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Rapid Evidence Appraisal of the Current State of Co-creation in Ten European Countries

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Co-creation of Service Innovation in Europe (CoSIE)

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1. Introduction



1. Introduction

1.1 Co-creation in the public sector

Co-creation and social innovation have been described as ‘magic’ key-concepts, which seem to be pervasive among both academics and practitioners (Pollitt and Hupe, 2011: 642). During recent years, both concepts have been embraced as new modernisation or reform strategies for the public sector (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). The main purpose of this embracement is to change the top-down approach, where the government (central or local) and the state take the majority of the necessary decisions and the citizens are mainly treated as passive recipients without having a saying in services that have been designed for them.

Public sector has a specific history, starting in the 1970s but mainly during the 1980s, with regard to the involvement of citizens in policy making, policy implementation and service delivery processes (Fugini, Bracci and Sicilia, 2016). Lusch and Vargo (2006) have described co-creation and co-production as two aspects of a more service oriented production process. Following that notion, some authors see both concepts as interchangeable (e.g. Rosentraub and Warren, 1987; Gebauer, Johnson and Enquist, 2010). Others define co-creation as such that there is no distinction with the used definitions of co-production (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015).

As a consequence, a crucial question is what is co-creation? Waller (2017:1) describes the following incident taking place in 19th century London in order to exemplify the difficulty in defining co-creation. Fire engines needed 22 people to manually pump the water for the hoses. Rather than take a bus-load of pumpers with them, the firemen used to recruit them from the crowd of onlookers at the scene, literally crowdsourcing. Pumpers were paid one shilling for the first hour and six pence (half a shilling) for subsequent hours. Was this co-production, co-creation, contracting-out, outsourcing, citizen participation or volunteering? Was this a public service, an open government service or public sector innovation? Was the fire engine owned and run by the city government or a private company under a private finance initiative? Did any of this matter? This incident gives a first idea of the difficulty to approach and define co-creation in a way that the majority of policy makers, researchers and practitioners would agree.

The participation of citizens in the decision making process is not new and goes back to the prototype of the Athenian democracy, where citizens themselves were deciding on various issues, e.g. how to spend public money. However, through the centuries the role of civil society was considered as very important and became the third sector between the state and the family or the state and the private sector. The above background provides the foundation for co-creation, especially during the last years when the economic crisis probably made it more evident that the public sector can no longer be a top-down authoritative mechanism. As has been also argued (Packer 2013 cited in Nambisan and Nambisan, 2013), governments are not vending machines, with bureaucrats dispensing services, but

resemble a platform, where citizens can build their own apps, interact with one another and come up with their own solutions.

As a consequence, a broader set of imperatives has taken hold for governments to redefine their relationship and nature of engagement with citizens in problem-solving, with the most important being the following (Nambisan and Nambisan, 2013: 8):

- Fiscal austerity that has made it difficult to continue implementing some of the existing resource-intensive business models and problem-solving modes in government;
- The increasing complexity of the problems to be addressed that demands collaborative approaches, not just among the government units, but with external entities as well, particularly with citizens, who are often closest to and possess unique knowledge about the problems they face;
- Finally, the availability of new technologies (e.g., social media) has radically lowered the cost of collaboration and the distance between government agencies and the citizens they serve.

The confluence of the above issues has set the context for redefining the citizens' role in public services, a shift from that of a passive service beneficiary to an active informed partner or, as could be argued, as a co-creator in public service innovation and problem-solving (Nambisan and Nambisan, 2013).

The application of the service-dominant logic and the co-creation of value may present the public sector with a diverse range of innovation-related opportunities. Citizens may prove to be excellent sources of innovation, inspiring ideas in their position as the actual users of services (Bason, 2010; Bessant, 2005; Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). Co-creation not only ensures that the real challenges in the lives of public-service end-users are taken into consideration, but also actually ensures that they serve to guide and structure the involvement of all the internal and external stakeholders critical to implementation and thereby could lead to behavioural change and real social impact (Bason, 2010 cited in Alves, 2013: 674-5).

Based on an analysis of the examples and case studies from the private and the public sector, four distinct roles for citizens in co-creation could be described.

- *As explorer*: citizens can identify, discover, and define emerging and existing problems in public services;
- *As ideator*: citizens can conceptualise novel solutions to well-defined problems in public services;
- *As designer*: citizens can design and/or develop implementable solutions to well-defined problems in public services;
- *As diffuser*: citizens can directly support or facilitate the adoption and diffusion of public service innovations and solutions among well-defined target populations.

These four citizen roles imply different types of contributions in civic problem-solving, different types of government-citizen interactions and relationships, and thereby the need for different types of mechanisms and support infrastructure (Nambisan and Nambisan, 2013: 9-10).

Others (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015) have described three roles of citizens in the co-creation process:

- *citizen as co-implementer of public policy*: where citizens participate in delivering a service;
- *citizen as co-designer*: often, the initiative lies within the public organisation, but citizens decide how the service delivery is to be designed;
- *citizen as co-initiator*: where the public body follows.

The main outcome from the above is that although citizen involvement and participation entered the public sphere in the late 1970s and during the 1980s, it is only in the last 15 years or so that the concept of co-creation has started to attract attention and be implemented more extensively. In that sense, it could be argued that it is a relatively new strategy and that there are different approaches, definitions and implementations in different contexts. However, in many cases the terms seem to be used interchangeably and describe similar characteristics and practices.

1.2 The CoSIE approach

The CoSIE project builds on the idea that public sector innovations (ICT related or not) can best be achieved through the establishment of collaborative partnerships between service providers and service beneficiaries, i.e. public authorities and citizens. The main goal of the project is to contribute to democratic dimensions and social inclusion through co-creating public services by engaging diverse citizen groups and stakeholders in varied public services.

As was stated in the project's proposal, the core of CoSIE lies in co-creation and co-production, which as concepts are often defined similarly. Both involve the active involvement of citizens in public service delivery by creating sustainable partnerships between local authorities and citizens (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). Co-creation is the joint, collaborative, concurrent, peer-like process of producing new value, both materially and symbolically (Galvagno and Dalli, 2014). It can be seen as the voluntary or involuntary involvement of public service users in any of the design, management, delivery and/or evaluation of public services (Osborne, Randor and Strokosch, 2016). The classification that CoSIE takes as a starting point is that of Voorberg, Bekkers, and Tummers (2015), i.e. the three types of involvement mentioned above:

- *citizens as co-implementers of public policy,*
- *citizens as co-designers and*
- *citizens as co-initiators*

CoSIE enhances the public service quality and performance purely by basing the development process on end users' voices and the project takes co-creation to a new level by taking advantage of ICT in the development process. Co-creation can be a fuzzy term and is related to the concepts of personalisation and co-production as well. Co-creation, as it is understood in the CoSIE project, is centred around collective innovation, trailing and experimentation and involves, engages and is led by service users and citizens. Keeping in mind that there is a variety of definitions and terms used with regard to co-creation and acknowledging the need for a more thorough and detailed definition, the above CoSIE approach will be revised and developed in a white paper.





2. Methodology



2. Methodology

The approach used in conducting this research was the Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA). REA is a type of evidence review that aims to provide an informed conclusion on the volume and characteristics of an evidence base, a synthesis of what that evidence indicates and a critical assessment of that evidence. The main purpose was to get a thorough evidence synthesis to inform policy or practice and to answer questions about what is effective and what is not. Ideally this will lead to a robust synthesis of the evidence, with key messages and recommendations acknowledging the limitations of such an endeavour.

In order to accomplish the objectives set for this report and provide answers to the main questions posed by REA, the partners of CoSIE were asked to conduct a rapid evidence research in their country about co-creation in the public sector. After that, they were asked to produce a brief national report describing the field of co-creation in their country and present some exemplary cases of co-creation (maximum 10) according to their own evaluation. The main idea behind that was that each partner has a full image of the situation of co-creation and in that sense each partner is the expert in the field. The countries that contributed in this REA were the following:

	Estonia (EE)		Poland (PL)
	Finland (FI)		Spain (ES)
	Greece (GR)		Sweden (SE)
	Hungary (HU)		The Netherlands (NL) ¹
	Italy (IT)		United Kingdom (GB)

1) Although it was not initially part of this task, the Netherlands also made a brief contribution, bearing in mind that they didn't have any person months allocated for this particular action.

Partners received common guidelines describing where to look for evidence and how to present their findings, but the methodology was basically open and they were free to select the best way to collect the necessary information. Based on the reports they submitted, the main methodological tools were of a qualitative background and included:

- Searching in databases
- Searching on the internet
- Scanning websites of co-creation projects
- Reviewing existing literature
- Reviewing grey literature
- Reviewing legislation
- Reviewing evaluation reports
- Conducting formal or informal face-to-face, via telephone, through email or Skype interviews/discussions with key-persons on co-creation

It is important to stress the fact that since REA is not an exhaustive review, not every case of co-creation in the public sector was collected and presented in each national report and that in order to accomplish the work, partners tried to include cases based on the following criteria for each case:

- Importance of the case
- Co-creation in the public sector
- Use of ICT
- Availability of information
- Access to information

As far as the time frame is concerned, it was decided to focus on recent examples of co-creation, i.e. mainly from 2010 onwards, but in case there were some previous examples, which were considered of importance, these could also be included in each national report.



