. As they remain the property of the city, they cannot be purchased, but the tenancy rights can be inherited.

External financial support given by the EU. European Funds are one of the major drivers of both infrastructural and social development in Poland nowadays. Active labour market policies as well as lifelong learn-

ing activities are important areas supported by the European Social Fund. Therefore, it is not surprising that the financial support given by the EU, especially in the frame of the ESF and the European Fund for Integration of non-EU Immigrants (EIF), is the important factor in the context of sustainability of the discussed local initiatives. For example, in case of mentioned TSOs helping immigrants, applying for EU funds is crucial for their projects, as they receive irregular and partial support from the city. Resources of the European Fund for Integration of non-EU Immigrants (EIF) allowed for intensification of activities aimed at integration.

Due to lack of a clear integration policy in Poland and existing restrictions on social assistance available for immigrants, the Fund actually replaced the state activity in this regard. Similarly, the support for social cooperatives is possible owing to the projects realised by the Labour Office and based on ESF money. However, there is a risk that the initiatives based mostly on these funds may lose sustainability in future programming periods when the European Commission introduces changes in the structure of the EU funds. On the other hand, in Plock, the EU money supports the great majority of the activities against unemployment implemented by local welfare institutions (such as The Labour Office), TSOs and private entities, which usually offer training and courses for various categories of unemployed.

In conclusion, building participatory democracy in Plock takes place even it faces problems. Creation of third sector organisations often based on individual initiative as well as building cooperation among different local stakeholders facilitates social cohesion of the local community. These types of activities are significant because of low trust of the government and its agencies in Poland (WVS 2012 unpublished) and the historically proven belief that citizens are most successful if they take their problems into their own hands. The last decade shows that the governmental agencies responsible for social policy increasingly understand (with a support of European Commission) the importance of identifying important problems in the city and ways to meet the needs of different social groups. Similar to many other countries, commercialisation of services takes place, which may polarise local communities, dividing them according to income and types of social networks that different groups have at their disposal.

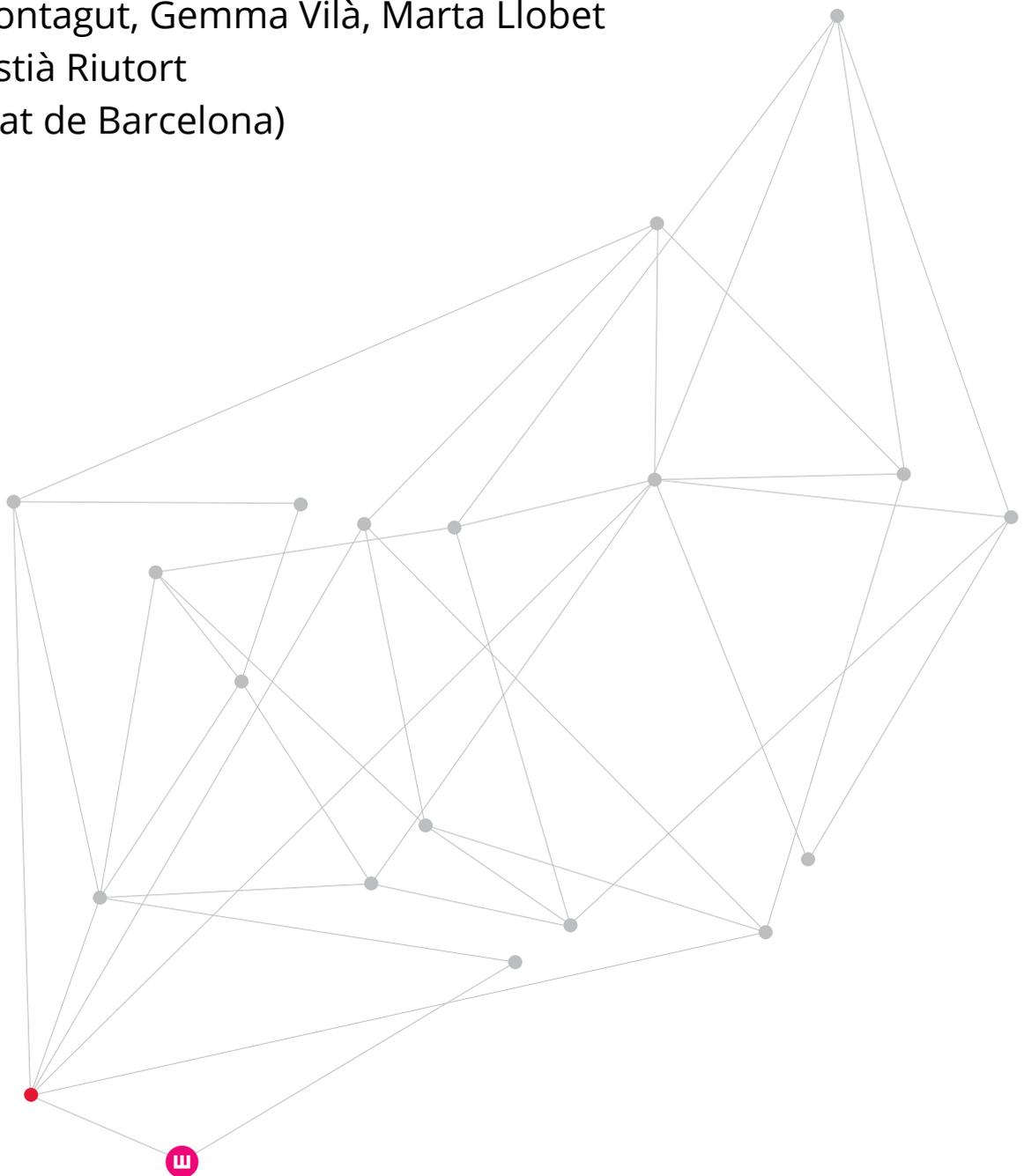
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ES Spain

Barcelona

Teresa Montagut, Gemma Vilà, Marta Llobet
and Sebastià Riutort
(Universitat de Barcelona)



ES

Barcelona

Authors

Teresa Montagut, Gemma Vilà, Marta Llobet
and Sebastià Riutort
(Universitat de Barcelona)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Civil society
Community
Democracy
Development
Family caregivers
Governance
Labour market integration
Local welfare system
Participation
Social Inclusion

The administrative decentralisation of the political structure in Spain grants regional and local councils a set of legislative and executive competencies which, in the case of social welfare services, are very far-reaching (Aguilar *et al.* 2011). This decentralisation of competencies has given considerable leeway to each territory in the design of their social protection systems. The case of the city of Barcelona is a good example for studying the main forces that have marked the way in which the social welfare system has developed at a local level. In order to understand it, we need to analyse what has happened over the last few decades. The social innovations that we find in Barcelona today are related to three basic factors: (a) the political/administrative structure of the country; (b) the specific city government; and (c) the dynamics of civil society.

(a) The political/administrative structure

At the time of the first local elections after the restoration of democracy in 1979, there was no organised social welfare system in Spain. Health and education were the only areas of social policy that had not been discontinued during the dictatorship. The Spanish constitution now establishes that the autonomous communities have competency over a network of services and benefits aimed at meeting the population's needs. The state legislation on local government also establishes that cities of over 200,000 inhabitants must design their own services in this area.

(b) The specific city government

From these first local elections, and until 2010, a period of over 30 years, the city council of Barcelona was in the hands of the Left (the Socialist Party won the elections and governed in coalition with two other left-wing parties). The main characteristics of the social welfare system of the city, therefore, are: (1) continuity in the government team over a long period of time, (2) starting from zero, *i.e.* they had to build the system from scratch, and (3) citizens who – after the long period of dictatorship – wanted to be involved in political action, to participate. Municipal policymakers made the most of this potential when it came to setting up the local welfare system, as did other political stakeholders (the opposition parties and civil society) to some extent.

The first decade, the 1980s, saw the creation of the social services network and, at the regional level, the passing of the first Social Services Act, but it was probably not until the 1990s that it could be said that the city's social welfare model was consolidated. Some years earlier, in 1987, a Social Welfare Department had been set up by the municipal government. It is significant that this was the first time any government body in Spain had used the term "social welfare" to define an area of political action. A ministry was later created in the government of Spain and a regional ministry in the Au-



tonomous Community of Catalonia. For over 10 years the department was run by the same politicians, a situation which has had an impact on its development right up until today.

In more general terms, in Barcelona we find an objective that cuts across all areas of political action: the “modernisation” of the city. This is a manifestation of the desire to recover the spirit of enterprise that the city once had, to recover its own brand of economic and cultural dynamism that was forbidden during the years of the dictatorship. It finds its expression in the construction of the “Barcelona model”, a model that can be seen clearly in the changes in urban development as a result of the 1992 Olympic Games, the success of which was to a large extent due to the involvement of civil society (a kind of ritual act of “civil religion” as one author described it), although it also affected other areas of society.

Policymakers in the Social Welfare Department set themselves a basic goal of building a social services model that was participative. As no welfare services system yet existed, there was no widespread culture of commitment to, or participation in, the city’s social welfare. The structures used to encourage and enable people to commit themselves to collective responsibilities would also have to be created (see Montagut *et al.*, 2012).

(c) The dynamics of civil society

Civil society in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia has traditionally been participative and enterprising, as demonstrated by the large number of cooperatives that existed in Barcelona at the end of

the nineteenth century. Another example reflecting the dynamism of citizen participation is found in the “neighbourhood associations” established in different neighbourhoods of Barcelona at the end of the dictatorship in the 1970s to influence municipal politics. These associations, organised citywide as the Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Barcelona (*Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos de Barcelona*, or FAVB), continue to be political stakeholders working on behalf of citizens’ interests (in some cases with ties to certain left-wing parties through leaders active in both). In certain actions (*e.g.* urban projects to rejuvenate neighbourhoods) some associations have played a role resembling that of speculators more than advocates for the interests of neighbourhood residents, which has resulted in conflicts between a particular neighbourhood association and the FAVB. There have also been some conflicts within certain neighbourhoods, which have led to the rise of new associations that aim to more closely represent citizens’ interests, but even so, these different associations have managed to work together, creating strong participation networks.

The search for a “Barcelona model” has meanwhile continued ever more seriously in various political arenas, and collaboration with civil society in social welfare matters has also increased significantly, representing a force for social innovation in the city. In the following sections we present three innovative projects in the area of social welfare at the local level. These three distinct approaches – all taking place in the same period – reveal the search among the different stakeholders involved to construct or transform the local social welfare system.

ES

Barcelona

Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

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La Mina Transformation Plan

51.1. Short description

“La Mina”, a neighbourhood built on the outskirts of Barcelona in the 1970s and segregated from the rest of the city, was designed to house a population with minimal resources that had been living in various settlements of shantytowns in Barcelona. Historically, the neighbourhood has suffered from significant shortages in terms of services and facilities. It has also been one of the most marginalised and stigmatised areas of the city, facing serious social and urban problems. Administratively, it is part of the municipality of *Sant Adrià del Besòs*, which borders Barcelona; however, the neighbourhood is administered by the governments of both municipalities, representing both a challenge and an innovation.

At the end of the 1990s a series of factors converged, bringing about favourable conditions for improving the neighbourhood: an awareness of the pressing need to intervene in the social situation in the neighbourhood, linked with the presence of very active neighbourhood associations and the pressure resulting from urban reform in areas around la Mina through major projects such as the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures and the 22@ Barcelona Innovation District, among others. In 2000 the “Transformation Plan for the Neighbourhood of la Mina” (PTBM in Spanish) was launched, financed through the URBAN II programme with funding from European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). La Mina was also part of a pilot project of the Local Social Capital programme of the European Social Funds.

The plan has various characteristics that explain its inclusion as a case study in the WILCO project, in particular, the comprehensive character of the intervention planned, which was innovative in comparison to other approaches that had been taken previously. “The objective is to transform the neighbourhood through an integrated and comprehensive intervention aimed at strengthening the community in the medium and long-term, leading to complete normality...” (La Mina Consortium 11, 2008). The essential link between urban transformation and social intervention was something completely new in local planning and based on the joint participation of professionals from diverse fields (architects, economists, educators and social workers).

51.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

The La Mina Transformation Plan has included a whole set of social inclusion activities that have been aimed at improving the economic and social conditions of a very deprived population. Most of these activities have been classical labour market integration programmes, but some social micro-management interventions have been developed as well.

Labour market integration programmes have been boosted in the neighbourhood, and have included some innovations, specially linking more closely training schemes and real job opportunities, following training for specific jobs on the job model. The increase and reorientation of training activities seems to have had quite a positive impact as long as the economic boom in the 2000s increased the demand for labour. The employment crisis since 2008 has drastically reduced employment opportunities for a very underprivileged population. But, however successful and to some extent innovative these programmes may have been, there has been no significant change in the way users have been conceived and addressed.

The main field in which “users” have been treated differently from the traditional approach to the neighbourhood has been the participation process affecting the urban transformation programme. The PTBM participatory approach has led to changes in the way users are addressed, but has had different stages. In the beginning (2001), there was a willingness on the part of different stakeholders (social and neighbourhood organisations and governments) to make participation a central axis of the whole process. At this time, it was developed as a proposal of a participatory and community project which considered the interests and decisions of neighbours in the transformation of their neighbourhood. In the second stage, the project moved from looking for direct involvement of neighbours and sharing the projects with them through assemblies, to creating joint working groups (entities and technical representatives) and holding regular meetings and informative sessions. In a third step, which coincided with the change of regional government, this model of participation was weakened when the PTBM chose for hiring entities out of town for the management of labour and social services, instead of enhancing the associative link to neighbourhood.

51.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The PTBM is characterised by a complex structure in which wide networks of social agents participate. The plan is managed by the La Mina Neighbourhood Consortium, which includes representatives from different levels of government: the two local governments, as well as the regional government. From the beginning, a network of citizens’ organisations has also been involved in different phases of the process and has played an active role in different areas. Regarding citizen participation, there is the La Mina Platform of Neighbours and Neighbourhood Organisations, which currently includes twelve organisations (although at one time it included twenty-four organisations) and the Neighbourhood Association of La Mina.

The participatory structure of the plan is organised around four broad areas, which has led to the establishment of ongoing work among different agents:

- > The plan for community development: neighbourhood residents, experts, politicians and representatives of organisations participate. It is structured through different administrative and participatory instruments. The transversal nature of the work stands out, as do the debate roundtables, sectorial work and technical support provided for neighbourhood participants. A model of participatory urbanism, which aims at encouraging the participation of neighbourhood residents in the design of projects through debate and proposals. What stands out in this model is the participatory instruments used (participatory workshops, sectorial meetings) as well as the technical support and information on projects provided to residents.
- > Technical support provided by two experts at the service of the Platform of Neighbours and Neighbourhood Organisations and the Neighbourhood Association.
- > An information and communication plan designed to provide information on the project and to improve the image of the neighbourhood. There are various communication channels, among them, a space on the local broadcaster Radio La Mina.

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All these structures have led to a new way of working on problems in the neighbourhood and approaching change. What has been fundamental in this process is the change in the role of neighbourhood residents, who are playing an active role in the transformation of the neighbourhood. This is not only the result of the efforts of the municipal government, but also stems from the participatory and civic tradition of neighbourhood organisations and the neighbourhood association. The association had organised debates and protests and made programme proposals to improve the neighbourhood in the past. One of these was a proposal for increasing literacy.

51.4. The embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The impact of the plan has more to do with the neighbourhood than with the local welfare system of the city. A set of actions aimed exclusively at this neighbourhood is still required. There are diverse aspects of the plan that should be mentioned:

- > The participation and collective effort of different administrations on a local project that has led to greater transversality.
 - > The comprehensive character of the plan and the relationship between urban conditions and social cohesion.
 - > The organisational structure of the PTBM articulated through the consortium and the fundamental role that the participation of neighbourhood and civic agents has had. The plan has strengthened communication channels between the different agents during its different stages and has led to a more transversal and comprehensive effort.
 - > The existence of a neighbourhood and civic network prior to the plan, which was maintained during the project. The members of this network have played a fundamental role in the elaboration of the plan (by encouraging debate, developing proposals, criticising and controlling policies) and in its development. In addition, they have played a role beyond the PTBM, strengthening democracy through educating and fostering the integration and participation of neighbourhood residents. In this sense, they have acted like schools for citizenship.
- > The involvement and the power of the intervention of the technical and professional services in the neighbourhood, with actions that have taken into account the needs of the sectors and neighbourhood groups
 - > The emergence and promotion of innovative activities initiated by organisations and associations in the field of training and labour insertion, reconciling work and family life, local economic development and social and educational support (like literacy projects with grandchildren and grandparents, local radio as a space for education and debate, a gym for teenagers directed by an Olympic medallist, etc.).
 - > Community attention to families and more needed groups, with interventions in the home and peri-domestic spaces. Specific socio-educational action in the relocation, with training and information activities on issues concerning the organisation of the household
 - > The project has managed to open up the neighbourhood and connect it with the two adjacent municipalities (Barcelona and Sant Adrià del Besòs). One of the problematic issues in the neighbourhood was the "ghetto" that certain urban barriers had generated. The PTBM incorporated as a priority project the elimination of these barriers and the construction of a "rambla" surrounded by housing and other facilities along which a tram would run connecting the neighbourhood with these two municipalities.

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Joves amb futur - Young People with a Future

52.1. Short description

An increasingly serious social problem in recent years has been the growth in the number of young people dropping out of school but remaining outside of the labour market, and who, for various reasons, lack work habits, discipline and responsibility. This population has been dubbed “the NEET generation” (not in education, employment or training) by the media. The programme is innovative both for its organisation (a new form of joint implementation of policy between government, business and the third sector) and because it is a response to a new social problem. We could call it a new way of bridging the gap between the administrative world and the “real world”.

It was necessary to break the cycle and encourage companies to hire these young people through internship programmes. However, the onset of the economic crisis has made it increasingly difficult to get companies to accept young trainees following the regulations established for this. It is in this context that in 2007, the city council proposed a new model for intervention that aimed to incorporate these young people into programmes to train them and to develop work habits and responsibility. This meant getting companies involved.

Young People with a Future is a programme of the Barcelona City Council, which, along with the regional government, has competency over this area, and is run through the city agency *Barcelona Activa*. The idea was to have a programme that would guide and mentor young people throughout the process and whose final goal would be job placement. In other words, there was the need for specialised job training as well as training in basic competencies and good work habits. The target population was young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years who had not finished basic education and were unemployed.

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52.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

Once the project was planned, the programme was set to run for the 2-year period 2010-12. The programme offered vocational training together with training in competencies as well as an internship contracted with a company to participants who fulfilled the requirements.

Training was provided by distance learning through the Open Institute of Catalonia (IOC). Its goal was for young people to be able to obtain their secondary school diploma. Once this process was completed, they were assisted in finding job placements in companies through a “work internship contract”. This prior training was recognised as the equivalent training that employers were meant to provide under the established regulations. The result was that the young person arrived at the company having already completed the required training programme and the company would provide, him or her, a 6-month work internship contract. A series of subsidies were also established for those companies who subsequently hired these young people during their “employment”.

The programme had two phases as a result of having to adapt to the economic and political changes taking place after its initiation. Starting in 2012, a different group of young people appeared who also had problems integrating into the labour market; these were young people with education, degrees and training who, due to the economic situation, were also having serious difficulties finding work.

52.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The project worked in innovative ways, institutionalising organisations and creating a diverse range of public-private partnerships among different entities and organisations within society and business at the local level. The programme brought together three types of organisations: (a) third-sector organisations, (b) local businesses and (c) the government bodies responsible for job placement within the regional government.

The participants in the programme were recruited through third-sector organisations and the employment offices of the regional government, which organised informational sessions for unemployed young people and selected those who were eligible for the programme. The youth council of the city was also involved.

Eight third-sector organisations that worked with young people in the city participated in the programme, providing guidance and tutoring for the participants. Each organisation provided a professional to be in charge of selecting the young people to participate in the programme, who would also accompany them throughout the duration of the programme. They were to be their tutors during the training and the work internship.

In addition to the staff provided by the organisations, there were also other staff and tutors from Barcelona Activa. All of them were trained by the IOC to monitor the online training of these young people. Exams took place in the offices of Barcelona Activa.

Different training programmes were designed based on the participants' interests and the job resources available. During the first year, 582 young people began their training, and 472 of them passed their exams. Of these, 264 were contracted by companies to do internships.

Due to political changes the programme was altered, which affected the continuity of the programme as designed:

- > The first change was related to Barcelona's new municipal government, which is now led by the nationalist/conservative party, after more than 30 years of socialist party-led governments. The new phase of the programme contained an important variation: the programme no longer only targeted young people who had dropped out of school but was extended to a broader population due to the critical economic situation, targeting all unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years, whether they had finished school (including university) or not. The programme, therefore, now had two branches: one targeting young people who had dropped out of school, which maintained the same design as before (training in the areas of hotel and catering, tourism, administration and personal services), and the other offering specialised training for placement in jobs requiring degrees (family mediation, social communication, project management, *etc.*).
- > The second and final change came with the closing of the programme by regional government (Generalitat of Catalonia) and its assignment to the "social economy" network of

the Citizens' Agreement (see the next section). A political decision was made to strengthen businesses and promote self-employment due to "structural needs". It could be said that the active policies designed by the government in recent months have "taken businesses more into account than individuals" (I-5).

52.4. The embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

Both phases of the programme were embedded in the local social welfare system, even though they were two somewhat different processes. In the first phase the programme served as an axis to involve organisations and companies in helping unemployed young people to get training and jobs. In contrast, in this second phase it is the Social Economy network of Barcelona. Among other objectives, it is trying to find solutions to the exclusion of young people from the labour market.

In both phases this issue has been able to unite a range of social and political stakeholders. Diverse stakeholders involved in local social welfare have joined forces to establish innovative forms of action. One of the important lessons to be drawn from this is that local social welfare systems are influenced and may be affected - as in this case - by higher level regulations, and this may impede their development. Although a specific local dynamic may promote social innovation, its success is tied to decisions made at other levels of government in cases where policies depend on public administration at another territorial level.

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Citizens' Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona¹

53.1. Short description

The Citizens' Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona is the result of the 2005-10 Municipal Plan for Social Inclusion that was approved in Barcelona in March 2005. This plan provided the framework for municipal policies aimed at preventing the social exclusion of individuals and groups and the promotion of participation. The Citizens' Agreement (CA) was established in April 2005. The ultimate goal of the programme is a redistribution of responsibilities in the social welfare sector in Barcelona through a broad agreement among representatives of the main social agents in the sector. The intention is to create a strategic framework shared by all participating entities. This is a new philosophy, which integrates the diversity of activities carried out in the local social welfare system into a single framework or joint strategy. It is based on a policy decision to coordinate the diverse activities of the different social stakeholders. No one loses their space for action; on the contrary, it is possible to improve results by combining efforts.

A total of 235 entities of a diverse nature (organisations, businesses and universities) signed the Agreement with the aim of establishing alliances, generating synergies, coordinating activities and finding shared objectives with the municipal government and among themselves. It was established with the intention that it would remain open to the incorporation of new entities and social organisations. Since its public presentation, the number of institutions and organisations involved and attached to the Agreement has grown each year. In December 2011, there were a total of 467 participating organisations, institutions and businesses (representing a doubling of the number of participants in 5 years), and by the end of 2012 there were 500 entities.

It is the result of a process that began 20 years ago with the goal of generating greater participation in the area of social welfare in the city. This process has gone through different phases and at present has taken the form of the Citizens' Agreement.

¹ See www.bcn.cat/barcelonainclusiva/es/que_es.html

53.2. Types of services and ways of addressing users

The Agreement has been promoted and is coordinated by the municipal government. Currently, the more than 500 participating entities work in such distinct spheres as the economy, culture, education, social action, housing, health and labour. The values that the Citizens' Agreement promotes are identified in the strategic framework that defines the programme: co-existence, cooperation, social cohesion, creativity and community. As stated in a Citizens' Agreement document: "these values emphasise the need to improve dialogue within a framework of diversity, increase interactions between individuals and organisations, social ties in the community, solidarity, transformative action and social innovation". In addition, from the perspective of the internal administration of the agreement, the desire is for "the values that preside to be closely related to democratic governance, networking and quality of work" (I-12).

Signing the Agreement means joining a network that provides opportunities for access to and exchange of information, resources and knowledge. It also promotes projects in which cooperation between diverse entities and organisations in the city are key.

53.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The Citizens' Agreement is organised on different levels:

- > There is an annual meeting of all the signatories to the agreement, in which participants provide an account of the work they have carried out during the year and agree on the direction of the work for the following year.
- > There is a governing council, which is a deliberative and decision-making body that shapes the development of the agreement and its actions.
- > There are work commissions, formed by organisations that temporarily work on concrete issues.
- > There are action networks formed by organisations, institutions and other bodies that work in specific sectors, which establish common objectives to improve the work they do. The development of their work has the support of a Technical Secretariat.

The organisations and city institutions in these networks share concrete methodologies and goals; they cooperate and direct their shared work toward common strategic and operational objectives. The networks begin with a desire to work together on a particular issue or matter and to achieve improvements in the respective fields of the participants. Each network is independent and has, based on its objectives, its own dynamics and work plan. At the time of this study (summer 2012), ten networks had been formed:

- > Network for the Reception and Support of Immigrants in Barcelona.
- > Network for Assistance to the Homeless.
- > Network of Businesses with Social Responsibility Projects.
- > Network for Social and Labour Market Integration (now: for "Social Economy").
- > Network of Centres for Children and Teens.
- > Support Network for Family Caregivers.
- > Inclusion Housing Network.
- > Cultural Network for Social Inclusion.
- > Network for Children's Rights.
- > Network for Co-existence and Prevention.

53.4. The embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system

The Citizens' Agreement has had an interesting impact on social welfare policy in the city. Not only has it allowed the sharing of resources and information, but it has also changed forms of governance. The entities involved feel themselves to be stakeholders who have influence on social welfare. It has led to the participation of citizens and social organisations in welfare policies through different forms of deliberation and action. The programme has changed the social welfare system in the city in various ways. For example, the structures of the Citizens' Agreement represent a new form of governance, in particular the dynamic in the executive commission, which allows and promotes pro-activeness with a very high level of reflection and production of documents (I-6). There is participation in the overall welfare system that also improves or facilitates the activities carried out by each of the participating entities.

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The municipal Social Inclusion Plan in its fourth strategic line of action promotes a “shared strategy” with the signatories to the Citizens’ Agreement. Its goal is to coordinate public resources with private resources and with social and voluntary initiatives, in order to respond more effectively to social needs in these times of crisis. As stated in the presentation document, the “shared strategy” is itself a plan for the inclusion of all the social stakeholders in the city, whether public or private, commercial or non-profit. The document “Shared Strategy 2012-17” was presented on 4 April 2013 and refers to the activities of the civil society contributing to the social inclusion plan promoted by the city government.

In addition, direct action depends on the networks. Each of them has their own dynamic and characteristics. Some of the networks have progressed more than others, and some have managed to agree on common citywide projects or programmes. In the following section we will analyse three of the networks forming part of the Citizens’ Agreement.

53.5. Description of three networks

The Network for Social and Labour Market Integration (now Social Economy Network) was created in April 2006. It is made up of 49 organisations and its objective is to coordinate the effort of public authorities and other social agents that work to find employment for persons in situations of vulnerability. Since the end of 2007, the recession and economic crisis have strengthened the network as a resource that gives a voice to its members and enables them to find solutions by combining efforts. The network has also been a “school”, helping its members consolidate as social enterprises that can find their own sources of funding to break with their dependency on government subsidies. In this sense, the network does not directly intervene in the social welfare model but is rather a tool or instrument that can improve the work of the entities involved. It is important to remember at this point that local governments in Spain have no direct competencies over employment policies.

Two years ago, and as a result of two factors - the change in city government and the economic and financial crisis - the network began to rethink its objectives and even changed its name. It is now called the “Social Economy Network”. This new focus means

that it no longer only targets the most vulnerable groups but that it also attempts to promote the social economy of the city. Along with measures to assist individuals and groups with difficulties, it seeks to promote “entrepreneurship” and social innovation in the workplace, incorporating companies that have corporate social responsibility policies and programmes into the network.

The Network for Assistance to the Homeless was created in November 2005 and constituted of twenty-six organisations and federations. The social organisations that are participants in this network are committed to working together to help homeless persons regain autonomy and social relations. The network initially arose in order for its members to set goals and plan actions together. They especially wanted to break with the stereotype that actions taken by the government were different from those carried out by the third sector, overcoming a lack of trust between the two sectors.

Various working groups were established and together they have carried out diverse actions, such as the following: a count of the number of homeless persons in Barcelona; preparation of a document with proposals on how to improve healthcare for the mentally ill; coming to agreement on proposals for actions; sharing information and data; and creating an open online catalogue of all the resources and services available through government and other entities. The network has representation and dialogue with officials of local and regional government. The administration, politicians and professionals with responsibility in this area have embraced this new way of working horizontally with third-sector organisations. This network has made it possible to create a new form of governance in this area.

Network of Centres for Children and Teens is made up of seventeen organisations and was established in April 2006. Its aim is to improve the city’s responsiveness to children and adolescents in situations of social risk.

It was an initiative of the organisations that manage or run centres for children and teens (outside school hours), the aim of which was to gain greater recognition for the work they were doing. Through the network the member organisations would work on developing a common model of care for young people for all the centres in the city, albeit managed

by different entities. Each year the different centres work on a theme that is chosen by all the participants in the network – both public authorities and social organisations. The organisations and the local administration recognise that they share a discourse. Moreover, this discourse has become a reference for other municipalities in the region. It is the network in the Citizens' Agreement that has had the greatest impact on the city's social welfare system.

Today there is one model for the centres agreed upon by all. During the work carried out new centres have been established, and today there are centres that depend on the city and centres that depend on the social organisations, all with the same programme for teens and children.

Conclusions

Each of the projects presented has certain specific characteristics. For this reason, we will look at impact, sustainability and the possibility of diffusion in each of the projects individually.

Impact

Case 1: Urban revitalisation: the La Mina Transformation Plan

The PTBM has had a significant impact on neighbourhood revitalisation, in terms of both urban and social reform. Regarding urban transformation, what stands out first of all is that the isolation and segregation of the neighbourhood has been overcome. Secondly, public housing and facilities have increased. The PTBM planned for many residents to move into new housing, sub-standard housing has been rehabilitated and lifts installed in many buildings. Finally, the PTBM has contributed to the improvement of the overall conditions of the neighbourhood, having an impact on cleanliness and on the creation of public spaces, *etc.*

On a social level, using the strategy of social responsibility, companies from the hotel/restaurant sector and the textile sector were involved in the programmes for social and labour market insertion and sheltered employment. For some years the rate of incorporation into the labour market among groups with particular difficulties (young people with low levels of education or training, women and the long-

term unemployed) increased. "The issue of labour market integration has been important. Training and insertion have been high. Many people have had the opportunity to access work, to have the experience of employment, in many cases quality employment, with important companies" (I-19). City policy managed to reduce the number of recipients of the minimum income allowance from 150 to sixty during this period. However, beginning in 2008 with the destruction of employment caused by the financial crisis, this trend could not be maintained.

The neighbourhood has worked too to end its stigmatisation through a communication plan to open the neighbourhood to the rest of the city. In addition, they have worked toward promoting a greater social mix through the construction of public and private housing on the new *rambla*. The commitment to increase security and contribute to a more civic use of public space by residents has also led to a relative improvement in the image of the neighbourhood.

The impact of the action plan has been positive from the perspective of public authorities and neighbourhood residents. However, the neighbourhood still suffers diverse problems, some of them stemming from situations that have not yet been resolved, others from the way the action plan has been implemented and others aggravated by the current crisis (such as the delay in finishing the social housing which has delayed the occupation of the *rambla*).

The impact has been less than expected in terms of the eradication of anti-social behaviour on the part of certain segments of the neighbourhood population. Despite interventions on the common staircases shared by neighbours and in public spaces, the programme has only had limited impact in terms of improving relations among neighbours. To transform attitudes and improve co-existence in the community, the educative aspect of the programme should have been more central than it was. These types of changes happen over the long term and require a social and educational intervention lasting over several generations.

I act on the population without autonomy and which has certain needs and needs us to provide them with educational tools, job placement, training tools and starting from there they reach a level of greater autonomy, and then they are able to respond to other issues such as civic behaviour, personal responsibility

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you have toward your neighbourhood, with your community of neighbours. This takes time that we haven't invested.

(I-18)

Finally, the plan has also had an important impact on urban governance. It has done so through the promotion of structures of participation and work coordinated among experts, politicians and neighbourhood residents. The fact that citizen participation in the project was a condition for its establishment has led to a large number of innovative social activities led by neighbourhood residents, which in turn has meant new patterns of organisation and new ways of making and monitoring decisions.

Case 2: Labour market integration for young people: Young People with a Future

This programme was only in existence for 4 years, but it is interesting to analyse because it illustrates certain specific difficulties. The current financial crisis, which is having a major impact on Spain, has led to both deep cuts in public spending and changes in public policies. We think this innovative programme is interesting even though it is no longer in effect because it can help us understand some of the obstacles that arise when initiatives started at the local level are subject to laws or regulations from a higher level of government. The local level's closeness to these problems may permit it to successfully address them, as in this specific case; however, the lack of formal competencies – and funding – can ultimately block a project. This is just one example of the obstacles that local welfare systems may face when trying to be innovative in areas that depend on higher levels of government.

We find two different assessments of the impact of this programme. The perspective of the participating organisations is that the impact was less than what those in charge of the programme expected (I-7); while the perspective of the administration is that given the current economic difficulties, there was a certain level of success in reaching 562 work internship contracts (I-5). There were difficulties in reaching the target population, as many were still living in the family home and were therefore hard to identify. In addition, there was the problem of finding companies

willing to participate in the programme that coincided with the interests “awakened” in the participants doing the training. Finally, the political and economic vicissitudes of recent years have raised new difficulties for the programmes that were designed by the previous government.

Government officials report that the total number of young people who passed the first phase of the training was 472, and of these 264 were able to do an internship in a company. In the second phase of the programme, when young people with degrees entered the programme, there were 168 without qualifications who passed the training period and 199 with qualifications who entered the programme; of these, only 40 had not yet been contracted for an internship at the time of the interview (I-5).

Case 3: New local governance: Citizens' Agreement for an inclusive Barcelona

This programme has had a major impact and one which continues to grow. It is proving to have a broad consensus, which is attracting other entities that have not yet become part of the Agreement. In addition, the organisations involved are very pleased to be able to participate in the governance of the city's social welfare system. To a great extent, the programme's success is a result of the relationships that are formed between the participants, who are essentially working in a network. But they also appreciate the fact that being focused on action, the effects of their actions multiplies. They also value the influence the Citizens' Agreement has at times had on municipal authorities (I-8).

In terms of the Citizens' Agreement's direct impact on social welfare policies, there have been two networks in particular that have achieved significant results: one is the Network of Centres for Children and Teens, which has agreed on one model for all the city's centres, both public and private, providing assistance for children and teens at risk. The other is the Network for Assistance to the Homeless, which has created a solid network for the exchange of resources and information.

Sustainability

Case 1: Urban revitalisation: the La Mina Transformation Plan

As regards the sustainability of the urban transformation process, some achievements seem to be quite well established and are likely to go on, but others are facing important challenges. Labour market integration programmes seemed to be quite successful during the economic boom, helping effectively part of the population to find jobs despite their disadvantage. However, the dramatic change in the employment situation has had very negative effects in this field, heavily affecting a population whose labour market integration was fragile.

Schools in the neighbourhood have had some success, but dropout rates and absenteeism are still high. According to some local leaders, schools would need a much wider autonomy to select their staff to be able to cope effectively with a young population that has to live with the attraction that drug dealing has by offering a quick and easy way of making money. In this case, both the rigidities of the educational system and the drug business are strong limits to the success of the process.

Social mixture has also been a key element in the programme, and freeing land for private homes was not only a way of achieving it, but also of financing the whole plan. Here results are less encouraging. While some people have come to live to the neighbourhood, a large number of private apartments are still vacant and for sale. The few people who have moved into the neighbourhood often live most of the time in downtown Barcelona.

This also raises the question of the sustainability of the model of financing many public actions in Spain during the last two decades. The model used for many large infrastructures (like train stations) but also for the La Mina plan is based on rezoning that allows land to be sold for a high profit, which is used to fund public action. This allows developing public projects without making taxpayers pay more, albeit with some negative effects on the land market. Whatever the negative effects, the burst of the real estate bubble has put a drastic end to this model, at least for the time being.

Case 2: Labour market integration for young people: Young People with a Future

As was pointed out previously, the programme Young People with a Future was discontinued. The serious financial crisis in the Spanish government had a major impact on the programme and on other policies and programmes that depend on funding from the central and autonomous regional governments. The finances of the municipal government were sound and showed no deficits or debt.

It is not possible to know whether the changes in the leadership of the municipal government would have affected the approach of the programme if there had not been budgetary problems. The change in the focus of the programme, although said to be the result of a lack of funding, could also have occurred – although perhaps not with the same force – in a moment of economic stability, since the new, more centrist government might have been expected to focus more on self-employment and the development of the social economy as a way to help young people rather than on providing subsidies.