According to the initial guidelines, the main fields for which partners were asked to provide information, depending, of course, on the availability and accessibility, were the following:

- A brief introduction about co-creation in each country
- The name of the programme/policy
- Time of implementation
- Legal framework
- Any working definition used
- A brief description (e.g. goals, target population, sector of implementation, use of ICT, funding, collaboration between public-private-third sector, etc.)
- The social outcome (expected and/or achieved)
- The main positive aspects
- The main problems/obstacles faced

On the whole, 10 reports of more than 250 pages were collected from all the partners, presenting a total of 42 cases of co-creation.

2.1 Objectives and questions

As mentioned above, the main goal was to implement the method of Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA). The intention was that REA will be used to identify and present co-creation policies in each participating country in order to inform the national co-creation pilots. Through the implementation of REA, this general report on preliminary results has been produced, including the presentation and evaluation of each policy, highlighting the gaps found in the field and the best practices implemented. The main key tasks were the following:

- A rapid search of databases, literature and policies on co-creation on national, regional and/or local level
- A rapid appraisal of the policies found
- Preparing material to inform the national pilots of CoSIE
- Dissemination of appraisal results

The objectives of the REA conducted are described below:

- Identify innovative and key policies of co-creation across the participating countries on a national, regional and/or local level;
- Evaluate the existing data, map the gaps found in the co-creation field and support the following actions of the CoSIE project;
- Summarise the current situation in co-creation in public social services at the European level;
- Provide the pilots with evidence-based support in the development process, in order to have a more effective implementation.

The main research questions for this rapid evidence assessment were the following:

- What is the situation on co-creation in each participating country? (For example, legal framework, working definitions, implementation, etc.)
- In which sectors has co-creation been implemented and since when?
- What are the main positive experiences from the cases already implemented?
- What are the main problems, difficulties and dysfunctions faced during implementation?





3. Results



3. Results

In this section, an effort has been made to present the findings of the appraisal analysis. However, and in order for partners to have a summarised overview of the current situation, a table has been produced including the main results in all the participating countries (see Appendix).

3.1 The field

Although the idea of citizens' engagement and participation in various aspects of public administration is not new, co-creation in the public sector is a concept that, according to the conducted national reports, has been introduced into European societies during the last 10-15 years in some cases, while in others only during the last 3-4 years. Based on the description of the co-creation field presented in each report, the participating countries could be divided into two main categories:

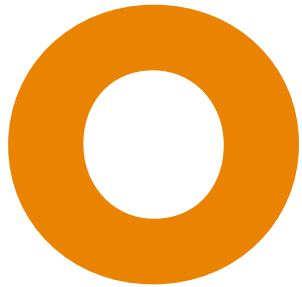
- a) Those in which co-creation is relatively developed (high-medium level) and
- b) Those in which co-creation is under-developed or on its first steps (medium-low level).

The first group (high-medium) of countries includes Finland, Sweden, Italy, the UK and the Netherlands, while the second (medium-low) includes Spain, Hungary, Poland, Greece and Estonia. This kind of categorisation, of course, is not ideal and differences could be found among countries of the same group. Nordic countries, for example, which have a well-established welfare state, seem to have moved already towards the directions of involving citizens in co-design, co-creation and co-production practices. For example, in Finland municipalities seem to play a fundamental role in co-creation.

While in Sweden, an increase has been observed during the last decade with regard to new, innovative, citizen involvement.

On the other hand, countries that have only recently entered the EU, like Poland, Hungary, Estonia, and some older members as well like Spain and Greece, have not yet developed co-creative initiatives in

Finnish public service provision has to a wide extent relied on autonomous municipalities protected by the Finnish constitution. The legitimization of autonomous municipalities is based on citizen participation and democracy. Concerning co-creation initiatives, municipalities have played a major role in introducing different participatory and citizen engagement practices (Finnish report, p. 2).



The idea of improving public service quality by co-creation with citizens as service users, especially in social and health care services, is not new in Sweden, according to the Swedish Association of Local and Regional Authorities (SALAR). Citizens have long been involved in designing, implementing and assessing public services. However, the recent decade has seen an increase in the driving forces for citizen involvement as service co-creators, especially citizens' level of education, access to data, ICTs, individualisation, legislation allowing free choice of service provider and access to evidence-based knowledge (SKL, 2010) (Swedish report, p. 3).

the public sector, at least not to the same level as other countries. In Hungary, for example, the government uses mainly top-down strategies and co-creation is found primarily in the private sector, if used at all.

In Poland there are only some examples of public deliberation and co-creation is also not used, because of the still strong bureaucratic system.

For Estonia, in particular, this seems to be a striking outcome, since it is a country with very well developed e-government initiatives and practices. According to the Estonian report (pp. 9-10), 'the e-state is so far only service-based (e-elections, e-government, e-health and so on), but e-democracy as described through everyday relationships between citizens and public servants, using crowd wisdom in policy-making, engaging more people in solving societal issues, protecting the rights of the underprivileged, contributing to openness and transparency of state and local governance is much more than a public service. There are also voices saying that the outdated model of public service hinders the further success of e-Estonia'. It was also mentioned that co-creation in Estonia is basically found in the third-sector civil society activities through the initiatives of NGOs and not in the public sector.

Spain, on the other hand, seems to be on a better level compared to the other four countries of this group, based on the cases described in the national report. However, according to the Spanish report (p. 2), in terms of the co-creation of public policy, evidence is scant, but there are certain examples, most of which are driven by the autonomous regional governments around the country. A search for co-creation initiatives on the part of the Spanish government does not bring up a large number of results and innovations of this sort have not become popular practice within Spain's borders.



In Hungary, co-creation is not a frequently used, embedded concept, especially not in the framework of (social) service development. If used, it is in the framework of marketing studies, especially in studies on media and involving marketing strategies (Nyírő-Csordás-Horváth, 2012) and design thinking. Building on bottom-up approaches and demand-reflective development is not the current direction of developments in Hungary. The government is highly centralised and clearly works along top-down channels (Hungarian report, p. 2).



The issue of the functioning of the public services system in Poland is not one of the most important topics in the current domestic public debate. Also in the scientific discourse this is not a problem that is very popular. After 2014, the issue of co-creation is being undertaken in Poland gradually and at this stage is still not in the mainstream (Polish report, p. 3). When observing the current practice of co-creating public services in Poland, it can be considered that it still oscillates around the traditional model of bureaucracy. Openness to public participation by public authorities is relatively small. It boils down to informing and educating with the preservation of the imbalance of entities. In principle, the ability to influence citizens on decisions is limited. Listening to them is treated as participation (Polish report, p. 12).



Within the Italian context there is no reference to the term co-creation, but, on the contrary we refer to co-production policies. The normative documents and the projects implemented by the public sector use the term co-production as a synonym of co-creation (not being the two processes which are clearly distinct in our territorial context). For this reason, in this report the term co-production has been used instead of the term co-creation (Italian report, p. 3).

3.1.1 Concepts and definitions

One very crucial aspect is how co-creation is approached in each different country, how it is defined and if other concepts are used. In all the reports it was mentioned that co-creation is not exclusively used and it is either used in parallel to other concepts or instead of co-creation – where this is less used other concepts replace it. Some examples of terms used in each partner's report are mentioned below:

- Italy: Co-production, co-design
- UK: Co-creation, personalisation, co-production
- Finland: Co-creation, co-implementation, co-design, co-initiator
- Greece: Engagement, participation, public deliberation
- Hungary: Consultation, engagement, user involvement
- Spain: Co-creation, engagement
- Sweden: Co-creation, service personalisation, participation, citizen influence, dialogue
- Netherlands: Co-creation, participation
- Poland: Co-creation, activation of citizens
- Estonia: Engagement, participation

When it comes to specific definitions of co-creation, the main finding is that in most countries these are not available. The main reasons are that there are other concepts used interchangeably with co-creation and that, as mentioned previously, in many countries co-creation as a concept,



The Social Care Institute for Excellence, or SCIE, published influential guidance on Co-production in social care: What it is and how to do it in which co-production is defined as 'a new way of describing working in partnership by sharing power with people using services, carers, families and citizens' (GB report, p. 2).

especially in the public sector, is not very well developed. In Italy, for example, the main term used is co-production and not co-creation, in order to describe the same practices.

However, in some cases, like in the UK or Sweden, definitions of co-creation or co-production have been used and clearly described when it comes to central strategies and policy implementation.

The findings of this appraisal report verify those of other reviews with regard to co-creation. Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015) have reached a similar conclusion through their literature review arguing that with regard to how co-creation and co-production are approached, the definitions show some variation. This variation can be distinguished in three types: 1) citizen as co-implementer, 2) citizen as co-designer, 3) citizen as co-initiator. In their analysis it appeared that in both bodies of literature



The Swedish Association of Local and Regional Authorities sees co-creation as instrumental for improved service quality, effectiveness and personalisation – all tasks for public services. Co-creation is here understood as i) user empowerment by user involvement/contribution in a personified service delivery, such as increased responsibility for monitoring their health, and ii) as a participative co-production or user involvement in future service development and organisational adjustment (Swedish report, p. 3).

the notion of the citizen as co-implementer is represented the most. In the co-creation literature, citizen involvement is often defined as value co-creation, while such a notion is not found in the co-production literature. Their main conclusion was that no conceptual distinction is being made between co-creation and co-production, based on the used definitions and types of citizen involvement.

This lack of definition, the use of concepts interchangeably or even without the same meaning and the difficulty to reach agreement have led other researchers to argue that it would probably be better now to drop the ill-defined terms co-production, co-creation and co-design in relation to the governmental realm and leave them in their commercial setting whence they came. Replacement terms for the 'systems' will no doubt be invented in due course (Waller, 2017: 13).