Case 3: New local governance: Citizens' Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona

Everything seems to point to the consolidation of the Citizens' Agreement programme. The new city government has made a commitment to its continuity and seems determined to expand its impact. The participating organisations believe that "it is not possible to turn back" (I-6). One factor that appears to confirm this is the appearance of "the shared strategy", a step further in the direction of joint work between government and the third sector, differentiating the particular spaces of each sector and the common areas of governance in local social welfare.

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Diffusion

Case 1: Urban revitalisation: the La Mina Transformation Plan

The PTBM contains certain aspects that may be useful to implement in other areas. These aspects depend on the design, management and implementation of the plan as well as on the initial start-up conditions. The aspects considered relevant are:

- > Joint work among the different government administrations forming the consortium.
- > The comprehensive approach of the reform, using both urban reform and social intervention as a way to improve the neighbourhood and the living conditions of its residents.
- > The management of the project in relation to integrating citizen participation. The structures that have promoted meetings and debate among agents have made it possible to carry out reforms better suited to the needs of the neighbourhood and based on the opinions of residents.
- > The importance of training and technical support to promote participation.
- > The programmes that managed to incorporate groups with special difficulties into the labour market.
- > The fundamental role of social organisations and the neighbourhood associations that were already playing an active role in debates and demands for reform in the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood also has a strong active population that has launched projects to solve specific problems in the neighbourhood.

It is also important to take into account the factors that have been obstacles in the process, which are related to the lack of trust in institutional politics. In addition, the neighbourhood residents have had a negative response to the arrival of companies from outside the neighbourhood such as service management firms.

The PTBM has been a reference for the regional government's "Programme for neighbourhoods and urban areas in need of special attention", established in 2003, and which has taken on more than 100 projects in Catalonia, among which we find projects to

intervene in the social fabric in residential neighbourhoods with characteristics similar to La Mina.

Case 2: Labour market integration for young people: Young People with a Future

In thinking about the possibilities for the diffusion of innovation, the programme Young People with a Future provides a good example of both the obstacles and opportunities on the local level in designing and implementing social welfare services. There may be ideas, ties, relationships or social conditions on the local level that conflict with the dynamics in the administration responsible for policy. An example of this is found in job placement for young people, which is affected by the specific characteristics of the locality, but dependent on the administrative structure of the country, which cannot take into account the different realities that exist on the local level and may therefore actually block innovation by not providing the economic resources needed to carry it out.

The lesson to be learned from this "failed innovation" is to consider the situation in which a programme begins. Precisely at a time when companies were having difficulties it seemed to be an interesting idea to have local government complement their role by assuming the costs involved in providing internships or training for young people without qualifications or jobs. But to do this required a network of companies and other entities willing to assume part of these responsibilities. That willingness on the part of different stakeholders was there, but not the funding needed to carry it out.

Case 3: New local governance: Citizens' Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona

It is possible to spread this innovation. In fact, it is a project that has been sparking a lot of interest in other municipalities in Spain and in other countries, as well. However, this is a project that requires a two-way social process. It would not have been possible without the interaction between clear leadership in charge of the project and a dynamic civil society.

For an innovation in governance to become established, a broad consensus is required on the part of all the stakeholders involved. And perhaps not only

a consensus on the idea, but also regarding capacity; in other words, on the one hand, a clear idea and the real possibility of designing a new model by the government leaders responsible, and on the other hand, the existence of a network of entities that want to be involved and participate in designing and managing the social services of the city.

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Annex

People interviewed:

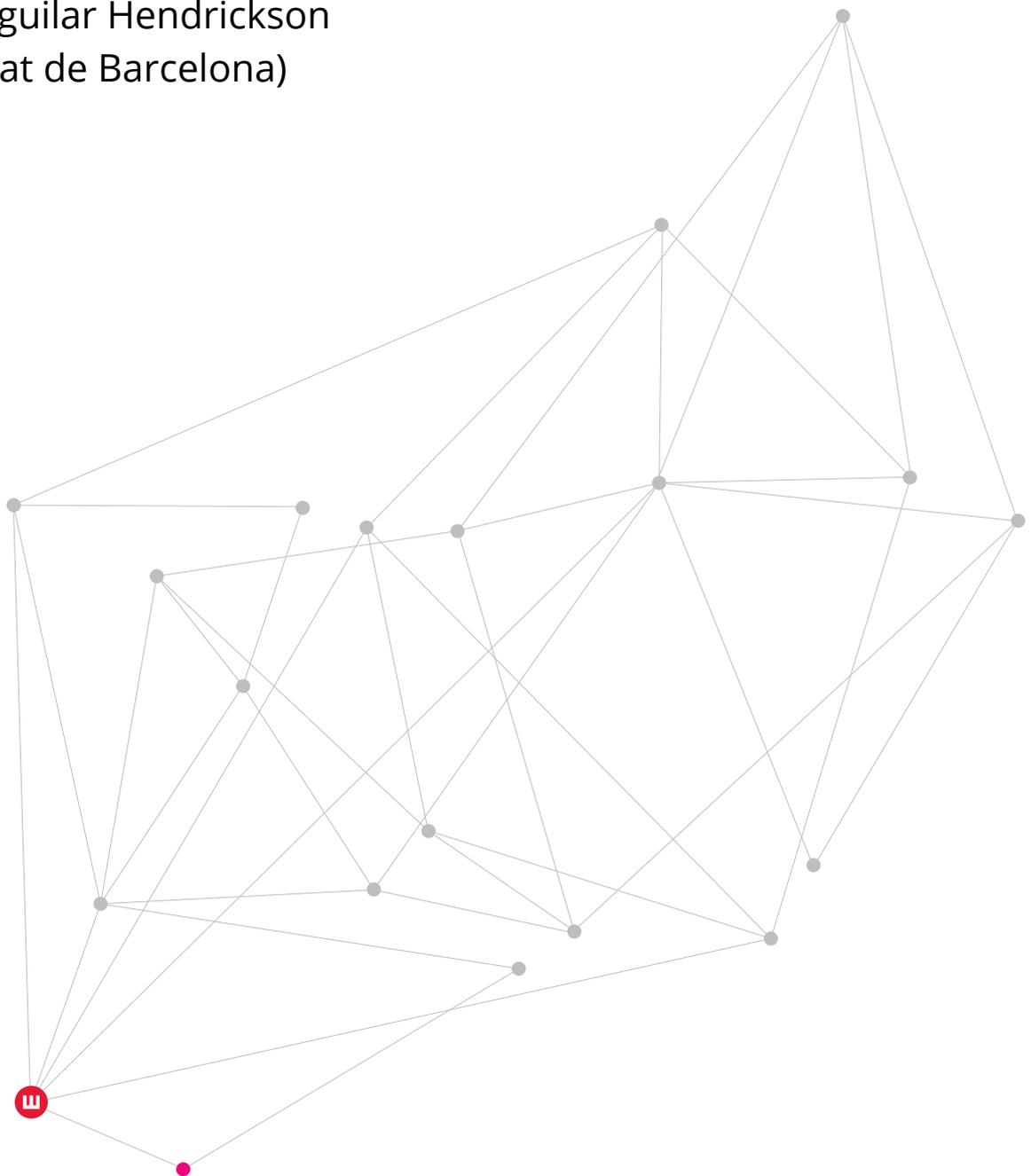
- > I-1 Former manager of the Social Welfare Area in the City Council Barcelona
- > I-2 Former manager of Housing Area in the City Council Barcelona
- > I-3 President of Teacher's Association Rosa Sensat
- > I-4 Former manager of Education in the Regional Government
- > I-5 Person in charge of the programme "Joves amb futur" – Barcelona Activa
- > I-6 Member of Social Educators Association and programme *Acord Ciutadà*
- > I-7 Member of third-sector organisation and programme *Joves amb futur*
- > I-8 Member of third-sector organisation and *Acord Ciutadà*
- > I-9 Former manager of Housing of Regional Government
- > I-10 Member of Entities Platform of La Mina
- > I-11 Former manager of Welfare and Participation of City Council Barcelona
- > I-12 Head of Technical Secretary of *Acord Ciutadà*
- > I-13 Member of the Quality of Life Area of the City Council Barcelona
- > I-14 Person in charge of Social Innovation of City Council
- > I-15 Former manager of Social Welfare of City Council Barcelona
- > I-16 Head of the Barcelona Activa Agency
- > I-17 High technical (civil servant) of City Council Barcelona
- > I-18 Councillor of Education of the City of Sant Adrià de Besos
- > I-19 Head of the Social Area of the Consortium of La Mina



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Manuel Aguilar Hendrickson
(Universitat de Barcelona)



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AuthorsManuel Aguilar Hendrickson
(Universitat de Barcelona)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Labour market integration
Participation
Regional government
Social housing

The history of social policies in Navarra during the last 30 years shows a certain degree of ambivalence. The regional and local governments have frequently boasted of having a level of social service provision clearly above the Spanish average and of being a pioneer in the development of social services. A financially and politically strong regional and local government in a small, comparatively wealthy and less unequal region has allowed a stronger development of services. In some cases, especially during the 1980s and early 1990s, this meant the introduction of services previously unknown in the region.

Civil society organisations have a long tradition in Navarra. This is a result of a strong conservative tradition of local self-government, going back to the Carlist traditionalism of the nineteenth century, the strength of the Catholic church and its organisations and of the complex political development of these traditions since the 1960s. The radical changes undergone in Navarra beginning in the 1960s transformed a rural agrarian region into an industrial and service based one, concentrated much of its population in the capital, Pamplona, and opened up dramatic political cleavages between left and right, and between Basque nationalism and Navarrese regionalism.

Third sector organisations (TSOs) emerging from these processes are generally very much respected by most of the political and social spectrum, as they represent the spirit of solidarity of Navarra and its concern for the weakest. Although social innovation doesn't seem to be an explicit political priority, new initiatives coming from TSOs tend to be seen with sympathy, even when they challenge the dominant views in the political sphere.

There are several ways in which they may be integrated. In some cases, they may be seen as limited actions for some special cases that fall out of mainstream programmes and require a careful personalised treatment, for which TSOs seem to be the perfect solution. This may be widely accepted by the "left" (as a way of expanding social action when it's not possible to do it directly by means of public programmes) and the "right" (which feels quite comfortable when expanding the role of TSOs and containing direct public provision). In many cases a widespread political consensus on an initiative may not translate into the idea becoming an actual priority. The possibility of integrating the initiatives into two different (and sometimes opposed) narratives helps to establish consensus in many cases.

Aside from TSO initiatives and government predisposition towards allowing TSOs to develop their initiatives, pressure from the European Union (EU) and the central government have played a role. The pressure to establish action plans for social inclusion (Navarra set up its own plan long before it became compulsory) has eased the development of some initiatives (something *has* to be done in a specific field). On the other hand, the widespread discourse on "best practices" has encouraged the development of innovative initiatives, although they don't always make their way into the mainstream.

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Social integration enterprises and social clauses

54.1. Short description

Employment policies in Spain have long included temporary employment schemes for the unemployed, usually run by local authorities. The idea that offering a chance of working for some time is better than just claiming benefits has a long tradition, based on the idea that it is better for the dignity of those involved, and that being active should help people to keep both their work habits and work ethic. While most temporary employment programmes are aimed at the registered unemployed, some of them have been targeted at people with a high risk of social exclusion and claimants of minimum income (social assistance) benefits. Such is the case of the so-called *empleo social protegido* (protected social employment) in Navarra since the 1980s. The usefulness of the scheme for participants has been questioned for some time now (Laparra *et al.* 1989; Pérez Eransus, 2005) for while it offers the chance of receiving a higher income and of being active, the content of the work itself (usually menial tasks in local public works) does not seem to offer much in the field of personal and professional development for people with serious social problems.

Since the 1980s the idea has developed that it would be possible to set up adapted enterprises that could combine being competitive in the market and being able to employ people with lower productivity due to different causes (disabilities, social or health problems). One strand of such development was aimed at people with disabilities, and it got legal recognition in the mid-1980s, under the concept of special employment centres (*centros especiales de empleo*, or CEEs), market oriented enterprises that obtain public subsidies (on wages, social security contributions and some other costs) to compensate the lower productivity of workers with disabilities. The development of the other strand was much slower, as it tried to extend a similar model to people with social (exclusion) problems.

In Navarra there were two pioneers in this field. *Traperos de Emaús*, a group linked to the *Emmaüs* international movement that has become a foundation, and *Gaztelan*, a youth employment project that evolved into a foundation that develops programmes to help labour market integration.

The legal status and public support of these initiatives has gone through three main phases:

- a. Prior to 1999, these projects had no specific legal status (other than being private associations or foundations) and received limited public support, basically to help with investments or to compensate for losses. In the two

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main cases, but especially in the case of *Traperos de Emaús*, public contracts to provide services (selective waste collection and home help services) did have a significant role. Since there were no social clauses in the tendering process, niche specialisation and harsh cost containment were key to access to such contracts.

- b. In 1999/2000 the regional government created a register of social and labour market integration centres (*centros de incorporación sociolaboral* or CISs) and establishes a system of subsidies for such centres, generally based on the model of the CEEs for people with disabilities. This allowed the consolidation of the existing projects and the birth of several others (some eleven by 2010 with 400–600 employees).
- c. The third phase should see these centres increase their chances of obtaining public service contracts and, possibly as a result, decrease their need for direct subsidising. The 2006 Navarra Public Contracts Act established the possibility of reserving up to a maximum of 20 per cent of public contracts to CEEs, CISs and other enterprises “participating in labour market integration programmes”. In 2009 the act was amended twice at the request of social enterprise associations and the unanimous vote of the regional parliament. It turned the possibility of reserving a minimum of 6 per cent of public contracts for these enterprises into an obligation, and includes the possibility of including social criteria to decide in tenders. Although the effect has been limited so far, there are indications of a stronger commitment of the regional government, under strong cost containment pressures.

54.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The main difference in the ways of addressing users in the CISs lies in the fact that “users” are actually “workers”. People get paid not for what they lack (a job, income) but for what they do, whatever the limits they may have to do it efficiently. This addresses directly an explicit demand of most users (“we want to work”) in a way that they are able to comply with and that is intended to help them develop their capabilities. This also has effects on the self-esteem and dignity of users.

This position of users helps to develop, at least in some of the CISs, a less formalised approach to work with users.

I believe that today everything [in social work] has become very technical and practitioners talk about “integrations”, “roadmaps” and so on and so forth... We don’t speak that way and we don’t have “roadmaps”. Of course we take in people and we have information about them, because a morning working together on the truck gives you more information than any interview. It’s a bit difficult when we have to report on our work, because the data they ask for have little to do with what we actually do. I see there’s a clear difference in the flexibility of language and the ways of understanding.

Then come the ways of doing social work, the work of “accompaniment”. We’ve always defined a “side-by-side” method of working. First, when we take somebody in, confidence and trust play a key role; the person has to feel comfortable, that is, we don’t start by asking “who was your father”, and so on. Of course we ask “what’s your name”, but we don’t ask where do you come from, so there’s a space that opens itself up we prefer people to express themselves the way they wish, to have them feel comfortable, because when you feel comfortable you express yourself freely and then the troubles and hardships of people show up and we can start to work, not in a hierarchic way but horizontally...

(José María García, *Traperos de Emaús*)

At least in one of the cases (*Traperos de Emaús*) the idea of participants being “helpers” rather than “helped” users seems to be important. The social enterprise has always thought in terms of living on what others discard and helping others, be it by giving a hand to other projects, by providing a public service (rather than depending on subsidies) or by contributing to projects in developing countries. “Breaking the trend of simply responding to problems has given us a strong root, that may be one of our innovative elements, that of acting as an organisation for helping others rather than helping our participants”.

Although this discourse might be specific to *Traperos de Emaús*, the process of moving from a discretionary subsidy model towards one based on opening up a market for the products of their work and obtaining contracts to provide public services or public works is consistent with the idea of “depending on our own effort”.

54.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Modes of organisation differ amongst these enterprises. Some stick to a rather conventional form of organisation (adapted in some respects). But at the other end, *Traperos de Emaús* has tried to innovate its internal organisation, to be able to manage a medium sized enterprise (over 200 employees) in a way that is both efficient and democratic and enabling for its members.

In 2005–6 we open a debate to rethink our organisation: what organisation do we want and is possible. Out of that debate we designed the “mandala trape-ro”. All work areas have a coordinator who belongs to what we call the central coordination group, that elects the trustees of the foundation (for two years) and the director (every year). So we have a group of about fourteen people who coordinate the process, and a second group we call the creation and evaluation group. This group is made up of about fifteen people with a certain degree of homogeneity in their understanding and their ways of expression who evaluate the main decisions we make and how our work is consistent with our principles, such as solidarity, for instance. There are some transversal elements, such as the right to information and to participation for everybody, and the quest for consensus in a hierarchical structure.

(J.M. García)

This organisational innovation effort is connected to the idea of building a sort of working community that helps the development of its members and is efficient (gets the job done) at the same time. *Gaztelan* has set up different kinds of structures in its projects, some of which have become cooperatives, some associations and some ordinary enterprises.

54.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Both the development of the CISs as such and the establishment of the social clauses for public contracts set up a kind of relationship between TSOs and government that differs from the usual one. The usual relationship is based on applying for specific subsidising for activities from different government bodies (local, regional, etc.). There is neither an organised system

nor clear rules of assignment of public subsidies, so they rely heavily in the interest that a specific activity may arise in a certain government body.

The setting up of the CIS system meant that at least there are clear rules as to which projects get an accreditation as a CIS, and what kind and amount of subsidies may be expected (directly related to wage costs, social security contributions and investments). They are still discretionary (there's no entitlement to get those subsidies just because you develop the activity) but rules are much clearer and the yearly agreement process allows for reasonable expectations (at least to keep activity levels).

The new model of relying more on public contracts (which *Traperos de Emaús* has had for three decades now) moves the relationship one step further, since funding is obtained for providing a service or a product, giving the enterprise more independence and making it more accountable as well.

The government of Navarra wants to reduce the role of subsidies to the CISs and enhancing reliance on their own activity, and I think that's great for us. (...) We get paid for what we do, for our work...

We've always told the government (at least I can speak for us): we don't want property, we don't want to accumulate assets, we want a right of usage. We want things to be owned by the government, because they have the duty to control social organisations. Over the years, we've actually built up assets for about four million euros, and it comes mostly from public money. What if we go crazy? We've told them that. So we want to have a correct relationship with the government, but not more intense than necessary. We want to be free to say our word, but without unnecessary aggressiveness. That's another key element of our style.

(J.M. García)

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Social integration housing

55.1. Short description

The social integration housing (*viviendas de integración social*, or VIS) programme allows a number of TSOs to buy second-hand homes that may be resold or rented to low-income people with whom they are engaged in a social work process. It allows a more flexible approach to access to housing for specific persons or families than the ordinary publicly subsidised housing programmes.

The origins of the VISs may be found in a programme that Caritas (the main Catholic social assistance organisation) developed in the 1980s. Caritas got hold occasionally of apartments, often bequeathed by their owners. Caritas started offering the apartments to their service users, either to rent them or to buy them under terms adapted to their situation and under a strong supervision of the workings of the family, as part of a process of social integration.

In the late 1990s, during the debate on the regional plan to combat social exclusion, TSOs and experts proposed that the government supported the programme and opened it up to other TSOs. The regional department of housing was very attracted to the idea. Their social housing targets were hard to meet due to the lack of private developers willing to build low-cost subsidised apartments, and the programme seemed to allow for a spread of the most complex social cases in different areas, instead of packing them all together in social housing blocks.

A dozen TSOs have participated in the programme, working with immigrants, gypsies or with other people at risk of social exclusion. Some have done so permanently, some have only participated occasionally, to solve housing problems of some specific cases amongst their users. The programme was well accepted and quite successful initially, but rapidly increasing housing prices all but blocked the chances of finding homes to buy in Pamplona. In smaller towns and villages it was still possible.

In 2009 the regional government agreed to open up the possibility of using either publicly owned homes or private apartments managed by the public rental system in the programme. Private landlords who wish to rent their apartments may do so by handing them over to a public agency, from which they obtain a rent payment slightly below market levels, but with a full guarantee that they will get their money and without having to manage the apartment and its rental. This extension of the VIS system is known as social integration social housing (*viviendas de alquiler de integración social*, or VAIS) and has reopened the possibility of using homes in Pamplona. Economic conditions are also easier for users. The TSOs participating in the programme have been buying between ten and thirty homes per year (mostly outside Pamplona) and managing the rental of nearly fifty apartments.

55.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

For the TSOs participating in the programme the VIS offered the opportunity of helping their users access a home in a very customised way (housing market permitting, of course). This allowed, for instance, finding (outside Pamplona) old, large, reasonably priced village houses for gypsy families who needed a lot of space, which would have been completely out of the question in a public housing project.

Sometimes social workers complain saying “that family you’ve brought to us...” Well excuse me, we haven’t brought anything, they’re people so they’ve come here. That’s the advantage of our programme, in the end, people choose where they want to live, even if the choice is limited. And the same way you will probably like to live near your relatives, they like it as well, and if they’re gypsies they may want to live close to relatives that are gypsies as well.

(Inés García, FSSG)

At the same time, offering access to housing gave the TSOs leverage in their social work process with the families. The fact that they become the means of access to a very basic need - housing - and that that access is conditional to a social work process enables the organisations to set clearer limits and conditions in their work.

55.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Setting up the programme seems to have reorganised responsibility for the social management of very poor families as regards housing. Before the programme, they might, if lucky, get access to a public rental apartment (in some cases even they might be able to buy a publicly built home). Chances were low, but if they got it, the housing department did not take any further action, unless payments ceased, and in that case it would be legal action or at most asking local social services to look into the problem. With the VIS programme, not only are people be housed in a much more flexible way, but the TSOs become responsible for following up and acting to ensure an as-smooth-as-possible process in the new home, by means of a “social accompaniment”: work. The regional government will pay for it, but now

somebody is directly responsible and has to act if conflicts or other problems arise.

What does the regional government get from this programme? Putting it harshly, they dump their responsibility on us. Being a bit kinder, they offer (through us) an intensive social work with the families, and that’s why they pay us to do it. The housing department, I believe, they wished to give a hand in the anti-exclusion plan, so they wanted to show they were doing something, plus that helped to promote a bit actions with used homes.

(I. García)

In fact, one of the TSOs got a specific agreement to act as the housing social integration team (*Equipo de Incorporación Social en Vivienda*, or EISOVI). Initially it was a sort of overarching support team for the whole of the TSOs involved, but that role didn’t make much sense, so it has become in fact a sort of social work team for a large part of the public rental houses in Navarra, a social work role that the public housing company was reluctant to play by itself, but saw as increasingly necessary.

In this sense, the role of TSOs in the programme has made it possible to develop (within its obvious size limits) a kind of action that both the government and the TSOs saw as necessary. The government was unwilling to take up as a direct responsibility and TSOs accepted to take it if that allowed them to act more effectively.

55.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

This kind of win-win agreement may explain the positive opinion on the governance of the programme. Both the government and the TSOs seem to be reasonably happy with the permanent negotiations and collaboration in the development of the programme. This means that the TSOs and the regional government sit down regularly to discuss how many and what kind of homes will there be available for the next year, how to improve the programme, and even if the results are not always the ones some of the stakeholders might wish, they speak positively of the process. What might have been lost is the fact that the size and scope doesn’t need to meet the social demand (as it happens when entitlements are estab-

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lished) but can be adjusted to what the government is willing to spend and what TSOs are willing to do.

It has also helped to establish a bridge between two regional government departments, Housing and Social Welfare. Blame avoidance may have been one of the reasons not to collaborate in the past, since each partner might have felt that sticking to its own responsibilities (producing and renting homes, providing social work services for citizens who asked for them) saved them from having to deal with the much more complex issue of housing and social integration. The possibility of assuming indirectly the job by financing TSOs to do it does seem to be a less risky way of starting to work jointly on the issue (in fact, of enabling somebody else to work on the joint issue).

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Casas Amigas

56.1. Short description

Casas Amigas (friendly homes) is a child care service for children under the age of three that is provided at the carer's own home. Two associations (one in Pamplona, one in rural areas in Navarra) provide the service, which is regulated and subsidised by the regional government. It is officially considered as a care service, as opposed to an infant school. Regulations set a minimum of space that must be available at the home, some requirements as to the training and experience of carers and a maximum ratio of four children per carer.

Casas Amigas has its origins in a 2003 (EU) EQUAL project run jointly by several regional and local government agencies, several employer's associations and three foundations, *Gaztelan* amongst them. It included several actions aimed at favouring the labour market integration of women. *Gaztelan* (a foundation that had been working since the 1980s in the field of labour market integration of underprivileged groups) had the idea of setting up the care service. The idea was to kill several birds with a single stone. Access to training activities for women with children usually required some kind of child minding service, some of the participant women had training and experience in child care and had a home (the needed infrastructure) and it was an opportunity to create jobs for them. The idea of a home child care service was taken from a previous experience in rural areas in Catalonia.

The service was created inside the project and funded with EU and regional government funds. Once it showed its potential, an association was created that took over the service. It started with six homes, and by 2010 it had fifteen homes and 50-60 children. The regional government subsidises half the cost.

The project was controversial from the beginning. Inside the organisations that promoted the project, there was a debate between those who saw some clear advantages and opportunities in the idea and those who thought it might reinforce stereotypes about the role of women as carers at home and the ways children should be cared for.

There was a public controversy as well. The *Plataforma del Ciclo Educativo 0-3*, a coalition of associations and practitioners who defend a public and free universal infant education service for children aged under 3 years was very vocal against the project. They argued that all services for children aged under 3 years should be conceived as educational services (not as care services), and be run by the government. They believe that these kind of "soft" services are unable to guarantee acceptable quality standards. On the other hand, the regional government and part of the media felt much more comfortable with the idea that parents should be able to choose whether they want to take their very young children to services or care for them at home themselves, and if they choose to use services, they should be able to decide what kind of services (care or educational, etc.) they prefer. In fact, services

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like *Casas Amigas* were seen as some kind of middle ground between institutional and family care.

56.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The nature of the care offered doesn't seem to be too different from other care services for children of the same age, and it combines some educational elements with basic personal care. The key difference as regards the relationship with users is the time flexibility. Since parents take their children to the carer's home the availability of the service is much more flexible, and picking up the child earlier doesn't disrupt the service.

Although the service is not classified as "educational" but as a "care" service, there is an educational project and some educational training of the carers. It is thus quite similar to other care services for children, in which, although the care role is the main one, it is usually accepted that there is an educational side to caring for children.

The other specific element is the fact that care can be much closer in a much smaller group of children (four, exceptionally five per home and carer). This is affordable due to much lower fixed costs. There is no need for a strong investment to build the premises, and basic utility costs are more or less the same as the private home would have had in any case.

Critics of the service insist that all child services should be educational and that for this reason "carers" should be in fact educators, and preferably college graduates in infant education. There seems to be a clear difference between a "hard" conception of child care, that insists in educational professionalism and an institutional environment, and a "soft" vision that would think in a diversity of service options (more or less educational, more or less formal) and that would have a soft spot for services that would actually look little different from a private home.

Whatever the merits of each position, it is clear that the *Casas Amigas* has been conceived according to the second vision.

56.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Casas Amigas has drawn much of its attractiveness from its apparent ability to build up synergies and obtaining several results from one single action. Innovation in the mode of working seems to be more in this combination than in the radical newness of any specific component of the project.

It is more flexible than traditional infants' schools and care services. The need for flexibility was especially obvious in the case of people trying to find jobs and to improve their chances of finding it through training. If you have a stable job it is possible, if often complicated, to build up a schedule that adjusts your known working times to the availability of care. But when you are looking for a job that you still don't know, and that may be a short-term job, schedules are much more difficult to foresee. The usual clients of services like *Gaztelan* may find themselves working one weekend, then without work for a few days, until they get an afternoon job for another few days. Availability for such jobs is expected, and making care arrangements with short notice for a few days is no easy task. Usually, when available, family fills in the gap, which is not always the case. A much more flexible care service is thus especially adequate for jobseekers.

Secondly, while care is similar to that offered by other care services, it is much less capital-intensive than standard services. Carers provide space at their apartment, and toys and other tools are relatively inexpensive. So it is possible to think of unemployed or low-income people who have an adequate home providing the service. So, after all, some of the potential users are potential providers as well.

Of course, they must be fit for the job. Some of the people involved (clients and potential providers) have experience (being mothers themselves, having worked in care services) and have some training, or, at least, such training could be provided by the project itself. So it helped create jobs for some of the very people they were helping to train and find jobs for, and training could be tailored to the very service that was being created.

56.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Casas Amigas doesn't show much difference from the usual governance patterns for services run by private providers regulated and sometimes subsidised by the regional government. There doesn't seem to be much innovation in this field.

It may be perhaps more interesting to look at the origins of the project itself. *Gaztelan*, the TSO) had the idea, but it was made possible in the setting of an EU EQUAL project involving local and regional government agencies, employer's associations and other stakeholders. This involvement helped the TSO to think in larger terms, to dare into more complicated fields of job creation, to get support from experts in fields quite different from social work. At the same time, the TSO offered ideas in the field of labour market integration that were much more original, creative and adapted to specific needs of certain users than those envisaged by other stakeholders. This process is not specific to *Casas Amigas*, but it certainly tells something of the factors that help social innovations.

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Neighbourhood children's services

57.1. Short description

The fourth case we are analysing in Pamplona is a group of neighbourhood associations that carry out social activities aimed at the prevention of social problems amongst children. It is the result of a movement of community associations that developed leisure activities for children and of its integration into the local government structure of social services, while retaining a peculiar way of working.

The first of these associations, *Umetxea*, was created in 1990. *Umetxea* tried to keep a balance between their traditional political role of claiming for more and better services in their neighbourhood and a new role as service providers. They tried to create social and cultural projects, mostly aimed at children, pooling the resources of several neighbourhood groups. These projects became quite successful. By 1995 some people in the local social services began to see that these associations were more successful in this field than their own public prevention programmes, which many people in the neighbourhoods thought quite useless.

The neighbourhood associations have been suspected of possible sympathies with radical left-wing parties and radical Basque nationalism, which, in the context of political violence and of a serious political cleavage between Basque nationalism and Navarrese regionalism, certainly hasn't made relationships easy. Somewhat surprisingly, it was a centre-right regionalist councillor who decided to establish a long-term agreement between the municipality and the associations. Although there was a strong and politicised debate, in the end the councillor said that "they work fine and they're much less expensive than other providers".

Since 1995 in one neighbourhood and since 1997 in another three, these associations are responsible for the so-called Community Preventive Action Service, a part of the local Family and Children Welfare Programme. The typical activities of such a programme are leisure activities for different groups of children, including activity groups and playgrounds for the youngest, summer camps, neighbourhood festivals and networking amongst teenagers. In some cases it has meant not encouraging but supporting and accompanying actions like the squatting of an abandoned factory.

The future of the programme has been unclear for several months now. The agreements established in 1995–7 ended in 2012. Since the late 1990s the local council has favoured private providers that fit better into an entrepreneurial model, with whom they agree specific outcomes and targets in a much more managerial way. Nevertheless, the TSOs have been able to win in 2013 the tender that may allow them to run the programme for up to eight years. The existing TSOs are much more flexible, they are able to mobilise many more local resources, but they do so by being less hierarchic and formal in their relationship with the local government.

57.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The traditional boundaries between practitioners and service users are somewhat blurred in these projects. There are certainly practitioners who are paid for their job and are bound by a contract with the local council, but they are neighbours as well, and they are hired by a local neighbourhood association. Since they organise activities for the young and for children, a large part of the actual implementation of the project is done by volunteer neighbours who take part in the activities (thus they are service users and producers at the same time). And although some specific work is done to integrate children with special difficulties in the activities, there's no visible difference between them and other participants.

In our projects volunteers are as important as professional practitioners. Volunteers are not of the kind that show up for an hour, but people who live here. (...) We promote the rights of the kids, so the kids are our bosses. They [the local government managers] don't think in terms of rights, they told us "don't talk about rights, talk about problems and needs".

(Alberto Jauregui, Equipos comunitarios de infancia)

The concept of neighbourhood is central to the work of these projects. Even if neighbourhoods are relatively small, the feeling of belonging may be very strong, and it is very significant for newcomers (migrants) as well.

In Pamplona the question of locality is very important. Whoever hasn't experienced it and doesn't know a neighbourhood has a citywide outlook. That's what happens to local councillors, (...) who don't know about it and don't understand it. If you take away the idea of neighbourhood from these kids you'll kill them. For migrants, their only identity here is that of the neighbourhood. They're neither from Pamplona nor from Spain, but they're certainly from San Jorge [the name of one of the neighbourhoods].

(A. Jauregui)

The project works specifically with children with special needs both integrating them into activities and offering personal support and "accompaniment". This role is different from the one played by ordinary child support services, which should be seen as different and separated. "[Control and support] should be separated, not only conceptually but in practice as

well. Our space should be a space to look ahead, and theirs as a space of protection if the children's rights are being violated" (A. Jauregui).

57.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The concept of working to promote the rights of children appears to be connected to the concept of autonomy of the projects, even if they belong to the local government. The projects consider themselves accountable first to the children and the neighbours.

[In our case] either the project is based on the concept of rights or we don't do it. The question of our autonomy is basic, because without it we can't carry them out, and our autonomy has practical effects, for it allows us a margin of flexibility and of method innovation that other projects don't have. In our team sometimes each [of the three formally hired educators/social workers] takes responsibility for an area, but sometimes a few youngsters join us and its five or six of us managing the project. We can do that, but public employees can't, and private providers can only do it at the expense of their workers

(A. Jauregui)

57.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The triangle made up by the local council (responsible for the service as a whole), the associations (who have a legal agreement with the local council to carry it out) and the practitioners (who are employees of the association but are, in practice, integrated in the local social services organisation) allows for the aforementioned autonomy of the projects. Practitioners tend to speak the same language (with some nuances) as the local social services staff, but the leaders of the associations are local neighbours with a strong commitment to their neighbours and tend to be much more "straight to the point".

The kind of associations we work in is special, and our bosses are our fellows in all its complexity. (...) There was one of those meetings with the local council after a cutback of 50 per cent of our activity budget. We were very angry, and we as a team wrote down a document against the cutback, and the director of social services said she had nothing to talk with us and that she'd only talk to the leaders of the association, to our

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Pamplona

bosses. OK, go ahead! Now she prefers to talk to us
(A. Jauregui)

The relationship between the TSOs and the local council is more conflictive in this last case than in the previous three, in spite of, or maybe because of, a closer relationship as direct providers of services commissioned by the local council.

Conclusions

All four analysed innovations were born as initiatives of TSOs. In all cases there has been one (or several) TSOs that wished to do something in a specific new way that have either started to do it on their own and then found the way to obtain public support (cases 1, 2 and 4), or have convinced public partners to start the project (case 3). In all three cases, public administration (local or regional) has had a significant role in supporting and sustaining the initiative, in some cases expanding it beyond its initial scope.

All four cases show an attempt to change the ways of working and addressing users. In all cases, the idea of customising or personalising services to specific needs or preferences of service users is present. In two cases (1 and 4) this adaptation goes further to redefine the boundaries between users and practitioners, be it by blurring the distinction (case 4) or by a more profound redefinition of the nature of service users (case 1).

Most cases show some degree of changes in governance and the relationship between TSOs and local/regional government. These relationships have a long tradition of particularistic, case-by-case selective discretionary support to the activities of each TSO. Cases 1 and 2 show a move towards a system of (a) clearer definition of what activities may be subsidised and with which criteria and (b) a negotiated procedure for setting goals and overall criteria for the programmes. This has not eliminated completely a certain degree of discretion, but it constrains it into a more objective system.

There is a degree of political ambivalence in all cases. On the one hand, there is a clear “political” aim by the TSOs to “work differently” in ways they consider to be better and more adapted to service users’ needs. In some cases these alternative ways of working are very different to the dominant views in public ser-

vices (cases 1 and 4), in others they are just different from the mainstream programmes. On the other hand, governments may accept such different or challenging approaches because they help to offer a limited exception for some users (with whom they are not being very successful) or they enhance the view of a more complex welfare mix in which TSOs have stronger roles. This may explain the (apparent) lack of political controversy in some cases (cases 1 and 2) or a very limited one (case 3). Case 4 is somewhat atypical, since it has seen stronger controversy, although external political reasons (connections with radical groups and with Basque nationalism) may be crucial in this case, and some political positions have been contradictory (the project got its public support thanks to the only political party that has had a critical stand afterwards).

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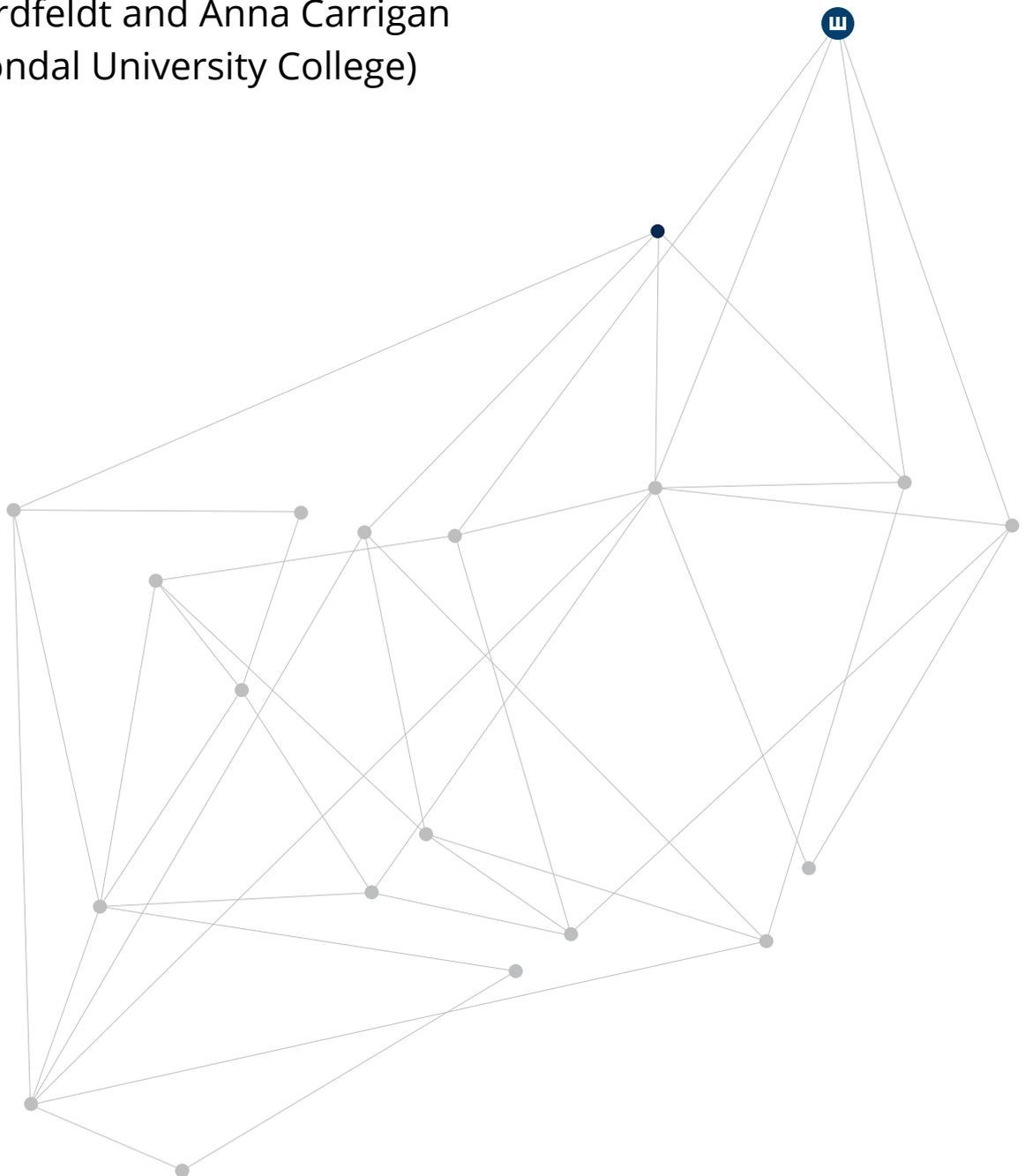
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SE Sweden

Stockholm

Marie Nordfeldt and Anna Carrigan
(Ersta Sköndal University College)



Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Civil society
Deregulation
Neighbourhood revitalisation
Participation
Partnerships
Privatisation
Segregation
Single mothers
User choice
Youth unemployment

Stockholm is among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in Europe. In an OECD territorial review from 2006, Stockholm was stated to be “one of the most successful metropolitan regions in the OECD”. The strengths of Stockholm that were highlighted in the report were research and development, concentration of advanced business, logistical and financial services, and specialisation in high-growth, high-tech sectors, notably information and communications technology (ICT). Weaknesses that were noted as risks that could undermine the region’s competitiveness in the long run, were factors such as “lack of new high-growth firms to stimulate the regional innovation system, challenges in the labour market especially with regard to the integration of immigrants, housing shortages and a transport network that has failed to keep pace with growth in the region” (OECD 2006).

The population of the city of Stockholm is growing by around 17,000 persons per year and the county of Stockholm is growing by between 30,000 to 40,000 new inhabitants every year. This puts enormous pressure on the housing market, and the construction of new housing has not kept pace with this demand, which has led to a severe housing shortage in the whole Stockholm region (Länsstyrelsen 2012; Boverket 2012a). Stockholm has an organised housing queue for rental apartments, but the number of years that one needs to be registered in the queue before being allocated an apartment is constantly increasing (Nordfeldt and Wiklund 2013). Young people and recently immigrated persons are especially vulnerable on the housing market. Landlord demands, such as references and a certain level of income, make it difficult for those entering the housing market for the first time (Nordfeldt 2012). Twenty-three out of 26 municipalities in the Stockholm region indicate a lack of housing for young people, and 21 of these also report an overall housing shortage (Boverket 2012a, 2012b).

In recent years, the problem of the housing shortage has been heavily debated, in the mass media, at the local policy level, and by organisations/networks of citizens. The latter plead for more rental units and protest against transformation and the selling of municipal housing stock. Among local politicians, there is a consensus that there is an urgent need to speed up the construction of new housing, but there are different views within local government between the majority and the opposition on how this should be achieved.

Overall, the employment rate is higher in Stockholm than on average in Sweden, but there are substantial differences between groups in the population. The unemployment rates for young people are substantially higher than for the older groups. The fastest growth in temporary employment is in the group of young adults. One obvious barrier to young people entering the labour market is low levels of education. Another striking difference in the unemployment figures is between people born in Sweden, the Nordic countries, EU/EFTA and outside of these regions. Unemployment rates for the first two categories have been somewhat reduced during the

2000, while for the latter two groups, there has been a limited increase. However, for people born outside of EU/EFTA, the unemployment rates are substantially higher than for the other groups. Young people and recently immigrated persons are also more likely to find temporary employment in the so-called “grey” labour market than other employees (Nordfeldt 2012, WP3 report).

Central issues in the local policy debate are how to find new jobs in areas of Stockholm with high unemployment, in order to counteract the mismatch between existing jobs and the unemployed. Solutions that are put forward in the political debate are different forms of support for new start-up enterprises. This has been highlighted as a way to create new jobs in the outer suburbs where the unemployment rates are high. Unemployment among young people is also an issue on the political agenda, but there have been few suggestions for realistic solutions. (Segnestam-Larsson & Carrigan 2013, WP4 report)

Segregation and segmentation in Stockholm

In Stockholm there is clear ethnic segregation as well as segmentation. This is especially pronounced between city districts but also between neighbourhoods within the same district, consisting of both affluent residential areas and “Million Homes Programme” areas (Bråmås et al. 2006). Some suburbs in Stockholm metropolitan areas with a large immigrant population are areas that can be defined as resource poor. These areas mainly consist of large housing estates that were built during the “Million Homes Programme” when a million dwellings were built during a period of 10 years from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s. These large housing estates are today associated with segregation and social problems. Refugees and immigrants, primarily from outside the OECD region, have been directed towards these so-called “under-privileged” suburbs (Nordfeldt 2012, WP3 report)

Diversity and choice – catchwords in local political debate in Stockholm.

In the field of social welfare, the ruling coalition within the local government – since 2006 consisting of the Conservative Party, the Liberal Party, the Centre Party

and the Christian Democratic Party – has pursued a strong policy of marketing and privatisation. This has been implemented within the field of health care and social services (primarily within elderly care) and the housing market.

Deregulation and legislation on competitive procurement (LOU), ideas of “user choice” and a new legislation – the Law on Freedom of Choice” (Lagen om valfrihet, LOV) has made it possible for municipalities to engage alternative service providers in social welfare. In Stockholm, the law (LOV) is applied in various fields, e.g. in home-care services for the elderly, in daily activities and assistance for disabled persons, and regarding residential homes (vård- och omsorgsboende).

Another policy implemented is the privatisation of the housing market. In Stockholm, this has been manifested by transformation of rental apartments to owner-occupied apartments, especially in the centre of the city and the inner suburbs. Tenants living in more distant suburbs have been less interested in buying their rented apartments. Some real estate has instead been sold off to private landlords. This transformation peaked in early 2000 and then again in the late 2000s (Nordfeldt & Wiklund 2013).

Stockholm administration

Stockholm is organised into 17 field-specific departments, 14 district administrations and 16 municipal companies owned by the Stockholm City Hall AB. The district administrations are responsible for municipal services and care for those who live in the district: preschool, elderly care, support and services to people with disabilities, social psychiatry, social care for individuals and families, consumer advice and leisure and cultural activities.

Social innovations in Stockholm – three examples

In the following section, we will describe the three social innovations that have been the focus of our research in Stockholm. These are the (1) “Filur project” within the local labour market; (2) “Children of Single (Lone) Mothers Project” targeting single mothers with low income, and (3) The “Miljardprogrammet” (“the billion project”) which is a citizen/activist-driven project related to housing.

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Authors

Marie Nordfeldt and Anna Carrigan
(Ersta Sköndal University College)

The case studies in Stockholm have been chosen according to a broad definition of innovations, as ideas or approaches that are new in a particular context, but implemented in practice to some degree. The innovations combine the policy fields and target groups highlighted by the WILCO project in different ways.

The empirical material for this report has been collected from websites, various official documents and through interviews with staff and users of the studied projects. The interviews form the primary basis for the descriptions of the respective innovations, also including interviews that are not directly referred to in the text below.

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The Filur Project

58.1. Short description

The European Social Fund and the Stockholm City administration finance the Filur project, which has been running since 2010. The target group of the project is young persons facing difficulties entering the labour market. Participants are enrolled in Filur through the so-called "Jobbtorg" (job centres) or via the special responsibility of the labour market administrations concerning young people. Persons can also be recruited from local employment centres or from the social insurance office. Young people enrolled from Jobbtorg are, however, the dominant group. An interviewed job coach at the Filur project estimated that 90 per cent of the participants were enrolled from Jobbtorg (interview 1). As Filur has cut ties with the Jobbtorg organisation, it is appropriate to give a short description of this organisation in order to clarify the context within which Filur is working.

Jobbtorg is an initiative introduced by the right wing majority in the city of Stockholm in 2006. The decision to implement Jobbtorg was taken in 2007 along with a modified set of guidelines for the administration of social welfare benefits (utl. 2007: 117 and utl. 2007: 116). Jobbtorg was initially referred to as a "special project designed to help people from Stockholm to move from social welfare benefits to work" (utl. 2007: 117), which was in line with the dominating activation policy within the Swedish labour market policy (Johansson 2009; Thorén 2008). This project had a clear two-headed goal: to help people to help themselves in finding employment, and to reduce costs for the city district administration by reducing the number of people dependent on social welfare benefits (utl. 2007: 117). The term "welfare dependency" with the obvious connotation (in Swedish) of "welfare addiction" (*bidragsberoende*) was used frequently in the debate to describe the problem that Jobbtorg was intended to address (utl. 2007: 117). The idea of Jobbtorg was to standardise the municipal efforts and resources available to assist unemployed people dependent on social welfare benefits, which meant centralising the organisation within the city of Stockholm. Prior to Jobbtorg, there had been a number of different projects and organisations cooperating with city district administrations to support people on social welfare benefits to find employment. Initiatives for different projects are also taken at Jobbtorg as part of their method of working. The objective of these projects is to develop regular activities at Jobbtorg as these projects are designed to try out new methods and ways of working (interview 2). The successful methods are supposed to be singled out and then adopted as regular Jobbtorg activities. Filur is an example of such a project (interview 3).

With the help of personal job coaches, a staff member interviewed stated that Jobbtorg is supposed to establish an individual planning document, a "work-plan", for each "candidate" to sign (the unemployed person is called an "aspirant" or candidate at Jobbtorg). This work-plan can include short work-related courses, learning Swedish, intern-

ship, as well as requirements of daily attendance and job-searching activities at the Jobbtorg offices. It can also include participation in one of the projects currently running, for example, at Filur. Because of the modified set of guidelines for the administration of social welfare benefits, there is a strong incentive for people who receive social welfare benefits to cooperate with the job coaches and follow their individual work-plan at Jobbtorg. Daily attendance is required as a norm, and attendance and even late arrival is reported directly to the administrators of the social welfare benefits at the city district administration (interview 2). This means, for instance, that too many “late arrivals” can cause a person’s right to social welfare benefits to be questioned. Unexplained non-attendance usually deprives a person of that right.

Filur was initiated on political request by a group of professionals specialising in youth unemployment at Jobbtorg. This group was commissioned to investigate the possibility for a new project for young unemployed people who seemed to experience special difficulty in getting a foothold in the labour market (interview 3). The staff group went on a tour of inspiration and came back with elements from different fields and organisations. Today, the Filur project is built on four elements. The first element is the so-called “7-twenty” method (7-tjugo-metoden), which is a concept adopted from an employee-owned cooperative in the Swedish city of Borlänge, called “Arbetslinjen Klippan” (Arbetslinjen Klippan 24 January 2013). The 7-twenty method is described as a pedagogic and self-strengthening method. The second element is referred to as “Try-out-a-job”, which is not supposed to be an internship, where the young person is forced to take whatever job is offered. Instead, it should be an opportunity for the young person to make a decision about a line of work that appeals to them, and then try it for a 4-week period (interview 3). The job coaches at Filur try their very best to match the young person to the labour market according to their wishes. The interviewed head of the project says that the 7-twenty method works on mobilising a young person’s motivation for 8 weeks and then the “Try-out-a-job” scheme is supposed to follow as a logical consequence (interview 3). During the 8 weeks that the participants follow the 7-twenty method, the job coaches also work individually with each participant to try to assess and map the needs of support for each participant. This is the third element. At the

beginning of the project, the mapping method used was ADAD (short for Adolescent Drug Abuse Diagnosis), which is a standardised questionnaire used within the social administration office in their work with young drug abusers. The project leader states that the original idea was to get results that could be comparable in the municipality. However, ADAD is no longer the method used for mapping the participants at Filur. Instead, the job coaches have a continuous and individual approach, meeting each participant for individual talks every week (interview 3). The fourth element that constitutes the Filur project is the mentor programme. Here the original idea was inspired from Mentor Sverige and Skandia Idéer för livet (ideas for life). The structure of this mentor programme, as well as its intensity and length, were adopted. “Our thought was that after the 8 plus 4 weeks of the Filur project, each participant should be able to have a mentor, someone who was already working professionally within the field of work that the young person had decided to aim for, and that that mentor should be available for the young person at least once a month for 2 hours” (interview 3). However, the mentor programme is the part of the Filur project that has not been working so well. The project leader explains that there has been a problem with timing and matching, as well as with recruiting mentors and maintaining the interest of the young person so long after the end of the project with so much changing in a young person’s life (interview 3).

58.2. Concepts and ways of addressing users

In the project application to the ESF, the following is written about the target group of the Filur project:

At Jobbtorg and within the community there is a growing group of young people, aged 16-24, who fail to establish themselves in the labour market or who fail to continue their studies despite the support and interventions that are available to them. This group represents the project’s target group. They get stuck in Jobbtorg or disappear for short periods of time only to then reappear (...) Some young find it difficult to understand and to live up to the demands placed on them in meetings with various authorities. Many risk getting stuck in the support systems, which means that they are at risk of permanent welfare dependency.

Further,

Our target group often lack fundamental social and practical skills required to be deemed employable by employers. It is a sprawling group of diffuse problems. Some young people are immature, others experience mental or emotional problems, they are on sick leave; they return and become sick again. It is likely that some young people carry undiagnosed disabilities. Common to the group is low self-esteem and lack of confidence in their own potential. Many young people lack education; others have completed high school but have missing grades in one or more subjects

Svenska ESF Rådet, 7 February 2013 (authors' translation)

The target group has broadened since the start of the project, and today most young unemployed people that wish to participate can do so (interview 3). The participants that we interviewed came from Jobbtorg and had been offered a place in the Filur project after a few weeks and up until a couple of months after enrolling with Jobbtorg (interviews 4 and 5). The project leader points out that the sooner a young person joins the project the better, and she says that sometimes the regulations of the national employment office can be ineffective as it only allows a young person to enter the Filur project after 3 months of unemployment when the young person is listed in the so-called "youth guarantee" (ungdomsgarantin) (interview 3).

From our interviews, it has been suggested that Jobbtorg can have a deterrent effect on the participants, and it remains unclear how much the fear of having to return to Jobbtorg is a motivating factor to continue Filur. Both interviewees said that they found Jobbtorg ineffective, unnecessary and unhelpful. They agreed that sitting at Jobbtorg was like being pulled downwards to a place where people were "just sad and only doing things because they had to". Both of the interviewed participants described incomprehensible rules at Jobbtorg, and they both said that the offer to start at the Filur project seemed like a good option. They stated that the individual mapping showed them their capabilities and increased their self-confidence and pride in themselves (interviews 4 and 5). The project leader confirmed that the project provides better chances compared with Jobbtorg and is an opportunity for the young participants to get the time to examine their own motivations and start to

build self-confidence around who they are, what they want and are able to do (interview 3).

58.3 Internal organisation and modes of working

The Filur project is an ESF-funded project run by the Stockholm municipality, administered by their organisation, Jobbtorg, which is organised within the labour market administration. The project is controlled by a board. The chairperson of the board is also the coordinator of the youth activities at Jobbtorg. The rest of the board consists of representatives from the employment office, social insurance office and the employment department, the city district administration, and Jobbtorg. Initially, there was also one representative from Stockholm City Mission, but not any longer. The project leader says that a decision was made to have only civil servants on the board, based on arguments of efficiency (interview 3).

The venue of the Filur project, with its address in central Stockholm, has an obvious advantage. The project leader works here alongside three job coaches and one career and education counsellor. In addition, they have one administrator and one economist working part-time in the project. They also have one informant employed through a special youth employment programme run by the municipality. The idea of that the programme enables young people to gain employment in the municipal organisation, or in one of its many companies, for a limited period of time during which Jobbtorg finances the young person's salary (interview 3). The advantage of the venue of Filur is that it is shared with the youth employment programme, which means that the matchers working in the youth employment programme, along with their contacts in different administrations and companies, can meet directly with the young participants in the Filur project and help them to find interesting jobs in the municipality.

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Categories

Employment

58.4 Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

The impact that the Filur project will have remains to be seen. At the time of the case study, it was often referred to politically as successful. In a survey conducted in January 2013, 78.5 per cent of the young people that had participated in the project and finished during 2010, 2011 and the first 6 months of 2012, had become self-supporting (Stockholms stad 2013). According to the project leader, parts of the Filur project will be implemented in the regular activity at Jobbtorg after the project has ended (interview 3). The project's termination date has recently been prolonged until June 2013. However, one can probably say that more activities based on an individual approach working with pedagogical self-strengthening methods will be continuously directed towards the young and unemployed in the near future.

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Barn till ensamamma mammor - Children of single (lone) mothers, Fryshuset

59.1. Short description

Fryshuset is a foundation headed by the YMCA. When it started in Stockholm in 1984 it was located in a former cold-storage building (hence the name – Fryshuset, meaning “cold storage” in Swedish). The creation of the organisation can be seen as a response to young people’s needs.

During its lifetime, Fryshuset has become a well-known and entrepreneurial organisation with a wide range of different activities. Today, Fryshuset runs schools and social programmes as well as vocational training, seminars and conferences, courses in theatre, music, and sport, as well as hosting events, concerts, parties and discotheques. Public funding covers around 5 per cent of the activities, and the rest is financed by a mixture of grants, endowments and fees for services such as educational and social programmes (fees that are not paid by young people or individual clients but by co-operational partners and government agencies). Fryshuset also runs activities in Malmö and Gothenburg. Throughout its lifetime, Fryshuset has worked to find new and innovative solutions to social youth issues and problems. Within the organisation, new projects have constantly been started. Fryshuset also cooperates with a range of public and private stakeholders.

Since 2007, Fryshuset has run a project addressed at children of single mothers in Stockholm, and since 2010, this has also run in Malmö. The focus for this activity is on the children but indirectly the activity also affects the mothers, and as a part of this activity, Fryshuset offers parent education and different kinds of lectures for the mothers. The aim is to support and strengthen children that are living with a single mother in economically vulnerable circumstances. Fryshuset describes the support as being provided from a health perspective with focus on the children’s and the mothers’ everyday situation.

59.2 Concept and ways of addressing users

The project offers three types of activities for single (lone) mothers and their children. The first is the monthly meetings. Up to 500 people - mothers and children - have been attending a monthly meeting in the Stockholm project. On more normal occasions, the participation involves around 100 persons. At the monthly meetings, mothers and children form separate groups. The group of mothers can, for example, participate in lectures concerning aspects of health, during which they will also have time to network and support one another. Meanwhile, the group of children are divided according to age and take part in sports, arts or music workshops together with volunteers - "amigos" - in the project (interview 6).

The fundamental idea behind these monthly meetings is that children of mothers who can be considered as socially vulnerable, need to have at least one window of opportunity where they can enjoy themselves and laugh, without having to think about and take responsibility for a mother feeling bad. The idea of the project is to encourage joy, says the project leader who we interviewed, "we are good at joy" (interview 6). She continues by explaining that the project wants to give these children positive childhood memories. "The children can come here and know that they don't have to look after their mothers while they're here, which is something that the staff experience a lot." According to her, children behave according to how sad their mothers are, and do not allow themselves to feel happy. At the project, it works the other way around as well. The mothers that come here are responsible for their children 24/7 and for them this is a much-appreciated "break" or time to just sit and relax for a while, knowing that the child is having a great time in the other room (interview 6).

The second activity offered by the project is what they call "activities". During these "activities" the idea is that they take the whole group, mothers and children together, to do something extraordinary. It can be visiting a museum, or going to the public swimming pool, visiting a fun park or a zoo. For instance, last summer, the project leader told us that the whole group was taken to a large zoo about 3 hours away from Stockholm. That trip took a lot to organise: "We have become experts at arranging events" she states, and mentions that six packed buses left Fryshuset at

that time and they received much recognition from other colleagues in the house when they saw the number of people that this project involved (interview 6). The main idea behind these activities is to build up and support the relationship between mother and child. The project leader says that the children need to see their mothers laugh and have a good time. She argues that in the child's view, these activities are things their mothers take them to do, without having to think about the cost, and this is a way to build up the role of the mother in the eyes of the child. This part of the project is costly and the three people employed in the project have worked out a special way of fundraising. They try to give lectures to companies and invite them to come in to co-organise these events with them. In that way, the companies will experience how the funds have been used, and hopefully how they have also created value for the company (Interview 6).

The third activity at Children of Single (Lone) Mothers is called the "boomerang meetings". This is a part of the project that has been going through many changes and, at the time of the study, had reached a form that the project staff were very pleased with. At the beginning of the project, the staff received many calls from mothers having all kinds of problems. These could be related to legal issues of custody matters, or health, or questions about how the social services function and act, and often these were questions that the three project leaders did not have the competence to answer. This resulted in an idea to arrange a fair twice a year where they invited experts from different fields and institutions to come and give personal counselling to the mothers. For many of the mothers, this meeting can be a first step to establishing a relationship with the appropriate institution. During these and all meetings, the project invites volunteers. The project leader explains that she and her two colleagues could not possibly meet all the needs and answer all the questions of the participants. The volunteers are called "fellow humans" in the project and they are there to support the mothers during meetings (interview 6).

Beside these activities, the project leaders do a lot of work "behind the scenes". They give lectures and try to represent and make visible the group of children of lone mothers. "There is much to be done to make people recognise the problems of these children", the project leader states (interview 6). The special meth-

od of fundraising, mentioned above, is also a way to make more stakeholders recognise this group. The project has also recently initiated cooperation with Södertörns högskola, a university college in Stockholm, where they give lectures to university students who are studying to become teachers. Here the project leader sees a good opportunity for influencing the general view of this group of children (interview 6).

59.3 Internal organisation and modes of working

There are three persons working in the project. They have become “event experts” and organise most of the target group’s activities. They also raise funds and apply for allowances. Volunteers are engaged in the projects as “amigos” who are there to attend to the children, and “fellow humans” who support the mothers. Fundraising and advocacy are important responsibilities taken on by the project staff, and both responsibilities seem to encourage the other, giving them the same purpose.

59.4 Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

Making the group of children of economically vulnerable mothers visible to politicians, who, according to the project leader, hold a lot of prejudiced thinking against this group, could have an impact on political decisions about, for example, the availability of child care outside business hours and child care at night, which has been debated locally at different periods of time. Another field where advocacy of this group can have an impact is in the discussion about the national norm of social welfare benefits, which today does not include leisure time activities for children (for example, fees for sport or music lessons), or monthly internet costs. This could mean that some children do not receive information sent out from their schools or from other organisations that communicate mostly via the internet. These are questions that the project at Fryshuset is advocating, and where it might have an impact on the welfare system (interview 6). Another aspect that is important is the way that they try to bring the help closer to the mothers by arranging the boomerang meetings; thus, working to empower the mothers to start their individual processes for a better situation.

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Miljardprogrammet (The Billion Programme)

60.1 Short description

The background to “Miljardprogrammet” (The Billion Programme) can be traced to the so called “Million Homes Programme” (“Miljonprogrammet”) and the political consensus about the need to upgrade these areas both in terms of the physical buildings and environment, and range of services, but also dealing with the negative connotations that many of these areas are beset with.

The Million Homes Programme was launched in the mid-1960s to combat the housing shortage. A million dwellings were built over a period of 10 years. Many of the large housing estates that were built in the suburbs of the big cities during this time are today associated with segregation and social problems. Refugees and immigrants, primarily from outside the OECD region, have been directed towards these so-called “under-privileged” suburbs.

In a report published in 2006, measurements of segregation and social exclusion were described based on a summary of four factors: rate of income, education, immigration and employment. The conclusion from this was that 8 per cent of neighbourhoods can be defined as “socially vulnerable to a high degree”, and 19 per cent as “partly socially vulnerable”. Many of the areas that are classified as socially vulnerable were identified at the end of the 1980s and a conclusion in the report was that there have been no significant changes in segregation in the late 1990s and early 2000s (USK 2006; Nordfeldt 2012).

The idea of Miljardprogrammet is to unite and inspire the people living across the different Million Homes programme areas in Sweden to take action and start positive processes, or innovations, in order to change the million programme areas in the direction of what the citizens want (Miljardprogrammet 2012). One could say that it functions both as a meeting place and as a think-tank for ideas and for innovative processes. However, it is also supposed to function as a platform for negotiations with relevant politicians and civil servants. It is an initiative that strives for communication across the more than 100 or so different million programme areas in Sweden. At the core of the Miljardprogrammet lies a sharp critique of how decisions about the areas are taken at municipal and state levels. According to the initiator of Miljardprogrammet, political decisions are mostly based on the way that the Million Homes Programme areas are depicted in the media: as run down, deprived areas whose residents are mostly unemployed people without opportunities (interview 7). The initiator says that the politicians rarely live in the Million Programme areas themselves, and therefore, they are easily manipulated by the negative picture they

get from the media. However, for the citizens this picture can become absurd when they cannot identify with what is said about them and about the places where they live. He argues further that decisions based on the negative media picture, becomes an obstacle to entrepreneurial ideas and engagement that exists among the citizens in these areas (Interview 7).

60.2 Concept and ways of addressing users

The project started in 2011 after the initiator had made a survey on the types of changes required by citizens in the Million Homes Programme areas. This survey was in itself a response to the many political discussions about different ways to change the status of the Million Programme areas, from costly renovations to special job projects aimed at providing more job opportunities in the areas. According to his survey, the main change requested by the citizens was better service in the centre. (The Million Homes Programme areas, as well as most suburbs, are built around a centre with shops and municipal facilities that can include libraries, public swimming pools and sports facilities as well as health care-centres.) The citizens also requested enhanced security and better housing standards and public environments, as well as better police, education and health care (interview 7). In 2012 the ideas of Miljardprogrammet was put into print:

The core aspect of Miljardprogrammet is that we who want to change things are often stopped by others, who do not want the same things as us. The way things normally work is that you get an idea of something that you want to do. You apply for money to do it from the municipality or somewhere else. If you get the money you move to action but if you don't you don't and that is where things go wrong.(...) No matter if you get the money or not you will take action; you will just have to figure out a different way. Almost everything is possible and what it depends on is whether or not people are doing things; if they put their time into it (..) Those who have the power over money or allowances are very seldom people from the Million Programme areas (...) In the end, the result will be that the status of the Million Programme areas will be viewed with respect, and we who live here will be viewed as resources and people that are needed in society. And when we and our areas get the respect

that we deserve, a lot of other things will change too – our chances of getting a job or something as central as our self-confidence.

Miljardprogrammet, 2012 (authors' translation)

The document also gives very firm practical advice, such as how to organise a start-up meeting (“you will need a flipchart”, “papers to distribute for people to write their ideas” and “you will need to take people’s email addresses” etc.), how to see possibilities rather than problems, and how talk to the media with a smile (sic) without confirming their negative view of the Million Programme areas. There are also recommendations about which other organisations to approach, for example, to hire a venue for meetings, and thorough advice is given on how to draw the attention of the local media to the start-up of Miljardprogrammet in each area (Miljardprogrammet, 2012).

Miljardprogrammet uses the networking ability that is provided by Facebook to communicate. Miljardprogrammet is a programme without any leader or board; however, the inspirational role of the person that initiated it is important when it comes to understanding the attention that the Miljardprogrammet has been getting (for example in DN, 18 October 2011, etc.). The initiator is well known for his engagement in the suburbs and clearly his personal position is an advantage. It is, however, uncertain as to how many communities have actually been adopting the programme since the start of 2012. In time of writing there are three groups registered on Facebook, from different Million Programme areas, and these are Vårby, Alby and Jordbro. Around 1,300 people have “liked” the page. It is of course uncertain whether this is a real count of how many people and communities are engaged. Miljardprogrammet is supposed to be running from 2012-2020 (interview 7).

Miljardprogrammet addresses users (or “citizens” as we should say in the case of Miljardprogrammet) in an empowering way, focusing on their possibilities to change things in a desired direction rather than on problems or political hindrance. It is a project that seeks to be a platform for all residents that want to be engaged in positive change in the Million Programme areas across Sweden. It can be seen as an attempt to create a positive identity for the people in the areas, enhancing the sense of community so that it can become strong enough to change the negative media picture to a more positive one. The way to do

that is to let the people living in these areas come up with and be inspired by their own innovative ideas, and to get them in touch with other people, neighbours and friends that can support them.

60.3 Internal organisation and modes of working

Miljardprogrammet has an *ad hoc* organisation based on civic engagement and participation. On their website the project is described as a “true democratic project”, which seems to reflect the fact that there is no formal organisation or representation at all. The initiator and also entrepreneur, is the face people associate with Miljardprogrammet, although he is clear about not wanting to represent the programme more than others that are engaged in it.

60.4 Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

What impact Miljardprogrammet will have on the governance on local welfare systems remains to be seen. At the core of Miljardprogrammet lies a critique of the governance of the local welfare system, which is understood to be too paternalistic and manipulated by the negative assumptions of the media. The ideas behind Miljardprogrammet could encourage citizens' suggestions and expertise in neighbourhood revitalisation. The programme recognises that the Million Programme areas are in need of (social) change, but it stresses the ideas should be engagement led and from a bottom-up perspective.

Conclusions

In Stockholm, social innovation is a less used term than in our second case study - the city of Malmö (Carrigan and Nordfeldt 2013). Innovation is not part of the policy discourse in Stockholm. The lack of interest in social innovation may appear contradictory, considering the strong emphasis that the steering majority of the local government places on diversity and consumer choice. Deregulation and legislation on competitive procurement (LOU) and freedom of choice (LOV) have opened windows of opportunity for alternative service producers. So far, these windows have mainly been filled by private for-profit health care companies. This means that there are new providers within the welfare field, but these procurements do not require innovative or new types of services.

The three innovative activities that we have chosen to study in Stockholm, and that are described above, spring from different needs and exemplify different kinds of ideas and approaches, as well as stakeholders. These examples also relate, in different ways, to the local government. The discussion below will focus on the innovations separately, with a final discussion on some common traits. Commonalities will be discussed with a focus on partnership, diffusion and scaling up, and finally, sustainability.

The Filur project is based on a highly topical issue – youth unemployment – and a perceived need to develop a model that is targeted towards young unemployed persons in a marginalised position in relation to the labour market, and also to the education system. These young people are sometimes labelled “young outside”. The Filur project can be described as a new way to deliver service, but within the dominant system. Filur is developed and institutionalised within the public sector, and made possible by EU funding. The model that is used in the Filur project is in itself a “mosaic” that comprises a collection of ideas and methods, which are combined and “translated” into a model that is especially adapted to young unemployed persons. This model works more intensely with the target group and with a higher degree of individually adapted measures. The innovative strands are thus limited to fit in with the dominant “working line” within the activation policy that since the 1990s has been the prevailing approach for labour market policy. Participating in Filur is a requirement to receive social welfare allowances.

The second innovation, Children of Single (Lone) Mothers, is an example of an innovation initiated within the civil society and by an organisation known for its entrepreneurial ways of working. Fryshuset is a Stockholm-based organisation but with networks and contacts in municipalities in different parts of Sweden. As described above, the Swedish welfare system has opened up to alternative producers of welfare services. A parallel development is that during the last few decades civil society organisations have attracted growing interest and have been granted greater legitimacy from local governments. However, this has resulted in a growing rate of social services produced by CSOs but only to a limited degree. However, there are expectations that CSOs can deliver new solutions for unsolved social problems and help to strengthen the welfare system by filling gaps.

One might argue that the project Children of Single (Lone) Mothers is more in line with the traditional role of civil society organisations, namely to focus attention on new needs and new groups with needs that are not covered in other ways. A traditional role of these organisations is to be pioneers and to offer services that are not covered by the public sector. Since the start of the organisation, Fryshuset has worked as a pioneer and entrepreneur within the field of youth policy.

There are elements of advocacy in this innovation. There is a will from workers in the project, from Fryshuset, to raise attention about the issue of child poverty and the situation for unemployed or low-income single mothers. The staff from Fryshuset implements this by cooperation with a university college in Stockholm and by giving lectures and seminars to different stakeholders, including politicians. In this way, there is an ambition to contribute to long-term changes for the target group, both concerning the children and the mothers. The project might also shed light on local needs for child care at “uncomfortable” times – for example, night-time child care. This could be an important basis for single mothers to get a job, although many jobs in occupations that are still female-dominated, within health and social care, have “uncomfortable” working hours. Child care in the evenings and at night is currently on the local political agenda in Stockholm.

The third innovation – *Miljardprogrammet* – is a citizen initiative started by a local entrepreneur. *Miljardprogrammet* can be defined as a policy innovation, but

it has so far been put into practice only to a limited degree. It has a clear policy orientation and is spread via social media.

The discourses and development lines that have constituted the basis for *Miljardprogrammet* reflect a political consensus about the need to improve the living conditions in the outer suburbs. The political standpoints on how to do this are thus different. One comprehensive proposal is to promote the building of mixed dwellings both in terms of the physical buildings and of types of ownership. Another suggestion is to move workplaces, such as local administrations, from central districts to outer areas. The problem areas that are pointed out are especially the so-called “Million Homes programme” areas. There is a need for long-term development in these areas. Problems here are often related to the population, for example, lack of language skills and high rates of unemployment. These areas are often defined as “immigrant areas”. At the core of *Miljardprogrammet* lies a sharp criticism of how decisions about the areas are taken at municipal and state levels. *Miljardprogrammet* aims to engage people in these areas so they can influence political decisions and their own living conditions. Within this programme, citizen initiatives are encouraged to participate in entrepreneurial activities and co-production. In this way, *Miljardprogrammet* could lay the groundwork for local innovation, but to what extent and in what ways still remains to see.

Partnerships

Partnerships are a feature of all the innovations, but vary in design and extent. The three cases feature both intra- and inter-organisational cooperation. *Filur* is mainly based on intra-organisational cooperation between units in public administration, but reaches out to employers in different sectors. Fryshuset’s funding builds on a mix of grants, endowments, and fees for services that are paid by government agencies but also by co-operational partners, such as private for-profit businesses. Fryshuset works with platforms and networks for youth activities and advocacy. *Miljardprogrammet* is a platform for citizen motivation, which builds on networking and contacts between citizens, politicians and different stakeholders involved in neighbourhood revitalisation.

SE

Stockholm

Scaling up and diffusion

Filur is in itself a result of diffusion, i.e. a mosaic of different inspirations and tangible work methods used in other contexts. In our case study, we found no indications of a desire to spread or scale up this concept. A possible explanation for this is that within the public sector there are no incentives, or time, to “sell” an innovation to other stakeholders/places.

During Fryshuset’s nearly 30-year lifetime, the organisation has had ambitions to spread its know-how and methods to other municipalities. This has partly succeeded, but there have also been many hindrances to spreading locally initiated activities to other places and stakeholders. Fryshuset’s answer to the problem of diffusion has been to build networks with local entrepreneurial stakeholders and initiatives (Engel 2014).

In Miljardprogrammet, scaling up and diffusion are core aspects. The idea is described as a call to unite and inspire people living across the different Million Programme areas in Sweden to take action and start positive processes in their respective neighbourhoods. To spread ideas and inspiration the programme is using social media such as Facebook. At the same time, this means that the programme is dependent on individual engagement and driving forces.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the studied projects is hard to predict and still remains to be seen. The Filur project is described as a success in a report summarising the 3-year duration of the project. This has also been confirmed in an evaluation (Stockholms stad 2013). The work model will therefore be implemented in the ordinary activities of Jobbtorg Stockholm.