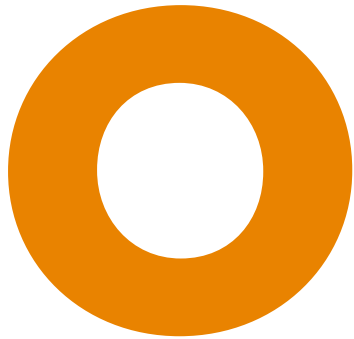
Having all the above in mind, it seems that co-creation and co-production are strongly related meanings and the conceptual lines between other concepts seems to be thin. Further to that, other concepts, such as participation, engagement, co-design, personalisation, etc. are also used in the field as it is the outcome of this report. What seems to be of high

importance is the requirement of conceptual clearance. That is why it is necessary that before starting the piloting process partners reach a minimum agreement with regard to co-creation and its possible definition approaches in order to have better understanding of the effects of citizen involvement as co-designer, co-producer, co-initiator, etc. To that end, the white paper that will be produced into this direction within the CoSIE project could be of valuable assistance for partners in their endeavour.

3.1.2 Implementation time

Each partner was free to choose those cases that were considered as closer to the description of co-creation provided within the CoSIE framework, but also any other case regardless of the term used (co-production, personalisation, etc.) with a special focus on the more recent years. However, since the concept of co-creation, co-production and the following are relatively new, it was assumed that most of the selected cases would be implemented during the last five or ten years. This was verified from REA since from the described 42 cases only three were initiated before 2000 (IT, HU, SE), four during 2000s (ES, HU, GB, SE) and the remaining 35 from 2010 onwards and of those 27 during the last five years (since 2013). Time implementation does not mean that co-creation, co-production or similar programmes were not implemented before that time in the respective countries, although in some countries this might indeed be the case (e.g. GR, EE, and PL).

Those cases presented in national reports, which started to be implemented in the years 2015, 2016 and particularly 2017, are still in their first steps and in most of the cases it was difficult to find out and document if the designed outcomes were met or which were exactly the strong points and the difficulties/obstacles faced. Partners, however, decided to include such cases during this mapping process in order to provide an overview of the current situation with regard to co-creation. It might be useful that partners follow how these relatively new programmes are implemented during their own preparation phase for their national CoSIE pilot in order to avoid problems and mistakes conducted in those cases or learn best practices and useful examples that could be followed in their own pilots.



SynAthina is the common space which brings together, supports and facilitates citizens' groups engaged in improving the quality of life in the city. By coordinating the invaluable resource of citizens' groups, the City of Athens actively listens to the needs of its people and is thus revitalised. By supporting the activities of the citizens, the City creates a new perception about the relationship between civil society and local governance and cultivates their dynamic, bidirectional bond. The programme collects the activities of citizens and through them the local authorities learn what their priorities for the city are. The municipality enables the groups and the citizens to actualise their activities and encourages them to cooperate with other groups, sponsors, and institutions. 'SynAthina, Municipality of Athens' (Greek report, p. 12).

3.1.3 Sectors

As was mentioned above, the cases of co-creation in the public sector were selected on the basis of each partner's experience and on the guidance provided. Each partner was free to decide from which sector the specific cases will be selected. Nevertheless, some of the cases presented were directly or indirectly related to the national pilot partners have decided to accomplish during the CoSIE project.

Existing reviews on co-creation have shown that, so far, most empirical data in the literature is derived from records within the education and health care sector. Given the traditional direct or indirect relation between service provider and service user, this is not a surprising finding. However, since citizen involvement gained popularity in other policy sectors as well, it seems prudent to expand this body of knowledge with other domains (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015).

The cases collected from each partner could be divided into four broad and general categories: a) Health and social sector, b) education, c) improving public services/ administration, e.g. digitalisation of services and d) improving city life and local government, e.g. civic engagement, budgeting, smart city, environmental sustainability, etc. Most of the selected cases fell into the category of social and health care (19) focusing on different kinds of social groups (children, elderly people, substance abusers, mentally ill, ex-offenders, homeless, etc.), like the following one from Finland.


The second most populated category, although broadly defined, was the one described as improving city life and local government, which included



The aim of the project was to increase participation, health and well-being of the recognised risk groups by developing the services in the regions of Southwest Finland and Satakunta. The project aimed to create better services for risk groups such as substance abusers and mental health patients by co-designing new service models. There was a recognised need for developing this area of services, as the services provided for the risk groups did not fully reach the service users' needs. 'Service design with risk groups of social and health care' (Finnish report, pp. 5-6).

16 cases. These cases varied from participatory budgeting to environmental sustainability and from IT technologies that would improve citizens' lives (smart cities) to urban sustainability. Despite the wide range, the common element was that all these cases had as their main goal to improve city life through different approaches, like the following from Greece.

The two categories with the fewer cases were that of education (3) and that related to the improvement of public administration and public services (3). What should be underlined, though, based on the analysis of the national



The process of active participation of citizens, which in Italy is defined as co-production, was inspired by Article 118 of the Constitution (modified in 2001) which states: 'The State, regions, metropolitan cities, provinces and municipalities shall promote the autonomous initiatives of citizens, both as individuals and as members of associations, relating to activities of general interest, on the basis of the principle of subsidiarity.' The type of subsidiarity that is created is horizontal: citizens become producers of goods and services without diminishing the value of the public administration institutions which support the general interest (Italian report, p. 3).

reports, is that some of the described co-creation programmes could be classified into two categories. For example, one related to the development of a smart city might include an aspect that relates to the improvement of public/local administration. In that sense, the categorisation is not exclusive and functions as an indicator with regard to co-creation cases.

Bearing in mind that all the CoSIE pilots are mainly related to social-health care and the improving city life and local government categories, it is important for partners to pay attention to similar cases already implemented or in the process of implementation in order to get benefits from the existing experience both in their own country, but from other countries as well.

3.1.4 Legislation

Legislation about co-creation is quite rare among partners. As one could assume, those countries in which co-creation is not very well developed also lack a specific legal framework (e.g. Greece, Poland, and Estonia). Based on the information with regard to legal framework in each country, it could be argued that some countries have a stronger legal and administrative framework (Finland, Sweden, the UK, Italy and the Netherlands), while others have a weaker one (Spain, Greece, Poland, Estonia and Hungary). It is interesting that some countries have included concepts such as citizens' participation in their constitutions (Finland, Italy), which according to the partners' view is a crucial parameter for the implementation of co-creation.

In most cases additional legislation, which specifies the role of citizens in public services, local government and public administration, also exists



The Finnish constitution obliges public authorities to foster possibilities for individuals to participate in societal activities and influence decisions that concern them (11.6.1999/731 §14) (Finnish report, p. 3).

and supports the implementation of co-creation policies. Nevertheless, this doesn't mean that a lack of a legislative framework does in itself completely inhibit co-creation. Further to that, political decisions, ministerial guidelines and white papers have been produced in order to strengthen users' and citizens' involvement in the design, production, and creation of services, like in the UK.

It should be noted that apart from specific legislation with to regard to co-creation, co-production, engagement, personalisation, etc. another type of legislation, which targets specific groups of interest or sectors, sometimes includes guidelines or leads towards the implementation of co-creative practices (e.g. specific legislation on the health sector, specific legislation about people with disabilities, etc.). Through this kind of legislation, an open space is provided for initiatives from the part of the public sector in order to include service users' views and ideas. What should be stressed, though, is that the existence of legislation or other administrative texts do not necessarily imply that co-creation is actually implemented.



The version of personalisation set out in the Department of Health's (2012) Care and Support White Paper had a stronger focus on relationships, communities and responsibility and it is this more rounded version of personalisation in which co-creation is more clearly visible.

The Care Act 2014 embedded personalisation into the legal framework for social care, and mandated adult's involvement in planning their care. It required Local Authorities to give all eligible users a personal budget (GB report, p. 5).

3.1.5 Funding

When it comes to funding, the majority of the selected and described cases have received funding from the public sector from either the central government or in most cases from local or regional governments. The private sector has also contributed in some cases with important amounts of money either exclusively or in collaboration with third sector and with public sector and the European Union. The EU apart from collaboration with public and private sectors has funded several initiatives exclusively or in collaboration with the public sector. European funds came mainly through the National Strategic Reference Framework or through research project funding from the European Commission (FP7 and HORIZON2020). The third sector and private foundations have also contributed but to a lesser extent.

- Public: 26
- European Union: 6
- Private: 3
- Public-Private-EU: 1
- Private-Third sector: 2
- Third sector: 1
- Public-third sector: 1
- EU-public: 2

From the data available in the national reports it transpired that the public sector, or to be more accurate public money, is the main source of the vast majority of such co-creative programmes. This is somehow reasonable since the main focus is on co-creation in the public sector. However, 16 cases have received funding either from other sources or from the public sector in collaboration with other funders. With regard to funding, in many cases it seems that there is a need for further financial support for the continuation of the implemented programmes. Towards this direction it might be useful and effective that collaboration between different sectors is established so that co-creative initiatives continue and do not end because of lack of funding. Another aspect, when it comes to money, is that in those cases where a programme was funded through EU resources after the project's end, the implementation usually stops or faces serious dysfunctions. That is why it is important when an EU programme comes to an end the public authorities together with the private and/or third sectors try to make its continuation feasible.

3.1.6 Level of implementation

One of the significant factors in co-creation is the level at which co-creation policies and programmes are implemented. From the moment co-creation, co-production, co-design and personalisation programmes ask for service users' active participation it is reasonable that such initiatives take place on the local or regional level. National programmes that ask for citizens'/ users' participation are less feasible both in terms of funding, but also with regard to logistical and organisational aspects. However, there might be examples where a policy or programme has been designed on a national/ central level, but the implementation takes place on the local/regional level. In such cases, of course, the design is more top-down orientated.