Fryshuset is a stable organisation with a range of activities based on needs, so as long as the organisation believes there is a need for these activities, which are not covered by other organisations, they will probably find ways to finance them and continue. One way for Fryshuset to achieve sustainability is through inter-sectoral and multi-sectoral partnerships with the public and the private sector.

Miljardprogrammet is a platform for citizens’ involvement and, therefore, as described above, is heavily dependent on citizen engagement for its maintenance. Therefore, the long-term outcome and

sustainability remain to be seen. However, the issues that Miljardprogrammet is addressing will probably remain matters for public debate for the near future.

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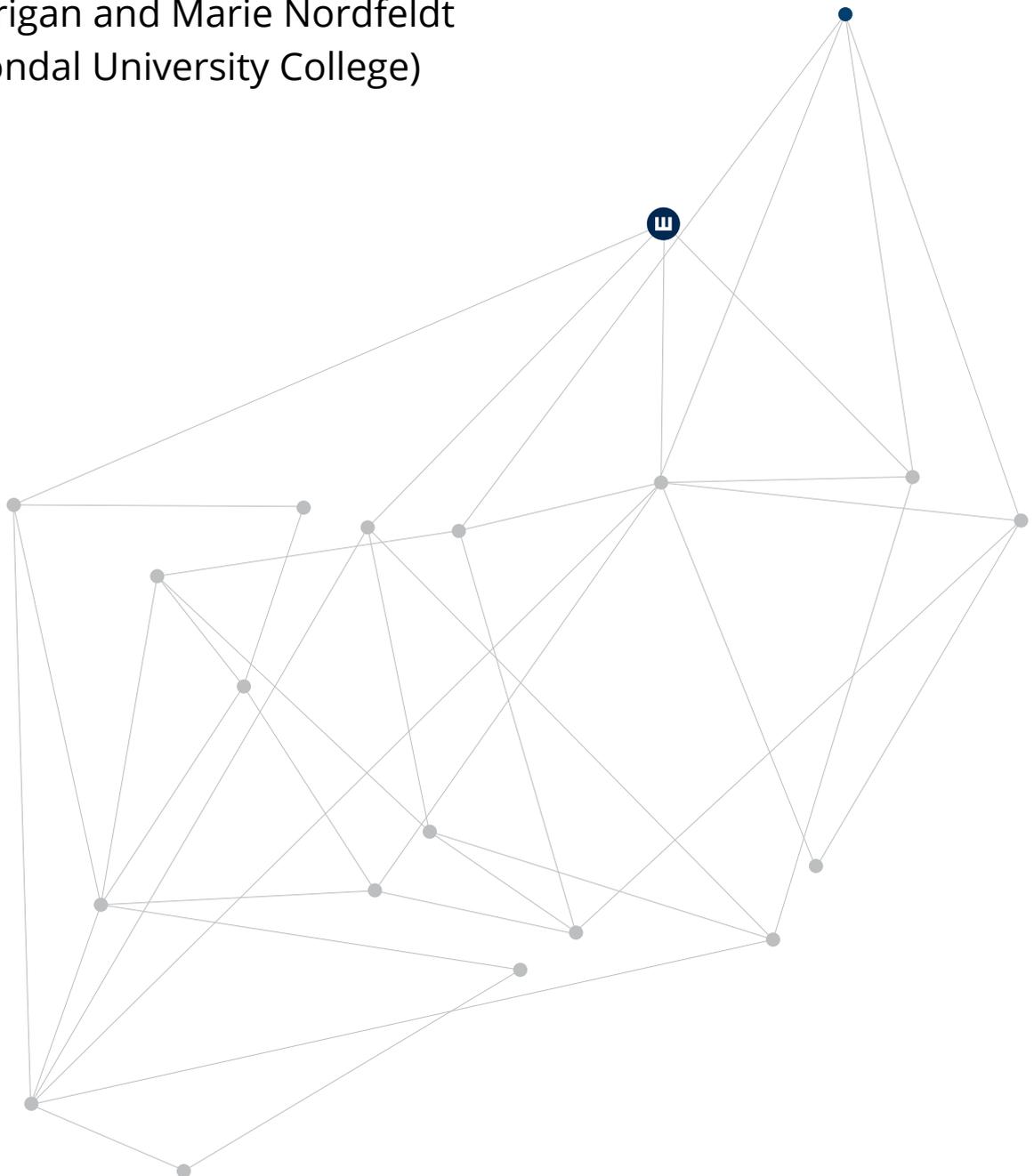
Interviews:

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- > Interview 2 - Head of the labour-market administration (11.05.12)
- > Interview 3 – Project leader at Filur (19.09.12)
- > Interview 4 – Participant at Filur (young woman) (19.09.12)
- > Interview 5 – Participant at Filur (young man) (19.09.12)
- > Interview 6 - Project leader at Children of Single (Lone) Mothers (22.10.12)
- > Interview 7 – Initiator of Miljardprogrammet (19.10.12)
- > Interview 8 – Participant/fellow entrepreneur at Miljardprogrammet (07.06.12)

SE Sweden

Malmö

Anna Carrigan and Marie Nordfeldt
(Ersta Sköndal University College)



Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Collaboration
Empowerment
Entrepreneurship
Incubator
Integration
Neighbourhood revitalization
Participation
Partnerships
Segregation
Social enterprise

It cannot be claimed that social innovation is a widespread notion or term in the Swedish context. Innovations are still very much related to the launching of new products, inventions and technical development. Welfare development has, by tradition, not been considered as innovative (Rønning *et al.* 2013). Innovation has also mainly been related to the private – for-profit - sector. However, there is awakening political interest in social innovations and social investments, at both the national and local level. Since the development of the welfare state in the mid-1900s the field of welfare in Sweden has been dominated by services produced by the public sector. However, during the latest decades, and still continuing to the present day, there have been structural changes taking place within the field of welfare in terms of deregulation and privatisation. These have opened up opportunities for alternative producers of welfare services. Moreover, with strained budgets and unsolved social problems, local and central governments are looking to the for-profit and the non-profit sectors for innovations and entrepreneurial initiatives.

Malmö is the third largest city in Sweden, with around 300,000 inhabitants, and it is a growing city. Malmö is a central part of the so-called Öresund region, which covers the very south of Sweden and parts of Denmark, including the capital, Copenhagen. Malmö and Copenhagen have been connected since the year 2000 by a bridge for cars and trains. This has increased commuting within the region. A number of changes have taken place that affected the local economy of Malmö. On a more general level, Malmö has made attempts to transform from an industrial city to a “knowledge” city. Malmö University was established in 1998, and there are, for example, currently 25,000 university students in the city. In addition to Malmö University, educational institutions include the World Maritime University, the Royal University College of Fine Arts, Malmö Academy of Music and Malmö Theatre Academy. The largest sectors in Malmö are trade and communications, corporate services and finance and health care and welfare. (Segnestam Larsson 2012). At the same time the city has struggled for several decades with severe social problems such as high unemployment, the high costs of social benefits, and growing segregation.

Malmö has a long and strong tradition of social democratic local government. During the present term, the Social Democrats are governing in alliance with the Left Wing Party and the Green Party. At the time of the case study, the local authority in Malmö was organised into 12 field-specific administrations and 10 territorially organised city district administrations. In July 2013, the territorial districts were merged to five. The city district administrations are responsible for providing services in particular areas. This include child care, elementary schools, care of the elderly, care of the disabled, social services and social welfare benefits, local leisure activities, local culture and the city district libraries. Furthermore, the local welfare system include local companies, such as the local housing company (MKB),

the Malmö Incubator (MINC) and other service and industrial companies that require more business-like organisation (Malmö Stad 2012; Segnestam Larsson 2013). Malmö can be described as a city of many projects within the field of welfare.

The city of Malmö has a long history of engagement with civil society, with traditionally strong associations in the fields of sports, culture, and leisure, organised under the umbrella organisation MIP (*Malmö ideella föreningars paraplyorganisation*) (ibid 2013).

Social Innovation in Malmö

In the city of Malmö the term “social innovation” is present in the dominant policy debates on local welfare. There seems to be a struggle among stakeholders within the welfare field to find new and more innovative ways to handle social problems such as youth unemployment and segregation. Another term used at the policy level is “social sustainability”. Malmö has launched a “Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö”, and one of its main tasks is to propose strategies for reducing health inequalities, and improve the long-term living conditions for the citizens of Malmö. (Segnestam Larsson 2013).

The innovations that we have studied in Malmö have developed in the context of the restructured Swedish welfare state, a local government searching for new solutions for social problems, and a growing interest in social enterprises, social entrepreneurship and innovations. The link with opportunities of EU funding is clearly present in the innovations that we describe below. The Coompanion Incubator and *Yalla Trappan* are examples of projects that aim to create work opportunities through the development of new co-operative businesses and through labour-integrated social enterprises.

The Area Programme (*Områdesprogrammet*) has a somewhat different background. The ideas this programme is based on can be traced back to ideas of neighbourhood revitalisation of run-down “segregated” areas, suffering from socio-economic stagnation. *Områdesprogrammet* seeks citizen engagement and the involvement of civil society stakeholders in new types of cooperation. *Områdesprogrammet* is conducted in neighbourhoods that were built during the so-called Million Homes Programme that existed between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. The aim of this programme was to combat the housing short-

age problem and to modernise the housing stock. In most cities, this resulted in new housing estates being built in the urban periphery. In the city of Malmö, these areas are located both in the central city and suburban areas. Some of the areas built during the Million Homes Programme, especially those that were of large-scale and high-rise character, have been subject to criticism. Problems that have been pointed out concerned both the areas’ physical appearance and the lack of social and sometimes also commercial facilities (Andersson *et al.*, 2010). Today, the large housing estates in the city suburbs are associated with segregation and social problems. In these neighbourhoods, there are close connections between segregation, social welfare dependence and poverty (Schierup 2006).

The innovations studied have been chosen according to a broad definition of innovations, as ideas or approaches that are new in a particular context, but implemented in practice to some degree. The innovations combine in different manners the policy fields and target groups that are pointed out in the WILCO project. The innovations are of different scales and complexity, including a broad neighbourhood programme, consisting of different projects (*Områdesprogrammet*), via the *Coompanion* Incubator, the aim of which is to provide inspiration and a support structure for innovations, to a defined project, i.e. *Yalla Trappan*. The empirical material for this report has been collected from websites, various official documents and through interviews with staff and users at the studied projects. The interviews form the primary basis for the descriptions of the respective innovations, also including interviews that are not directly referred to in the text below.

SE
Malmö

Categories

Related to all policy fields

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Områdesprogrammet in Holma-Kroksbäck

61.1. Short description

We visited Holma-Kroksbäck, in the district of Hyllie, where the Head of the Department of Integration and Sustainable Development, is responsible for the programme, together with the programme coordinator. They are, together with a secretary and a business consultant, employed to work on *Områdesprogrammet*. *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck is not directed at the whole of Holma-Kroksbäck; instead it focuses on a certain area, i.e. the “Million Homes Programme areas”. Currently there are far reaching political plans for a new area within the district of Hyllie. These plans contain new housing, a sports arena and a shopping mall just around the corner from the Million Homes Programme area in Holma-Kroksbäck. There are also plans for a new swimming pool and ice skating rink in Holma and there is already a new and popular “theme” park for children.

According to the head of the programme, these projects could help to gradually change the identity of the area, making it more attractive to its inhabitants and others. The interviewees speak of these new plans as a possible “engine”, and they want to make sure that the people in the Million Homes Programme area also gain from the ride when that motor accelerates and charges off (interview 1).

61.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

One way of describing the conceptions of *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck is to look at the area-specific problems that they try to find solutions to. The Million Homes Programme area in Holma-Kroksbäck is inhabited by around 5,000 people (out of 32,000 in the total district of Hyllie). Problems that are mentioned in the interviews, include unemployment, poverty and low levels of education. The programme coordinator further describes the area as transit area for immigrants, who tend to leave as soon as they can get employment and/or housing elsewhere (interview 1). Possibly linked to the “transit area” is lack of a sense of security, which is an issue that *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck is investigating, along with Malmö University.

Områdesprogrammet in Holma-Kroksbäck aims to seek new ways of cooperation between different administrations and stakeholders, i.e. different departments within the city district organisation (for example the schools, libraries, *JobbMalmö* (the municipal employment office) or the municipal housing company, as well as the different service

centres organised regionally and nationally, for example the local health care centres and the governmental employment office (AF). *Områdesprogrammet* also seeks cross-sectorial cooperation with private stakeholders as well as with different local civil society organisations, such as the Afghan Association (*Afganska föreningen*) and Active women in Hyllie (*Aktiva kvinnor i Hyllie*), Red Cross (*Röda Korset*) and Save the Children (*Rädda Barnen*). Malmö University is also involved in and cooperating specifically with *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck, for example, by conducting the survey mentioned above. Malmö University is also assisting *Områdesprogrammet* in identifying possible social innovations or innovative processes within the programme itself, which may strengthen the programme's legitimacy at the policy level in Malmö.

Områdesprogrammet is seeking to address its "users", i.e. the inhabitants of the Million Homes area in Holma-Kroksbäck, as partners and co-producers. One good example of this is a proposition from a local, young unemployed person who wanted to become a link between families and teachers in the school. This person wanted to set up homework classes after school for the students. He and two other persons from Holma were employed to conduct the suggested homework classes. The head of the programme believes that if they had employed ordinary teachers without the local connection, those homework classes would not have been as popular (interview 1).

Another example of the idea of reaching out to the people living in the area and to the local civil society is the process behind the Holma Info Centre. The administration of *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck had planned to open a new "citizen office" where locals could get information and citizens' advice. Two civil servants were employed to serve in the office, which was located in the library in one of the schools; "we thought of having representatives there from for example the different administrations, as well as politicians that could come to meet and talk to the people. It was a great idea and we opened with a nice ceremony, but no one came. After a year we had had 10 visitors in total" (interview 1). During the same period, a civil society organisation called Active Women in Hyllie (*Aktiva kvinnor i Hyllie*) planned to start an activity similar to a "citizen office", in a venue that had already been arranged by them, through the local public housing company MKB. *Aktiva kvinnor* asked for support and it was decided that this was a good

initiative to support, and that the recently opened office instead would be closed. One of the women – a long-term unemployed woman - from the association was employed in the office. After 3 weeks the new Info Centre had served 30 clients, which was 300 per cent more than what had been accomplished by the "civil servant project" in 1 year (interview 1).

The Info centre was strategically placed within the library administration, to make sure that it would remain in municipal administration even after 2015 when *Områdesprogrammet* will end. The head of the programme states that this is the way they will generally try to work, i.e. not making projects dependent on the *Områdesprogrammet*, but independent and sustainable over time. The idea now is that the person who is employed in the Info Centre is supposed to give local service to the citizens there. In practice, this could mean answering questions about education, giving information on making applications and filling in the right kind of forms, translating letters and information from different institutions, or helping people surf the internet for information regarding, for example, their rights or institutional procedures. The Info Centre can also help to direct people's questions to the right institution, be it the job centre or the tax administration office or something else. Both the municipal and the national employment offices have representatives at the Info Centre a few hours a week.

At the time of the study, there were far-reaching plans to open another Info Centre in Kroksbäck and this one will be organised by *Afghanska föreningen* (the Afghan Association) with the support of *Områdesprogrammet*, which will provide education and start-up advice. Here, however, the aim is not to "take over" the business and to employ somebody under the municipal administration, but to let the association take full responsibility for the centre.

61.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Områdesprogrammet in Holma-Kroksbäck tends to reach out and support local initiatives. In some cases, it can act as a support structure for new ideas, providing start-up education, material and contacts as in the ongoing process with the Info Centre in Kroksbäck. In other cases, it co-produces these ideas and employs long-term unemployed people as in the Holma Info Centre and in the initiative with the homework classes in school. Generally speaking, *Områdesprogrammet* is seeking local answers to local problems, and uses already existing infrastructures provided by the citizens themselves or by the civil society organisations. There is also a tendency to welcome voluntary work, for example through the Red Cross.

61.4. Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

The general idea of *Områdesprogrammet* is to challenge the municipal administrations to think and work in a cross-administrational way in cooperation with each other for the benefit of the areas where they work. Clearly, on the very local level, as for example in Holma-Kroksbäck, the programme also aims to work in a cross-sectorial manner, when it reaches out to find and support local initiatives among citizens and in civil society. *Områdesprogrammet* in Holma-Kroksbäck is arguing for political reform concerning social considerations in procurements, when for example the municipality is closing deals with building companies. However, this strategy is already used on a small scale by *Områdesprogrammet* themselves when they employ persons from the neighbourhood. This can give a double positive outcome of increasing the work force statistics and enabling one individual to be employed, as well as acknowledging one locally situated person as a resource when it comes to connections to the local community.

The example of the Info Centre in Holma is also interesting in the way that its organisation has been passed to the library administration, for the sake of sustainability. That move has had spin off-effects on the library as well. New groups of visitors have been introduced to the library, because of their contact with the Info Centre (the employee at the Info Centre is also working 1 day a week at the library), and a more general discussion about the citizen service aspect of the library service in itself is taking place, resulting in new and challenging questions being asked about responsibility and professional qualifications when it comes to serving vulnerable groups (interview 2).

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Coompanion Inkubatorn

62.1. Short description

Coompanion is an organisation providing advice and education to people in the process of starting their own business. *Coompanion* is a national organisation. However, the national office is more of a service office for the relatively independent regional organisations (interview 3). Before the Incubator initiative the *Coompanion* Skåne (Skåne being a county in the south of Sweden) office was located in one of the office spaces in the Malmö Incubator (MINC). In that environment, the head of *Coompanion* Skåne came up with the idea of an incubator for young unemployed people, and that idea was made possible through financing from the European Social Fund. *Coompanion* Skåne is currently running the *Coompanion Inkubator* (incubator) at a new venue in central Malmö, where they are offering the Incubator to young unemployed who are registered with and directed by the national employment office *Arbetsförmedlingen* (AF). The users are supposed to be challenged, inspired, educated and motivated to set up their own business, be it private or organised as a cooperative.

Main cooperation partner of the Incubator is the national employment office, AF. The officer at AF is the person who decides whether or not a young unemployed person who applies is eligible to participate. These decisions determining participation are valid for 12 weeks, which means that a participant needs to stay in contact with his or her officer for the duration of the participation. After completing the 12 weeks, the participation can be prolonged for another 12 week period (interview 3). *Coompanion* and its Incubator is also cooperating with the so-called *C-Företaget* (the C-enterprise), an offspring enterprise to *Coompanion*. The idea behind *C-Företaget* is that the company can act as an employer and take over administrative responsibilities, for example for invoicing, so that a person can try out his or her business idea without being caught up in many heavy technical and administrative problems at the beginning (interview 3).

62.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The *Coompanion Inkubator* is aimed at young unemployed people that are registered with AF. One can be up to 29 years old to participate. The aim is to break down the sometimes over-dramatised barriers and learn to have a playful approach towards entrepreneurship. At the *Coompanion Inkubator*, the staff seek to treat participants as equals and individuals with an idea, and as entrepreneurs (interview 3). Ideas and advice (and “entrepreneurial spirits”) are supposed to travel fast within the Incubator. One participant has the right contacts, another might have ideas, a third might have a special skill (interview 4). The logic is that when they come together, new and

positive things can happen, and the processes behind action (starting up a new business) are speeded up and simplified. The group dynamics are important here, both for inspiration and creativeness and as a reference. Trust is mentioned an important issue. When people start to trust one another they immediately begin to share their knowledge, contacts and ideas (interview 3). The group can also function as a “little boss” to new entrepreneurs; one can use the group to make promises and the group will start asking questions. Most people need a “boss” to impress, according to an interviewee. The group can eliminate personal resistance and help one to take small steps in the “right direction”, once one has that structure to answer to (interview 3).

According to one of the key promoters, the initial idea with the Incubator was to encourage young unemployed who had a “latent” business idea. However, when the project met its first users and the doors to the Incubator were opened in January 2012 the organisers were surprised at a few things. Firstly, they did not realise that the people attending the Incubator would be as young as they were. Many came directly from secondary school and were naturally not used to taking personal responsibility for their career. Another surprising thing was that only a few of the participants were entitled to unemployment insurance funds, which meant that the participants were in a much more difficult economic situation than expected. They had a lower level of benefits from AF (so-called activation support) and/or with additional social security benefits. This came to have an impact on the project’s budget as well, with an initial loss for the *Coompanion Inkubator* (interview 3).

62.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

At the time of the study, 39 participants or entrepreneurs were attending the Incubator and about 100 had been in it since the start in January. The Incubator at *Coompanion* is part of two networks; one is an official steering group with *Coompanion* representatives, ESF representatives and AF-representatives. This network, among other things, deals with issues around recruiting participants. The other network is composed of entrepreneurial new enterprises, such as *Nyföretagarcentrum* (New Business Centre), MINC, *Uppstart Malmö* and so on. This network serves prac-

tical and inspirational needs, they can come in and meet the participants at the *Coompanion Inkubator* and share their experience and knowledge of starting up a new business. It also serves inspirational needs on the level of the project management. *Uppstart Malmö*, which is a company offering micro-loans and credit, has also visited the participants at the *Coompanion Inkubator* to look for businesses to support. However, they mostly support businesses with prospects of employing many people.

One peculiar circumstance for the Incubator is that participants “drop in” to the project whenever they get the “thumbs up” from their officer on AF. This has led to a rolling schedule of courses, which was not planned for. In the beginning, 30 participants started at the same time but that became too school-like, according to an interview. “The group became like a class and it was quite frustrating because our role became a fostering one and we had to say things like ‘it is not OK to arrive late; you will not be able to keep a customer if you arrive late’” (interview 3). The Incubator has been described as a chance for people to “grow”. The Incubator cannot choose the participants, nor decide that they be engaged. What it can do is to encourage the right kind of “mind-set”. “We can say to someone that you have exactly the right kind of mind-set, we would like you to become more of a role model in this group. That inspires the person, which inspires the core group. The larger the core group, the more people want to participate, that’s how we work. It is energy giving energy” (interview 3).

62.4. Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

The ESF has a model for co-financing, which has caused problems in budget calculations for the *Coompanion Inkubator*. The model is supposed to be an incentive to get the project management to work harder to find more participants. The ESF does not want empty projects and venues and the system is based on more funds for more participants. However, this system grants less for participants who are not eligible for unemployment insurance funds and more for those who are. The larger participant group at the *Coompanion Inkubator* comprises young people who are not yet eligible for employment insurance funds, but only for activation support in combination with social security benefits, which is much less money.

This creates a problem within the system, according to an interview. The Incubator is forced to try to attract more people who are in the unemployment insurance system, who are mostly older and more experienced, and more likely to find a job by themselves. This side effect is described as quite “absurd”. “We are more dependent on the participants than they are on us. It could be that they are already in the process of heading out to start their own business but our feeling is that we would like them to stay longer so that we can get the funds” (interview 3).

Another condition that has made things difficult for the participants in the Incubator is that the *C-Företaget* is not compatible with the labour market programme *Ungdomsgarantin* (Youth Guarantee) (AF), through which young unemployed people can get certain benefits during the period of unemployment (if they are not entitled to unemployment insurance benefit). These benefits are called “activity support” and they are granted when you are activating yourself in order to eventually enter the labour market. However, to be eligible for “activity support” you must prove you are available full-time for the labour market, which means that you cannot be formally employed by the *C-företaget*, even though that “employment” is supposed to help you start up your new business. Participants risk losing their benefits by taking a step towards actually starting their own businesses. *Cooperation* would like to see their participants get some kind of exemption from this rule (interview 3).

During the projected time up until 2014, *Cooperation* Skåne will run the Incubator and try to come up with more permanent solutions for continuing the project, even after the ESF funding has ended. The key promoter says that this now is a good time for trial and error and finding the best solutions. “We are learning as we go” (interview 3).

SE
Malmö

Categories
Employment

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Yalla Trappan, Rosengård

63.1. Short description

Yalla Trappan is a labour-integrated social enterprise. The general aim of *Yalla Trappan* is to provide work for women who would otherwise have severe difficulties entering the labour market. *Yalla Trappan* is organised by integrating permanently employed workers with workers who are there on an internship, through the social services administration. *Yalla Trappan* is organised as a cooperative enterprise, which means that its workers are also members of the association. The *Yalla Trappan* association was founded and is based in Rosengård, Malmö, which is a so-called Million Homes Programme area. People living in Rosengård originate from 111 countries, and up to 50 different languages are spoken. The *Yalla Trappan* association was formed in April 2009 with inspiration and staff from the so-called *Trappan* projects that were running in Rosengård from 2006-2010, initiated and financed by the European Social Fund, the city of Malmö and other associations related to education and labour-market programmes – ABF (The Workers' Educational Association) and ABL (providing job-coaches) for example.

The *Trappan* projects focused on women's entrepreneurship, integration, empowerment, education and equality. These projects were clearly labour market-oriented and thus aimed at enhancing possibilities for women in Rosengård to enter the labour market. In May 2010, the *Trappan* projects were made permanent in the new *Yalla Trappan* association. According to the chairperson and founder, the women in the *Trappan* projects were considered as "un-hireable" by employers and the municipality seemed to share that view, which to her seemed like "a total waste of resources" (interview 5). *Yalla Trappan* wanted to make use of the successful initiatives that had started in the projects, and with commitment, participation and democratic routines they started the new social enterprise.

Yalla Trappan wants to provide the local community with a meeting and business centre, where they wish to combine social and educational activities with work and encouraging entrepreneurship. As part of the more commercial side of *Yalla Trappan* they run a coffee shop and a lunch restaurant, offering affordable lunches and catering services. They run a studio for design and craftsmanship, mostly concerned with sewing. They also offer cleaning and conference services. The users at *Yalla Trappan* are offered work and both theoretical and practical education (courses). *Yalla Trappan* also provides Swedish tuition, health care, and employment training programmes. As a meeting centre, *Yalla Trappan* strives to work with other associations. For example, they permanently cooperate with an association called *Tjejer i Förening* (Girls In Association), which tries to inspire young girls and women to organise or join already existing organisations in civil society, all based on the idea that participation enriches and empowers the individual.

Yalla Trappan is a membership-based association, and both men and women who accept the principles of *Yalla Trappan* can become members and thus have a vote at the annual association meeting. However, only women can become participants/workers within *Yalla Trappan*. Participants work at the café and lunch restaurant, in the cleaning service or in the hand-crafts studio. The cleaning and conference service of *Yalla Trappan* is mainly aimed at offices and shops. The cleaning services are an expanding part of the association, and the interviewed founder regards it as a area with great potential (interview 5). *Yalla Trappan* has received much attention, not only from the media but also from other stakeholders in the private market, like IKEA or small-scale clothes designers who wish to cooperate with *Yalla Trappan*. In 2 years *Yalla Trappan* has become an attractive trademark that stands for social values and that has become more and more important on the commercial market. The founder says that their growing popularity can be explained by the fact that “We are for real, we are plurality in practice” (interview 5).

63.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The target group for *Yalla Trappan* is unemployed, immigrant women with little or no education, who are experiencing severe difficulties entering the labour market, and who often have poor knowledge of Swedish. They are offered employment with a contractual salary or internship, education and Swedish tuition, a social arena and an empowering and democratic environment, where they are part of a creative atmosphere and make decisions concerning matters such as working schedules, lunch menus and new proposals from different customers (interview 5).

63.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Users enter *Yalla Trappan* in different ways. One can say that there are two types of user, not counting the members of the association or the people on the board or the customers or partners. One group of users at *Yalla Trappan* is permanently employed and another arrives on internships through the social services administration. The first group was recruited either from the early *Trappan* project or from the second group of users, i.e. the group on internship. At

the time of the study, there were 22 women working in total and 12 were permanently employed; the rest were on internships. The interviewed founder says that all women working on an internship basis at *Yalla Trappan* wish to be permanently employed, and she explains that they do not have the capacity to employ more people than they currently do. However, she continues, their first priority when the business is profitable is to employ the participants for longer working hours; the second priority is to employ more people; and the third is to invest in new equipment (interview 5). Most users work part-time at *Yalla Trappan*, which is also in line with the original idea of the *Trappan* projects. The word “trappan” means “steps” and the name is used to describe a progression where users are encouraged, step by step, to take more and more responsibility in the company depending on their own recovery or growing ability.

63.4. Impact on the governance of local welfare systems

Yalla Trappan represents an example of recent trends of development in Swedish society. The co-operative movement has a long tradition in Sweden, but this activity represents a new discourse and a new field for organising co-operatives. Social enterprises, as well as social entrepreneurship and social economy, are concepts that have been upcoming quite recently and are closely linked with notions of innovation. They have also gained attention on both local and central governmental levels as means to find new solutions to complex social problems. For example, the central government has decided on an action plan for social enterprises (N2010/1894/ENT).

Yalla Trappan has been receiving a lot of attention. The founder says that the positive attention sometimes masks the problems that *Yalla Trappan* is experiencing, for example, scarce economic resources. They do not get any extra benefits from the municipality (although they benefit from a tax-reform called *nystartsjobb* which lowers the employment tax when they hire a person who has been unemployed for a long time), even though they are showing positive results and are highly requested by the municipality for internships for women who otherwise would need social support (interview 5).

SE

Malmö

Conclusions

Deregulation within the field of social welfare, a political interest in alternative providers, and a high degree of self-governance in the Swedish welfare system would open opportunities for social innovation. The case study of the local policy context in Malmö indicates a favourable local context in relation to social innovation. It was stated in the WILCO WP4-report on Malmö (Segnestam Larsson 2013) that there seems to be a political consensus in the promotion of innovation. An agreement is described in the report, among various coalitions and political stakeholders, on the need for new solutions in local welfare. There is also a shared view of what social problems need to be addressed in local welfare as well as across the three sectors of child care, housing and employment. A conclusion is that the discourse on local welfare seems to include dimensions that promote social innovation. In this way there seems to be an “innovative soil” in Malmö (ibid).

At the same time, this report points at local elements that, arguably, prevent innovation. For example, there seems to be some disagreement among the different stakeholders and coalitions regarding the methods and instruments to be implemented. Some stakeholders are not positive about including alternative service providers within the field of welfare. The final conclusion of this report states: “social innovation should perhaps be regarded as an ideological proxy or a Trojan horse for a liberalisation of the welfare in Malmö” (ibid).

Common traits

The innovations that we have studied in Malmö occur in different ways, and on different scales, addressing social problems that are high on the political agenda: youth unemployment, segregation and lack of integration. The different projects address these local problems and try to find local solutions. In this way, they represent new ideas and ways of working in the local context. At the same time, these activities have developed in line with broader political trends and are embedded within the legal and administrative frames of the welfare system. This embeddedness serves as both an enabling and an obstructive feature.

The Malmö Incubator and *Yalla Trappan* contain elements that are in line with the activity policy and

“work line” in labour market policy, where social enterprises are highlighted as a possible way to go from welfare dependency to receiving a salary from work. Social enterprises are described by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) as aiming to integrate persons with a marginal position in relation to the labour market. Social enterprises are further defined with positive qualities such as involvement of employees, social cohesion and empowerment. They are also closely linked to possibilities for receiving EU funding through the structural funds, e.g. Equal. Both these projects are closely connected to the public administration of unemployment services as regards the target groups for the projects and the possibility for individual users to receive benefits while participating. The foundation of *Områdesprogrammet* can in turn be traced to ideas of neighbourhood revitalisation of run-down “segregated” areas suffering from socio-economic stagnation, which is implemented in different European cities.

Common features among the studied innovations are that they all take a kind of holistic approach, and they contain different elements such as employment, training, membership in social cooperatives or becoming entrepreneurs. Another common trait is the projects’ aims in investing in their users’ personal capabilities. A further commonality is that innovations are based on collaboration and partnerships. On the one hand, these are inter-sectorial partnerships between the city administration, Malmö University and stakeholders within the civil society; on the other hand, they are intra-sectorial collaborations – between different units within the public sector.

Both top-down and bottom-up

The studied innovations contain both top-down and bottom-up elements. They are initiated top-down by political or professional initiatives, and the city administration of Malmö is a key stakeholder in the initiation processes. The possibility of EU funding is an important enabling factor. At the same time, all three projects aim to initiate and support local initiatives, i.e. promoting bottom-up activities.

Områdesprogrammet in Holma-Kroksbäck reaches out to and supports local initiatives. In some cases, it can act as a support structure for new ideas, providing start-up education, material and contacts as in the

ongoing process with the Info Centre in Kroksbäck. In other cases, it co-produces these ideas. The Malmö Incubator is all about supporting and promoting the participants' entrepreneurial ideas. *Yalla Trappan* focuses on women's entrepreneurship, and workers in the project can become members. Through operating the project as a co-operative, it enables the users to have a degree of influence on the concrete activities.

Sustainability and the mismatch between public systems and innovations

Incorporating a project within the public administrative system can facilitate sustainability and counteract the risks of "project economy" - that good initiatives and projects end when the funding period of a project is over. Possible knowledge and competence gained in a project risk being lost when former staff members move to other tasks or projects. On the other hand, the public administrative system can counteract and put obstacles in the way of innovation and entrepreneurship. The rules and regulations for different types of employment benefits are not adjusted to self-employment and social enterprises. This is described as an obstacle in the Malmö Incubator.

As mentioned above, the studied projects/innovations are investing in their users' personal capabilities, with the goal of helping them become employable and improving their living situation. In the case of *Områdesprogrammet*, the aim is to improve the living conditions of people living in the neighbourhood. At the same time, the innovations consist of small-scale projects, and it is therefore hard to draw conclusions on their impact on local government and local development.

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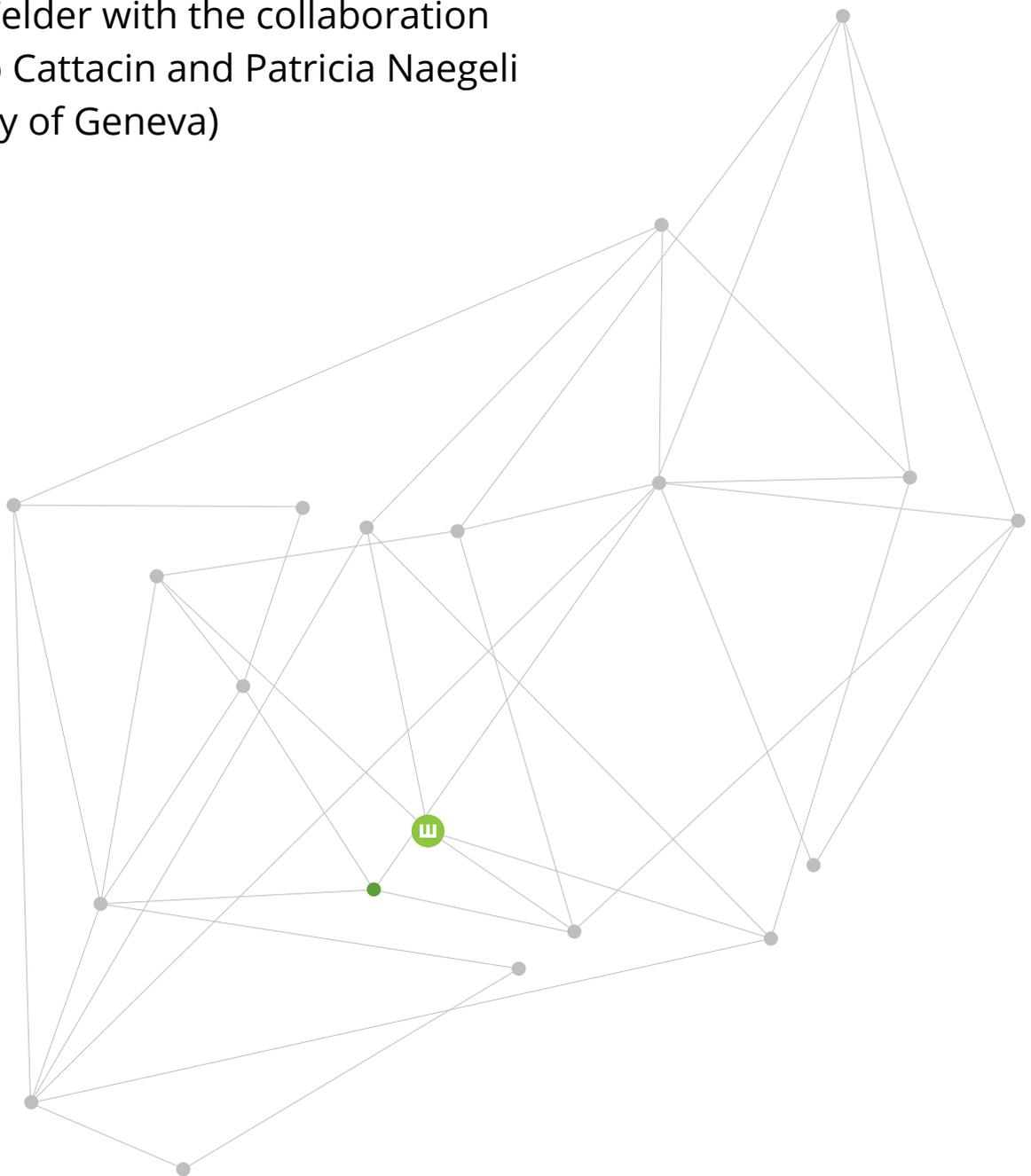
Interviews:

- > Interview 1: Head of and project coordinator of *Områdesprogrammet* Holma-Kroksbäck
- > Interview 2: Librarian and employed at Holma Infocenter, *Områdesprogrammet*
- > Interview 3: Employed at The Coompanion Inkubatorn (key promoter)
- > Interview 4: Experienced user at the Coompanion Inkubatorn
- > Interview 5: Founder and chairperson of *Yalla Trappan*
- > Interview 6: Spokesperson for *Yalla Trappan*
- > Interview 7: Experienced user, *Yalla Trappan*

CH Switzerland

Bern

Maxime Felder with the collaboration
of Sandro Cattacin and Patricia Naegeli
(University of Geneva)



CH Bern

Authors

Maxime Felder with the collaboration of Sandro Cattacin and Patricia Naegeli (University of Geneva)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Activation policies
Case management
Child care
Empowerment
Lone mothers
Participation
Preschool education
Social investment
Unemployment
Workfare
Young mothers

Bern is trying to identify itself as a social and innovative city. Although it is the capital, Bern is only the fourth largest city in Switzerland. The head trio is Zurich, often identified as the financial capital, Geneva known for its banks and its numerous international organisation, and Basel, with its dynamic pharmaceutical industry. The three of them have an international airport and close links with neighbouring countries.

In a famous quote of 1932, the American judge, Brandeis, enthusiastically stated: "It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country."¹ Being in charge of welfare, Switzerland's 26 cantons and 2,495 communes enjoy considerable latitude in experimenting new forms of welfare policies. Cattacin (1996) showed how this room for manoeuvre allowed some communes or cantons to implement very innovative social policies, which would have had no chance on the national level. These innovations – in the field of addiction for example – were sometimes spread throughout the country, not by being scaled up and taken over by the federal government, but through a coordination between territorial units.

If we consider social rights as an essential part of citizenship, we could argue that urban welfare contributes to build urban citizenship. Marshall's analysis addressed the national level, but it could apply to a sub-national level. A local welfare system could contribute to a feeling of belonging to the urban community, and hereby influence the perceived identity of the city. In this way, innovative policies are a feature of an innovative city. As well as tolerance toward the alternative cultural centre "Reithalle", or the realisation of architectural flagship projects, innovative social policies contribute to the fulfilment of an image of the city as it is thought of by the local elites. As a goal and as a slogan, some recent administrative documents have used this headline: "Bern is a growing city, a creative city, a ecologic city, a world open city, a social city".

The three innovations to be presented in this document are flagship projects of the governing (left) coalition. All three occasioned extensive communication. Scientific documents preceded and accompanied the projects. Resources and information are available on paper and on the internet, addressing a large public. Evaluations are also made public. This effort of communication and transparency is meant to increase the project's efficiency as well as its acceptance and to prevent political criticism. The first project is a compensatory preschool education programme. The second is a concept of guidelines and recommendations regarding integration of migrant populations. The third and most recent is a professional integration project addressing unemployed young mothers facing economic difficulties.

¹ Brandeis, J., "New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann", United States Supreme Court, 1932.

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Primano

64.1. Short description

Primano is a pre-school education programme targeting disadvantaged children and their families in selected districts. It started in 2007 with a home-visit programme. Bern was the first commune to implement a Dutch programme named *Opstapje*. The idea of a pre-school programme arose as school nurses noticed that some children had difficulties in the very first year of school. In addition, these children showed speech difficulties, and social interaction and psychomotor problems that could be linked with the family structure and social environment. The Director of the Health, Education and Welfare² Department was encouraging multidisciplinary work and tasked the health unit to implement a home-visit programme. The result is a pilot project in the stream of social investment, which includes, besides home visits, educations modules for child-care facilities, playgroups, and a coordination structure inside the districts. The programme aims to build a chain of support that accompanies children until kindergarten. The following steps constitute the chain.



² Bern has the particularity to gather in the same department health, education and welfare.

CH Bern

Categories

Child and family care

Primano was initially a 5-year pilot project (2007-12). An evaluation has been conducted and the project has now been adapted and extended as a regular offer by the city. The pilot project has been financed by private foundations. As a regular offer, the programme will be financed by the city from 2013. We will now detail the three elements of *primano*: home visits, educative modules and playgroups, and the district coordination office. Our description is mostly based on interviews and on documents such as the “pre-school education concept *primano* – regular offer from 2013”³.

64.2. Internal organisation and modes of working

Part 1: Home visits.

*Schrittweise*⁴ is the result of the implementation in Bern of the Dutch programme *Opstapje*. The association *a:primo* bought a licence from the Netherlands Youth Institute. The licence includes the right to implement the concept as well as working papers and user instructions. *a:primo* has a contract with the city of Bern and is in charge of the coordination, the training of personal and the production of information and play material. Professionals are involved as coordinators and non-professionals are hired for home visits. Workers in charge of home visits are from the neighbourhood and have no schooling in pedagogy. Instead, these persons should be experienced mothers themselves.

Two periods constitute the 18-month home-visit programme. During 9 months, the family receives 30 visits of 30 minutes and participates in ten 2-hour group meetings. During the next 9 months, ten visits of 30 minutes each and fifteen group-meetings are scheduled. During home visits, parents are introduced to educative play and activities for children. Play material is brought by the visitor. In addition to the visits, group meetings aim to discuss in more depth issues of education and development, as well as answering parents’ questions. After 18 months, as a continuation of the support, children should join a playgroup or a crèche, and even a “mother and child” German class, if necessary. The pilot phase addressed

40 families; this number has doubled since 2013. After Bern, other cities implemented the programme: Winterthur, Basel, St Gallen, Solothurn, Grenchen, etc. In the canton of Bern, other communes followed the capital. One of them (Ostermundigen) even added the programme to the ordinary budget.

Part 2: educative modules and playgroups.

Playgroups are seen as a complement to child care. They are meant to offer quality educative work. Quality should be achieved through sufficiently trained group managers and through a minimal participation of two half-days (2.5 hours) per week. Participation is not free but means-tested subventions are supposed to make it accessible to everyone. The means test is based on the subventions parents receive from the canton for health care. According to the amount of the subventions decided by the canton – which is based on the fiscal declaration – parents pay between 0.80 euros and 6.50 euros per hour (with no subventions). Parents receive subventions for two half-days (2×2.5h). Only quality-tested playgroups can claim for subventions. They are organised in an association that holds an up-to-date list and offers information to inform parents in search of a place. The *primano* district coordination office links playgroups to the other existing pre-school education offers. It also helps parents during admission and subventions procedures. Playgroups also target parents interested in educative coaching.

Part 3: District coordination.

A coordination point is located in every participating district. Its role is to coordinate the work of all stakeholders, to provide information and to help with admission procedures. The programme takes place in the neighbourhood of targeted families, and if possible, in the same place as other activities, such as child-care facilities, parental counselling or in a neighbourhood house. The idea is to gain visibility and to build trust with the potential users.

One problem is access to target groups. Home-visiting personnel experienced some mistrust toward the State. Hiring non-professional people, eventually living in the same neighbourhood and speaking the same mother tongue does not completely reduce the mistrust. Another issue is related to residence status. Some families move frequently, others have no per-

³ http://www.primano.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/BSS_GSD_Konzept_primano_ab2013_web.pdf

⁴ The name of the programme, *Schrittweise*, means “gradually” or “step by step”.



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manent residence authorisation and will one day be asked or forced to leave Switzerland. This uncertainty does not favour participation in such programmes.

The programme is justified by two types of arguments. The first emphasises two values: equality of opportunities and distributive justice. Children do not have the same conditions and opportunities at the start of their life. It becomes visible and public as soon as they enter school. The State has the role of reducing these differences and ensuring a good start. It seems to be a well-accepted role of the State: it is legitimate to ensure equality of opportunities (but not equality of outcomes). The second argument is related to a social investment perspective and is two-sided. On the one hand, social investment aims to reduce inequalities and break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Equality of opportunities is a goal, but one expects some outcomes in terms of reduction of inequalities. Social investment thus supports social cohesion.

On the other hand, some arguments insist on the efficiency of the method (rather than on its fairness). It is efficient in achieving its goals (reducing inequalities), but also financially, in the global budget. As social problems partly redound to the commune, the latter has an interest in preventing them from happening. *Primano* is thus presented as “A paying investment for the future”⁵. Efficiency arguments are based on reports of scientific studies. An intermediate evaluation run by the Psychology Department of the University of Bern argues that children do produce better school performance when they have attended pre-school education. Documents and interviews recount studies showing that, depending on the length of the period

5 “Frühförderungskonzept Primano - Regelangebot Ab 2013.” Stadt Bern, July 2012.

studied, investments in pre-school education are multiplied by 2.5 to 16⁶ for the most optimistic previsions.

64.3. Target groups

In the regular offer of 2013, the number of target areas is extended compared to the pilot project. Target areas are districts with high unemployment and social-assistance rates, with a median income lower than average, and with a high proportion of migrants. Target groups are usually addressed as “disadvantaged families”. *Primano* addresses children and parents in situations of poverty or close to the limit. Other factors are situations of unemployment or of a precarious job (working poor), parents with little formal education, lone-parent families, difficult migration situations (unstable resident status), trauma from the country of origin, difficulties with the local language, little knowledge about offers addressing children and families. House visits also occur in families with little contact with other families, little support from friends and family and little access to information. The need strengthens if these families live in small apartments and in children-unfriendly areas (with no playgrounds, lots of traffic). Poverty here is considered as a multidimensional concept.

64.4. Conclusion

Two innovative aspects of the project should be highlighted. The first is the strong emphasis on accessibility. “No access, no effect” says the creators of *primano*. Non-take-up of public services is an issue for the contemporary welfare state (Hernanz et al. 2004). Recommendations to prevent non-take-up often state the importance of evaluation of the needs and of the policies efficiency. Bern pre-school education programme arose from a need observed by school nurses. Regular evaluations of the needs and of the efficiency of the programme are led by independent stakeholders. However, being close to the needs and being efficient is not enough to prevent non-take-up. Problems of lack of information, administrative complexity, mistrust, shame, and financial obstacles have to be tackled. Statistics of the school nursery would show that 40 per cent of families with a difficult socio-economic situation do not have or do not find information on pre-school offers in Bern. Issues of

6 Fritschi, T. & Oesch T., Volkswirtschaftlicher Nutzen Von Frühkindlicher Bildung in Deutschland, Büro Bass, 2008.

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trust are pointed out, particularly regarding migrant families. *Primano* developers count on coordination. Coordination centres are distributed in the targeted districts and, if possible, are combined with other offers from places already visited by the target groups. These centres should inform, orientate, and build with the population a relationship based on trust. Proximity is also reinforced by hiring mothers with no formal training for home visits. Because it recognises individual differences in the ability to convert the same resources into valuable activities, this concern over accessibility is close to Sen's capabilities approach. This is thus an innovative aspect of *primano*.

The second aspect is related to the child-centredness of *primano* as a policy. Switzerland is rather conservative on children-oriented policies. Recent votes on child care and on making school compulsory for 4-year-olds showed that a considerable part of the population consider such measures an attempt to bring children under the control of the state. Even if this stance is less likely to appear in big cities, pre-school education is somehow innovative in Switzerland. Precautions have been taken; participation is voluntary and paying (in some cases the contribution is symbolic) and *primano* is run in the field not by "state agents" but by "mothers from the neighbourhood". The project is a kind of public-private partnership as it has been developed by the licence holder, the private association *a:primo*. *Primano* is a path-breaking measure in a welfare system where the State should not intervene in the private sphere. It also recognises that children are both a private and a public responsibility. This recognition can be linked to social investment perspectives as children are suddenly seen as potential targets of social policies.

However, outside of the Swiss context, pre-school education programmes have existed for a long time in countries all across the world. One of the first was launched in 1964 in the USA under the name "Head start". This federal programme was part of a "war on poverty" (Currie and Thomas 1993). A summer school was meant to prepare children of low-income families to start kindergarten. In 1969, Israel implemented a programme called the Home Instruction Programme for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) (Baker et al. 1999). This project was then exported to the USA and Australia – among other countries – where it is now widely spread. In the Netherlands, a pre-school education programme named *Opstapje* was born in

the 1990s and was exported to Germany in the early 2000s. In 1999, Tony Blair's New Labour launched a compensatory education programme under the name "SureStart". This programme has been exported in other European countries, such as Germany. Finally, a well-known example is the successful programme "Triple P" for Positive Parenting Programme. It was developed in Australia 30 years ago (Sanders 2008) and now exists in twenty-five countries, among which Switzerland is one. Why did compensatory education take so long to be developed in Switzerland? One reason could be that the need was not felt. Poverty is not (and has never been since the Glorious Thirties) considered as a central issue in Switzerland. NGOs, such as Caritas, regularly fight to publicise the fact that poverty does exist in Switzerland. Beside that, public education is a Swiss pride and is considered as egalitarian, as there are no "good" schools and no "bad" schools. A second reason is that children of pre-school age and the family, in general, are largely considered a private responsibility⁷. Switzerland's largest political party regularly condemns the attempts of the left to bring children under State control and their egalitarian tendencies⁸.

7 A example, paid maternity leave only existed from 2004, 60 years after it was planned in an constitutional article. Every project had been rejected in popular vote (in 1974, 1984, 1987 and 1999).

8 "Enfants étatisés? Non à l'article sur la famille", UDC Suisse, 2013.

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Integration guidelines

65.1. Short description

In the second half of the 1990s, Swiss cities started taking charge of the challenges of migrant integration. Until then, right populist parties were alone on this ground. Schönenberger and D'Amato (2009) attribute this change first to the growing heterogenisation and fragmentation of the social and urban structure, and to the arrival of new lifestyles (of nationals as well as of migrants). The specific urban context allowed the cities to take over this theme, which was ignored by the Confederation and the Cantons. Debates rose in the cities. One of the problems was the implementation of the ageing Foreigners Law (of 1931). It had become necessary to adapt the policies to the context and to more actual concerns. However, the authorities of the different levels barely cooperated, as they had different understandings of the procedures.

Establishing guidelines was thought of as a way to define specific needs. In 1999, after years of discussion, Bern was one of the first Swiss cities to establish guidelines for the integration of migrants. It resulted in a document that was heavily publicised. It is not a law, but recommendations were addressed to everyone, particularly to institutional stakeholders. It is mandatory for public stakeholders – as a work instruction – but has the status of a recommendation regarding private stakeholders. The document is also meant to inform the population about the position and aims of the city council regarding integration. The project is coordinated by a competence centre for integration.

65.2. Internal organisation and modes of working

The city council first demanded a study about facts and potential issues linked to the integration of migrants. The report of the University of Bern highlighted the need for a coordinated and needs-related integration policy. A working group dedicated to the redaction of the guidelines gathered representatives of the foreigners' police of Bern, of diverse departments such as welfare, education, equality between men and women, of the Federal Foreigners' Commission, together with an anthropologist. Some non-governmental organisations were represented, among other Caritas (charity), the information point for foreigners and the Forum for migrants. It is noteworthy that representatives of migrant populations among others were not invited.

The guidelines set milestones. They include ten principles that should constitute a new understanding of integration in political discourses. It should "open the way" to the implementation of lasting integration measures⁹. As an

⁹ Claudia Omar-Amberg, preface to "Leitbild zur Integrationspolitik der Stadt Bern", Stadt Bern, 1999.

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Related to all policy fields

introduction, the executive councillor of the time¹⁰ underlined the importance of the contributions made by migrants to Switzerland. Following her, although some were among the most successful people of the country, a disproportionately high number have low paying jobs or are unemployed. This fact would be the sign of an economic, social and cultural disintegration that threatened Bern's prosperity. Schönenberger and D'Amato (2009) stated that although there has never been an active integration policy in Switzerland, the "declining" economic situation intensified the challenges faced by migrants.

The situation kept changing in the 10 years following the publication of the first guidelines. A new foreigners' law was voted in 2006 in a climate of heavy debates on the migrant population. The right Populist Party SVP presented several xenophobic popular initiatives. In the same years, bilateral agreements were signed with the EU. The Bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) allows European workers to freely choose their country of employment. Furthermore, with a decade of experience with the first guidelines, an adaptation of the guidelines was required: they had to be modernised.

In 2009, the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population study was asked by the Competence Centre for Integration to write a report on the question¹¹. It included an overview about the actual debates and challenges, possible perspectives and propositions. In addition, new hearings were organised, this time with representatives of the migrant population. As a civil servant explained, "We invited a lot of people for a day of discussion. They could make proposals, ask questions. It would have been unimaginable to come with these guidelines and say 'here you have got guidelines you have to implement.'¹² The new document was approved in 2010¹³.

The document first details the five guidelines. The sentences below are detailed in three or four sub-points.

- > The city of Bern recognises diversity and difference as a strength of our society.

10 The social-democrat Claudia Omar-Amberg, in charge of the Department of education, health and welfare.

11 Schönenberger, Silvia, and Gianni D'Amato. *Das Integrationsleitbild Der Stadt Bern Neu Überdacht*. Forum suisse pour l'étude des migrations et de la population, 2009.

12 Interview 19 with a Public administrator in the field of integration.

13 "Leitbild Zur Integrationspolitik Der Stadt Bern 2010." 2010. Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern.

- > The city of Bern supports the potential of migrants.
- > The city of Bern commits itself in the fight against discrimination.
- > The city of Bern supports equality of opportunities and participation of migrants.

More specifically, the aims are detailed in several fields of action such as training and education, labour market, hobbies, culture and sport, health, civic and social participation, information and living area. Finally, the list documented the involved stakeholders and their specific role in the implementation of the guidelines. However, the most important novelty of 2010 is list of tangible measures.

A catalogue of 37 measures planned for 2011 and 2012 should transpose the ideas into reality. The Competence Centre does not provide the measures itself, but instead coordinates and informs. The city finances them in the global city budget. Some measures address the migrant population (financial support for German courses for example), while others address workers in contact with migrants (trainings in diversity management for example).

65.3. Target groups

The guidelines have many goals and so they have many different users. Three main roles and their respective tasks and users were identified. First, the guidelines have an instructional role. For the users – administration offices, as well as for social-partners, associations (sport, for example), institutions of community work or religious communities – the guidelines should influence everyday work. Integration is seen as a challenge concerning practically every stakeholder and institution.

Secondly, the guidelines have a very practice oriented role as they serve as a basis for tangible measures. The idea is that action needs a consensus on the aims and on the definition of concepts. The document says explicitly what is often implicit. It states in black and white that the city of Bern wants to promote integration, and specify what exactly is meant with integration, why it is important, and who is responsible for it. As accomplishing the aims needs the coordinated work of many stakeholders, clarifying all these aspects is crucial.

The third role is less explicit and is political and strategic. As a civil servant said, "The guidelines were a political

project. The idea was to show that they handled it [integration]¹⁴. The guidelines are used as a political tool, to legitimate measures of integration. Integration is a hot topic for debate. As Vogel stated in another Swiss city, establishing guidelines on this topic puts an end to endless discussions in the city council (Vogel 2006). Thus, it can be seen as a way of imposing a political programme. As everybody agreed on the principle of promoting integration, the left managed to establish a model that bound the principle to the measures, in order to make them harder to contest.

65.4. Conclusion: collectively defining integration

Even if concepts vary on how to balance rights and duties or how to share responsibilities between migrants and settled citizens¹⁵, all political forces agree on a concept of integration as a reciprocal duty, based on the principle of “encouraging and demanding”¹⁶. Migrants are expected to exercise their own responsibility and provide an active contribution to their integration, but also the settled population has to be open and tolerant, and offer a support to the integration process¹⁷.

A condition of appearance and success of such a project on a such controversial theme is a certain political consensus. “The guidelines have to be endorsed by parliament. Some small points were disputed, but in general, everybody is in favour of integration. There is neither discussion on the need to intervene, nor on the definition of integration. It is now clear that we do not speak of assimilation. Integration can only be reciprocal.”¹⁸

The consensus is based on a rather liberal conception of integration, seen as a reciprocal and never-ending process. However, on the national level, a much more conservative idea of integration prevails. The recent tightening of the conditions required to obtain Swiss citizenship is a clear example. Naturalisation is the end point of the integration process, which requires, for many politicians, assimilation. A condition for success

14 Interview 18 with a civil servant in the field of integration.

15 “Vernehmlassung Zum Gesetz Über Die Integration Der Ausländischen Bevölkerung.” Schweizerische Volkspartei Kanton Bern, 7 September 2010.

16 The German expression is “Fördern und fordern”.

17 “Leitbild Zur Integrationspolitik Der Stadt Bern 2010.” Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, 7 May 2010.

18 Interview 18 with a civil servant in the field of integration.

of such guidelines is thus the low level of application. Such a consensus can hardly exist at a higher level than the one of the city.

The concept of integration and the advancement of it are also innovative. Similar to social cohesion, integration cannot only rely on the State and its administrative agencies. In addition, it cannot be reached through big projects or campaigns, or on quotas and compulsory measures heading toward civil society. Inclusion, equality of opportunities and non-discrimination (also) takes place everywhere and every day. Like a civil servant explained, “People often think that there is no will to implement these guidelines. What we see is a lot of motivation and perhaps a lack of know-how. People expect big projects. But integration is also a matter of small things we do not necessarily see.”¹⁹

The way of discussing, negotiating and finally writing down guidelines is an innovative way of building social policies. It supports participation and acceptance through consultation and involvement of stakeholders. It acknowledges the limits of enforceable rules in a field such as integration. Definitions and responsibilities first have to be collectively defined and endorsed. The coordinating and informing role of the Competence Centre illustrates the innovative (in this context) role of the State as an encouraging and enabling stakeholder. However, here lies the limit of this way of governing. The city can somehow enforce its guidelines in its own administration and institutions. However, there is no legal basis to enforce them in associations and private companies. Even if there is no need to enforce it (it is not the idea), the implementation of the guidelines is highly dependent on the cooperation of third parties.

Another limit is related to the competences attributed to the Confederation. As an example, a journalist explains that if a migrant comes with an academic degree that is not recognised by Swiss authorities, the city has no leeway to offer him better job opportunities. The same problem weighs upon the naturalisation process and the requirements. If Bern – its government and its population – predominantly think that naturalisation can be a tool to support integration, the city has no authority to reduce the requirements of the procedure; those are defined by the Confederation and at a national level. Naturalisation is mostly seen as the reward for “completed” integration.

19 Ibid.

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Professional integration and education for young mothers

66.1. Short description

The project for young mothers is a pilot project aiming to improve the employability of women between 16 and 25 years with young children, no professional training and dependent on social assistance. Although it is a typical case of a management programme aiming to motivate, this project has some innovative features. These are first linked to a new – with respect to the context – social investment perspective. Second, innovation is evident in the organisation and the implementation of the programme. Let us look first at the context in which this project appeared.

66.2. Internal organisation and modes of working

In 2001, the city council, with its left majority, decided that unemployment should be tackled by the city (fight against unemployment is primarily a cantonal responsibility). In 2004, a concept was implemented in collaboration with an association named “Jobs instead of assistance” (Arbeit statt Fürsorge). As a result, the Competence Centre for Labour (Kompetenzzentrum Arbeit) was created, which started its activities in 2005. The Competence Centre provides professional and social integration. One of its main focuses is the struggle against youth unemployment. It collaborates with the canton and encourages inter-institutional collaboration²⁰; collaboration is particularly close with the social services.

Over the last few years, a growing proportion of young beneficiaries that become mothers between the age of 16 and 25 years was noted. They identified motherhood (particularly successive motherhoods) as a risk as some of the participants never completed any professional training. These women are seen as isolated from the labour market by their parental duties, resulting in a lifetime dependency on social assistance. The Competence Centre for Labour consequently developed a pilot project addressing this particular group.

Bern’s basic strategy against unemployment consists of four points. The first is to provide low threshold offers. The underlying idea is that people differ greatly in their capabilities, in other words their ability to convert opportunities into positive outcomes. Education institutions and the labour market would be too demanding for some people

²⁰ Inter-institutional collaboration is a concept promoted by the Confederation to coordinate the work of institutions (sometimes in different fields or different territorial level). www.iiz.ch

who can neither complete professional training nor step into the working world. Welfare programmes against unemployment should note the capabilities and improve accessibility to education and jobs. This perspective is based on an individual and structural explanation of unemployment. The labour market is very demanding, and some people, no matter how they try, cannot meet these expectations.

A second point is the principle of “supporting and demanding” (*fordern und fördern*). It is close to Giddens and New Labour’s “no rights without responsibilities” (Giddens 1998). Support depends on cooperation. The collaboration with social services establishes a system of carrot and stick. Non-cooperating beneficiaries receive deductions of their allowances. Another example is the implementation of “test jobs”. If civil servants have doubts regarding the motivation of social assistance beneficiaries to get a job, the latter are hired as road-mender, for example, where their “real” motivation to work can be tested. If they do not come to work or do not cooperate, allowances can be cut. Those are typical features of activation policies of an “enabling state” (Gilbert and Gilbert 1989) that requires cooperating citizens.

The third point is the orientation toward empowerment and employability. The aim of the Competence Centre is to improve people’s capacities and employability, including skills and knowledge, but also attitudes and behaviours. Some programmes focus on getting people (or maintaining them) used to the working world. The part-wage jobs and the “social firms” are examples.

The fourth and last point is multidisciplinary work and partnerships. Inter-institutional collaboration should bring together efforts of the different public stakeholders in welfare, amongst others, the social insurances and social services. It should also define the responsibilities and coordinate actions of cantonal and communal stakeholders. Furthermore, public-private partnerships (PPP) are encouraged. Networking is seen as essential as there is a consensus over the fact that the State alone cannot tackle unemployment.

These guidelines in the fight against unemployment are part of a whole workfare programme. It is a central point of Bern welfare strategy as a job is seen – in the discourses and the documents – as the best way to ensure social integration and avoid dependency on social assistance. Forcing beneficiaries to work is seen at the same time as a tool to promote professional –

and consequently social – integration and as a tool to fight against welfare fraud (Cattacin *et al.* 2002). It also sorts the willing from the unwilling (or undeserving) welfare beneficiaries.

This workfare approach is mixed with a social investment perspective: “measures are not free, but the money is well spent. The city of Bern invests for the future, in order to avoid more ‘fixing’ costs”²¹, says the director of the welfare, education and health department. As we will see, the investment component is the main justification brought to convince of the project necessity and the legitimacy. It is neither justified by the extent of the need, nor because it is a public problem²², but because it is economically efficient. Therefore, the project is cheap and should, at the same time, enable savings.

66.3. Target group

The Competence Centre for Labour has three target groups: (1) people dealing with lack of training, (2) unemployed people and (3) people facing long-term unemployment. The project for young mothers takes place in the first field. The cause of unemployment is here supposedly the lack of training and the abandonment of any professional project in order to concentrate (willingly or by necessity) on parental duties.

The project addresses mothers between 16 and 25 years old, who meet the social assistance criteria and with no professional training. Following social services, around seventy people actually (in March 2013) meet these criteria in Bern. For now, ten women are involved in the programme²³. They are volunteers and should be involved for the long-term until they reach their aim. Objectives are set considering their double role, mother and worker. Their personal situation must allow them to dedicate themselves to a professional activity. Even if it is no criterion, participants often are lone mothers (nine out ten²⁴). Thus, the first task will often be to find day-care for their children.

21 “Diese Massnahmen sind nicht gratis zu haben. Das notwendige Geld ist aber gut angelegt. Die Stadt Bern investiert damit in die Zukunft und vermeidet gesellschaftliche „Reparaturkosten“. Mittel- und langfristige führen diese Investitionen zu Minderausgaben”. Edith Olibet, “Strategien und Massnahmen. Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Integration in der Stadt Bern 2010-2013”, Stadt Bern, 2010.

22 Juvenile delinquency, for example, is a public problem in the sense that people (and the media) worry about it (and often overstate its extent).

23 Hearing “Projekt Junge Mütter”, Bern, 7 March 2013.

24 Ibid.

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In a case management approach, the project provides tailored programmes seeking to improve participants' capabilities and employability. The outcome should be either a job or training. The programme is flexible in terms of duration. Some attend a full-time programme, others just come for one day per week. It mostly depends on the arrangement regarding child care. As it is very individual, women can start at any time of the year. The programme includes education, coaching and work modules. Coordination is central. Participants have the possibility to develop their work experience and professional perspectives, as well as defining their role as a mother. The aim is to show that there is an alternative to potential isolation – or at least distancing from the labour market – caused by motherhood.

The programme mainly consists of a coordinator in charge of defining the needs of the participants and of coordinating the different parts of the defined programme in several external institutions. Some offers are provided by the Competence Centre, but others are outsourced. Offers can be divided in three fields. The first is education. A teacher provides individual support to fill the gap in school knowledge (in German or mathematics, depending on the needs). The second is coaching. Individual advice is provided, as well as parental advice (on how to raise children and to manage the everyday life with children, or health issues), and advice on job applications (how to write a résumé, how to manage a job interview). The third field is related to work. Participants are taught the reality of the labour market, for example, "Punctuality is one of the simple but essential skills we teach here," a civil servant stated. Participants can take part in workshops (of the Motivation Semester²⁵) or internships (in the regular labour market). A task of the coordinator of the project is to develop a network of companies that could potentially hire participants.

25 Motivation Semester (SeMo) is a programme for unemployed teenagers and young adults with no completed professional training. <http://www.ch-semo.ch>

66.4. Conclusion

The first innovative aspect is the social investment perspective added to a workfare approach. The matter is not whether or not social assistance must be earned, it is not about moralising and disciplining unemployed people. The project is about saving money. Similar to *Primano*, the project for young mothers aims to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Mothers of participants often are, or were, dependent on social assistance themselves²⁶. There is a high risk that these young mothers spend their entire lives receiving allowances. Furthermore, it would be quite likely that their children would follow this path.

In presentations and assessments about the project, the most prominent argument is a costs-benefits analysis. The evaluation led after the pilot-phase use of a tool named Social Return On Investment (SROI²⁷) to estimate the potential financial benefits of the project²⁸. The assessments consists of two levels: profitability (or cost-effectiveness, *Rentabilität* in German) and efficiency (*Wirkung*). This investment perspective based on a cost-benefits analysis leads to a broad consensus between the two leading coalitions (the more social-democratic one and the more liberal one).

The second innovative aspect resides in the concept of the project. It is a very flexible structure. The pilot-phase lasted for 18 months at a cost of 170,000 euros. The project uses existing infrastructures only (infrastructures of the Competence Centre, of the Motivation Semester, of the Youth Department, the parental advising, etc.). According to interviewed civil servants, a flexible structure and low costs are conditions for success for such pilot projects. Of course, not having its own premises and employees requires a high degree of cooperation from all involved partners. Yet, as it has been pointed out, obstacles to cooperation in a welfare system are numerous (Demailly and Verdière 1999). Conflict regarding power, territories, budget, recognition and expertise are likely to restrain cooperation. In our case, all stakeholders have to understand and support the project, as well as see

26 Hearing "Projekt Junge Mütter", Bern, 7 March 2013.

27 Social Return on Investment is an analytic tool created for measuring and accounting a broad concept of value. It estimates social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. See (Scholten 2006).

28 "Evaluationsbericht zum Angebot für Sozialhilfe beziehende, ausbildungslöse junge Mütter", Hochschule Luzern Soziale Arbeit, January 2013.



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their own interest in participating. Regular hearings were organised with partners and stakeholders, from the conception phase to the evaluation phase.

However, success not only depends on partners, but also on the city council, which has to endorse the concept and the strategy against unemployment. Scientific evaluation was often mentioned in interviews as a key element of acceptance in the political field. The risk and efficacy of the measure have to be well documented. For example, the presentation document states that having basic training reduces the risk of being unemployed by a factor of three and the risk of being poor by a factor of 2.5 (based on Strahm 2010). The assessment report undertaken by an academic institution provides “evidence” of efficacy. It highlights the effects of the measure on the participants as well as the effects on the global welfare budget. The estimated return on investment is certainly of primary concern for many politicians.

A last factor for the appearance and the success of such a project is an existing, similar project elsewhere. To sum up, it is good if it is innovative, but it is reassuring if it is not the first experience of this kind. Programmes for young unemployed mothers exist in Zürich and Luzern. Bern had the opportunity to learn from their experiences. It also helps to convince of the merits of the project. If it exists and works in Zürich, why not try it in Bern? In a hearing where assessments of the pilot-phase were presented, representatives of the cities of Zürich and Luzern were

present, as well as other city representatives interested in implementing a similar project. If the “federal states as laboratories” idea existed, it is through this method sharing of ideas and information. Over the coming years, the project could appear in other cities, but it could also be scaled up at a regional level in Bern. A discussion is scheduled.

Some limitations of this innovation can be highlighted. First, the model of the working lone mother advocated as the only way out of poverty by the unemployment strategy can be critically addressed. Even with full-time child care, working full-time turns out to be impossible for the mother, for example if the work place is distant from home. Furthermore, participants’ chances to get a skilled and well paid job are thin. This means that these lone mothers, even following the Competence Centre programme, are condemned to become and probably stay working poor. Indeed, statistics show that lone parent families are highly exposed to a risk of poverty²⁹. In addition, with a high activity rate, the mother and her child spent less time together. This contradicts recommendations of educational programmes such as *primano*.

Another critical view could highlight that the changing role of women in society corresponds mainly to aspirations of women from higher social layers (Esping-Andersen 2009). The working mother as a model of emancipation and equality of men and

29 “Les familles en Suisse: pauvreté et aide sociale”, Office fédéral de la statistique, Neuchâtel, 2013.

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women probably does not match the situation of every participant. For ethical and economical (demographic) reasons, the State should not spread (even unintentionally) the idea that having children only is for those who can afford it. A preoccupying fact has been mentioned by a manager of the programme: none of the participants had more children after the start of the programme³⁰.

Conclusions

To conclude, we will highlight some characteristics of the selected innovations. Then we will review some conditions and challenges for the appearance and success of innovations in Bern.

Characteristics of innovations in Bern:

For Chambon and his team, the State can have three roles regarding innovation. It can be a barrier to social innovation or be a facilitator for public debate, or play a regulatory role (Chambon *et al.* 1982). The case of Bern shows a fourth option: the State can create innovative ideas. Social innovation is often considered as a product of the third sector, but our case studies testify that the State itself can produce social innovations. What are the conditions for such a situation to arise? First, the selected innovations arose from administrative agencies enjoying both autonomy and support from the hierarchy (the Department of Welfare). Second, these agencies demonstrated an interest in cooperating with other stakeholders. The result is a wide network composed by stakeholders from different levels and different fields, public and private. The recurrent opposition (in Moulaert *et al.* 2010, for example) between state-led programmes and civil society social initiatives is not relevant in the case of Bern. The programme for young mothers, for example, was created by the State but its development and its operationalisation includes many private stakeholders. The case of Bern illustrates that innovation does not necessarily arise from an emancipatory logic and from a community dynamic.

An objection could be whether these so-called innovations are “real” innovations, as they are implemented by administrative agencies, which were inspired by already existing projects. It all depends on

our definition of innovation. Since WILCO considers projects as innovative regarding a specific context, innovations can be a replication of already existing projects. We saw that the three projects (except maybe the guidelines where there is no evidence of replication even if some were to exist in other Swiss cities and in Germany) were inspired by experiences initiated elsewhere. A first point is that we – researchers – evaluate the innovative character of a project. Stakeholders themselves do not always consider the selected projects as innovative. For example, civil servants in charge of the development and the implementation of the guidelines for integration do not consider the guidelines themselves as innovative. In the focus group, participants agreed that innovation is mostly a buzzword (“Schlagwort”). This could be a reason why administrative agents do not insist on this aspect. As we have shown, other arguments than innovation are much more powerful and add more value.

One of these arguments is a global approach to social problems. Two innovations – Primano and the project for young mothers – particularly illustrate the tendency to build a “whole family approach” in social policies. Morris *et al.* (2008) and Clarke and Hughes (2010) emphasise the success of such approaches with the aim of “supporting families to help themselves” and to consider the importance of family, both as a source of support and as source of potential obstacles to social and integration processes.

A second argument adding value to social policy programmes is a combination of an investment perspective with a workfare approach. Our three innovations include such a combination. A key element for the investment perspective is the selection of the target of the policies. Investing in children appears obvious (Palier 2005), but what about grown-ups? The dominant discourse, in the administrative field at least, postulates that some people are cognitively and socially too weak for realistic professional integration. A worthy target group includes people likely to get back to work. Work is thus the focal point of our innovations. *Primano* aims to improve children’s learning and social skills, in order that in the future, they will be well trained and thus have less risk of being unemployed. The project for young mothers aims to improve beneficiaries’ employability. Last, but not least, the guidelines converge toward work as a tool for gaining financial independence and as a

³⁰ Hearing “Projekt Junge Mütter”, Bern, 7 March 2013.

tool for social integration. In the preface to the 1999 edition, executive councillor Claudia Omar mainly talks about professional integration. She highlights the contribution of migrants who “build houses and roads”, are “top-managers” and “sports champions”. Then, her (only) argument about the need for action is that migrants are too often unemployed.