According to the national reports collected for this appraisal analysis, the majority of the co-creation programmes were and are still running on a local/regional level.

- Finland: 4
- Poland: 1
- Italy: 6
- Estonia: 1
- Greece: 2
- Hungary: 5
- Spain: 8
- UK: 5
- Sweden: 4
- The Netherlands: 1



In terms of the co-creation of public policy, evidence is scant, but there are certain examples, most of which are driven by the autonomous regional governments around the country. Evidence might suggest that there are certain regions in Spain that have tended to lend greater importance to the co-creation paradigm (Spanish report, p. 2).

From those cases, some are nationally decided and organised on a first level and then implemented by local or regional authorities. Only a few cases were categorised as national (5), although even in those cases the implementation always involves the local societies. In Italy or Spain, for example, where regions are relatively autonomous, the existing cases are almost all implemented on a regional/local level.

The main outcome is that while on the one hand it is important to have a national legal or administrative framework that facilitates the implementation of co-creation in the public sector through constitutional and legal provisions, administrative guidelines, white papers, etc., on the other hand the specific decisions and details of each type of co-creation should be left to the local society and the collaboration between the local/regional authorities, private and third sector stakeholders and of course the users-citizens of each region or municipality. In this respect, the central government and the state actually provide the necessary tools (legal and structural) for the implementation of co-creation, but at the same time give the open space for local societies to better design, organise and carry out such initiatives.

3.1.7 Collaboration

If one of the most important aspects with regard to co-creation is the legal framework, and the second is the implementation on the local/regional level, another – the third – important aspect is the degree of collaboration between the different sectors. Since the main focus of the CoSIE project and this report is co-creation in the public sector, it is reasonable that all 42 examples presented by the partners are related to the public sector (central government, local-regional governments). However, in many cases collaboration has been identified between the public, private and third sector with the following combinations:

- Public: 14
- Public and private: 11
- Public and third sector: 11
- Public, private and third sector: 6

Since the purpose of co-creation is to involve citizens, this certainly refers not only to individual persons, but organised groups of citizens, NGO's, stakeholders, private companies, etc. as well. The truth is that organised groups in the third sector and companies from the private sector are usually easier approached and willing to participate in the co-creation procedure. As is mentioned also below in the relevant section, the more difficult aspect is to involve individual end users in the process of co-creation. The ideal co-creation would involve all the three sectors in one region or in a municipality (public-private-third) as well as individuals in order to be better organised and implemented. The fact is that in reality this is not always the case and great effort should be made in order to achieve a basic level of collaboration and participation. One final point that should be stressed is that when so many agents, stakeholders, groups, etc., are being involved in a process, the roles and responsibilities should be clear for every participant in order for the best outcome to be achieved.

3.1.8 Use of ICT in co-creation

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in co-creation in the public sector is one of the main aspects of interest of the CoSIE project. According to the project's proposal, CoSIE enhances the public service quality and performance purely by basing the development process on end users' voices and the project leads co-creation to a new level by taking advantage of ICT in the development process. The national reports collected for this WP showed that in the majority of the cases (27), ICTs were somehow introduced and used during the implementation of the programmes described. In other cases (15), ICTs were not considered as important in the co-creation process, as was mentioned in the UK report.

However, where ICTs were somehow used, there was a variation from the use of websites and social media in order to communicate and transmit knowledge, to innovative ICTs that were crucial for the implementation of the programme. For example, in Sweden, in the 'Esther network for cooperation in social and health care' programme, ICT, while used to some extent as a major tool for co-learning and competence improvement, seems not to be a tool for engaging users.



Technology and ICT tends not to feature as a central element in supporting co-creation (GB report, p. 24).



ICT use: A 'virtual competence centre' is used but primarily to transmit knowledge to practitioners along the care chain. For example, individual professionals can sign up for online workshops on topics such as dementia or palliative care. Evaluations by participants found that use of the centre strengthened teamwork and staff members' understanding of different roles in the care chain (Programme 1, Swedish report, p. 16).

In Spain, on the other hand, on a completely different case (water consumption/saving water) related to smart cities, the city of Alicante has developed an innovative initiative to improve, innovate and increase transparency of public services through a process of co-creation of new services with citizens through collaborative workshops within the framework of Design Thinking methodology. In this case, ICT played an important role in terms of citizens' participation as well.

One crucial issue on which special attention needs to be paid is the implementation of ICTs in co-creation, especially when it comes to local-regional examples – small cities or even villages – where the digital gap

might be wider. For the moment in co-creation programmes, there is a need to involve as many citizens as possible, from all classes, groups, genders, ethnicities and ages, it is very important that everyone is able to participate and use ICTs, as was stressed in the Finnish report. The case 'Tesoma – Smart Community by the Citizens' contained four targets: 1) increasing participation and citizen involvement, 2) strengthening growth and social cohesion of young people, 3) building a comfortable, safe and attractive environment and 4) developing new ways of use of public and private space. What was important is that during the design and implementation of the programme people not so familiar with ICT were involved and taken into consideration.



The process of co-creation resulted in new communication and service solutions for the citizens in which the use of ICT is fundamental. During the process, citizens' needs were exposed and joint design in subsequent meetings with the participants has led to successful implantation of the results in the city (Programme 1, Spanish report, p. 6).



This way, ICT was used as a tool to inform and engage, but the chosen approach also took the groups possibly not so familiar with online surveys and websites into account (Programme 6, Finnish report, p. 35).

3.2 Problems faced

As would be expected, co-creation programmes have faced a series of obstacles during the implementation phase and in some cases did not follow exactly the design and the decisions made at the beginning. Some of the issues partners mentioned in their reports are very briefly exposed below. First of all, in some cases there seemed to be a distance between what has been designed and the implementation of the programme. In the Finnish case of the 'Service design with risk groups of social and health care' the aim of the project was to increase participation, health and well-being of the recognised risk groups by developing the services in the regions of Southwest Finland and Satakunta. The project targeted to create better services for risk groups such as substance abusers and mental health patients by co-designing new service models. There was a recognised need for developing this area of services, as the services provided for the risk groups did not fully reach the service users' needs.

As a consequence, when such programmes involve groups that need to be treated in a more sensitive way (e.g. abuse substance users, mentally ill, etc.) the practice seems to be quite different from the theory, since



The service design process was conducted in a participatory way, which is the logical way when co-creation process is applied. Services were developed by integrating and reorganising services, and the assessments of service users and experts by experience were a part of the wider development. However, neither the service users nor the experts by experience were involved in the service design process as intensively as would be the idea of service design thinking (Häyhkiö, 2015) (Programme 1, Finnish report, pp. 6-7).

much effort is needed to involve these groups in the co-creation process. Another problem mentioned was (especially with regard to these groups) the difficulty in measuring the results/outcome of the programme. In that case, the suggestion made is to include a provision to follow-up people with special needs (disabled, mentally ill, drug users) not immediately after the end of the programme but during a longer period of time. This was underlined in the UK case of 'Developing a national user movement of people with dementia: learning from the dementia engagement and empowerment project', which aimed to connect local groups and individual activists through a national network, the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Programme (DEEP) that would engage and empower people with dementia. Through the network people would begin to work together to set priorities about dementia and to shape political agendas.

It was also argued that in some cases a lack of participation was mentioned. While the design included the involvement of individual citizens and organised groups, the evidence shows that it was not as easy as expected to achieve actual involvement of the service-users. In some cases, the so-called professionals of participation, i.e. those who usually tend to participate in public discussions, consultation and public deliberation processes are those who take part in the co-creation process. This problem was mentioned for the 'Tesoma - Smart Community by the Citizens' case in Finland, described already above.

This is also related with regard to the ICT's implementation, in those programmes in which ICTs are used. The existence of digital gaps should be taken into consideration especially between regions (e.g. urban-rural) and ages (e.g. young-elderly). This comes out of the Hungarian case 'Smart City Debrecen', which aims at creating an intelligent, innovative, effective, healthy, wealthy, and sustainable city, focusing on three areas: digital literacy, energetics, and transportation.

A third point is the active collaboration between as many groups and stakeholders as possible. This means that the public sector, for example, which is usually the main player in co-creation, should not outweigh the other sectors involved (private and third), while also stressed was the fact that sometimes, and despite what has been designed, the control came from the above and the whole process was top-down directed. The lack of



There are also concerns that groups are 'used' by organisations to meet their own agendas and that genuine co-creation is undermined or only extends to consultation rather than true co-creation. Some costs or barriers to people getting involved are identified including that people with dementia get tired, that organisations don't always make adjustments, that there are financial costs for individuals and that they have a 'short window' of involvement due to the degenerative nature of dementia (Programme 4, GB report, p. 17).



Therefore, the low level of participation can be identified as an obstacle for the project. Especially groups such as youngsters or families with small children were lacking, and their viewpoints could not be presented in the process (Programme 6, Finnish report, p. 35).



The use of IT devices can be successful only for a smaller part of the community, who are actively using smart devices and social media. In the case of the transformation of the traffic system of the city centre in November 2017, it proved that users with lower digital literacy skills could not be reached through smart technologies (Programme 1, Hungarian report, p. 6).

dialogue between the different sectors and all the participating stakeholders is a crucial aspect that needs attention from the design phase already, but also needs great effort during the implementation process in order for the goals to be achieved. The above dysfunctions seem to be influenced also by a lack of communication between those involved in the process.