Some innovations in other cities studies highlighted by WILCO feature work integration in social enterprises (“work corporations” in Nijmegen and “Yalla Trappan” in Malmö, for example). In Bern, owing to a very favourable employment situation, work integration can be done in regular firms. Civil servants in charge of the project for young mothers stated that internships in regular firms were much more appreciated by beneficiaries than temporary jobs in the Competence Centre workshops. The above-mentioned “part-wage jobs” project follows the same path. There is a will to orientate work integration toward the “real” labour market. It is seen as more efficient (and bringing more recognition) and it does not imply the creation of new structures. Such practices can only occur with cooperation between public and private stakeholders. Again, the innovation starts with a public initiative and then needs the support of the private sector.

Conditions for appearance and success of innovations:

The report on values (WP4) helps to understand the context in which these innovations appeared. The context analysis allows us to draw some hypothesis about the conditions that could favour the appearance of social innovations. Of course, as our innovations arose from the public sector, our hypotheses only concern the appearance of innovations in the public sector. Conditions of success are even harder to establish, as the “success” is hard to define. We will consider that the three innovations are successful, as they have lasted for several years and have not been contested.

First, we stated that in Bern, the leading coalitions have a consensus on core values and on a certain part of policy core. The centre-left coalition (“RGM”) and the right coalition (“Die Bürgerlichen”) agree on basic values. For example, the project for young mothers fits some values shared by both coalition: self-determination - individual responsibility and

solidarity - equality of opportunities. The consensus also involves the role of the State. Both leading coalitions agree on an enabling State providing public support for private responsibility.

Second, as we have shown, there is no overly dominant regime. A configuration where a growth coalition and an integration coalition are overlapping facilitates innovations, as they are more likely to find converging interests. In the case of Bern, workfare and social investment are considered as win-win policies for both coalitions. They emphasise different arguments (or have a different arguments hierarchy), but they support the same policy.

Third, a basic condition for the appearance and success of an innovation is surely its cost. The lower it is, the bigger the chance of success. Almost all interviewed stakeholders mentioned the low cost (for the community at least) of their project as a key-element. In other words, good innovation would be an answer to the question “how to make better or more efficient use of existing (infra)structures?” The three innovations do not imply the creation of new big infrastructures. It was regarded as a factor of success (and acceptance).

Fourth, as Evers and Guillemard (2012) showed, the landscape of social policy is changing. The process of transition from one paradigm (the remains of post-war welfare state) to another (activating social investment state) offers conditions for innovations. There is a shift between the existing structures that still correspond to a rather classic providing state and the values in which the population and the leaders believe. Innovations can be seen as adaptation of an old system to new values, new understandings of social-problems and new ideas of what solutions could be.

Fifth, the relative independence of a territorial unit in a federalist system probably favours innovations. In the introduction, we emphasised the idea of federalism as a laboratory to try new solutions at a reduced scale. As we argued, some values are widely shared in a city such as Bern, but heavily disputed in the rural areas. It is the case for child care and *primano*. The innovations could only appear in the territorial unit where they fit values and representations. Furthermore, it is (or it looks) less risky to try new ideas in a relatively small area. Small size also facilitates cooperation when needed. Stakeholders are more likely to know each other personally. As many interviewees said, the innovations studied were quite

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Bern

person-centred. Each innovation was supported and advocated by one or two people. One or two people cannot support and lead a project alone. A certain consensus between stakeholders (not only coalitions and not only leaders) is necessary. The innovation in the unemployment sector could only rise with an certain consensus over values and policy core, between the health, education and welfare department and the legislative council, between the youth unit and the welfare unit, between the administration and stakeholders of the labour market, between the leaders and the base of all these organisations.

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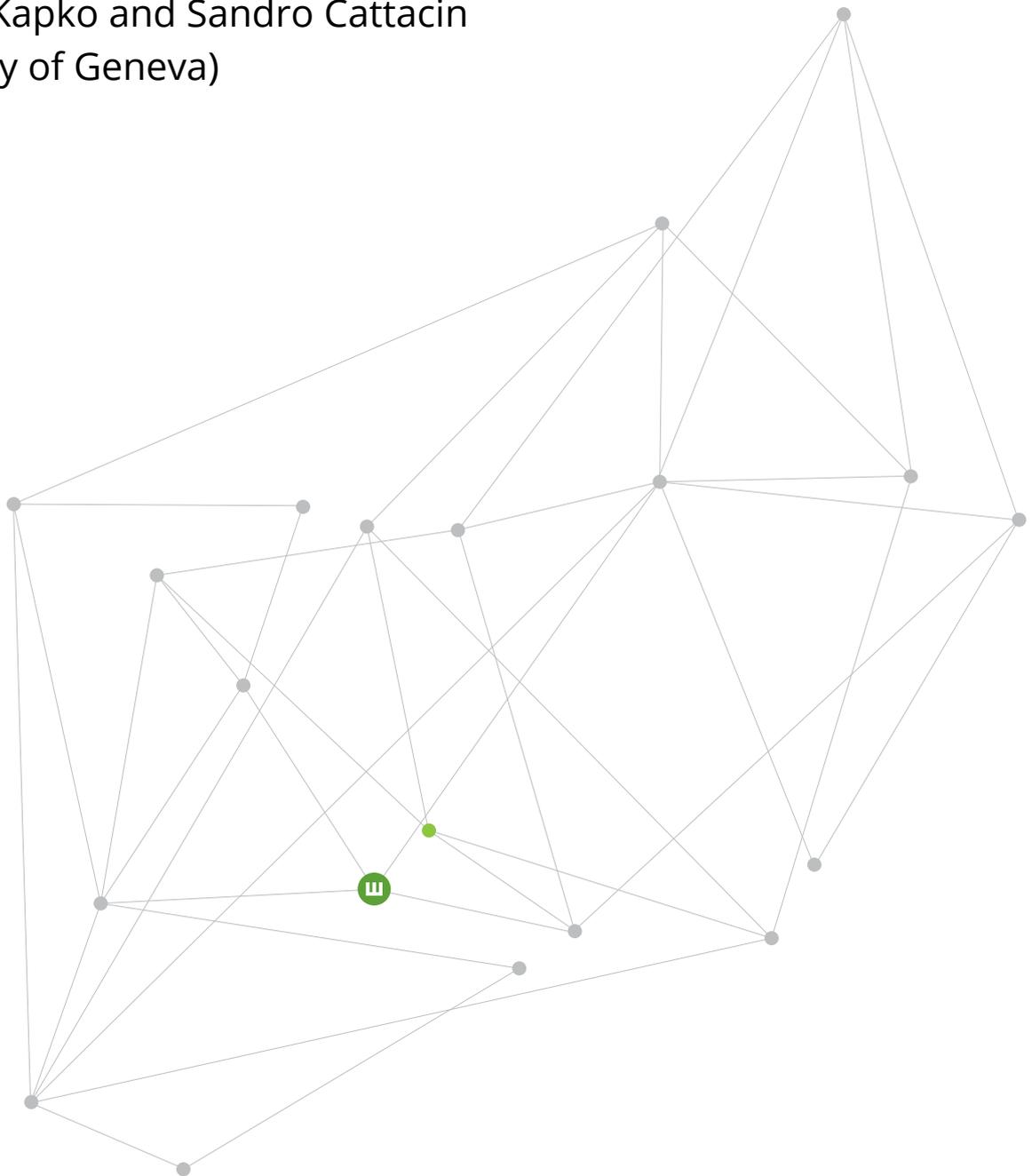
Interviews (undertaken between the 31 July and the 13 December 2012 in Bern)

Nb	Date	Field	Position
7	08.10.12	<i>Primano</i>	Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party, E.O.
2	11.09.12		Public administrator of youth department - city of Bern
11	16.10.12		Civil servant in the field of childhood, M.S.
18	13.12.12	Guidelines for integration	Public administrator in the field of integration, U.H.
19	13.12.12		Civil servant in the field of integration, M.H.
7	08.10.12		Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party, E.O.
3	21.09.12	Programme for young mothers	Public administrator of the employment department - city of Bern, J.F.
10	12.10.12		Civil servant in the field of unemployment, A.K.
14	05.11.12		Civil servant in the field of unemployment, Y.P.
20	02.11.12	Focus group in Bern	

CH Switzerland

Geneva

Nathalie Kapko and Sandro Cattacin
(University of Geneva)



CH

Geneva

AuthorsNathalie Kapko and Sandro Cattacin
(University of Geneva)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Activation
 Child care
 Disability
 Empowerment
 Housing policy
 Participation
 Subsidiarity
 Unemployment

In Switzerland, there is not only a large sharing of competencies between the communal, cantonal and the federal levels, but also local authorities (and in particular city governments) and cantons develop their own social policies in many areas. For instance, social assistance is a compulsory task, imposed by the Confederation, but the cantons and the communes fulfill it and also have the choice to fix the types of programmes and the level of benefits. Also, specific policies are often developed by the cities and the cantons, for example to face unemployment and favor reintegration of people at the margins of society.

Since the first half of the 1990s, for instance, unemployment increased in Switzerland and several cantons implemented programs of unemployment assistance, this dimension being absent at the federal level. In particular, the canton of Geneva put in place a Minimum Cantonal Income in 1994, which was inspired by the French minimum income support (*Revenu minimum d'insertion or RMI*), as an answer to the unemployment rate of the canton that is one of the highest of the country (with today around 5% of the cantonal working force).

Together with the city of Geneva, the canton of Geneva created one of the most developed and generous systems of social and health care services in Switzerland. In many fields, Geneva is pioneering the development of services. For instance, it was the first canton in Switzerland to introduce an obligatory maternity leave insurance that permitted to extend from two to four month the period of home stay.

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The three services presented here are related to the fields in which Geneva is particularly considered innovative: community oriented services (at the city level of Geneva – the *Unités d'Action Communautaire*), services for the inclusion in the labour market of people with impairments and risks of discrimination (the ORIF project) and finally services for people with difficulties in finding housing opportunities (the Unit for Temporary Housing). The three examples are characterised by a specific welfare mix trying to include in the logic of service production for and non-profit organisations as well as public administration units, and to work on the specific needs of their targeted population groups.

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The *Unités d'Action Communautaire*

67.1. Short description

The *Unités d'Action Communautaire* are structures created by the Municipality of Geneva and they were implemented 10 years ago. Located in four neighbourhoods, they are managed by the social services of the city of Geneva. Their goals are diverse:

- > UAC are in charge of collecting information about the four areas where they are located. Proximity is a keyword of their action. They map resident's needs, urban problems in safety, housing or public facilities. Diagnoses are made through everyday observation, involvement with residents and local statistics. This expertise aims to support the shaping of social policy and public decision at the end.
- > UAC are in charge of giving residents information about city services and opportunities they offer. UAC are rooted in the making of a new conception of social services in which social workers try to reach out to people in the areas where they live.
- > UAC are in charge of facilitating contacts between the associations/participants involved in the neighbourhood. They aim to reinforce the collective action in the area through a better coordination between participants.
- > UAC try to improve the density and quality of neighbourly relationships through coordination and networking (directly related to the above goals).

67.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

The UAC target individuals and NGOs involved in the area (in solidarity, in organisation of cultural activities, etc.) and does not directly work with vulnerable populations: in the UAC perspective, users are members of civil society and the latter is a welfare producer. The UAC aims to support the making and the organisation of this civil society through a better coordination of participants. Building a greater consistency of the diverse programmes, encouraging meetings and common projects and making the spreading of information easier are the main tasks of the UAC.

Moreover, this project is based on the idea that community work has to be based on a great knowledge of urban areas. Each UAC has a specific approach to the neighbourhood according to its characteristics. The UAC of *Champel*, a wealthy neighbourhood located outside the city centre, has developed a different approach to that used in the *Jonction* area. In doing so, the UAC acknowledge the diversity of the population's needs and communities located in the neighbourhood.

CH Geneva

Categories

Related to all policy fields

Intensity of the NGOs' and individuals' involvement in collective action varies according to the neighbourhoods. In some of them, individuals such as caretakers for instance do fantastic work while it is less the case in other areas. One of the main strengths of the UAC is that they look at the micro level (V. S., Head of Social Services in the city of Geneva).

The UAC participants thus develop significant expertise in neighbourhood dynamics and this is helpful in the making of social policy. In a report for the managers of the social services, the UAC of the neighbourhood *Jonction* mentions the changes in the neighbourhood and especially the progressive gentrification in the north of the area: they also give information about how residents perceive these changes.

The UAC focus on the strengths and weaknesses of neighbourhoods in a matter of collective action and create a policy with the aim of fighting social isolation of vulnerable populations. The policy framework emphasises that collective action creates communities that favour the embeddedness of individuals into dense networks. To some extent, we again find the idea of stabilising communities that we highlighted in the ULT project.

67.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The UAC is managed by the Department for Social Cohesion and Solidarity of the city of Geneva. They comprise 40 workers in the city as a whole and each UAC has a specific budget. The global budget of the UAC is quite important showing that they have been greatly supported by the city of Geneva. For instance, the salary of an employee of the UAC represents 120,000 Swiss francs per year (roughly 98,000 euros taxes included). Moreover, between 2004 and 2007, the city of Geneva founded important research regarding the work of the UAC. In *Jonction*, the team comprises four community workers. Finally, most of the UAC workers previously worked in another sector and they followed a specific certified training of 300 hours.

A first mode of working is the making of diagnoses of the *neighbourhood dynamics* such as the use of public spaces, housing maintenance, child care, public facilities, safety problems and evolution of the local

population regarding socio-economic status. This expertise may support public decisions and relationships between politicians/policymakers and residents. Thus, in 2010, the UAC was in charge of preparing a report before a meeting organised in the neighbourhood. UAC participants used diverse methods: questionnaires, everyday observation (a strong side of the UAC), conversation with NGOs' participants and residents, local statistics.

A second mode of working is related to the improvement of coordination between the diverse participants and NGOs involved in community action in the area. In doing so, the UAC workers collect information about collective action in the area, study the diverse emerging projects, they meet people and they favour contacts between all participants (NGOs and individuals) involved in the area. For instance, the UAC may support a group of inhabitants wishing to improve the quality of relationships in their building.

A third basic principle of the working culture in the UAC is that social workers should be more proactive in meeting populations needing assistance. Proximity is a key word in the UAC working culture as the Head of Social Services argues:

People working in the UAC are very different from social workers working in their offices and waiting for people who need their help. The main idea is that UAC professionals walk around to map the issues and the key-points of a neighbourhood. And then, they give people the information they need and they favour the making of social interrelations.

The UAC tries to develop new methods in order to be in touch with hard-to-reach groups. When the UAC were created, this approach - state workers on the ground - was definitely innovative in the local welfare context.

At the same time, the modes of working of the UAC are embedded in the Geneva tradition of subsidiarity in which initiatives from civil society are largely encouraged. Civil society put ideas forward and policy-makers support them shaping a bottom-up process. The UAC appear as a tool enabling development and realisation of this principle of subsidiarity.



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67.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The UAC are directly related to a 2002 law on the reorganisation of social policy in the canton of Geneva. According to this law, the canton is in charge of individual measures (benefits, individualised support, home care, etc.) while the cities have to develop a community social policy. Following the law, the city of Geneva implemented the UAC, an original approach, which contrasts with the dominant individualised support of people and families. The UAC look at individuals in the urban environment and networks and clearly favour the shaping of stabilising communities able to improve social integration of individuals, which contrasts with the view of communities in some other welfare states: their significance is underestimated, they are associated with social segregation and they withdraw to their own small circle.

Nevertheless, implementation of the UAC in the local welfare state was quite difficult in the beginning. Although they have been clearly supported by the higher city management, local participants in the neighbourhoods were sometimes destabilised by the implementation of the UAC: some social workers were reluctant with respect to interventions differing from an individualised approach and some NGOs defending similar community values perceived the UAC as an attempt of policymakers to make their work more bureaucratic (Rossiaud 2007). Consequently, the UAC both have to prove their value added and make their goals clearer.

Another interaction with the local welfare system is also one of the limits of the UAC. Through this project, the city of Geneva encourages civil society self-organisation and offers significant subsidies to the NGOs. Thus, the UAC action significantly contributes to the proliferation of organisations in a specific field – isolation of elderly, assistance to migrants, etc. As the numbers of participants increase, they get into trouble coordinating and working together. According to the Head of Social Services, this is one of the limits of the Geneva welfare system:

We have a very important number of participants in social policies. For instance, in a matter of assistance to the elderly, we roughly have 250 participants in Geneva – state workers, NGOs and so on. This is one of the features of the Geneva welfare. And it's difficult because people do not always know each other... This situation is clearly linked to a large amount of money offered to the diverse organisations. When one of them needed money, the state supported it and we built a kind of "yarrow" with multiple layers. We forgot to develop a global vision of the whole.

On the one hand, the UAC works to improve the level of coordination and has helped the city of Geneva to get a clearer perception of what the NGOs do and how they work together. The state of Geneva thus tries to get out from a single logic of welfare benefits provider based on an instrumental rationality. Likewise, they also contribute to the proliferation of NGOs and their dependence towards the local government.

CH
Geneva

Categories
Employment

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The ORIF project

68.1. Short description

The ORIF (non-profit private organisation for integration into employment and professional training) addresses the reintegration into employment of people suffering from health problems. Marginalised young adults are part of the target group: due to medical conditions, some of them cannot get back to the labour market with the job they previously had, while others experience difficulties at the early stage of their entrance into the labour market. Training in companies and various shadowing modules are organised to enable individuals to be aware of what they can do, with respect to the types of jobs and tasks. Finally, ORIF tackles the diverse dimensions of social vulnerability – not only health but also lack of qualifications, marginalisation, absence of professional projects and distance from the labour market.

The ORIF marks a contrast with other programmes that focus on the (re)integration of young people into employment with less attention to the multiple dimensions of social trajectories and vulnerability. On the one hand, ORIF offers professional training that takes into account people's health problems; services in charge of integration into employment develop a significant network of companies likely to hire young adults once a period of training is completed. On the other hand, ORIF helps to develop autonomy and self-responsibility. In the ORIF facilities, people are involved into the community through activities and exchanges with other people. ORIF wishes to develop employability of people but differing from other structures, we have been observing an interactive employability frame (Bonvin and Farvaque 2007) in which developing self-responsibility goes with real social opportunities for recipients.

68.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

Many young adults welcome at the ORIF have learning difficulties related to intellectual, motor and behavioural disabilities. Traditional learning processes were challenging for them and the ORIF is in charge of implementing programmes enabling them to integrate into jobs while taking into account their individual difficulties. The Office for Disability Insurance funds and follows these young people.

The first innovative dimension of the ORIF programmes is the global approach of individuals: assessment takes into account health status and its evolution as well as diverse problems of socialisation. The head of ORIF says: "these young people have failed and they are not self-confident. Our role is enabling them to be self-confident so that they develop their abilities and enter the labour market". To perform the global approach, a multidisciplinary

team, comprising a psychologist, experts in special education and teachers, supports people. "Each individual is supported by two people: the first one is an expert in training while the second one is a social adviser in charge of working on social skills in relation to the young person's family environment." Conception of users considers social trajectory (learning difficulties, school paths) but also the type of social *milieu* in which people move.

A second significant dimension is the long-term support, from the beginning to the end: in other words, measures start with assessment, continue with training and conclude when people are back to work. This support marks a significant contrast with other programmes, which are only in charge of one dimension (skills assessment or training or job search strategies). The ORIF support lasts 3 years. The first one focuses on the career choice. The NGO offers training in 10 professional sectors and young people are involved in diverse job experiences to be able to choose further a type of job. At the end, young people have to argue their choice in front of the ORIF managers. The first year also focuses on a school upgrade and on a specific course on social skills. The second and third years are about training in various places: in the ORIF facilities, in private companies and in classic vocational schools.

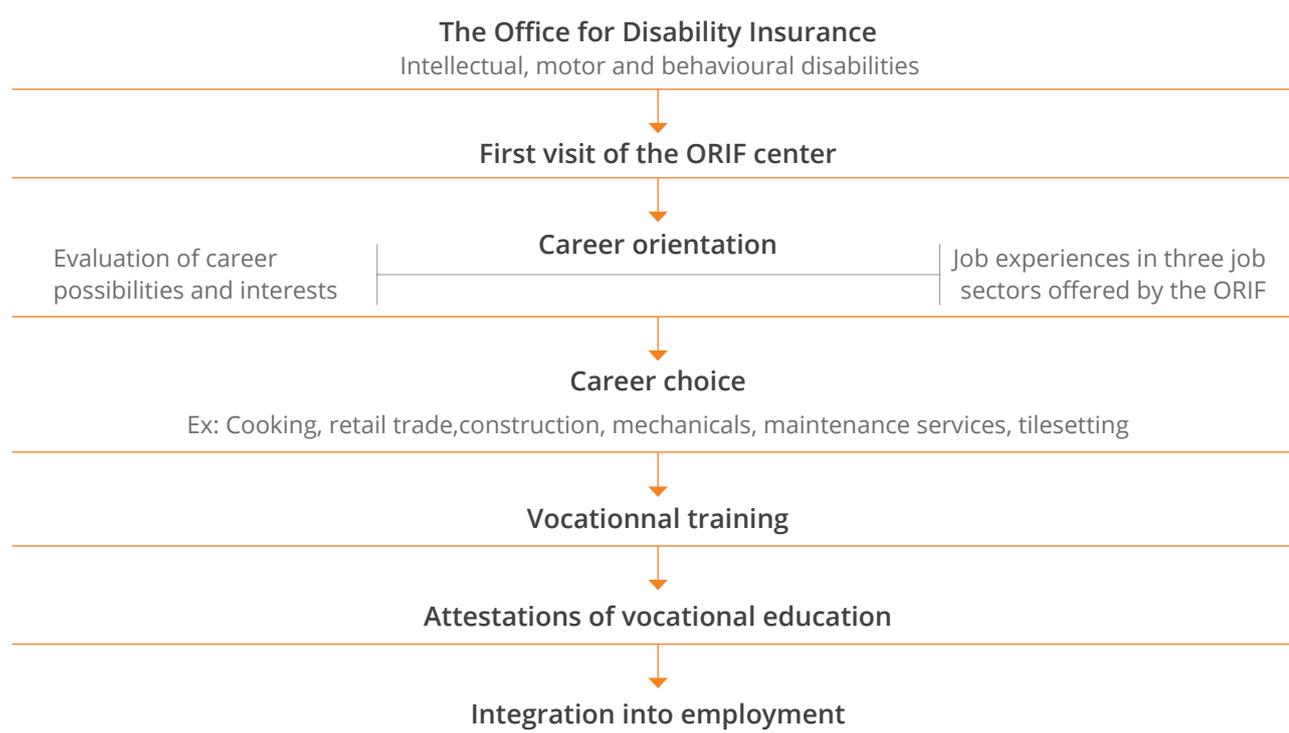
68.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The ORIF is a Swiss NGO with nine offices/training centres among which one is located in the canton of Geneva. The ORIF as a whole has 400 workers. Each ORIF centres has its own director and team. The Geneva ORIF may welcome 90 trainees in diverse job sectors: cooking, masonry, landscaping, parquet flooring, mechanics, and sales among others.

The ORIF only welcomes young adults who are sent there by the Office For Disability Insurance. The project is based on the idea that disabled people have remaining/residual working abilities that enable them to integrate into the labour market. Modes of working consist in supporting people in the diverse steps of professional integration:

- > offering people opportunities to be aware of their working abilities through observation modules and job experiences;
- > placing people in a working situation in order to explore their abilities in relation to employers' needs;
- > implementing working projects that take into account the trainee's health situation

Figure 1 - Organisation of the 3 years training



On the one hand, ORIF contributes to a process in which each individual has to participate in the labour market: we have been witnessing a workfare regime with an “activation” of social expenditures. Disability benefits should not prevent people from being integrated into the labour market. In this perspective, the welfare goes with a contract involving obligations and responsibilities on both hands. The contract refers to the liberal perspective meaning that social assistance should not be mechanical and universal but rather tied to formal arrangements between participants involved. But on the other hand, we have been witnessing an empowerment of people because they are not reduced to their disabilities, are encouraged to develop their abilities and to become full members of society (see for instance Jacques Donzelot in *Un Etat qui rend capable*, 2007).

68.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The impact of the ORIF is less about governance than about the conception of how young people enter adulthood. Within the local welfare system, we find divergent views of instruments and policies targeting young people. Debates about the *Emplois de Solidarité* are a significant example. This programme offers long-term jobs to people who cannot integrate into the primary labour market. Within the working group implementing this programme, there were debates about whether young adults may have benefited from the *emplois de solidarité*. To the manager of the project as to the head of the Department of Employment and Solidarity, young adults were not considered as relevant recipients. The manager says:

The emplois de solidarité should not be the beginning of a career. Starting with this type of job would not be great. Most of recipients are more than 55 years old. People under 30 years old must follow training and get a qualification. The emplois de solidarité are not for this category of people but for those who are likely to dissocialise. Young people are not as a risky population as older people from this point of view.

In this perspective, youth and early adulthood are defined in a normative way: they are associated with training and the latter is supposed to lead people to employment. Youth appears as a life cycle organised around traditional markers – going to school, choos-



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ing a career path and getting a job, all occurring in a linear way.

Still, research highlighted that this representation of youth is much less relevant than it was before. Scholars have underscored a highly fragmented life transition focusing on how employment and an extended school course have meant that many traditional markers of adulthood have occurred later, sometimes not until the early thirties or beyond. Some researchers even assert that defining youth as a process of transition is not relevant any longer. According to these scholars, youth is fundamentally a process of individualisation, a long life stage both uncertain and unfinished (Van de Velde 2008). It goes hand in hand with risk biographies. To some extent, we may think that changes into the entrance into adulthood and its fragmented features have been overlooked in some debates within the local welfare.

The ORIF project is innovative because it takes into account *the diversity of youth* and how intellectual, motor but also behavioural disabilities impede integration into training and participation to the labour market. Going to school, access to training and getting a job do not occur in a linear way and sometimes, they need to be supported through public programmes. In a general manner, Nicolas Frossard, the head of the NGO Realise¹, disapproved strict rules in a matter of selection of target groups. He says that, “too precise rules immediately imply logics of exclusion. With another head of an NGO, we have defended flexible measures enabling stakeholders to have more freedom in how they combine means and goals”. The ORIF project concurs to this more flexible approach of populations.

¹ All names were anonymised.

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The Unit for Temporary Housing (ULT)

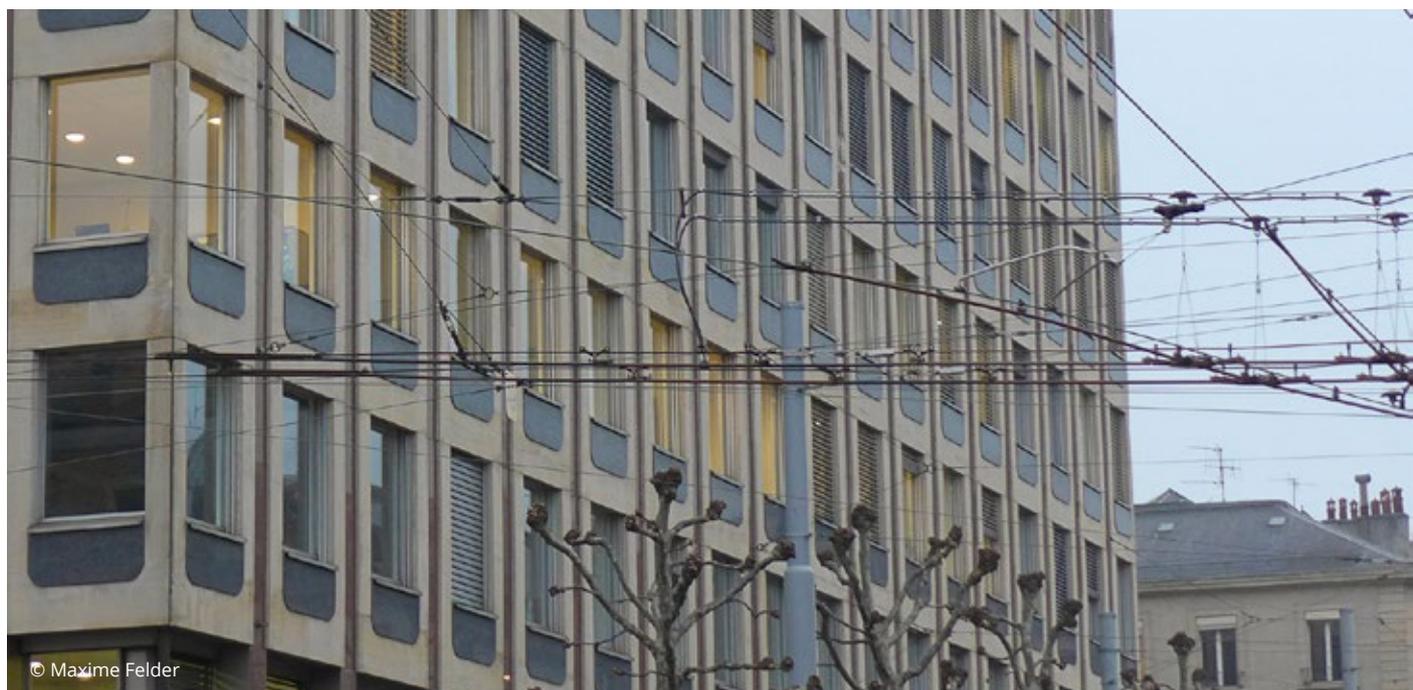
69.1. Short description

This municipal service offers temporary subsidised housing to vulnerable populations: foreign households in a challenging housing situation, people who become homeless and sometimes those who are seriously depressed following a separation, households with massive employment and debts problems. The project aims to counterbalance the effects of the Geneva very limited housing market (very low rate of available dwellings) on marginalised people's housing conditions and opportunities. This building (called *Michel Simon*) was inhabited by elderly people 30 years ago but populations have changed since the 1990s through policy effects.

The municipality of Geneva turned this building into a place offering 157 temporary subsidised flats. What is specific in the ULT is that residents may be supported by a team employed by the municipality, i.e. a building manager and two nurses. Indeed, the health dimension of social vulnerability has been taken into account and is, as a matter of fact, a key feature of many users living there. The maximum stay is officially 6 months but it may be longer and many residents have been living there for 1 and even 2 years. Rent varies according to the tenants' resources. This service takes into account *risk biographies* and how life accidents overlap with health, employment, family status and housing situation.

Roughly, tenants may be divided in two parts: first of all, we find people who are excluded from the labour market for several years and cannot have an autonomous flat. Most of the time they lack of qualifications, have substantial social problems and health conditions, which are the key elements explaining that their lack of jobs for a very long time. The case of Christine exemplifies this type of trajectory: Christine had a very serious car accident in 1995. "I was waiting for the bus and suddenly a car hit me violently. I was completely squeezed. I had multiple injuries and for 1 year I remained in rehabilitation and underwent skin transplants". Her life completely changed from this moment. Some years after, she became separated from her third husband who "threw her out". She was not able to find an apartment again as she had no income (she has been affiliated to the Disability Insurance since 1986-1987 because she was previously a drug user and addict with long-term consequences). Some tenants of this category are not likely to go back to the labour market, except perhaps in subsidised jobs.

A second category of tenants that is not insignificant do not have significant health problems but family problems such as a divorce or/and an erratic job career with precarious jobs have not enabled them to get a flat in an



autonomous way. Most of them lived in hotels and other people's flats before accessing these subsidised apartments. Men who got divorced and whose previous wives remained in the family apartment are numerous in this category.

69.2. Conception and ways of addressing users

The ULT contrasts with a traditional pattern of social assistance: indeed, it is not only concerned with the population's basic needs (food, housing, clothes, etc.) but it also deals with their social isolation. Some people have very little contact with other people and some weeks, they only meet the building manager and nurses. To this end, one of the innovative aspects of the ULT is that it takes into account diverse dimensions of social marginalisation: housing, health and especially psychological troubles, social isolation, lack of autonomy. From this point of view, it contrasts with the compartmentalisation of social policy programmes and with traditional social housing projects.

Ways of addressing users contribute to make the ULT a place of trust and support that explains and informs people in the city. These places help newcomers to become more familiar with the city and to appropriate it (Cattacin 2009; Cattacin and Kettenacker 2011). It is even more relevant for tenants who recently arrived in Geneva and are not necessarily migrants.

Thus, Martine lived in a rural area, Dardilly, for a long time. She was not used to living in the city and was reluctant to go out. She only went outside with her dog. Although she did not like the area *Jonction*, Martine had good neighbourly relationships with the other people living in the building Michel Simon. She took part in a Christmas event there, she regularly talked to her neighbours and she invited a man living on the same floor for a chat and tea because he was depressed due to an ongoing divorce. To Martine, as to many others, the ULT is one of these small communities providing support and a feeling of belonging to the city even though this process should not be overestimated.

The way public policy has concentrated vulnerable populations in the building has some effects on individuals and neighbourly relationships. The ULT is located in the area *La Jonction*, a neighbourhood with a low/average rate of socio-economic segregation. There is an over representation of disadvantaged populations with respect to the other areas of the city of Geneva but we also find there intermediary groups, university students and even quite wealthy families. But on the other hand, the ULT displays a pattern of socio-economic segregation at a micro-level (the building) as we only find very disadvantaged households there. It is actually a place of socio-economic segregation within a mixed area.

We found that the concentration of low-income households and high residential proximity shape solidarity practices between neighbours and help them to find diverse strategies and arrangements to deal with problematic situations. Numerous examples might be mentioned: hours of child care, loan of money (50 or 100 euros), short repairs, discussions between neighbours, etc. Consequently, we observed that a concentration of vulnerable populations provides resources to tenants. To some extent, we consider that the ULT is a small stabilising community where people can find a support (from the ULT workers and neighbours) to facilitate daily life. One of the tenants, Catherine, who was homeless and lived in a squat for many months, said: "I have been relieved and moved by how Geneva welcomes me. I am very grateful for this flower they offered me. Since I lived here, I always receive presents...from the Red Cross, places for events, I said to someone it is a permanent Advent time here (...). I am in a transitory time with the protection of the city of Geneva".

The ULT contributes to make the city more inclusive to precarious and marginalised populations trying to recover. This research outcome sheds light on aspects of segregation differing from those often studied. Indeed, what is commonly called "social mixing of populations" has been at the core of many urban policies as it would enable a better integration of disadvantaged groups - immigrant or low income populations while socio-economic segregation is commonly associated with public disorders, delinquency and increasing of social and urban marginalisation. Research shows that concentration of vulnerable populations may also become a resource for residents. This innovation is characterised by both closure and openness with respect to the city. On the one hand, closure is related to protection (an intercom is a boundary between outdoor spaces and the interior of the building; nurses and a manager take care of residents). On the other hand, it is opened with respect to the city to the extent that it supports integration of residents into the urban fabric.

It does not mean, however, that conflicts do not occur in the social life of the building. Some residents try to distance themselves from the others, as they want to avoid the label and self-identification of "populations with social problems" (Lapeyronnie 2008). Representations of the building vary according to residents, some who have experienced massive social problems for a

long time do not "frame" the place where they live as residents who have experienced a quite sudden social decline following a separation or a loss of job. Brice, for instance, is very critical about his neighbours and it seems that it is highly related to his feeling of social decline (*déclassement*). Indeed, Brice experienced a social fall following his bankruptcy as an entrepreneur and his recent separation from his wife. The diverse cognitive frames impact upon residents' practices and relationships with their neighbours.

69.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The ULT is owned and managed by the city of Geneva (Department for Social Cohesion and Solidarity). The manager and the three nurses have been employed by the city for several years. The building comprises 170 small apartments. People are generally sent there by social workers and NGOs; they have to apply to get a flat. The ULT is part of a large network of emergency housing offered by NGOs and the city services. Flats are supposed to welcome people for up to 6 months but most of people have been living there for 1, 2 or 3 years due to the housing situation in Geneva. The rate of turnover in the rented housing market and the number of available dwellings are very low (0.2 per cent) explaining that people who are evicted from their flats have many difficulties finding a new flat, even a much smaller one. Each year, only 30 residents are able to leave the ULT because they find a flat.

The ULT does not only offer subsidised housing but also diverse types of support to tenants as the modes of working show. Three nurses are in charge of visiting tenants: they provide medication and control evolution of health. Many tenants need medication for depression. Secondly, the building manager has the role of managing common spaces; he is also regularly in touch with tenants and may help them with diverse issues. Maria, a single mother tenant, mentioned that she appreciated the manager of the building: one day, her daughter Evelyne who is disabled, escaped from the flat. The manager found her and brought her back to Maria's apartment. Investigation in the building showed that he contributes to make the ULT more welcoming and secure. The city of Geneva is also present through the *Unité d'Action Communautaire* of the neighbourhood *Jonction*, which is located at the ground floor. Modes of working build up a solidarity network around residents.

We may wonder, however, to what extent the modes of working enable people to become more autonomous. Although we may consider that ULT acknowledges risk biographies and the diverse dimensions of vulnerability (health, social isolation), the team working with residents is not multidisciplinary and the health approach is dominant with three nurses employed. As we said, they provide medication and welcome residents who have health problems. There is a contrast between the statement of a global approach and the management team. To some extent, all happens as if social problems were, to some extent, reduced to health problems. We do not witness, as in the ORIF team, a social adviser who would meet people, discuss their expectations and help them to become more autonomous through training and employment. Still, our investigation showed that residents are a quite heterogeneous group: some of them have health problems and have not been working for a long time but others, who also receive a medical treatment for depression at the ULT, have experimented a marginalisation process only recently due to unemployment, a family breach or bankruptcy. In the latter case, it seems that a medical approach is not sufficient and does not really meet their needs. We may consider that “a psychiatrisation” of social processes is at work to some extent.

69.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The ULT occupies a specific segment of the housing policy for very low-income populations. In Geneva, the canton is in charge of the social housing policy: allowances, access to subsidised dwellings and emergency housing for people evicted from their flats (most of the time, the canton pays for stays at a hotel for 3 months). Numbers of NGOs (The Salvation army, Emmaus, Carrefour-Rue) offer marginalised populations emergency housing. The ULT deals with people and households who lost their flats following biographic events (loss a job, bankruptcy, divorce, heavy debts and expulsion): some of them still have an income but it does not enable access to a subsidised flat. Differing from people living in the flats offered by most of the NGOs, residents have to pay a rent (in proportion to their income). To some extent, the ULT policy takes into account this particular segment of vulnerable populations: they have not experienced a process of marginalisation for a long time but a biographic event dramatically changed social circumstances under which they live.

In addition, most of measures in social housing policy are individualised and focus on the allocation of a flat to low-income populations: adopting a different perspective, the ULT offers not only a flat but also a secure and stabilising environment. As we said above, ways of addressing users contribute to make the ULT a place of trust, support and information for people in the city. The ULT contributes to shape a more welcoming city, for migrants, for instance, who have suffered from low-standards patterns of housing conditions (Schaerer and Baranzini 2008, see the Geneva WP2 report).

Conclusions

The three innovations we studied have grown and stabilised. A first critical factor explaining this stabilisation is certainly the significant public funds invested in social policy in Geneva. They enable innovations to stabilise on time. For instance, the UAC were created 10 years ago and they have progressively grown to 40 workers: wages represent a yearly budget of almost 4 million euros. The key role of public funding in the stabilisation of innovations is perhaps a limit to their diffusion in other contexts. Indeed, UAC encourages organisation of civil society and plays a key-role in the contacts between the diverse participants involved in neighbourhoods but also in the interrelations between organisations and the local government. Therefore, their legitimacy and their efficiency (perceived by participants) are strongly related to the financial and material support provided by the city of Geneva. In a less favourable financial context, the UAC would have to reshape their actions and their goals, at least partly.

A second critical factor favouring stabilisation of innovation is that they agree with the current interpretation of solidarity according to which the latter involves a contract with obligations and responsibilities on both hands. The current orientation of the local welfare system has been enabling people depending on social assistance to access measures to reintegrate the labour market, which was much less the case before. Legal norms were changed as well as the general representation of people on benefits as we have showed in the WP4 report (see the reform of the Minimum Cantonal Income for Social assistance). One considered that they had to work in one way or another. The ORIF project, for instance, concurs with this vision because it is clearly focused on the participation of disabled people into the labour market. This orientation agrees with the current orientation of social policy regarding people suffering health problems as the head of the *Hospice Général* explains:

Previously, many people were able to receive Invalidity Allowance but it is currently much less the case. The Invalidity Insurance is reducing the number of recipients and people are much less recognised through their health problems. We now have to work with them on their professional reintegration. Those who already receive an invalidity allowance have seen the amount of benefits reducing. The question for us is how can we support them and support their economic participation?

This orientation is relatively new but the ORIF organisation has already developed significant know-how and relevant tools in a matter of participation of people suffering from health problems and motor/intellectual disabilities. This feature contributes to the stabilisation and the growing of this innovation. This is much less the case of the ULT because we see a discrepancy between the current policy orientation towards ill populations and the approach of people in the ULT. Indeed, the working team comprises three nurses and a caretaker. They tackle resident's health problems and social isolation but they are not likely to favour their professional integration in a significant way. All happens as if the architecture and modes of working of the ULT were, to some extent, a legacy of the previous orientation towards ill populations, which does not mean that it is not innovative in many ways (stabilising community, housing alongside everyday support to residents, etc.).

In addition, we may consider that the Geneva context favours diffusion of innovations to some extent. Many people with responsibilities in the field of social policy have known each other for a long time and some of them are used to working together. These routines of collective work favour diffusion of innovation to the extent that workers are aware of what the other organisations do; circulation of information is easy. This context favours the shaping of coalitions and these coalitions may further be involved in the "mainstreaming" of the respective organised projects through lobbying and social marketing for instance. Thus ORIF has been in touch with other organisations such as Realise and OSEO. They all agree with the idea that improvement of reintegration of people into the labour market requires that the sector of employment and that of social assistance should open to each other rather than being referred to antagonistic principles. These organisations, shaping a coalition, have developed a significant lobbying practise, on their own part and sometimes together, to spread this idea. We may therefore consider that development of routines of collective work favours diffusion of innovation.

However, a weak point concerning diffusion of innovation in the Geneva context is related to the lack of relevant assessment of innovations. Assessment concerns modes of working or the governance but they remain weak with respect to the impact of innovations upon populations. Thus, the city of Geneva

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has funded an assessment of the UAC but the latter is about the architecture and modes of working of social services including the UAC. The ULT has not been assessed. In both cases, the impact of innovation upon vulnerable populations is relatively unknown. This feature is likely to hamper diffusion of innovation.

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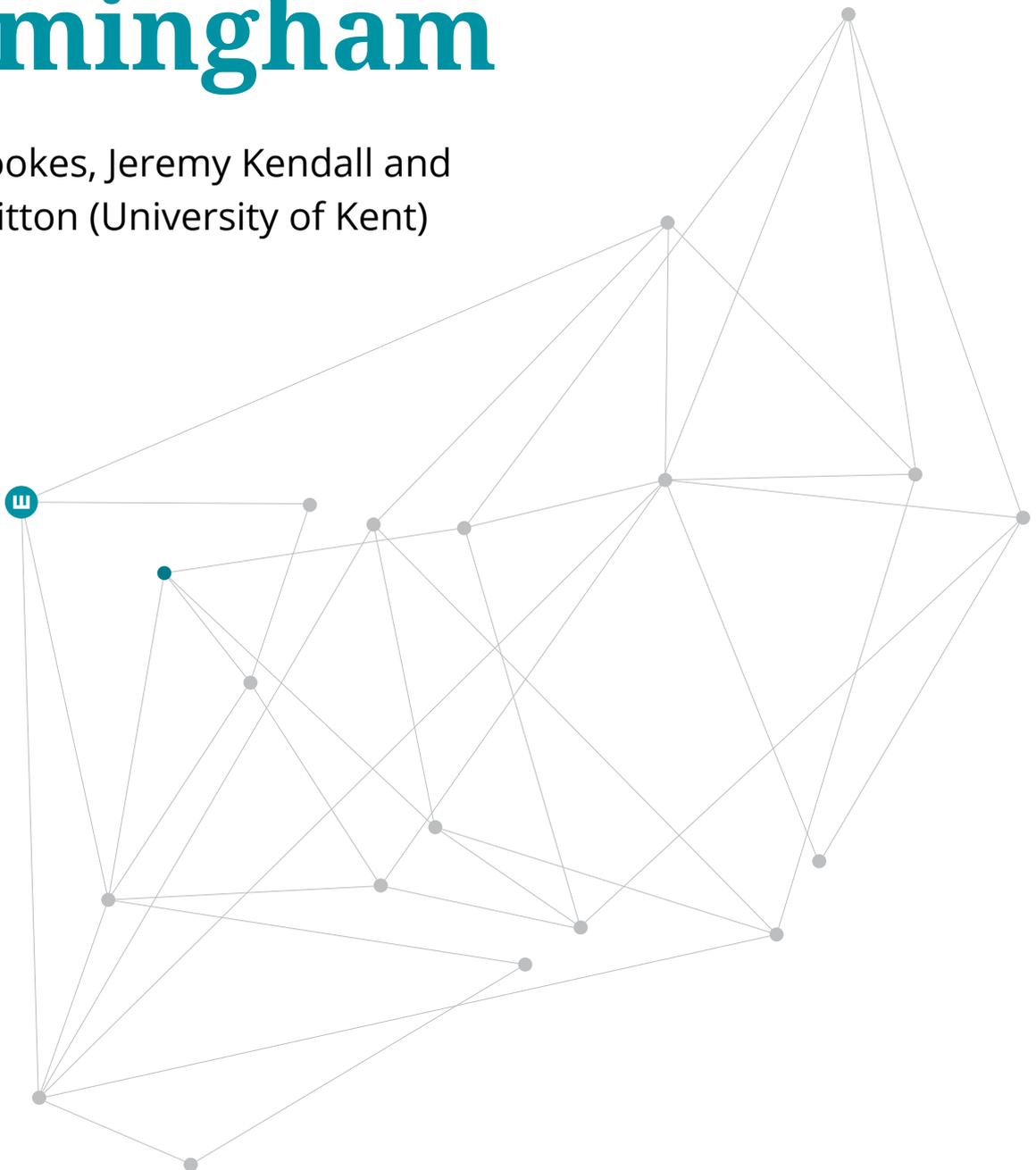
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United Kingdom

Birmingham

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and
Lavinia Mitton (University of Kent)



UK Birmingham

Authors

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton
(University of Kent)

Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Empowerment
Entrepreneurialism
Labour market
Local government
Lone parent support
Participation
Partnerships
Personalising support
Social housing
Social investment
Social media

Birmingham is located within the West Midlands region of England and is the regional centre for business, retail and leisure. It is the largest city in the UK outside London and has a population of just over one million inhabitants. Much of Birmingham suffers from high levels of deprivation. The city has had a wide range of regeneration and renewal programmes and initiatives over the years targeting both the city centre and neighbourhood areas. Local government for the city is the metropolitan authority of Birmingham City Council (BCC), the largest local authority in the UK.

One of the key drivers for the innovations described here was the need for access to social and affordable housing. Birmingham's population is increasing and projected to grow by 100,000 residents by 2026, in total 90,000 additional households will be formed. Demand for social housing significantly outstrips supply and there is a large waiting list for social housing of over 30,000 applicants. The average city income is insufficient to buy an average priced home. This is a huge housing challenge, made more pressing with the economic downturn, which resulted in a slowing of the housing market, a drop in house building and restricted access to mortgage lending.

The other main driver for innovation was access to jobs; Birmingham has rates twice the national average and in some areas over 50 per cent of the working age population are not in employment. Birmingham has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the UK. Entrenched problems of unemployment, a shortage of appropriate jobs, fragmentation of support and young entrepreneurs not getting enough support were some of the issues identified. Birmingham was perceived as good at job creation but not necessarily for people in those areas where unemployment sat at a higher level. The opportunity for innovation came largely through funding from a central government grant, the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF). The aim of this was to tackle unemployment and low levels of skills and enterprise in the most deprived areas. A total of £114 million was allocated to the city between 2008 and 2011.

There was evidence of social innovation across all sectors in Birmingham, usually with some involvement from the City Council as a source of funding. Innovation was evident in both labour market integration and housing but not visible in the area of child care. This is due to the fact that child care policy is determined by central government and local responsibilities include ensuring that there is a mixed economy of child care provision across the city, and administering resources for children's centres (providing holistic, one-stop-shop services for families with children 5 years old and under, tailored to the needs of local communities) and for free child care hours for 2-4 year olds. This does not allow for decentralised solutions to child care issues.

The five innovation examples were chosen according to the following criteria: they were “new” to the setting in which they were being implemented; they covered one or more of the WILCO policy fields; and involved a variety of local stakeholders.

Welfare innovations in the three policy fields

The five social innovations presented were chosen on the basis of initial meetings with stakeholders and a desktop review of information available (websites, reports, policy documents). The examples selected had been highlighted as “innovative” or “promising” but these are merely examples, there were many more social innovations in existence in Birmingham at the time of selection. The innovations are introduced by a brief description followed by the themes of conceptions and ways of addressing users; internal organisation and modes of working; and interaction with the local welfare system. There are four innovations related to labour market policy and one the housing policy field.

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A locality approach to unemployment

70.1. Short description

Birmingham developed an approach to tackling unemployment for those living in the most deprived areas, which could be characterised in two ways. Firstly, it was locality driven in that it focused on areas with high levels of unemployment (25 per cent or more) and detailed consultation took place with local welfare partners, local providers, community organisations and local councillors. Through this process the needs of local areas were analysed, existing service provision mapped, gaps in service provision identified and proposals made for additional activity to be commissioned. These Neighbourhood or Constituency Employment and Skills Plans (NESP/CESPs) were then agreed at local constituency or strategic partnership meetings. Local Commissioning Boards oversaw the commissioning activity with the intention of selecting high-quality providers and Local Provider Forums developed the capacity of local providers to deliver interventions and supported monitoring activities. Secondly, the approach was characterised by a strong client focus, which addressed the needs of individuals (the Integrated Employment and Skills model or IES). The aim of the model was to offer a continuous service led by individual client need, which recognised that progression was often not a simple or linear process. Using this model services were commissioned strategically to ensure an integrated pathway for clients.

The NESP/CESP contracted provision tended to provide a somewhat standard set of options for employment and skills support, but the locality and IES driven approach to delivery on a city-wide scale, the development of the NESP/CESP approach and the contracting process were innovative. This was a move away from the usual arrangement of a single contract for the whole city to one with tailored contracts to meet the needs of local people. The deliberate targeting of local areas, groups and individuals was a key innovative feature of the approach. The IES model and the NESPs and CESPs provided a foundation for a focus at the client level and the provision of targeted action and support that each individual required (whether this was education, skills or employment) no matter what provider they accessed. The approach was designed to ensure that local needs were taken into account and overall contract values set at a level to allow third sector providers to tender for contracts. It also facilitated the development of a number of innovative projects to address unemployment.

Funding for the unemployment initiative came from the WNF a central government allocation to local authorities to help tackle unemployment and low levels of skills in areas of high deprivation (the Coalition Government phased

this out in 2011). This was awarded between 2008 and 2011. The NESPs covered seven Birmingham wards that had more than 9 priority areas for deprivation within them and nine constituencies were the subject of CESP (which also captured the needs of smaller clusters of priority areas lying outside key wards).

70.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The areas with the highest levels of unemployment are also usually the most deprived, by supporting people into sustained employment in those areas there should be benefits to the localities as a whole. This was a proactive drive to pursue the development of community-led, neighbourhood-specific approaches, actively engaging those individuals most at risk of unemployment and furthest away from the labour market, including the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. The IES model underpinned the delivery of the unemployment approach and focused on making changes to the way the infrastructure works, including improved partnership working and more joined-up services. The support process included employability skills to overcome personal barriers; skills support linked to existing vacancies; and support to and through sustained employment.

The key features of the IES model included:

- > Improved local information to effectively target resources to the needs of a particular group or individual.
- > A wide range of outreach and contact strategies to effectively engage with groups or individuals.
- > A strong client-focused approach that addressed the needs of specific individuals.
- > A range of interventions to address the needs of individuals.
- > Client tracking to support individuals to access employment and post-employment support.
- > Engaging with employers and providing bespoke training to match priority clients to vacancies.
- > Continuity to ensure a joined-up approach, assurance to clients and opportunities to build on learning.
- > Local unemployment champions.

NESP/CESP providers indicated that having provision available at a local level was essential for engaging with service users. Many people did not want to travel outside of their neighbourhood and so it was important to have a visible presence in the community and to use organisations potential users of the service would be familiar with.

70.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

Forty-three contracts were let to a variety of provider types: private sector; third sector organisations and consortium; and social enterprises. Individual projects specifically targeted a range of groups: the disabled, lone parents, the over 50s, those not in education employment or training (NEET), carers, women, and vulnerable clients (alcohol users, offenders, not in employment, education or training). **The employment and skills support provided included making contact with clients, skills assisted planning, mentoring, subsidised work placements, support into business “start ups”/social enterprise, and English language and basic skills. There was also support to local businesses to provide job vacancies for local residents.**

In terms of responsibilities for the management of the locality approach, Be Birmingham was responsible for the effective delivery of Birmingham’s Local Area Agreement and the City’s Area Based Grant including the WNF. Be Birmingham, as the Local Strategic Partnership, played a key role in bringing partners together to coordinate action on unemployment through focusing on the most deprived neighbourhoods. The Birmingham Economic Development Partnership (BEDP) was the thematic partnership responsible for the management of elements of the WNF. Responsibility for the development and approval of projects was delegated to the Employment Sub Group (ESG), which included BCC, Job Centre Plus (JCP) and Skills Funding Agency representatives. BCC was the accountable body for the funding and so processes and governance needed to comply to both Be Birmingham and BCC requirements.

The unemployment approach was largely bottom up in that priorities were identified through the NESPs and CESP, which were then fed into a delivery plan. The ESG management team agreed the priorities and commissioned projects and activities. An appraisal panel made recommendations on which projects

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should go ahead for approval and the ESG approved projects (except for those over £300,000, which went to Be Birmingham for approval). The BEDP made programme level decisions and received project information. Be Birmingham received updates on performance and a BCC Cabinet Member approved projects in line with financial regulations.

70.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

As a city, Birmingham was and is highly committed to tackling unemployment, and social inclusion is high on the political agenda. The IES model was the principal means by which activity to tackle unemployment was informed and sat at the heart of the City Strategy (the core strategy to provide a 20 year framework for sustainable growth in Birmingham, with proposals to provide 50,600 new homes and deliver 100,000 new jobs by 2026) and the Local Area Agreement (steps to deliver the City Strategy). **The major players in the local welfare system all agreed and signed up to the IES model, including BCC, JCP and the Skills Funding Agency.** It provided a well-understood model against which to commission activity and assess performance. There was a significant amount of political scrutiny mostly related to constituencies wanting to have greater independence over spending and to be able to hold providers to account. Political involvement in the process led to some delays (and the slow start resulted in criticism within the City Council and local press) but having the engagement of local councillors also helped to embed and raise the profile of the NESP/CESP delivery contracts in their areas.

Stakeholders and service delivery organisations believed that this approach provided local support and got many people into work, training and volunteering opportunities. A number of partnerships came together for the first time, including those of different sizes and different sectors with a range of geographical and target group focus. One partnership brought together a national provider, a city-wide provider and a third sector local provider each offering different skills and expertise for supporting people into work. Many third sector providers came together solely for the purpose of delivering WNF contracts. Private sector providers also felt that their relationships with many community and third sector groups had improved during the delivery phase of the NESPs/CESPs.

It also enabled projects to develop new relationships with employers, which increased opportunities for clients to access available jobs.

The IES model and local delivery approach arose out of a particular set of circumstances in Birmingham and a willingness to undertake major change. **It enabled an in-depth understanding of issues for local residents where unemployment was high, provided the opportunity for different provider organisations to work together for the first time and provided an opportunity to develop small-scale innovative projects and capture learning.** Key was the agreement of the BEDP partners and their signing up to the IES model. However, with regards embeddedness within the local welfare system, the locality approach currently does not operate in some of the original areas or not in the way originally intended. This was seen primarily as a knock-on effect of the loss of resources for neighbourhood management, which supported the process. There are plans to refresh this approach under the council's localism agenda.

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Youth Employment and Enterprise Rehearsal (YEER)

71.1. Short description

In 2010 The Future Melting Pot (TFMP) set up the YEER pilot project (for 1 year) to provide business support to black and minority ethnic individuals who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) with the main aim of participants being able to set up their own enterprises. YEER was designed to provide business-specific training and assist young people from developing an idea to starting their own business. The project included training, support and access to accredited advisors. The approach could be characterised as intensive, personalised support to stimulate entrepreneurialism.

The project's approach was innovative in that it offered hard-to-reach, excluded young people an alternative to un-employment or ad hoc paid employment. This differed from conventional employment support and the focus on "getting a job". It used innovative approaches to communication and retention using the clients preferred method of communication such as Facebook and other social media.

71.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

TFMP is a community interest company, which was set up in 2009 after identifying a gap in the market for an organisation to support the aims and aspirations of disadvantaged young people. The project provided a structured yet flexible programme of support in a "safe and welcoming atmosphere". Young people had to be over 18 years old and on benefits for at least 3 months. There were a limited number of places and young people had to complete an application form and take part in an interview. Participation therefore required a certain amount of motivation and commitment from the outset. The usual timeframe for young people to be engaged with the project was 6 months or less.

Participants were offered the chance to improve personal development; nurture their entrepreneurial "mind"; start the business they had always wanted to start; create their own work and become their own boss; and make a difference for themselves, their family and their community. An action plan was drawn up with a mentor and participants received support in developing business ideas from initial design to completion. It provided the opportunity to explore the option of self-employment in an environment, which was led by the needs of individuals and where

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feedback was incorporated into the project. The project developed in response to the different learning paces of individuals and more advanced learners could benefit from a “fast-track” approach to courses and additional sessions.

71.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

TFMP is a community interest company, which is a social enterprise that uses profits and assets for the public good. They operate with a board and have shareholders/members. The philosophy of TFMP is to “enable and empower young people to achieve their potential through enterprise”. The concept is very much about developing individual ideas and talents, to “open new gateways to disadvantaged groups who find it hard to engage meaningfully with traditional business networks”.

The YEER project received support through a local Innovation Fund, which provided small grants to test innovative approaches to issues of unemployment. The Innovation Fund was part of the wider WNF. The mentors and advisers were recruited specifically for the project so that they had existing networks that people could tap into. **Partnership development was seen as a large part of the success of YEER and gave participants the opportunity to network effectively from the start.**

71.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

In Birmingham, young people who are NEETs have been a particular concern over the years and this project helped to address this. It was a small-scale pilot project and so low risk for the local strategic partnership to support; therefore, also the potential for impact on the local welfare system was limited. The project did shift the focus away from getting people into work to supporting entrepreneurial activities, which had not often been central in policy discussion, and even less so for this particular group, which was considered difficult to engage with. **It was an example of the increased involvement of the third sector in delivering services and the application of business practices to areas of social concern.**

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Lone parent support

72.1. Short description

The lone parent support project was delivered by Employment Needs Training Agency (ENTA) and partners, and offered a holistic approach to addressing barriers to work for lone parents. Once contacted people were assessed, agreed an action plan and then received on-going support and mentoring from the project team (this continued once they had a job or placement). Training had always been an issue for many lone parents as this was not always child-friendly. The project funded some child care and travel costs to volunteering and training sessions and clients were able to bring their children into the project (unlike the case for many other statutory agencies) and this helped with issues surrounding child care. The funding for the project came through the Innovation Fund of the WNF.

72.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The project offered a holistic approach to addressing barriers to work for lone parents. Project partners developed a range of activities to secure the initial engagement of the target group. **All partners had local bases within the target areas and therefore offered local access points for recruitment and delivery.** Eligibility was determined by the area someone lived and users had to be unemployed, 19 years old or over and a lone parent. Individuals could self-refer to the project.

After contacting the project, an initial client assessment was undertaken using a range of assessment tools. The assessment led to the completion of an agreed action plan for the individual, which could be tracked by the service user and the responsible officer. The action plans included short, medium and long-term actions. The clients received on-going support and mentoring from the project team and support continued once a job or placement was secured. A benefits advisor was appointed as this was identified as a particular need by ENTA and helped to address people's fears about coming off benefits. The advisor went into all centres, partners and job clubs to advise on getting benefit roll-on and housing benefit. They also advised on debt, as this could be a major barrier for clients getting into work.

The project had a particular impact on people who were long-term unemployed and enabled them to compete for jobs on a more equal footing. Being able to sit with someone and talk through their concerns was a key benefit of the project for many of the service users. The individuals concerned were very vulnerable and the project enabled them to deal with issues at their own pace with staff considered friendly and approachable. Clients were able to bring their children into the project and this helped with issues surrounding child care.

72.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The contract in Erdington was managed and delivered by ENTA, working in partnership with Merlin Venture. The project also involved a consortium of 22 partner organisations with a track record of working with groups who were a long way from employment, training and education. Of these between 10 and 12 were considered to be very active within the project. ENTA was a community interest company that had been working across Birmingham since 1977. It aimed to “work with the community to improve lives and provide opportunities and empowerment for people living in and around the city”.

The project aimed to engage and support lone parents from Erdington, Stockland Green, Tyburn and Kingstanding wards in Birmingham to access employment. Erdington Constituency also paid for the benefits advisor to offer advice on debt, benefits and housing benefit support. Staff members were trained in information, advice and guidance, which helped them to deal with a range of issues.

72.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Lone parents were identified as one of the priority groups by the local strategic partnership and individual projects were commissioned specifically to target these groups. Partnership working worked well and the project helped to enhance the organisation’s reputation, capacity building and profile with other services but not specifically within local politics or authorities. It was a small-scale, pilot project with time-limited funding and therefore had little opportunity to impact on the wider local welfare system.

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Targeted discretionary housing payments (TDHP)

73.1. Short description

The aim of the TDHP project was to support people from areas of high levels of unemployment and deprivation in Birmingham in the transition from welfare to work. Having managed to overcome hurdles associated with getting a job in the first place, people may be faced with a series of issues, some social and some more practical, which need to be addressed to support the sustainability of the employment. Among the most practical difficulties can be those relating to financial matters.

The previous Labour government recognised the difficulties in the transition from benefits to work in a number of benefit changes but many claimants still did not meet the strict eligibility criteria for additional support. The criteria were that individuals must have been claiming certain benefits for 26 weeks continuously and take a job for at least 5 weeks. Those who met the criteria could receive support for a 4-week period. The project provided additional and practical support to people in the transition period for up to 12 weeks to maximise their chance of sustaining their new employment.

73.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The project provided tangible support in the form of payments to ease the costs of transition into work for clients. Eligibility was based on the area that a person resides and qualification for the initial 4-week support. People were contacted by the service with information on how to access payment, which involved completing a form. The support was in the form of additional Housing and Council Tax benefit payments. In 2011 the average each participant had been paid was over £280 to bridge the gap between coming off benefits and paid employment.

One client explained that the extra assistance received helped towards rent arrears as before becoming unemployed they had fallen behind with paying rent. When they started work, the discretionary housing payment helped towards paying the arrears so that they were not threatened with eviction. Another felt that the financial assistance had helped them remain in work.

73.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

The project was run by the City Council's Benefits Service and supported initially through the WNF. The project benefited the proposed number of customers but at a lower cost than anticipated, and as such released funds back into the wider WNF Programme. As part of contractual arrangements, the participants remaining in employment was monitored at the end of each month. The information available at January 2011 indicated that over 91 per cent of customers remained in employment at the first outcome milestone of 13 weeks and over 77 per cent of customers paid through the scheme were still in work at 27 weeks.

An original aim of the project was to develop closer, mutually supportive referral arrangements with other agencies and employment support providers. A great deal of work was done in this area and there was a continued dialogue with a wide range of employment support provider. The team did receive some direct referrals from organisations and individual workers but overall the number of referrals from key organisations such as JCP was low. Most eligible clients were identified by the Benefits Team trawling their own database. The project managers felt that a longer implementation phase would have made it possible to get more referral agencies on board.

73.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

The project was successful at getting different organisations and departments within BCC to work together such as the Benefits Team, Regeneration, Housing and Neighbourhood Offices and helped to show what impact relatively low-cost support can have on job retention. This approach pre-dates the Coalition Government's proposals for welfare reform. Iain Duncan Smith MP (currently Secretary of State for Work and Pensions) visited Birmingham in February 2011 and came to find out more about the TDHP project within the context of welfare reform. In addition, two local authorities contacted the team to find out how the project works. The project was also put forward for two local government awards.

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Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT)

74.1. Short description

BCC devised a way of delivering affordable but high-quality new homes that limited financial risk through the formation of BMHT. Properties on BMHT sites were a mixture of council homes and those for outright sale built on council-owned land. An innovative financial model was developed in consultation with contractors that reduced upfront costs and reduced uncertainty over planning permission. Planning consent for each site was gained and paid for by the council before tenders were invited so potential partners could tender risk-free financially. The houses were then built on council-owned land with an agreed number of properties on each site allocated for social housing. Payment for sale property land was delayed until developers sold their homes and then only on a plot-by-plot basis.

The concept of "site clusters" was developed where two or more sites could be treated as one within the council's social housing policy. This meant a higher proportion of homes could be offered for sale in some areas maximising cross-subsidy funds to build further council homes. Developers were given the responsibility, within their contracts, for creating local apprenticeships in areas where BMHT sites were situated. Wherever possible, electricity-generating photovoltaic panels or air-source pumps were included as features in the new homes to reduce energy bills and help prevent families falling into fuel poverty. A number of homes were adapted for wheelchair use. By 2011, more than 700 properties were in contract under BMHT and more than 150 of these homes had been allocated to council tenants.

74.2. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The City Council persuaded developers that building new homes in any volume in the current economic climate meant entering into new financial arrangements to minimise risk while providing social housing for the city. The key was to involve developers from the start so potential obstacles could be identified and solutions found at the earliest possible stage.

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Categories

Neighbourhood revitalization / Housing

BMHT homes were allocated to existing secure tenants who had made an application for transfer. There were eight sites across Birmingham at the time of writing. Feedback from council tenants who received new homes through BMHT was good, with objectives to provide green technology to reduce fuel bills, quality design and larger homes for bigger families receiving particular positive comments.

74.3. Internal organisation and modes of working

BMHT was set up in January 2009 and a dedicated team of council officers assigned to the house-building programme. The team secured more than £16.7 million of Homes and Communities Agency grant under the Local Authority New Build and Public Land Initiative programmes from central government. A multi-disciplinary team of planners, architects and design advisors was established to ensure space and quality standards were prioritised. BMHT worked in partnership with developers.

Developers tended to want to build on sites in “more desirable” areas where homes for outright sale would be more likely to sell. BMHT came up with a way of clustering the more and less popular sites in developers’ contracts so all areas with BMHT developments would have a mix of tenures. Developers also often attempted to maximise profits by building to the minimum size and standards possible. The BMHT team prescribed the size, layout and materials of all homes from the outset to prevent this. It also made sure designs were “tenure-blind” with the same specifications for rent or sale homes. As with housing build standards, the level of green technologies was specified during tender and contract negotiations.

To help improve community cohesion, the BMHT team developed “good neighbour agreements” that established ground rules for positive behaviour among the new neighbourhoods at each site. The council asked each tenant to show that they agreed to abide by the agreements by signing and returning them. Unemployment was addressed by adding a requirement to contracts that developments provide on-site apprenticeships for local young people.

74.4. Interaction with the local welfare system

Since new financial freedoms were announced by the Government in 2009, which meant councils could keep rent from the homes they built rather than it being pooled nationally, Birmingham has built, or has plans in place to build, more homes than any other council in the country. The BMHT approach was adopted by the Homes and Communities Agency in its “accelerated disposal” initiative that encouraged local authorities to donate land to developers and recoup costs only when the homes built on it are sold. Interest in how the BMHT mixed-tenure model works has been shown by other local authorities. Developers have also looked to this model as a signpost to the future allowing them to continue in business on a sound financial footing while minimising their upfront and on-going costs.

It is felt that BMHT will have a lasting legacy beyond just providing somewhere for people to live. The renewable technologies that feature in BMHT homes will help to reduce carbon emissions as a whole and also help ensure that social housing tenants can avoid fuel poverty and benefit from the associated higher standards of health and well-being.

In addition, the new developments should be a boost to the local environment and economy with new homes, jobs and training opportunities for the communities surrounding BMHT sites. Providing homes in areas in need of regeneration should have a knock-on effect in improving the housing market in general there and help to create neighbourhoods where both tenants and homeowners choose to live in the future. The development work has protected construction companies from having to reduce their workforce in these areas and some new apprenticeships have been created for young people as part of the employers’ contracts for BMHT.

Conclusions

Social service research: Innovations as illustrative examples for a new generation of social services

These innovation examples are time-specific and came about as a result of particular circumstances in Birmingham and more general problems caused by the current financial climate. However, there were some overall key approaches and instruments adopted by the innovations. In terms of how service users' needs were addressed, there was a trend towards investing in capabilities rather than targeting deficits. The labour market innovations in particular focussed on personal development and developing individual ideas and talents.

There were also attempts to bridge the gaps, bringing services closer to the communities they were trying to engage with such as targeting particular neighbourhood areas. The innovations adopted a holistic approach with service offers that connect, the idea being that it was rare for service users to have only one issue to deal with at any one time.

Personalising support was also a key feature. The labour market innovations adopted a strong client-focused approach addressing the needs of specific individuals. There was also an example of providing ad hoc transfers beyond fixed entitlements; TDHP provided a combination of cash with individual support to help with the transition from benefits to work.

Some of the innovations involved innovations in public governance. The locality approach to unemployment for example involved city-wide support, localised decision-making and encouraged the third sector to participate. The BMHT involved a closer relationship between the public and private sector.

There are features that point to the links between the innovations and post-traditional welfare concepts, for example the labour market innovations described here are examples of an enabling welfare state with their focus on individual strengths and the YEER project in integrating economic and social development through stimulating entrepreneurialism, social enterprise and start-ups, is an example of a social investment perspective on public welfare.

Researching innovation and change on the local level: The importance of the local context

The local context is of central importance and local welfare policies in Birmingham had been underpinned by a focus on community cohesion, devolution or localism and social inclusion over the past few years. Politically there was overall consistency of references and values and agreement on social problems. There was a slightly different approach to solutions but social policy was developed through a largely consensus-oriented approach.

Birmingham was viewed as having non-conformity "built into its DNA" and a history of looking at different ways to deal with social issues. Local stakeholders believed there was a tradition of supporting unorthodox ideas. However, there was little opportunity for individuals or smaller organisations to develop innovations without the support of local government who saw themselves as an "enabler, a policymaker and a funder".

Researching the role of innovations in local politics and governance

In terms of impact, all innovations were perceived as successful by local stakeholders. The labour market approach and projects were evaluated as part of a review of the wider funding stream, which included measurement against targets set and the views of those involved were captured. Some of the projects received positive attention from other local areas and from central government or won awards from national bodies.

There is little evidence to suggest that the innovation ideas were adopted from elsewhere, the small-scale projects identified a need (for example YEER conducted focus groups with young people) and designed a service to meet that need. The IES element of the locality approach came out of a national review of skills and Birmingham was one of the trial areas for the model initiated by central government (who then continued with it to underpin the approach to unemployment). The focus on local areas and involving the community had more to do with learning from the implementation of other central government programmes in the city such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund than ideas from elsewhere.

UK

Birmingham

Some of the projects were perceived as a success but were still vulnerable; once grant funding was withdrawn, there was no mainstreaming of services. One of the organisations that delivered one of the projects exists, but is no longer funded to deliver the project; however, another went into administration after 30 years of delivering services in Birmingham. The locality approach to unemployment continues in some areas but not as originally intended due to a reduction in neighbourhood resources. **The employment-based projects were intended to be time-limited, pilot projects and were small in scale, which meant the opportunity for scaling up was always going to be limited.** In terms of legacy, the projects are part of best practice guidance produced by the local strategic partnership for the design, delivery and learning from new projects. The benefit support and the home-building projects continue but these have local authority involvement in their direct delivery.