Additional problems that were mentioned were the lack of enough resources for the implementation of the programmes. This has to do with the continuation of the programmes, because in some cases when funding stopped, the programmes could not continue functioning and this has a very important impact especially when we have to deal with the social and health sector cases, i.e. involving vulnerable groups, as was mentioned in the Swedish case of the 'Esther network for cooperation in social and health care'.

As transpired from the majority of the programmes, the main problem was citizens' participation, because they are not used to be involved in such initiatives and this is more obvious in those countries in which co-creation is not very well developed. Citizens seem to be suspicious of the public sector and they avoid participating in initiatives designed by either central or local authorities. In other cases, it was mentioned that similar suspicion was expressed from the part of the third sector against the local authorities, when the first calls about co-creation programmes were publicised. This was quite evident in the Greek case 'SynAthina', a common space that brings together, supports and facilitates citizens' groups engaged in improving the quality of life in the city. By supporting the activities of the citizens of Athens, the programme creates a new perception about the relationship between civil society and local governance and cultivates their dynamic, bidirectional bond. The programme collected the activities of citizens and through them the local authorities learned what their priorities for the city were. The municipality enabled the groups and the citizens to actualise their activities and encouraged them to cooperate with other groups, sponsors, and institutions.

In the same direction, the lack of information about the programme (e.g. what exactly it is about, how it works, its goals and usefulness, expected outcomes, etc.) is a key-factor that should become a main objective. Groups of people, stakeholders and individual citizens in particular, should be fully informed about the co-creation programme/policy in order to

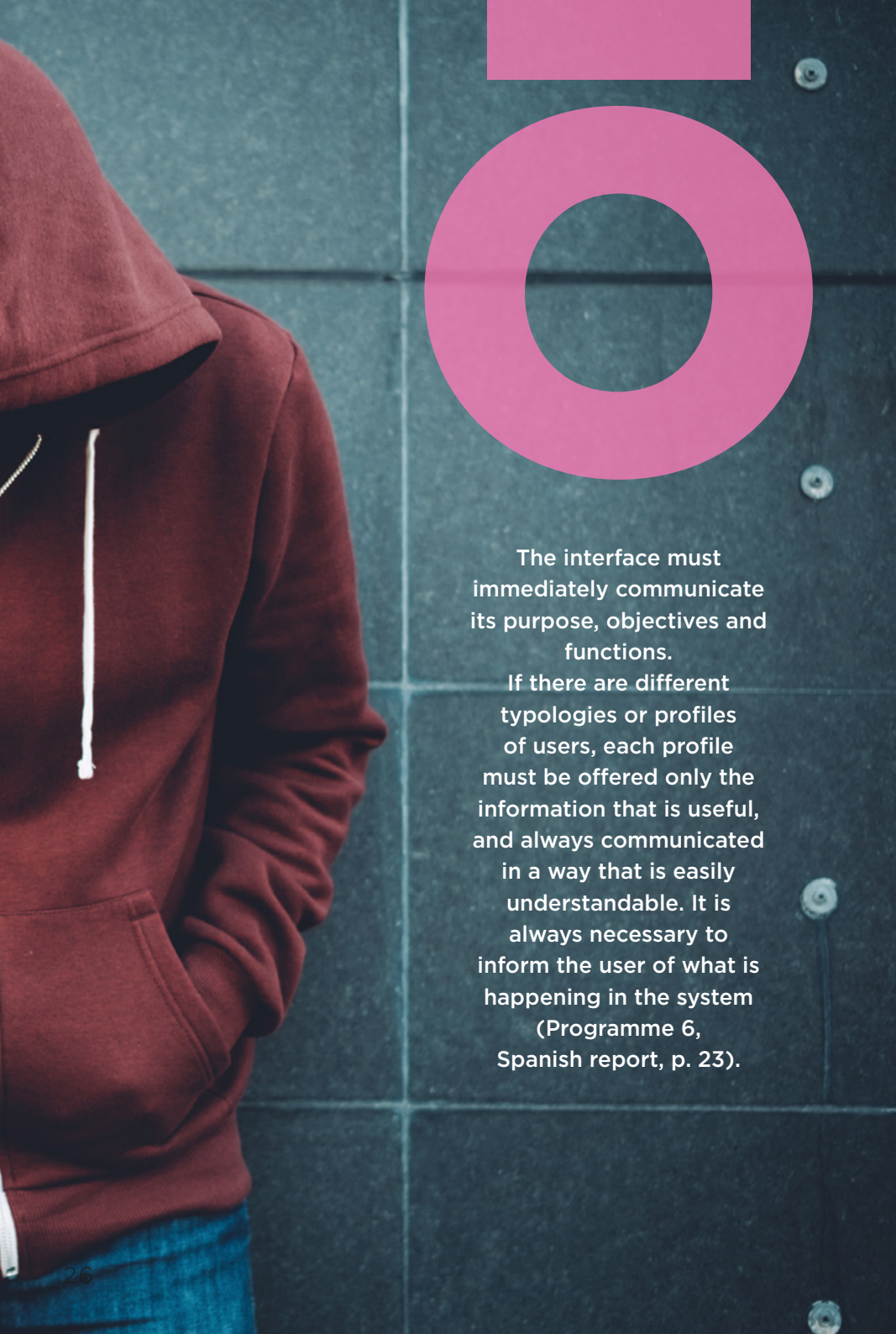


Lack of Financial continuity has been a challenge. Some years the initiative was financed from the ESF (European Social Fund) or Government, other years no additional budget has been allocated and the organisations had to find internal resources. Maintaining an adequate budget has proved difficult (Programme 1, Swedish report, p. 14).



The core of the problem lies in the fact that through this project there is an effort of culture change on both sides, i.e. citizens and local authorities. As our contact person mentioned, it is very difficult trying to alter the image citizens have about public services and it is equally difficult to achieve change within a municipal authority. This lies in the fact that the relation between the municipal authority and the citizens has been established through the years (in a negative way) and this is what SynAthina tried to change towards the creation of a trust relations, but mainly an equal relation from which both parts could be benefited (Programme 3, Greek report, p. 12).

achieve as much representative participation as possible. This was stressed in various cases like the Spanish 'Welive', which aims to bridge the gap between innovation and adoption of open government services and to catalyse public services by empowering citizens and businesses to directly participate in the design, creation, selection and delivery of some of the public services in the form of mobile apps.



The interface must immediately communicate its purpose, objectives and functions.

If there are different typologies or profiles of users, each profile must be offered only the information that is useful, and always communicated in a way that is easily understandable. It is always necessary to inform the user of what is happening in the system (Programme 6, Spanish report, p. 23).

Based on the collected reports, the main problems faced in all the stages of the co-creation examples include the following:

- Differences between the design and the implementation phases
- Lack of citizens' participation
- Difficulties in involving vulnerable groups (e.g. mentally ill, dementia patients, small children, substance users, etc.) – It was challenging to explain the concept and meaning of the actions and to encourage the target group participation.
- Lack of collaboration between stakeholders (public-private-third sector)
- Strong control from the public sector
- Lack of flexibility to face issues raised during implementation
- Lack of information/dissemination towards citizens (individual and organised)
- Lack of resources for the continuation of the programmes
- Lack of representativeness
- Difficulty in measuring the results/outcome of the programme – lack of evaluations
- Difficulties from the part of the users to fully understand the initiative
- Lack of dialogue between the participants (individuals, groups, public-private-third sector stakeholders)
- Problems with regard to ICT implementation (digital gap)
- Suspicion from the part of the citizens and third sector organisations towards the public sector
- Lack of interest from those leading the programme
- Lack of feedback to the users of the services
- Technical difficulties especially with regard to ICT use

3.3 Strong points

Apart from the problems and obstacles faced during the implementation, a variety of positive aspects and strong points were also mentioned in most of the partners' reports.

One of the most important positive aspects was that through co-creation programmes implemented in the public sector the users' voices are heard. Despite what was mentioned in the previous section, that in some cases participation was not actually achieved, there were also examples that citizens' and groups' participation was very active and effective. People through their participation were able to communicate, express their views and ideas and feel part of the design and implementation process. This was mentioned for the Dementia case mentioned already as well as in the Community Led Support (CLS), both in the UK. CLS involves local authorities working collaboratively with their communities and partners and with staff, ideally across the whole authority (not just within social care) to design a health and social care service that works for everyone. Co-production is a key principle within the CLS approach. Changes made to local services and systems include a combination of interconnecting elements that include streamlined processes and quick decision-making, an emphasis on the quality of conversations between service providers and users and community and voluntary sector involvement.

The importance of such participation was signified as higher with regard to people with special needs and vulnerable groups or groups the opinion of which was not previously taken into consideration (e.g. children). Although this was also a negative aspect in some cases, as was mentioned in the previous section, there are other examples that support the fact that co-creation had a positive impact. This was referred to in the Spanish case 'Strategic Plan of Social Action of Sabadell', which defines the main objectives and actions to be taken to address and combat inequalities in the city.




Better experiences and outcomes for local people with evidence that local people value different conversations (i.e. about what matters to them), quicker and easier (local) access points, the emphasis on local connections and natural networks of support, and most fundamentally of the sense of a trusted, ongoing relationship with the people who support them (Programme 2, GB report, p. 11).



Although evidence in support of claimed impacts is limited, the report argues that the impact of DEEP has been to inspire people, share ambitions for social change and that there have been many local successes in influencing services, strategies, community developments and raising awareness. Individuals report an increased sense of solidarity, confidence, empowerment and self-esteem as well as improved health and wellbeing (Programme 4, GB report, p. 17).



In the case of SAP, the application of a co-creation model in the development of the public service has allowed people with disabilities to have the freedom to decide on their own lives, as well as the rest of the citizens, thus recovering the role of full citizens. In this sense, this group with serious risk of social exclusion has been able to integrate in the workplace, educationally, socially and personally (family, friends, and couples) (Programme 4, Spanish report, p. 18).



One conclusion was that children have an important input to share and that co-creation and participation may lead to positive outcomes. However, we cannot expect children to express their views in day-to-day activities. They need special arrangements. Very often, the project team could see that children did not express critical or deviant views in ordinary activities. However, in special arrangements, with personnel other than the ordinary, children had important arguments and critique to express. It is not what the staff and the social service does that is interesting for the children. Rather, the children's own reasons why they seek contact with the social service should be in focus. The children possessed a lot of information and were acting much more maturely when taken seriously (Programme 4, Swedish report, p. 33).



The civil servants remained in the background, offered information if needed, and mediated between different residents for reaching a compromise. Another strong point of the programme was the commitment of the project staff to gain effective results. As a way to tackle the problem of (the lack of) representativeness in participation, the project staff made substantial efforts to encourage residents to participate. They also offered different kinds of possibilities in different forums to take part. In the initial questionnaire for residents, there were possibilities to answer both online and on a paper form. [...] The project staff also spent a lot of time in the residential area, meeting and informing the residents. In addition, their project office was set in the area in order to make it easier to participate (Programme 6, Finnish report, p. 35).

Similarly, this issue came up as in the Swedish case of 'The Västernorrland model to raise children's voices and co-creation in social childcare', which engaged primarily professional staff, researchers and managers in social services dealing with children and young people. The project asked questions like, how do children want to participate? Under what circumstances do children want to avoid participation? Do children want to participate in forms of arenas other than the Social office? How do children conceptualise their meeting with the Social service?

The role of public servants in order to support citizens' participation was underlined as very important. It is they who need to act properly, understand their role and citizens' role in order to achieve the best outcome possible. This means that when civil servants are well informed and trained with regard to co-creation they could become a key-player in the implementation of the relevant policies. This was highlighted in the Finnish case of 'Tesoma - Smart Community by the Citizens', described above.

Another strong point mentioned was that through these co-creation programmes the collaboration between different stakeholders and between all sectors (public-private and third) was strengthened and contributed to networking, co-operation between many groups and stakeholders at the local level, exchanging experiences, views, and best practices. That was underlined in the Finnish case 'Citizen-driven development in local service reform: May I help you?' aiming to develop citizen participation into a systematic tool for renewing social and healthcare services and to create new kinds of services together with local residents. At the same time, the goal was to discover new roles for local governments as a source for the well-being of its residents on the threshold of the local government reform.



In general, the project succeeded in engaging different stakeholders in the project. Here, the communication, openness and systematic reporting has played a crucial role. As indicated in Heikkinen (2016) the creation of targets and indicators measuring those targets can help in keeping all the various stakeholders 'on the map' of the current state of the project. This requires skills to offer the right amount of information - not too little, not too much - to keep all the stakeholders engaged and interested (Programme 4, Finnish report, p. 24).



Based on the documentation, the strong points emerged from coordination meetings between the partners and the new stakeholders involved, which displayed open consideration of best practices already experimented at the national and international level (Programme 2, Italian report, p. 13).



The public-private-citizen collaboration is a formula for success in this type of innovative project. Let's not demonise the Private Sector, be they SMEs or large companies. The combined use of the two Design Thinking + Co-Creation methodologies for the design of collaborative public services related to the environment is an innovative aspect for which organisers could find there are no references (Programme 1, Spanish report, p. 7).

A similar outcome is derived from the Italian case 'Futura Trento. Il bello ci salverà' aiming at the activation of young people, co-empowering them in the implementation of environmental sustainability measures through the use of digital technologies facilitated communication and participation.

Such kind of cooperation seems to be very important and vital for co-creation policies.

From the moment co-creation asks for the involvement and participation of as many stakeholders as possible in order to avoid top-down strategies, this seems to be a point that partners should pay attention to together with the involvement and good collaboration with citizens as service users. This came out of the reports of Spain (the case of water consumption) and Hungary (Smart City Debrecen), both described above.

As a consequence, a change of mind-set with regard to the public sector and its role was achieved, as was mentioned by some partners, e.g. in Greece (SynAthina) and Finland (Citizen-driven development in local service reform: May I help you?). This was even more important with regard to the role local and regional authorities/governments have to play in the field, since the majority of the programmes presented and analysed were implemented in the local/regional levels.

While it has already been mentioned that ICTs might be considered as an obstacle, in other cases the use of new technologies was a strong point during implementation, like in the cases of Hungary (Smart City Debrecen-SCD), Spain (Welive) and Sweden (Esther network for cooperation in social and health care).

This means that ICTs could be useful during the implementation process, although they should not be considered as a panacea, because there



A strong point of the project was the good cooperation between private companies and the city of Debrecen through a non-profit organisation (Programme 1, Hungarian report, p. 6).



Another social outcome is related to changing the organisation culture of the public organisations. The pilot project and the process helped the public managers and politicians to reconsider the role of the municipality, and helped them to learn new approaches for service development from a user-oriented angle, moving away from producer-centredness (see, Heikkinen, 2016) (Programme 4, Finnish report, p. 23).



Another strong point is the wide network created through Facebook - this most popular Smart City page in the country with its ca. 2,500 followers. It is an active page: in February 2018, 23 posts were written by SCD (Programme 1, Hungarian report, pp. 6-7).



The co-creation process is facilitated through a set of suitable web interfaces allowing all stakeholders not only to provide suggestions for the new services, but also to take an active part in the design, implementation and deployment of services, thus enabling them to mould the services based on their personal needs (Programme 6, Spanish report, p. 24).



ICT use: A 'virtual competence centre' is used but primarily to transmit knowledge to practitioners along the care chain. For example, individual professionals can sign up for online workshops on topics such as dementia or palliative care. Evaluations by participants found that use of the centre strengthened teamwork and staff members' understanding of different roles in the care chain (Programme 1, Swedish report, p. 15).



The core value of the project was certainly to increase the transparency of the public administration's activity, which therefore allows citizens to have greater control and the possibility to better understand the choices and decisions made by the authority (Programme 5, Italian report, p. 25).

might be cases where ICTs could not be used because of the existence of a digital gap and in that case become an obstacle for the whole programme.

Finally, it could be argued that co-creation programmes, especially the successful ones, could contribute to the rise of transparency, as was mentioned by some partners. This was reported for the Italian case 'Bilancio partecipativo' (Participatory Budgeting), one of the oldest among those included in this report, an instrument of direct democracy that allows citizens – single or associated – groups, committees and companies to decide how to invest some of the resources of the Municipal Budget.

Summarising the main strong points of the co-creation cases, these could be listed as following:

- Better collaboration between public-private and third sectors
- Users' voices are heard
- Involvement of a variety of local organisations, groups and stakeholders
- Opportunity for vulnerable groups to participate (mentally ill, disabled people, children and young people, etc.)
- Successful implementation of ICTs augment participation
- Change of negative views with regard to the public sector's role
- Improvement of transparency in the public sector
- Effective design, close observation of the implementation process, evaluation and information
- Use of innovative methods (mainly through ICTs)

On the whole, it could be argued that while the design and implementation of co-creation in the public sector might face difficulties and obstacles, it is true that when implemented accordingly many positive aspects could be mentioned.



4. Conclusion



4. Conclusion

The Rapid Evidence Assessment conducted within the framework of the CoSIE project (WP2) had as its main object to search, find and as critically as possible present the current state of co-creation in the participating countries in order to support the following pilots. The main conclusions that came out of this effort could be summarised as follows:

- There seem to be differences between the countries with regard to the implementation of co-creation. In some cases, co-creation has entered the public sector during the last years through a variety of programmes, while in others co-creation is underdeveloped or not at all developed.
- Related to the above is the difference found in the terms used to describe co-creation. Co-production, personalisation, co-design and others are alternatively used to describe similar policies and this also has an impact on the definition of co-creation, although in many cases these terms are used interchangeably.
- In addition, ICTs are not used in all the cases and it is not clear if ICTs are by definition important in co-creation or could be just an option based on the sector co-creation is implemented on. A crucial parameter with regard to ICTs is the digital gap between social groups, classes and ages, which could put obstacles in the implementation of co-creation.
- Another difference among partners is the lack of a legal framework, governmental guidelines, white papers, etc. that could create a fruitful field for co-creation to flourish and an open space for the implementation of such policies. In some countries, there is a strong framework that supports such initiatives, while in others there is a lack of such a background, although the lack of it does not necessarily imply that co-creation could not work.
- As came out of all the programmes/policies presented in each national report, every case has its strong and weak points that should be taken into consideration because the previous experience is very useful. One crucial point is that special attention needs to be paid to vulnerable and/or socially excluded groups (e.g. mentally ill, substance abuse addicts, prisoners or ex-prisoners, etc.), because involving them might prove to consume more time and effort compared to other groups of citizens.

The current literature is aimed at identifying what kind of co-creation/co-production types can be distinguished and what the influential factors are. As a result, still much is unknown about the outcomes of collaboration processes with citizens. Future research is required in order to conclude whether: a) the underlying assumptions about the benefits of co-creation are correct, b) under which circumstances certain outcomes of co-creation may occur, and c) to what extent these outcomes are long-lasting (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers, 2015). On the whole, the main outcome is that co-creation has a long way to go before it could be argued that it has been a key policy in the public sector. It is a relatively new concept that needs further elaboration and agreement among those using and implementing it and it should always be kept in mind that co-creation is not a self-evident value and that failures should be expected.



5. Further discussion



5. Further discussion

Bearing in mind that this is a rapid evidence assessment and not a full literature and policy review, the following points should attract special attention during the preparation process of the CoSIE pilots.

- A minimum agreement among partners could be made with regard to the terms used and the definition of co-creation. Although the approach of co-creation is described in the project's proposal, this should be perhaps again discussed and agreed or at least clarified how each partner understands and uses it. The preparation of an internal white paper on the definition would help in this direction.
- Partners should pay attention to the problems faced in other cases not only in their own country, but in other countries as well and at the same time reflect on and try to follow the good ideas previously developed. This, of course, keeping in mind the special needs of their own national and local framework.
- It seems that the most difficult issue and at the same time the basic element of co-creation is to persuade the service/policy users to participate, and more particularly individual citizens and vulnerable groups. Despite the fact that each case is different, a previous discussion among partners and a somehow common strategy might be useful.
- Good and productive collaboration among every participant (service users, local authorities, stakeholders, funding agencies, etc.) is also very important and should be taken into consideration from the very early steps of the pilots.
- Another crucial parameter is to discuss and design what will happen after the end of the pilot. Does that mean that the policy will end? Is there a provision of how this could be continued? Continuation seems to be a very important aspect of co-creation initiatives.
- On the whole, it seems that co-creation in the public sector is a very promising field and there are a lot of opportunities for implementation. However, and despite the interest it attracts, this doesn't mean that co-creation is easily implemented and that it functions under any circumstances. Failure could happen, but careful design and reflection on previous experiences could be very fruitful and helpful in order to lead to the desired outcome.



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Appendix: Summary Table

1. Finland

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Targeted (individuals or specific groups)		X	X	Development of social and health policies in Finland Involvement in service design or development Increase participation of risks groups by co-designing new service models.	Service Design with risk groups of social and Health care	NO	Power relations (equal roles of professionals and risk groups) Challenges of service design approach for the target group in question (mental health and substance abuse). Problems for the implementation and the innovation process.	Service users were heard and were invited to the process. New way of interaction New models for co-design Increased networking between professionals Increased knowledge about the target group needs
Universal (Geographic or community or community/population of interest)		X	X	Involvement in service design or development Co-design of service processes Theme arose from citizen initiatives	Licensing and supervision Mitigating licences in different policy sectors	Digitalisation of public services on the basis of the components for national service architecture (Kansallinen palveluarkkitehtuuri KaPa)	Not enough participants to represent all the different stakeholders Scheduling the project Cross-sector cooperation Challenges with regional government reform process	Wide and challenging but with high social impact if successful Co-design as a concept established more prominent position in public authorities
Targeted		X	X	Involvement in service design or development Learning experience in practice	Design for Government course by Aalto University	NO	Course required a lot of work Ownership of such a programme	Co-operation between ministries and university Solving real-life problems Combination of theory and practice
Universal	X	X		Involvement in service design or development Power sharing	Citizen-driven development in local service reform: May I help you?/Arjen Pelastajat	Accessible in the website of the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities	Process concentrated on co-design at the discovery and ideation phases. The reality check and implementation phases need stronger support in the future Lack of willingness by the stakeholders involved to take charge of the implementation	Success in engaging different stakeholders in the project Success in gaining a very broad understanding of the local residents' needs Systematic and careful implementation of the co-design process Carefully reported process
Targeted	X	X		Modelling the co-creation processes Test the practices and accelerate development	Accelerated co-creation by schools and companies - KYKY/Koulujen ja Yritysten Kiihdytetty Yhteiskehittäminen	The Six City Strategy - Open and Smart Services New technology utilised in the development of learning environments	Difficulties in the implementation of the project Limited possibilities to inform the schools and stakeholders Mistrust/lack of experience and understanding of the service design processes	Pioneering nature Connecting the school world and the companies and entrepreneurs Accessible materials available online Quality Innovation Award in 2017
Universal	X	X		Engagement or participation as part of consultation Power sharing	Tesoma - Smart Community by the Citizens/OmaTesoma-hanke-Case of Local level Co-creation	ICT was used as a tool to inform and engage Web-based survey	Delays Conflicts between the civil servants and residents Difficulty to connect resident-driven planning processes into wider decision-making processes	Participatory budgeting helped to relieve mistrust Room to express themselves Reaching a compromise Success in engaging the local communities and NGO's in the project

2. Sweden

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Targeted Also universal regarding the methods	X	X	X	Power sharing among involved organisations Involvement of users in service delivery Involvement of users in service development Engagement of users as part of consultation	Esther co-creation networks on complex elderly patient needs in at least 6 municipalities in Jonkoping region Improved coordination of institutionalised and home-based health care services based on experiences of (elderly) patients.	(YES, but) Used to some extent but as a major tool for co-learning and competence improvement and not primarily for engaging users.	Hierarchic leaders can block changes required from bottom-up co-creation Lack of commitment and competence among front-line and leadership Lack of Financial continuity Privacy laws that limit information sharing	Variety of informal yet structured platforms for interaction with users Cross-organisational, multi-professional platforms for sharing and learning (The cafés, trainings etc.) Organisational commitment and resources for the task Specially trained promoters of the model (Esther coaches)
Universal	X	X	X	Power sharing among users and experts Engagement of users as part of consultation Involvement of users in service development and <i>evaluation</i> Closes the gap between government service regulations and user perspectives	The Participatory Model (Delaktighets-modellen)	NO (not primarily)	Lack of time and personnel resources Lack of continuity (personnel rotation) Lack of supportive leadership Engaging organisational staff who might feel forced Difficulties to reach out to users	Engaged and competent Leaders capable of providing support for personnel (time, competence development) Coherence in method application and continuation. Personnel engagement, perception of meaningfulness Proper preparation and communication with users Tutors/process leaders play a major role for success of the method Ability to integrate insights in daily practices
Targeted	X	X		Involvement of (young) users in co-design of (digital) services Reaching out to young people and <i>increasing their awareness of the services</i>	First (Help) Line project in County Council of Värmland for young people and front-line staff supports the initial intake for children, youngsters and their families seeking help for non-severe mental health issues	YES (an outcome) Co-creation resulted in conceptualising new digital services e.g. 'hurmårdnu'	Too great focus on developing digital tools, Lack of focus on staff competence development (new ways of working) Lack of staff engagement (with new ways of working)	Involvement of young people in the service development Staff access to tools for needed organisational changes Workshops with users assisted the staff reflections and shifted their mind-sets from seeing themselves as experts to acknowledging the resourcefulness and knowledge of users
Targeted	X		X	Accessibility for all children with certain needs in social child care Develop new forms of participation for children with different needs Integrate professional skills and experiences To create a dialogue with children in social care and other societal actors	The Västernorrland model that supports development of new methods and knowledge transfer with the aim of strengthening children's and youngsters' situation in society	YES, the project focused on how to make use of young people's digital knowledge, to strengthen their participation	To concretise and build conceptual bridges between concepts and reality It is sometimes hard for children that lack experience of participation to be active in a relevant way. The project team found it hard to develop questions about participation that may have effect on ways of doing things. They started with an actor-centred perspective, but found themselves repeatedly confronted with <i>organisational</i> obstacles. Lack of interest from the leadership.	It is not what the staff and the social service do that is interesting for the children. Rather, the children's own reasons why they seek contact with the social service should be in focus. It is fruitful for staff to meet children that are not ordinary 'customers'. The meeting became more alive. The children possess a lot of information and were acting much more maturely when taken seriously.

3. Italy

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Targeted	X			Involvement in service delivery	<i>Futura Trento. Il bello ci salverà.</i> Mapping of degraded urban areas to recover these areas	NO	We have not been able to identify any weak points	Elaboration of hypotheses of specific response Interventions with the contribution of all the participants
Targeted	X	X		Involvement in service delivery	<i>MicompOrto</i> A series of meetings in venues and with different subjects in order to collect and combine skills and information;	NO	Attempts to promote a dialogue to increase participation	Experimenting a new methodological, managerial, and technical-operational model for home composting applied to vegetable urban gardens. Promoting the spirit of cooperation for the sustainability and energy-environmental efficiency
Universal	X		X	Promoting the culture of collaboration, continuously seeking the involvement of the community to make information, technologies, resources, spaces, and knowledge more accessible to the public.	<i>Collaborare è Bologna</i> Citizen meetings to determinate priorities	YES	The classic communication tools are not enough. Necessity of experimenting with new models and tools by changing language and styles	Changing the logic of welfare for which the well-being of the community is now fostered as the result of the collaboration Implementing the energy of the city and the ability of citizens to collaborate.
Universal		X	X	Power sharing	<i>Palmi Condivisa</i> Evaluating the programme's progress through the online platform.	YES	The direct involvement of citizens in the co-production phases. The collaboration agreements are not always respected	National impact in the process of confiscated properties to the mafia The project embraces all the experiences of spontaneous and voluntary active citizenship in favour of the territory and its community.
Universal	X		X	Involvement in service delivery	<i>Co-city</i> Fighting poverty and degradation in the most fragile areas of the city.	NO	We have not been able to identify any weak points	The systematic and careful implementation of the co-design process. The project represents a concrete possibility for involving citizens in the active co-creation policies
Universal		X	X	Engagement or participation as part of consultation	<i>Bilancio partecipativo</i> All citizens can send and share projects with the Municipality.	YES	Sometimes the management action is missing (too much technicality) Increasing economic investments and human resources	Improvement of public services, since citizens actively participate in the formation of the budget Accelerating internal administrative procedures

4. UK

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Targeted	X			Service users have a significant say in planning how they want their own social care needs to be met	'Individual Budgets Pilot Programme' personalisation by means of cash in lieu of services – with care co-ordinators' support	Not an ICT project. The need to coordinate across different services led to problems bringing information together from their different IT systems	Complex paperwork; 'positive risk-taking' in conflict with professional safeguarding	Beneficiaries reported feeling in control of their daily lives; some but not all groups reported better/more appropriate support.
Universal		X		Involvement in service design or development	Community-led support of local authorities working collaboratively with communities, voluntary sector partners and staff to design a health and social care service that works for everyone	Very little but a staff member in one LA produced some online resources	None reported but limited evaluation	Some evidence of better experiences and outcomes, improved trust, more efficiency (streamlined processes), higher staff morale
Targeted	X	X		New rights-based approach to support and services for disabled people	Right to Control Trailblazers brought together existing cross-government funding streams with a view to streamlining the customer experience across services.	NO	No evidence of impact; short timeframe of the pilot; provider markets under- developed	Achieved some culture change and increased partnership working between different funding streams
Targeted		X	X	Involvement in service design or development – also set priorities about dementia and shape political agenda	Developing a national user movement of people with dementia: learning from the dementia engagement and empowerment project	Not much – one group bought iPads to connect individuals	Groups fragile with precarious funding; sometimes 'used' by others to meet their own agenda	Inspired people to share ambitions for social change; many local successes in influencing services, strategies, community development
Targeted but very wide Political leaders professionals members of the general public with experience of care		X		Involvement in service design or development	The co-productive approach taken to develop the statutory framework for the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014	NO	Could do more to ensure different groups were fully representative	Stakeholders felt that the approach resulted in better outcomes

5. Greece

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Targeted	X	X		Involvement in service delivery	Access, extracts of insurance record in Social Security Organisation, pilot case in the COCKPIT, FP7 project (Citizens Collaboration and Co-creation in Public Service Delivery)-Social security/employees	YES	Due to a lack of an evaluation report and the fact that the project has ended already six years ago it was not easy to document any problems during the implementation phase.	Citizen-centred and citizen-motivated services which create public value; seamless and transparent service provision; wider economic value and improvement of cost-benefit efficiency of the designed services; potential to reduce administrative, management and operational costs; easier services to use as opposed to previous bureaucratic processes
Targeted	X	X		Involvement in service delivery	Digital Schoolteachers/ students	YES	Severe problems were not mentioned, just some difficulties during the design phase, but the implementation went well and without any dysfunctions	Opens the educational process, broadens the material used in it and enriches the available material both for students and teachers and also for children with disabilities. It was interactive and open to annotations.
Universal	X	X		Power sharing/ Involvement in service development-delivery	SynAthena, Municipality of Athens	YES	Lack of trust towards the municipality; difficulty in establishing contacts-networks	Collaboration between local authorities and citizens; collaboration between local authorities and third sector; building relations; mentality changes
Targeted	X	X		Involvement in service delivery	Open Schools, Municipality of Athens	YES	It was not possible to trace any evaluation report or get access in order to document the possible problems during implementation.	Creative learning, alternative education and entertainment for children; The creation of a pleasant, purpose-built, shared space in which students and adults will be able to meet, study, work and build their capacities together with other people. The ability for adults to meet other adults, enjoy themselves, learn and organise activities for themselves (i.e. language courses, seminars, meetings) and with their children (i.e. festivals, labs). Variety of activities and services, based on the needs and abilities of the local community

6. Hungary

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Universal	X	X		Engagement or participation as part of consultation	City development plan.	Yes, extensively; Facebook, Waze.	Users are more reactive than proactive. The use of IT devices can be successful only for a smaller part of the community.	Good cooperation between private companies, the city of Debrecen through a non-profit organisation.
Universal	X			Involvement in service delivery.	Tourist information and channels for accelerating notifications for urban development.	Yes, the focus of the development is a smartphone application.	Used mostly by the younger generation. Sometimes no feedback arrived from the office.	User involvement and 4,000 users.
Universal	X	X	X	Engagement or participation as part of consultation	Digital strategy built on a national consultation.	The consultation was done on the internet about digital literacy and policies relating digital transition.	Highly politicised context.	Complex programme with systematic approach is built on the consultation. Governmental resources involved widely.
Targeted	X	X		Increase participation of risks groups by co-designing the development the service models	Digital services for home care clients.	Signalling system based on traditional telephone systems	The older generation has difficulty in using the system	The elderly clients of the disadvantaged areas are able to get help and support on time when and if they need it. The dispatch centre and home help can be performed by a service provider of any sector.
Targeted	X		X	The concept and notion of co-creation is not used, and the decision-makers did not mention that they would have cooperated with NGOs, but the members and stakeholders of the organisation jointly organised the movement	Broadly organised social movement, representing the interests of homeless people	Campaigns and support groups on social media play an important role in the organisation's life. Also the group blog is fresh and widely known. Their Facebook page has more than 13,000 followers.	The grassroots initiatives have been handled by the authorities as social critique. Instead of social dialogues, only civilian disobedience movements leads to results.	The <i>City is for All Group</i> is organised on a voluntary basis, but also cooperates with parties and state actors to achieve its goal.
Targeted		X	X	Local employment pacts can create frameworks for effective cooperation between labour market players.	The principle of the broad cooperation is the goal of expanding employment opportunities,	The programme has no serious ICT platform (just email, use of telecommunication tools during communication)	Many of the pacts are still a government intent and central source of funding and not the local will	All the partners involved in the expansion of employment opportunities – public, private and non-profit organisations – form and become members of local pacts: NGOs, county labour centres, labour offices, small and medium-sized enterprises, local governments and educational institutions are typical members of these pacts.

7. Spain

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Universal	X	X		Increased awareness of water usage effects on environment	Co-design of app with citizens	App and digital meter for info on various variables in water usage	Fiscal austerity, lack of continuity of scheme from regional government (scheme was EU funded)	User goes from passive beneficiary to active co-creator. Improved communication between public admin and citizen. Improved household economy.
Targeted	X			Collaborative actions between self-employed, LaborLab technicians, university, private firms to teach people to 'invent work' esp. in creative industries	Co-design and co-implementation of training and resources for freelance workers	Training in usage if ICT in areas such as creative industries (tech design)	Organisations commit to participation without bearing in mind time restrictions. Lack of financial resources	New resources for business creation. Opportunities for networking within the local admin and business fabric.
Targeted	X	X	X	Personalisation of services so that citizens with disabilities are able to co-design how and how much they are provided with care services	Co-design of care services	NO	Lack of spaces for additional dialogue and feedback with regional govt.	Improved effectiveness and efficiency of services for disabled citizens. Process transparency.
Universal	X		X	Combating inequality through co-created policies with a variety of stakeholders	Co-design and co-evaluation of social services	NO	Policy makers tend to act more in the short term with actions based on personal leadership	Lessening effects of economic crisis. Number of evictions decreased
Universal	X	X	X	Openly sourced suggestions for innovation in public service	Co-design of new public services and applications	New apps for citizens adapted to newly created services	Communication/information to users sometimes the weak point. Uniformity of the interface.	Support of all phases of co-created new services in different sectors
Universal	X		X	Promotes shared learning, collaborative work and networks Promotes the involvement of public professionals in improving management and innovation	Co-design of innovation and networking opportunities	NO	Lack of human resources	Improvement in transparency quality and effectiveness of innovation schemes
Targeted	X		X	Mediates between traditional businesses about to close and entrepreneurs willing to take them on	Co-implementation between public admin and private enterprise	NO	Lack of applicants to undertake businesses	Strong matching system. Traditional business and sectors find continuation.
Targeted	X			Patients enabled spaces where they can give feedback on experiences and treatments with doctors.	Co-evaluation and co-creation of new health services.	NO	None identified	Patients empowered in treatment and able to communicate feelings related to treatment.

8. Estonia

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Universal	X	X		Engagement or participation as part of consultation Power sharing	Participative budgeting	YES	N/A	Improve understanding of the city budget and its shaping process; boost cooperation between communities; find solutions to practical problems within the city by implementing citizens' ideas.

9. Poland

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Universal	X	X		Engagement or participation as part of consultation Power sharing	Civic budget in Wrocław	YES	Lack of dialogue with all stakeholders; Top-down approach; Lack of its connection with the political priorities of the current authorities, as well as the instrumental treatment of the WBO as part of the city's marketing, and not the principle of involving residents in co-governance of the city.	Stimulate civic activism at the local level; New concepts and categories to the local debate along with the accompanying solutions; Communication among citizens and participation in decision making

10. The Netherlands

Beneficiaries	Impact			Characteristics of co-creation already or expected	Title/Type of example	Use of ICT	Problems	Strength
	Individual	Systems	Policy					
Universal	X	X		Engagement or participation as part of consultation Power sharing	Neighbourhood budgets in the city of Utrecht	NO	The interaction between civil servants and citizens was quite complicated, and a lot of expectations from both sides were not met; The fact that an external partner operated as an intermediary was seen as an obstacle to direct communication by citizens and civil servants; Civil servants should be internally committed to the project (not only citizens); Civil servants from all services involved need to cooperate	Participation of its citizens and entrepreneurs with regard to the development and implementation of policy and projects in the neighbourhood; Transparency with regard to local authority budgets and give citizens (financial) space to realise projects; Give more space to citizens and encourage civil servants to change their ways of working