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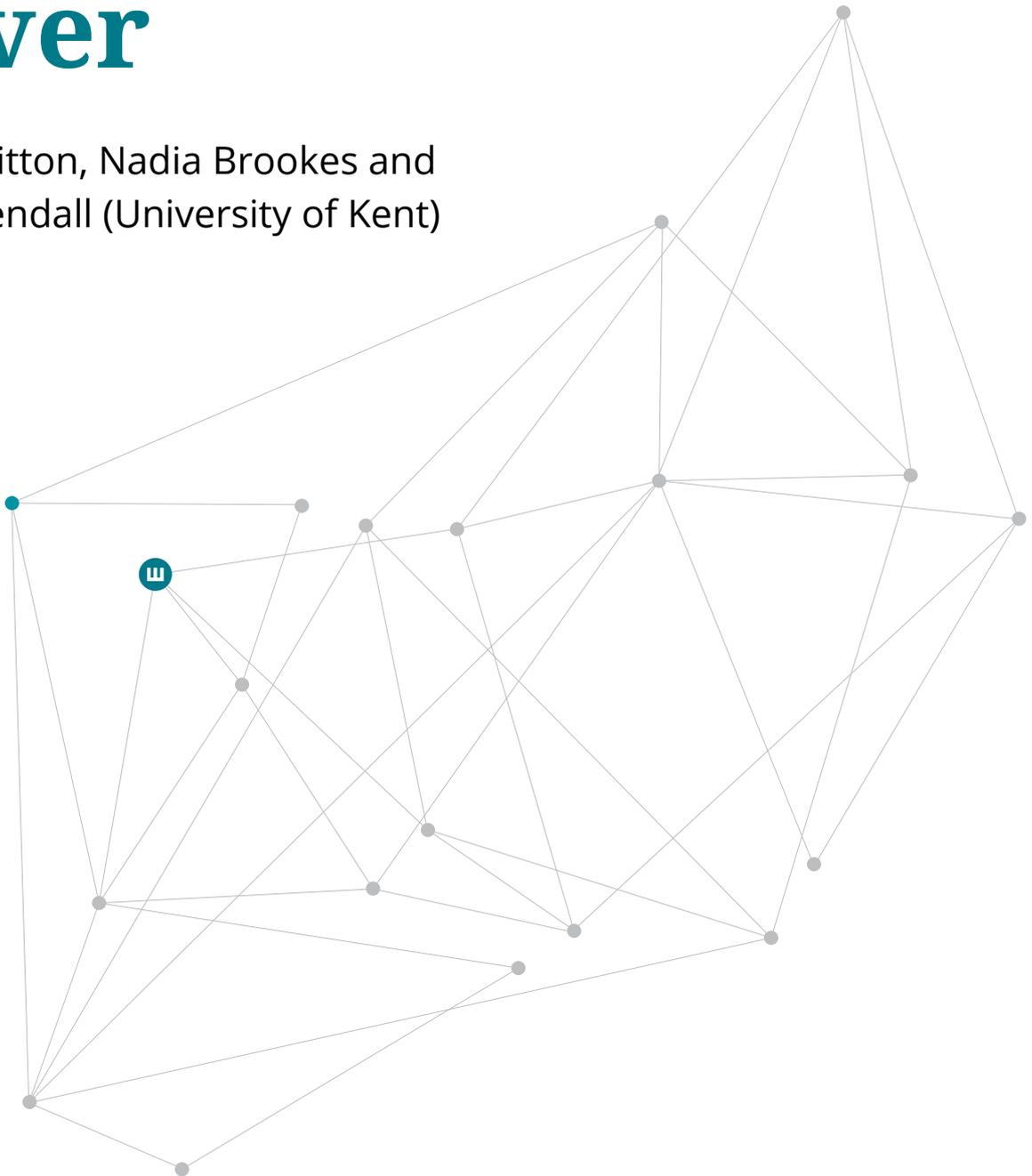
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UK

United Kingdom

Dover

Lavinia Mitton, Nadia Brookes and
Jeremy Kendall (University of Kent)



Introduction

Local background of the social innovations

Keywords:

Child care
Community development
Enabling
Participation
Partnership

Public and professional debates about growth and regeneration

Across all the examples of social innovation presented here, a consensus emerged among officials and policymakers about the importance of economic growth to Dover District Council (DDC) and the importance of the Council to the growth agenda. The key word used by officials and politicians in Dover in describing their general values and policy orientation is *regeneration*. A drive for regeneration has been the main focus of the local “welfare system” and is the first strategic priority of the Council’s *Corporate Plan*¹. The aim is not only to *physically* regenerate the area, but also to ensure all residents access *economic* benefits. In the concept of “regeneration” housing and employment opportunities are intricately linked. Indeed, what characterises the underlying dominant approach in Dover is that plans in both these policy fields need to be addressed together.

Business regulation, street cleaning, community safety and planning are all critical to creating a business-friendly environment, and lie in the hands of local authorities. Councils are well placed to co-ordinate and broker local resources, and bring together residents, businesses and different public sector agencies to work towards a common goal. The Council’s response has been to make tackling regeneration “the priority of the Council in terms of major projects, investment and partnership working”². The key orientations and values to note in this statement are *major and partnership*.

Context for public services

Even before the recession, services for which local authorities are responsible were struggling to respond to changing expectations and demographic shifts. The UK government has perceived the crisis in public finances to be deep and urgent. Public services in England are facing the stark reality of needing to decide what to cut. The current financial climate has increased the pressure on locally organised services and made the demand for new solutions even more pressing.

The conclusion of a recent address given by the Leader of DDC Cllr Paul Watkins to members of the Cabinet was that: “Decisions about the most effective use of resources, targeting the most needed areas and responding to residents’ aspirations continues to be a challenging agenda”³. The Council is facing a changing local government environment with new partnerships

1 DDC (2012). Corporate Plan 2012-16. Available from: <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/CorporatePlan2012-2016.pdf>

2 Dover Pride (2006). Memorandum by Dover Pride (CT 29). House of Commons Select Committee on Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Written Evidence. Available from: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cm06pm/1023/1023we30.htm>

3 East Kent Mercury, July 12, 2012, No money, so it’s over to you...

and alternative ways of working and a shift *from councils directly delivering a multitude of services to an environment of enabling others*, where appropriate, to deliver services for themselves. Cllr Watkins said:

*The government's spending plans require public sector organisations to consider changes to the way that local services are delivered ... Over the next few years, we are facing a changing local government environment with new partnerships and alternative ways of working and a shift from councils directly delivering a multitude of services*⁴.

Many in government at all levels believe that the challenges faced call for a rapid expansion of the role of innovative civil society organisations, social enterprises and other non-traditional providers in a market for public services. Such a radical change is being hastened by the opening up of contracts to provide public services to a greater range of providers and the emergence of new forms of finance, including social finance, philanthropic and commercial investment.

In consequence, the other notable feature of the local welfare system in Dover is the debate about how to deliver the Council's priorities of growth, jobs and investment in an environment of ongoing financial constraints, the national government's Big Society agenda and the need for establish alternatives to Council-delivered services.

For example, the Council's *Corporate Plan 2008-20* stated that role of the Council in respect of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) would seek to deliver services in different ways, including devolving services to the VCS and others⁵. It stated: "We have been working closely with partners to support, enable and encourage development and enterprise"⁶. "Partnership working" has more than one definition in the context of the Council's relationship with the VCS. The nature of the relationship depends on how the Council works with the organisation, such as whether it was the commissioner of a service or providing support and expertise to another group. This way of working raises a number of issues. One potential risk is that of an alternative provider defaulting on service delivery.

4 East Kent Mercury, July 12, 2012, No money, so it's over to you...

5 DDC (2010). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held on Wednesday 17 November 2010 at the Council Offices, Whitfield at 6.00 pm.

6 DDC (2012). Corporate Plan 2012-16. Available from: <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/CorporatePlan2012-2016.pdf>

The support the Council offers to the VCS for activities, other than funding the provision of services, is primarily administrative support to organisations using the expertise developed by the authority in delivering its own projects. This can include assisting in the development of constitutions for VCS groups, assisting in the completion of funding applications, and attending meetings. The Council has also taken steps to involve the VCS by being a partner in the Dover and District Compact, which represented local groups and public bodies working together to achieve objectives for the local community⁷. The Compact provided the Council with a greater understanding of how the VCS worked and provided a focus for corporate strategic awareness in involving the community and voluntary sector⁸.

Approach to social innovation

Inequality, whilst receiving less attention than regeneration, does have some priority. In 2006 the Council identified the general issues facing Dover then as including "high levels of deprivation"⁹. Their diagnosis at that time was that "the town is suffering from lack of investment that has led to the high levels of deprivation within its urban ward." The Council's *Annual Monitoring Report 2010-11* showed there had been an almost doubling in the number of areas that are within the 20 per cent most disadvantaged in England. It was felt by the Council that, "The cause and impacts of the increase in the number of most disadvantaged areas in the District needs to be investigated further"¹⁰.

Still, the overall direct strategy has been to bring economic growth to Dover, rather than expanding support to individuals with services and financial assistance beyond statutory and national government services. So, whilst a larger council might be able to build on its reach into local communities, particularly

7 DDC (2010). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held on Wednesday 17 November 2010 at the Council Offices, Whitfield at 6.00 pm.

8 DDC (2010). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held on Wednesday 17 November 2010 at the Council Offices, Whitfield on at 6.00 pm.

9 Dover Pride (2006). Memorandum by Dover Pride (CT 29). House of Commons Select Committee on Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Written Evidence. Available from: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmmodpm/1023/1023we30.htm>

10 DDC (2012). Agenda Item No 13. Dover District Annual Monitoring Report. Meeting and Date: Cabinet - 12 February 2012 Report of Mike Dawson, Director of Regeneration and Development.

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Lavinia Mitton, Nadia Brookes
and Jeremy Kendall

through its housing and social care services, which make it well placed to broker links between job seekers and innovative programmes aimed at the unemployed, Dover has not had the capacity to do so in a big way. The overall political focus is to attract business, new residents, and tourists to the area. The underlying values have been summed up as follows:

Everyone (communities, public services, local businesses and individuals) has been affected by the national economic downturn. It is therefore important to focus on economic recovery and growth and continue attracting and enabling inward investment to the district, to support the creation of local jobs, and aim to keep wealth locally to see our district grow and thrive¹¹.

Concepts such as “reducing inequalities”, “social cohesion” and “social inclusion” have not been recurrent in the public discourse in the last 10 years, except in the field of housing, perhaps because of the Council’s limited resources. In housing, the Council wants to see delivery of more affordable homes, as well as improving the condition of existing homes, addressing inequality, and enabling vulnerable people access to quality housing to live independently.

However, despite the constraints on direct activities by the Council, it clearly favours social innovations that target “social cohesion” at the “local level”, although they are not using that vocabulary in discourse. The social innovations with most high profile and pro-active Council involvement right now outside of housing policy aim to raise aspirations, educational attainment and skills. Thus the Council’s position is that “training and education is linked to economic growth” rather than a direct social cohesion or social mobility agenda.

The approach adopted is one of an “enabling role working with local employers and training providers to identify skills shortages to meet local business needs and improve access to local job opportunities.”¹² These have included working with the Homes and Communities Agency and Hadlow College to develop the Betteshanger Colliery and Fowlmead Country Park sites as a Sustainable Futures Campus (a mixed use educational, employment and tourism facility) to secure the long-term future of the area

and working with partners to enable and facilitate a training centre of excellence for the marine skills sector¹³.

Other social concerns have included, and continue to include, health, partly because the long-term health problems encountered by former miners are well known and Dover has been no exception to this. In view of such statistics as life expectancy, which is 8 years lower for men and 2.3 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Dover compared to the least deprived areas, and the statistically significant relationship between living in the poorest wards in Dover and the likelihood of having an urgent hospital admission, the Council intends to address health outcomes in the district in future¹⁴. Local government can have an impact on health through sports, open space, housing, planning, social care and a range of other services. The Council has been working hard to input into planning the right services for the Dover communities by, for example, creating in partnership a local Health and Well-Being Board to identify health and social care needs and improve health outcomes¹⁵.

The social innovations selected in Dover

This document outlines three social innovations from Dover. The first two described - Aylesham Neighbourhood Project (ANP) Family Learning and Happy Feet Pre-school – are run by the VCS. The third innovation – East Kent Housing (EKH) – is an example of improvement in council services brought about by reorganisation.

ANP and Happy Feet Pre-school offer services in all three policy fields that are the focus of the WILCO project, i.e. housing, employment, and child care. Indeed, the most innovative and successful aspect of their work is precisely that they recognise that improving the circumstances of an individual frequently involves improving the well-being of the whole family. Often this can best be achieved by giving support with a number of inter-related issues ranging from unsatisfactory housing conditions, to low literacy of the adults in the family, to problems managing children’s behaviour and delayed child development milestones.

13 DDC (2012). State of the District 2012. Available from: <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/StateoftheDistrict2012.pdf>

14 DDC (2012). State of the District 2012. Available from: <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/StateoftheDistrict2012.pdf>

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12 DDC (2012). State of the District 2012. Available from: <http://www.dover.gov.uk/Corporate-Information/PDF/StateoftheDistrict2012.pdf>

The other important component of success that is shared by these two social innovations is that they are seen by their clients as separate from council-run or national government-run services (e.g. social work, JobCentre Plus, or the Work Programme), which the service users may have had bad experiences with.

The descriptions in this document are based on interviews with staff working in the services, local politicians, and district and county council officials.

In summary, the recurrent patterns and features of the innovations ANP and Happy Feet Pre-School are that they are services that:

- > Offer often fragmented forms of support under one roof.
- > Personalise support in order to address critical situations affecting the whole family.
- > Involve flexible forms of ad hoc support.
- > Are perceived by users as welcoming and not part of the “establishment”.

The major innovation of EKH is to work beyond the political boundary of the local authority. This demonstrates that a local council area is not always the most logical geographic area over which to plan services.

UK
Dover

Categories
Child and family care

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Family Learning at the ANP

75.1. Short description

Aylesham, near Dover, was affected by the vacuum left by the colliery closure at Snowdown in 1989. From the community perspective, the problems created by the mine closure were compounded by a succession of further setbacks including the closure of the secondary school in Aylesham, closure of the library, a reduction in local bus services and the withdrawal of other community services. The ANP is a voluntary sector organisation. It provides a number of different services under one roof: Family Learning; Family Support advice service; Skills Factory employment and skills training; Small Wonders child care; and a children's centre. This innovative approach can be characterised as holistic services that work together and put clients at ease by being at arm's length from government-run or contracted services.

75.2. The innovation

Established in 2008, the ANP Family Learning service offers families with children and young people from 0-12 years short-term early intervention. They aim to work with families who are experiencing a wide range of issues that should not be long term and can be resolved in a maximum of eight sessions. The issues being experienced include:

- > Low self-esteem (child or parent/carer)
- > Emotional difficulties; Helping a child and family to express their feelings
- > Transitions/loss/change/grief
- > Relationship difficulties within families
- > Social difficulties
- > Parent/carer difficulties in connecting emotionally with their child

Support is provided to:

- > Build upon families' relationship with their child/children
- > Tackle issues that a family is experiencing
- > Provide opportunities for families and children to spend quality time together
- > Advise on issues with toddlers and pre-school children

ANP Family Learning service exemplifies an innovative approach to building local cohesion, which has only emerged in the last 10 years. The strapline of ANP Family Learning is “Making a positive change, together.” Family learning is based on the core belief that families are not only our first and most important teachers, they also teach us the most important things in life, and on the research finding that parental involvement in a child’s learning is more powerful than family background, size of family or level of parental education and, in the primary years, has more impact on attainment than a child’s school. Shaping education and social policy to build positively on this insight is innovative.

The progress of families towards their goals (specific changes) is reviewed during their engagement with the service. After sessions are completed, a closing meeting is held with the worker, referrer, child and family to evaluate and celebrate progress. An overall formal evaluation of the wider positive impact of ANP Family Learning on social cohesion in the surrounding community would be difficult to do because its outcomes include some that are hard to measure and quantify, such as, helping those the furthest away from getting into work; raising aspirations; conscious rejection of “tick-box” approaches to delivering services.

75.3. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

The funding body SEEDA’s community consultation and organisation of public meetings a decade ago uncovered a wide range of views culminating in “total disillusionment with establishment” announcements and processes. It became clear that the biggest challenge was to re-create a framework for engagement and positive community support for future regeneration solutions¹⁶. Practitioners have told us that ANP’s philosophy has achieved this by being at arm’s length from government-run or contracted services. It is also very important that they take into account the overall immediate setting of users and offering a personalised approach of support with a number of issues that may be presenting an obstacle to entering paid work. For

¹⁶ South East England Development Agency (2003). Memorandum by The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) (COA 25). House of Commons Select Committee on Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Written Evidence. Available from: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmselect/cmmodpm/1169/1169we26.htm>

example, problems with family relationships can make work difficult but unlike with ANP, support with this is not typically available on welfare-to-work programmes more narrowly focused on “getting a job”.

ANP Family Learning is a bespoke service to meet service users’ specific needs. The activities are child-centred and include creative activities such as cookery, arts, crafts, painting, drawing, and free play. They often use the “Solihull approach” with a family, which offers guidance on sensitive, effective parenting to help create a better understanding of a child’s behaviour. The support can be delivered at various settings in the community. They do not offer counselling, psychotherapy or therapy.

ANP Family Learning addresses service users by involving every family member. Family learning takes place when family members of all ages are involved together and encourage each other. ANP can help overcome barriers caused by negative associations with traditional or government institutions. This helps to raise aspirations and create a long-term change in the culture of the family and patterns of learning among the service users. However, children and their families need to be willing to make changes, with support.

The *combination* of adults and children taking part *together* is crucial in building resilience in families, in creating community well-being, economic prosperity and social cohesion. A basic assumption of family learning programmes is that reaching both generations of service users can simultaneously can help break the “cycle of disadvantage.” In this regard, such programmes are an excellent example of “joined-up” policymaking, in which it is understood that children’s cognitive and non-cognitive development cannot be addressed in isolation, by focusing on the child alone, but the *family* needs to be involved.

In the past families interested in participating could refer themselves. However, in time there was some perception that the service should target its limited resources on those families most needing extra support. Consequently, access to the service is now through referral from other agencies, followed by an assessment by a team member. If appropriate, four sessions are offered initially, with the possibility of another four sessions if goals have not yet been reached. If a family and child require longer term or more specialist support, they may be referred to a different agency.

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75.4. Internal organisation and modes of working

ANP is a VCS initiative that has come from community development workers rather than the local authority. It is not run by outside professionals. The working of the organisation is fairly conventional. Funding originally came from a grant. However, grants are now harder to come by and the project has had to become more targeted. It is innovating by generating income from selling services as a social enterprise, such as cooking and sewing workshops.

75.5. Impact on the governance of local welfare system

Because of the current economic environment for public services DDC do not have resources for new, non-statutory, services. Their support consists of approval, enabling, partnership and facilitation, but not financial support or direct involvement. ANP is very much a bottom-up initiative from the local community. The former miners had a culture and history of trade unionism that meant they were willing to be led by community leaders with a vision, especially when "up against it". ANP has a genuine use and role outside of council or government-run services. In addition, ANP is not working by contracts, which they have rejected out of concern about penalties if targets not met.

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Happy Feet Pre-School

76.1. Short description

The Happy Feet Pre-school is a registered charity located in one of Dover town's more underprivileged neighbourhoods. The pre-school is in a very deprived area and the surrounding area suffers from social and economic problems. There is a lot of unemployment, drug addiction, alcoholism and so on. Anti-social behaviour and vandalism are problem in the area.

The Happy Feet Pre-school is based at The Ark, a Christian church-run centre that hosts a number of different activities under one roof. For example, there are groups for mums and toddlers, health visitors, and appointments can be made with the local MP. They are on the same site as Tower Hamlets Children's Centre. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of staff have child care qualifications. The Ark generates some income by hiring out its facilities and by employing business practices. It is led by a committee and the core beliefs and values that underlie the approach of the service and its staff are Christian ones. It offers an approach to improving child development outcomes in a deprived neighbourhood by supporting whole families, delivered by a third sector faith organisation. As well as early years education, support is offered in: adult literacy, child protection, and help with any crisis.

In their own words: "We always go the extra mile, don't get extra money, but to be working here you need to have a real passion for the children here and to support the families." Happy Feet Pre-School has been formally inspection by government body OFSTED, although the wider family support it provides has not been formally evaluated (and would in any case be hard to measure)¹⁷.

76.2. The innovation

The innovative aspect of the pre-school is that the staff work to support the whole family and to form very strong professional working relationships with other agencies that may be involved in supporting the family. The pre-school is trusted by families who are wary of government-run or contracted services. The work of the pre-school is based on evidence about child development. It is now established that if by the time a child starts go to school they have not been adequately stimulated and had full learning opportunities there are parts of the brain that "shut off".

¹⁷ OFSTED (2011). Happy Feet Pre-School: Inspection report for early years provision. Available from: http://www.thearkdover.com/happy-feet/images/downloads/Ofsted_Report_2011.pdf

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76.3. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

A large part of the success of Happy Feet can be attributed to the way that the staff can work with the wider needs of the whole family in their social context. The involvement of the staff goes beyond child care and is at a personal level. For example, they actively help with the process of getting the children into the better surrounding primary schools, and other types of form-filling if the parents are not able to do this. The help given has even extended to activities such as helping a household to tidy junk from their garden. They do not want to just “tick a box” because they would see it as shallow.

The Happy Feet staff are often the professionals most aware of when families have support needs because the child is in their care for several hours a week. Staff may initiate interventions. Staff of other agencies, on the other hand, may only visit the family for relatively brief periods. Pre-school staff, on the other hand, know how the children behave, what they are like when they are dropped off, when they are picked up, what their lunch box looks like, and how they are presented.

The pre-school is trusted by families who are wary of government-run or contracted services. Happy Feet often find that social services' support is not entirely helpful because they are not doing what they should be doing, or they are not seeing the bigger picture, and can advocate on behalf of a family.

76.4. Internal organisation and modes of working

Description of the setting

There are about 55 children aged from 2 years on the roll. Happy Feet is in receipt of funding for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. It is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Child-care Register to look after children aged over 5 years. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The pre-school opens 5 days a week term time (38-39 weeks of the year). Sessions are from 8.45 am to 12.00 pm on Mondays and Fridays, and from 8.45 am to 3.30 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. There are 16 staff, including the manager, supervisor, an

administrator, cover staff and parent helpers. The majority of staff have child care qualifications to at least level 2, and several have qualifications to levels 3 and 4 and above (i.e. degree level).

Happy Feet is different from neighbouring business-run nurseries. Others provide full day care and are part of a chain of businesses. Working class parents from a deprived area cannot afford to pay for that type of full day care. Whilst other nearby nurseries do provide spaces for 3 and 4 year olds on the government voucher scheme, they are tighter in what they offer. In consequence, a lot of parents prefer to come to Happy Feet. At Happy Feet some parents do pay for a few extra sessions, but the majority of the families stick to the funded sessions.

Motivations and purpose of the staff

The working culture at Happy Feet is influenced by Christian faith. Happy Feet is part of a church, although it is government funded and is inspected by OFSTED as other pre-schools are. In understanding the help that Happy Feet gives to the community it is important to appreciate that it is in essence a church. The managers are Christians. Whilst they exercise equal opportunities in employing people, it is at heart a faith community. One of the Ministers said:

part of our belief in God and the world is that we want God to be explained to people. We in this group of believers we believe that if you do it forcefully, people don't listen and it's not our style. So our style is to be amongst the community, whether it's the pre-school, whether it's the coffee morning, whether it's business hire. So ... the whole way we run is about meshing with the community, we would use a bible phrase like trying to be salt and light. So the pre-school is a department of the church, just as we have a youth department and another department. So in our thinking the whole time is just about working in that way.

The Ark has different groups where people come, and a lot of its root energy is about making stepping stones that lead towards God. It is not about “bible bashing”, but there is a motivation about touching a community. Many times people enjoy the pre-school and they have no idea it is connected to a church.

Skills of the staff

The personal qualities of the staff are critical. The extra services are not just an overflow of the pre-school but depend on *who* the Operations Manager is. She has invested her life into the pre-school: it is like a vocation for her,

And so part of our motivation and our belief in life is actually about linking and sharing with others, and so when Sharon talks about like helping parents it's because she's lovely and kind and skilful ... it's hard enough for Sharon running the pre-school, but when people ask questions about their primary school I'm really proud that parents have bothered to ask Sharon about that.

Management structure

The organisational structure has been quite flexible according to the skills and ambitions that the Operations Manager has, and the skills and ambitions that the Business Manager has, because the organisation is able to be a bit malleable. The leadership structure is committee-led, and in that committee are five or six people. That committee is then answerable to the leadership team of the church but because of the number of people, and a shared interest, they are able to make sometimes quite big changes in a relatively short period of time. The pre-school is owned by the church and so all of the people on the committee are stakeholders in the church, for example Minsters, Vicars and attenders of the congregation. Their thinking is the pre-school is a very significant part of the church and needs to be managed by people who have an awareness of the church and the pre-school. Their business health is because they are able to make changes quickly. Part of their success is being able to respond to growth, e.g. new equipment has been bought.

76.5. Impact on the governance of local welfare system

Child care providers (including Happy Feet) are funded by the local authority to provide free places. In England, the government funds free part-time early education for children aged 3 or 4, and in some cases if they are aged 2. It is intended to prepare children for school. The places are available for 15 hours per week, for 38 weeks per year. The government has

gradually been introducing free early education to some 2-year-olds based on the child's circumstances or on the family income.

Last year Happy Feet decided that the pre-school was so successful that they wanted to expand it. It was doubled and used another room, which was a major decision because it meant it could not use that room for business hires. So, the pre-school has recently moved into two separate rooms for children at different stages of development because they felt the need. They were taking more and more very young 2 year olds who were more like 18 month olds in their development in the same room as children who go to school. The staff working with such a broad range of children found it hard to ensure that every child was catered for because the little ones are very needy, and the older ones do not have enough patience.

However, whilst the government made funding available for 2-year-old children, the support in making changes to provision to cater for such young children has not been in place. Consequently, Happy Feet had to set up the new room "off their own back" with its own money, and had to make its own adaptations. Whereas previously under the Labour government grants were available, such as one that was provided in 2010 for a sum of 25,000 pounds sterling to completely recreate the outside play area, there is no such money available at the moment. Instead, Sure Start paid for Happy Feet to join an organisation called Treasure Chest for a year and this enabled them to borrow a lot of equipment and furniture for the new room. Happy Feet will have to apply for a grant for furniture at the end of the year.

Further, funding for staff to professionally develop themselves has been cut too, so staff will have to fund more themselves.

Because of the current economic environment for public services, the Council does not have resources for new, non-statutory, services. There is little local government involvement other than funding available to all child care settings. Happy Feet is an initiative by a local faith community, and such initiatives are generally being encouraged by the national government. Communities Secretary Eric Pickles has urged faith groups to make use of new powers in the government's *Localism Bill* to strengthen their arm

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in playing an active and visible role in society¹⁸. He is committed to giving faith groups new freedoms to act in their communities, including the running of public services. Happy Feet is a good example of the expertise and enthusiasm that can be found in this sector, which has inspired his approach.

Working with other agencies

Happy Feet also benefits from being in a building next to a Sure Start Children's Centre. Happy Feet work closely with council services, such as the Sure Start Children's Centre, and VCS organisations such as Home Start. They feel this is necessary because they have moved away from just providing child education. They are working on the principle that in order to support the child you actually have to do things to support the families:

it's very helpful having Sure Start and Home Start here, which I find more beneficial than maybe other pre-schools that don't have them right on their doorstep. Often I can walk straight out of my office straight into another office, make a referral straight away and by the end of that day it's gone off and within a week that person has contacted the parent and they've managed to get help with the rent arrears on their housing and something sorted out for them.

The Happy Feet staff attend a lot of social services meetings involving statutory agencies because there are several children known to social services, three children in local authority care, several children with additional speech and language support needs, and children with disabilities including a blind child and a deaf child. However, social workers are overloaded, which can make it hard to have a productive relationship with the statutory social services.

¹⁸ Department for Communities and Local Government. (2011). New powers will put faith groups at the centre of their communities. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-powers-will-put-faith-groups-at-the-centre-of-their-communities>

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EKH

77.1. Short description

In 2002, Inspectors classed the Housing Management Service provided by DDC as poor, with poor prospects for improvement. The inspection team gave the service no stars. The rating may be from 0-3, where 0 is poor and 3 is excellent. Action was needed to do more to make the Council's homes meet the Decent Homes Standard set by the government. In 2005, the four neighbouring councils of Dover, Canterbury, Shepway and Thanet each carried out an appraisal of the long-term viability of their council housing. While all four authorities could achieve and sustain the Decent Homes Standard and had viable business plans, concerns remained that the relatively small stock holding of each authority would limit any ambitions to improve services and to improve opportunities for council tenants and leaseholders.

Not-for-profit companies set up by a local authority to manage its housing stock known as "arms-length management organisations" (ALMOs) have demonstrated that they offer a better service to tenants than any other form of council housing management. The ALMO programme started in 2001 and there are around 68 ALMOs in the UK, which manage more than one million council homes across 64 local authorities. ALMOs manage over 700,000 council homes. They achieve higher inspection ratings than local authority managed housing or housing associations. There were only 26 "three star" housing authorities in the country, of which the majority were ALMO's and none were councils¹⁹. East Kent Housing (EKH) came into being on 1 April 2011. It is an ALMO owned by the four councils of Dover, Canterbury, Shepway and Thanet.

EKH is aimed at saving money while improving services to tenants. EKH is responsible for the management and maintenance of 18,000 homes owned by the four councils. EKH does not: decide who is allocated housing, make homelessness decisions, set the housing strategy, manage the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), or decide what improvements are made to the housing stock. These functions all remain with DDC.

77.2. The innovation

The innovation behind EKH is that it aims to achieve economies of scale by operating cross local authority boundary working, and was the first instance in the country of four authorities sharing a single housing company, or "super ALMO". EKH differs from other ALMOs in that it is the first that serves more than one local authority.

¹⁹ DDC (2011). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday 14 December 2011 at 6.00 pm.

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ty. As such, it is seen as being particularly innovative and has attracted national attention as a potential model for future shared services.

Although there were initial set-up costs, with Dover's share estimated at 237,000 pounds sterling, it was hoped the second year would make modest savings of 44,000 pounds sterling for DDC and the first 5 years would save the four councils 1.5 million pounds sterling in overall housing costs between them. The ALMO should begin to deliver its most significant savings from year 5, when the longer-term maintenance and service contracts could be harmonised between the four authorities²⁰. To date EKH has reduced running costs across the whole of East Kent by about 300,000 pounds sterling a year (about 86,000 pounds sterling in Dover), has made procurement savings by about 900,000 pounds sterling a year (340,000 pounds sterling in Dover), and has increased rental income to the councils through improved performance. That is to say, it has been re-letting empty properties faster, bringing in revenue of around 122,000 pounds sterling a year (34,000 pounds sterling in Dover).

Its claims to success are based on statistically robust annual surveys of tenants' satisfaction. Statistics place EKH in the top quartile overall when compared to other ALMOs. Its performance in other business areas is also measured, e.g. rent arrears. Hoped-for savings have been made. So far, these have mainly been on payroll, but there are future prospects for economies of scale in maintenance and administration.

20 DDC (2011). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday 23 February 2011 at 6.00 pm.

77.3. Conceptions and ways of addressing users

Improving the way EKH communicates with tenants and learns about what they really think about the service is a key element of its work. Tenants have been involved in a number of ways. For example, DDC took into consideration that of the 51 per cent of tenants who voted on the issue of the transfer of housing management functions to EKH, 72 per cent voted in favour of the transfer²¹. Tenant groups were sceptical at first, but that officers had won them over by listening and taking on board their suggestions, although it might take some time to deliver the improvements²². Neighbourhood managers are expected to play a significant role in working with tenants to identify and deliver environmental improvements. A Dover editorial panel was set up to review all EKH communications with tenants to ensure they were as clear and tenant-friendly as possible. The "You said, we did" section newsletter was cited as one way in which EKH communicated how it responded to tenant concerns²³.

EKH is run by its own Board. The main function of the Board is to oversee the strategic development of the organisation, ensure effective financial management

21 DDC (2011). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday 23 February 2011 at 6.00 pm.

22 KCC (2011). Minutes of a meeting of the East Kent (Joint Scrutiny) Committee held in the Council Chamber, Dover District Council on Tuesday, 22 March 2011.

23 DDC (2011). Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday 11 April 2012 at 6.00 pm.

and ensure that the organisation delivers its obligations to the four councils and their tenants. The Board has 12 members, four councillors (one nominated from each council), four tenants (selected by the tenant representative bodies in each local authority area) and four independent members, selected through an open recruitment process, involving councillor and tenant board members. The Board initially meets bi-monthly. Board meetings are open to the public and agendas, papers, minutes and the forward plan are published on the EKH website.

Area Boards are a critical part of the EKH governance structure and are designed to ensure that there remains local accountability to tenants, leaseholders and councillors. There are four local area boards, one for each authority, and these provide scrutiny of EKH based on the tenants' priorities. Within Dover, these comprise the Dover/Deal and Sandwich/Rural tenants' groups. Each group elects six tenant representatives and one leaseholder representative who form the Area Board, together with two councillor nominees and a nominee from the main EKH Board. Area Board meetings are open to all tenants and councillors to attend. Details of meetings, venues, agendas and minutes are on the EKH website. As well as an Area Board structure, EKH has developed other ways in which tenants can hold the organisation accountable and has introduced Tenant Inspectors and a Tenant Scrutiny panel in line with the current regulatory requirements for social landlords.

77.4. Internal organisation and modes of working

DDC remains the owner and legal landlord of the council housing stock in the district and continues to set rents. Tenants' and leaseholders' rights and responsibilities are unchanged as they remain tenants and leaseholders of DDC. Councils have kept responsibility for all strategic housing functions such as housing strategy, homelessness, housing advice, the management of the housing register including Choice Based Lettings, private sector housing, and the management of the Housing Revenue Account. DDC retains responsibility for the policy that determines how council homes are allocated and for determining the terms and conditions of its tenancy agreement which EKH undertakes to enforce.

EKH, on the other hand, manages and maintains council homes across the four councils involved in areas including: repairing and improving tenants' homes, managing grass cutting, gardening contracts, cleaning and maintenance of communal areas, collecting rent, and helping tenants who are having difficulty in paying, and ensuring tenants stick to their tenancy agreements. EKH supports DDC with regard to the delivery of its strategic housing objectives.

The configuration of staffing was critical in delivering both an effective and improved service and reducing costs in line with expectations of the councils. Two hundred and thirty posts transferred from the four councils to EKH in April 2011. The Board appointed a Chief Executive and other senior management posts within the organisation. Two members of the management team, the Head of Corporate Services and the Head of Asset Management were both former employees of DDC.

Certain principles underpin the innovative restructuring, the most important being that core frontline services like housing management and repairs will remain locally based. Other functions have potential for being centralised, e.g. debt recovery, leasehold management etc.

77.5. Impact on the governance of local welfare system

EKH aims to achieve economies of scale by operating cross district boundary working, and was the first instance in the country of four authorities sharing a single housing company, or "super ALMO". It follows a wider trend in smaller councils to explore sharing other management staff roles within the council and services such as the collection of council tax, the administration of housing benefit, ICT technical support and customer services, with other district councils.

EKH works closely with DDC. A comprehensive performance-reporting framework has been developed by EKH. Formal quarterly monitoring meetings take place involving the portfolio holders for Housing and Community and Finance and senior officers in the council including the Housing and Community Manager. Within DDC, performance is monitored through the Housing Improvement Board (HIB) which includes the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing, Community and Youth and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources and Performance.

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HIB scrutinises performance reports produced by EKH and meets with the Chief Executive of EKH and senior managers on a quarterly basis. In addition, there are regular meetings between senior managers of the two organisations including meetings between the Head of Finance at EKH and finance staff at DDC. The Chief executive of EKH also attends quarterly meetings with the Council's Corporate Management Team. The Management team of EKH and the client officers from the four councils meet quarterly. Key areas of the monitoring include, Performance Plan (e.g. rent arrears, re-lets, repairs targets); Delivery Plan; and Managed Budgets (repairs budgets).

Conclusions

Sustainability

For the ANP sustainability is potentially difficult. The relatively large grants from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust that ANP benefited from in the past are no longer available. Instead loans are being offered, but projects such as ANP are wary of entering into these types of obligations. Similarly, they feel that operating by contracts to deliver employment services can entail too much risk. Instead, ANP are constantly applying for uncertain grants e.g. Big Lottery. As grants are now harder to come by and the project has had to become more targeted on certain users. It is innovating by generating income from selling services as a social enterprise, such as cooking and sewing workshops.

For Happy Feet Pre-School, sustainability prospects are good. There is local demand for paid-for child care services. The organisation generates income by hiring premises out to other groups, conferences, etc. However, there is some uncertainty about whether there may be less national government funding of child care in the future. This could lead to loss of workforce skills in the sector.

EKH can be expected to be sustainable as long as savings and improved service can be demonstrated.

Diffusion

The ANP "Family Learning" lifelong learning aspect of their work is very clearly the product of diffusion of an idea. It is a concept based on evidence of research in 1990s demonstrating the intergenerational effects of poor literacy and numeracy. For example, *A Fresh Start - Improving Literacy and Numeracy* highlighted the effectiveness of family literacy, language and numeracy programmes in engaging parents and tackling poor skills in families²⁴. This was one contributory factor that led to the government identifying parents as a priority group and promoted the expansion of family literacy, language and numeracy programmes²⁵. Family Literacy and Family Numeracy demonstration programmes were expanded with funding from the Standards Fund in the late 1990s, which came from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to local authorities with support from the Basic Skills Agency (BSA). In 2000, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was set up to fund Adult and Community Learning. The DfES sent Standards Fund money through the LSC and funding for family learning commenced in 2002²⁶.

EKH aims to achieve economies of scale and improve services to tenants by operating cross-district boundary working, and was the first instance in the country of four authorities sharing a single housing company, or "super ALMO". As the first example of local authorities sharing a housing company in UK, it is not itself a product of diffusion. As such, it is seen as being particularly innovative and has attracted national attention as a potential model for future shared services. Similar arrangements have been developed in Cornwall and other councils in Shropshire and Co. Durham have shown an interest in what the East Kent councils have achieved. However, the principles underlying EKH are influenced by the diffusion of the present national government's nudge towards local authorities to collaborate more such as in purchasing supplies, in sharing senior officials, and in sharing administrative functions (e.g. the collection of council tax, the administration of housing benefit, ICT technical support and customer services).

24 DfEE (1999). *A Fresh Start - Improving Literacy and Numeracy*

25 DfEE (2001). *Skills for Life: the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills.*

26 NIACE (2006). Briefing sheet 74: *Family Learning in Children's Centres, Schools and the Community: literacy, language and numeracy and the broader offer for families.*

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Welfare innovations
at the local level
in favour of cohesion



**EUROPEAN
COMMISSION**



**SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME**