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Abstract:

The central focus of this report is on forms of social innovation identified by the case studies carried out in three localities within each of the seven countries that constitute the COHSMO project team. Overall, it is clear that while there is no widespread agreement on precisely what constitutes Social Innovation in terms of a definition. When it comes to policy recommendations that can be applied to particular types of areas/places (i.e. urban suburban and rural) what become clear from our examples is that in terms of social innovation this is not feasible. Nor can we think in terms of examples of social innovation simply being transferrable to other geographical and institutional contexts.

There is no 'off the shelf' social innovation pack that can simply be picked up and transferred elsewhere. Nor is there a simple 'check list' of social innovation that can be followed. Correspondingly it would seem unwise to try and develop a 'general policy'. However, based on our cases studies it is possible to identify a number of general factors related to and likely to support the development of social innovation that can be drawn upon and used as 'lesson learning' aids for a wide range of places (i.e. urban, suburban and rural situations).

Keyword list: Social Innovation, Definitions of, Case Study Examples, Policy Recommendations.

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Abbreviations

ALMP – Active Labour Market Policy

ECEC - Early Childhood Education and Care

SI – Social Innovation

SIS – Social Investment Strategy

VET – Vocational and Educational Training

1   Executive Summary

The central focus of this report is on forms of social innovation identified by the case studies carried out in three localities within each of the seven countries that constitute the COHSMO project team. Overall, it is clear that while there is no widespread agreement on precisely what constitutes Social Innovation in terms of a definition there is agreement that it involves some or all of the following:

- A less directive top-down and facilitative approach on the part of government;
- A greater role for communities and the voluntary sector that involves empowering them to act;
- Knowledge sharing;
- Co-production and/or co-creation;
- A role for market provision (e.g. through social enterprises) that acknowledges the 'social dimension';
- Meeting previously unmet needs;
- Meeting new emerging needs;
- Moving away from a one size fits all approach to a more custom-made integrated approach;
- Addressing well-being in a broad sense.

In relation to the social innovation examples we present in this report when it comes to making policy recommendations that can be applied to particular types of areas/places (i.e. urban suburban and rural) what became clear from our research and case study examples is that in terms of social innovation this is not feasible. Nor can we think in terms of examples of social innovation simply being transferrable to other geographical and institutional contexts. There are serious issues in terms of identifying practices that may be applied elsewhere due to their embeddedness in the social and economic contextual conditions and the different levels of territorial assets, social cohesion and collective organising capacity characterising each locality and social innovation practice. Our view is that an alternative approach would be to consider the mechanisms and the processes that are helpful in creating conditions conducive for social innovation, it is these that could be disseminated to other places. However, they will not necessarily lead to social innovation, much depends on the actions taken in each place. Indeed this seems to be entirely compatible with the place-based approach.

What almost all the examples we have provided do address are inequalities, often of access to welfare services or in terms of meeting previously unmet needs or new emerging needs. In addition, a number of the examples address issues of social cohesion.

In order to support social innovation there needs to be what might be termed a supportive policy environment. Support from different levels of government can be provided in a variety of ways. For some years, the European Commission has supported and encouraged social innovation (see European Commission, 2010, 2013, 2017, 2018). Funding is available through a variety of funding streams and there is a plethora of advice websites under the banner of the European Union. At the national and subnational level among our case study countries Austria stood out as an example of the creation of a supporting infrastructure for social innovation. This involved not only government but private foundations and the education system. Italy and Greece, to varying degrees, also had elements of such a system. If countries are to take social innovation seriously then it would seem sensible to put in place an appropriate version of the Austrian approach. Moreover, it might well be sensible to create a single European 'clearing house' website that can be accessed and provide information and advice to those looking for support on social innovation. This would offer a single 'one-stop shop' to which groups and individuals can easily refer.

During a period of austerity, the role of private foundations that support social innovation should be acknowledged and encouraged. Their flexibility may allow them to respond more quickly than the state sector to new needs and processes of experimentation to meet those needs. The results from the Austrian, Greek and Italian case study reports point to the significant role such foundations have played in supporting social innovation. It would be sensible for the EU and all countries to look at taxation regimes and consider if these could be amended to encourage such foundations where they exist and the setting up of them where they are absent.

As well as focussing on the support of individual initiatives part of the general policy environment is the presence of networks and collaboration between sectors, and where relevant across administrative boundaries. Media support, lobbying and networking can be crucial in raising awareness of new challenges and promoting collaboration among actors and disseminating lessons learnt from individual initiatives. Much of this is about raising the profile of social innovation and ensuring its relevance is understood and appreciated by a wider audience of policy makers, business leaders, private funders and local communities.

Given this there is no 'off the shelf' social innovation pack that can simply be picked up and transferred elsewhere. Nor is there a simple 'check list' of social innovation that can be followed. Correspondingly it would seem unwise to try and develop a 'general policy'. However, based on our cases studies it is possible to identify a number of general factors related to and likely to support the

development of social innovation that can be drawn upon and used as 'lesson learning' aids for a wide range of places (i.e. urban, suburban and rural situations). These are:

1. At a very general level, it is important to recognise there is a *problem* and that past policies have failed to address it. This in itself is a generic issue, but nevertheless important;

2. In part related to (1) political *leadership* that acknowledges past failure(s) and the necessity of developing a new approach;

3. Following on from (2) it increasingly appears to be the case that the more traditional top-down directive form of leadership is inappropriate and that a form of leadership, which is more collectively orientated, is required. A leadership approach that is open to co-decision making and *enhanced democratic engagement*. In a sense it may be described as *facilitative leadership and consensus leadership*;

4. A multi-actor partnership approach that combines public, private and voluntary/community sectors as the situation requires;

5. As far as possible reducing bureaucratic requirements that may hinder the supply of services in the long term;

6. Stable funding regimes that are multi-annual that give social innovation initiatives a degree of freedom to develop and experiment;

7. Related to (6) utilising endogenous resources, such as training individuals from relevant communities/groups to be active, in both a paid and voluntary capacity, in the initiatives and interact with the relevant groups and individuals;

8. As part of this approach to innovation it will be necessary to bring together a range of *different knowledge forms* (e.g. professional, managerial, local, every day) to inform policy development and create a local evidence base that has the potential to be scaled up;

9. Following on from (8) embedding social innovation in relevant educational, professional and managerial curricula;

10. A crucial element is *empowering local communities and voluntary sector organisations* to address problems at the local level as part of a wider approach;

11. Innovation in terms of addressing what are often complex and multifaceted problems requires bringing together a wide range of *key actors and decision-makers* from a diverse range of organisations;

12. Selecting the most appropriate scale (i.e. the most effective one) for policy interventions in order to make them place-sensitive on one hand and to efficiently manage the available territorial assets and organizational resources on the other;

13. Developing suitable web based platforms and associated physical spaces staffed by trained individuals, preferably from the local community, who can meet with relevant individuals/groups and help assess their needs and link them into existing services;

14. Where necessary developing new services and/or service delivery systems to meet existing or emerging needs.

By engaging in the above, or an appropriate combination of them, this will help create collective ownership and the sustainability of any innovations. It is, however, important to adapt them to the particular problems and situation of individual places as part of a context sensitive place-based approach that takes into account the need to simultaneously address and promote economic, social and territorial cohesion.

2   Introduction

The central focus of this report is on forms of social innovation identified by the case studies carried out in three localities within each of the seven countries that constitute the COHSMO project team. The principle aim, as specified in the original bid document being:

> ...to provide guidance for future recommendations and provide examples of good practices that can support and complement existing EU-cohesion policies and instruments.

Drawing on previous work packages, including in-depth case studies of three localities (urban, suburban and rural) each of the seven national teams[1] that made up the COHSMO consortium were asked to identify innovative and effective examples of:

- New initiatives and forms of service delivery developed at national and sub-national levels;
- How new instruments associated with the current phase of cohesion policy (e.g. integrated sustainable urban development; integrated territorial investments; community-led local development) have been used innovatively, either individually or in combination;
- Relevant citizen-led initiatives;
- Relevant private-led initiatives.

Teams were also requested to looking for examples of innovation that while they have worked in particular situations and may be transferred elsewhere and/or act as a source of policy learning.

In addition teams were asked to look across the examples of social innovation they provided to see if it was possible to identify any common factors that facilitate (or inhibit) social innovation such as:

- common drivers of innovation (this could potentially include leadership);
- knowledge integration (i.e. different forms of knowledge);
- co-decision making;
- capacity to act.

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[1] The seven nations covered were: Austria, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, and United Kingdom.

National teams were also asked to bear in mind that different definitions of Social Innovation might be more or less relevant to different policy fields. So teams should choose the form of Social Innovation most appropriate to the relevant example(s). What National Teams were also asked to do was to specify *where the driver of innovation originates* –was it: Top-down, Bottom-up, Horizontal (i.e. created by the articulation of policies in policy bundles) or a combination of all three. In addition to specify how it might relate to territorial cohesion and, where applicable, any social investment strategy that may exist in their country/region/locality.

Each national team then produced a report providing examples of social innovation that covered a variety of different types of locality and forms of social innovation. This work provided the basis for the current report, which is deeply indebted to the excellent work carried out by the national teams.

In Section 3 we discuss some of the different approaches to and definitions of Social Innovation, particularly those that relate to the policy-action field in order to bring out the multiple ways in which Social Innovation is currently understood and the implications this has for the wide variety of forms it takes in practice. Section 4 provides selected examples of Social Innovation identified by the national teams. This section seeks to provide an illustration of the diverse forms Social Innovation can take in practice reflecting local circumstances, the drivers facilitating and hindering it as well as beginning to provide the basis for identifying examples that have the potential to provide examples of 'good practice' and policy learning. Finally, in Section 5 we set out some conclusions about Social Innovation and provide policy recommendations regarding the ways in which European, National, Regional and Local authorities can facilitate and support Social Innovation.

3   Approaches to Social Innovation

3.1   A Brief History of Social Innovation

Over the last 20-30 years, Social Innovation has featured prominently in the research, policy and practice literature. However, as Marques, Morgan and Richardson (2018, p497) point out "…the concept of SI has been in use since at least the second half of the 19th-century, under different guises and definitions.". In its early usage it had radical implications referring to structural changes in society often associated with the democratisation of society and in some cases with socialism. Gradually, however, during the twentieth century, particularly in recent decades, the meaning of the notion began to take on a more limited set of implications related to reforms/changes within societies and how (social) services were delivered. They argue:

> …the concept of SI has shown itself to be both extremely resilient (in the sense that it has continued to be used in a variety of contexts) and extremely difficult to define. Both elements are probably interrelated, since the lack of a clear definition allows different actors to project onto it different meanings, thereby guaranteeing its continued appeal. (ibid, p499).

Nevertheless it has increasingly been used to refer to the inclusion of groups previously excluded, addressing needs previously neglected, meeting new needs that have emerged and the implementation of developing new ways to meet societal and/or group needs. Moreover, in the context of the increasing pressure on budgets this has resulted in government, at all levels, for a variety of reasons, adopting a less active and directive role, top-down approach and taking on a more supporting/facilitating role leading to a greater role for:

- end-users, citizens and, communities increasingly being involved in the design and delivery of services to meet existing needs or new need;
- market providers being involved in delivery of services;
- not for profit social enterprises delivering existing services of meeting new needs;
- some combination of the above.

As a result:

> In practice, this has meant that the concept has been appropriated by a variety of actors pursuing a number of agendas. It could be argued, for example, that the political right

have used the term SI to legitimise investment in the third and private sectors in order to retrench the welfare state, arguing that grassroots initiatives are a superior way to deliver welfare. (ibid, p499)

3.1.1 Contemporary Understandings and Usages of the notion of Social Innovation

What we have undeniably seen over the last 20-30 years has been a rapid growth in the use of the notion by a wide range of institutions, organisations and groups ranging from the European to the local level. This growth has been accompanied by an explosion in the different definitions, understandings and classification of Social Innovation in terms of how policy communities think about it and what counts as Social Innovation in practice.

Based on a literature review of both the academic and policy literature it quickly became clear that there was no single widely held definition confirming the argument put forward by Marques, Morgan and Richardson (2018). Nevertheless, it was possible to see a number of common threads running through the literature on Social Innovation.

In terms of the academic literature definitions abound, although all tend to agree that there is no single widely accepted definition. Vigar et al (2020) seek to distinguish between what might be termed 'radical innovation', which they liken to 'invention', *a la* Schumpeter, and what they term 'incremental innovation'. Moreover, they argue it should not only relate to the private sector but also the public sector and more recently the community sector. They take as a working definition that offered by Sørenson and Torfing that: "… innovation is defined as an 'intentional and proactive process that involves the generation and practical adoption and spread of new and creative ideas, which aim to produce a qualitative change in a specific context'.". (ibid, 524). They also insist on the importance of linking 'public value' to social innovation. For them there are two, interlinked, aspects to this notion that need to be 'balanced'. Thus:

> Firstly, in relation to the 'public' aspect, we argue that planning is about interventions focused on place-making and about paying attention to the relationships between human and non-human activities in space i.e. spatial relations. It involves caring for place qualities whose value is recognized by a public formed of residents, businesses and the like who have a stake in a place for one reason or another. (ibid, p526)

They then go on try and define the slippery issue of 'value', they conclude:

> On the one hand, the value of some intervention depends on the socio-economic and cultural background to those affected. On the other hand, from an economic point of view, value is about the cost benefit or rate of return on any innovation. In relation to public value in the context of public innovation, inevitably attention must be paid to both aspects of value. Public innovation must involve creating and maintaining socially and cultural valued qualities, and the political mobilization to sustain them. It might also need to conform to understandings of financial value, as public managers understand it. (ibid, p526)

For them public value is vital to any assessment of what constitutes innovation and its success. One might, however, argue that in contemporary contexts, particularly that of austerity and the overwhelming emphasis on economic growth and competitiveness, too much weight will be given to conventional economic notions of value as articulated in the second quote and the danger is this will restrict the space for the more social dimension of value that might be articulated by communities. The definition articulate here is arguably too elastic, capable of being stretched in multiple ways. Although, it can be contended that this does convey the essence of many notions of social innovation.

A second approach articulated by Marques, Morgan and Richardson (2018) is arguably more systematic and rigorous, for them social innovation is about:

> …the application of new ideas, irrespective of them being new products, processes or ways of communicating. It is however distinct from technological innovation in three ways: first, it actively promotes inclusive relationships among individuals, especially those that are (or have been) neglected by previous economic, political, cultural or social processes. In this sense, SI values the process of implementing a new idea as much as it does the outcomes of that implementation. Second, SI is explicitly about addressing need, whether it is in areas such as education, health or more broadly in dealing with social exclusion. This means that while it is possible for profit-seeking organisations to implement SI (for example social enterprises), profit will not be their primary goal, since addressing human need will necessarily involve reaching out to people with limited economic resources. In this sense, there is some crossover with the concept of user-led innovation. (ibid, p500)

In many ways, this does express the essential qualities of what much of the literature identifies as social innovation and is sufficiently wide ranging to embrace the wide variety of forms social

innovation can, and has, taken, as we will see from the illustrations drawn from our case studies in Section 4. Nevertheless, the notion of 'public value' as argued for by Vigar et al (2020) should not be discounted as it does point to a key aspect of social innovation that distinguishes it from more traditional market-based notions of innovation.

In relation to what might be defined as the policy literature in a review carried out for the European Commission Jensen & Harrison (2013, p13) identified a number of definitions developed by European Commission funded research projects that appeared to be compatible with the COHSMO project:

- Social innovations are new solutions that simultaneously meet a social need and lead to new or improved capabilities and relationships and better use of assets and resources. In other words, social innovations are good for society and enhance society's capacity to act.

- Social innovation is a process where civil society actors develop new technologies, strategies, ideas and/or organisations to meet social needs or solve social problems.

A similar definition was provided by the European Commission (2013.p6) in a 'Guide to Social Innovation', this offered the following definition:

> Social innovation can be defined as the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. It represents new responses to pressing social demands, which affect the process of social interactions. It is aimed at improving human well-being. Social innovations are innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. They are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance individuals' capacity to act.

The Guide went on to argue (ibid, p6):

> This process is composed of four main elements:
> - Identification of new/unmet/inadequately met social needs;
> - Development of new solutions in response to these social needs;
> - Evaluation of the effectiveness of new solutions in meeting social needs;
> - Scaling up of effective social innovations.

More generally, the Guide points out Social Innovation tend to:

- involve co-production and co-creation;
- be multidisciplinary and involve knowledge exchange/integration;
- not be top down led, to engage with and empower citizens;
- demand as against supply led; and
- customised rather than mass produced solutions.

More recently, Moulert et al (2017) carried out a systematic meta-review of 30 EU funded projects from FP7 and Horizon 2020 that covered a wide range of fields and found considerable variation in the use of the term in relation to different policy fields. Initially they developed a working definition of Social Innovation:

> …a combination of at least 3 dimensions: collective satisfaction of unsatisfied or insufficiently met human needs, building more cohesive social relations and, through socio-political bottom-linked empowerment, work toward more democratic societies and communities. (ibid, p10)

In the course of their discussion, they identified two notions of Social Innovation relevant to Social Investment Strategy:

(i) …actions aimed at the - satisfaction of social needs that are not adequately met by market and macro-level welfare policies (content dimension) - through the transformation of social relations (process dimension) which involves empowerment and socio-political mobilisation (political dimension) linking the process and content dimension (ibid, p22)

(ii) …the activation of economically and, consequently, socially marginalised and vulnerable people as productive economic subjects… that is, there is an emphasis on individual (rather than collective) empowerment. As such, it can be seen as a discourse of 'caring neoliberalism'…, with a strong focus on how to facilitate, enable and spread the 'right' kinds of SI, i.e. those making social welfare cheaper and more activating. (ibid, p25).

Finally, there is the LEADER programme, which has innovation as one of its core ambitions. Innovation is a key aim of this initiative and it has been widely considered as one of the Commission's most successful initiatives in relation to rural areas (but it is also relevant to the other areas we have

studied) and it is also the inspiration for Community Led Local Development in the current programming period. The European Commission (2006) in a document describing the LEADER approach, described innovation in the following terms: "Innovation needs to be understood in a wide sense. It may mean the introduction of a new product, a new process, a new organisation or a new market." (ibid, p.12). What we can take from this is that innovation can take a wide variety of forms and should first of all be related/situated in the specific context in which it occurs before going on to consider its wider applicability.

3.1.2   Conclusion

Overall, it is clear that while there is no widespread agreement on precisely what constitutes Social Innovation in terms of a definition, nevertheless there is agreement that it involves some or all of the following:

- A less directive top-down and facilitative approach on the part of government;
- A greater role for communities and the voluntary sector that involves empowering them to act;
- Knowledge sharing;
- Co-production and/or co-creation;
- A role for market provision (e.g. through social enterprises) that acknowledges the 'social dimension';
- Meeting previously unmet needs;
- Meeting new emerging needs;
- Moving away from a one size fits all approach to a more custom-made integrated approach;
- Addressing well-being in a broad sense.

In addition to the above it is also worth bearing in mind the point made by Vigar et al (2020) on 'public value', this suggests the importance of going beyond market assessed forms of value and entails taking into account a wider sense of value.

4   Forms of Social Innovation in Our Case Studies

In what follows we provide example of social innovation identified by the COHSMO teams in their national reports. They were selected on the basis that they represent not only innovations in their national and local contexts but also that they may be of relevance to other similar places. The selected examples are, of necessity, presented in an abbreviated form with short, informative descriptions. Perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this report we have also sought to identify the key drivers of innovation and the mechanisms and the processes that may be transferrable to other geographical and institutional contexts that can facilitate and support social innovation as well as the role that can be played by an established infrastructure that can encourage and enable social innovation in the short, medium and long term.

For ease of exposition we have arranged them under the categories Urban, Suburban and Rural but it should not be assumed that this implies they are only relevant to such areas, there are likely to be common factors related to social innovation that cut across spatial categories and these are perhaps of most interest.

4.1   Urban Examples

Here we present five examples from our urban case studies. These were selected to illustrate the range of different forms of social innovation.

4.1.1   Vienna - *Nachbarinnen/Neighbours*

This is a social association for integration, qualification for female migrants and social work that operates at the neighbourhood level in Vienna. It is financially supported by a federal ministry, the City of Vienna and many local private businesses. The initiative was set up in 2012 and those involved describe themselves as *social assistants* (not *social workers*) who engage in face-to-face meeting with their fellow nationals and help resolve their social difficulties. It adopts a low-key, practical approach to support socially excluded families.

The project trains and employs social assistants from diverse migrant backgrounds to directly offer care, support and strategies for positive change to relevant families in Vienna. They work in public spaces and visit people in family homes. The social assistants actively approach socially weak families. These are families that live rather withdrawn from other communities or the general public in Vienna. They are therefore hard to reach with traditional social programmes provided by public

institutions. Because of their links in the communities, the social assistants can take a pro-active approach to contact families as part of their daily routines. The assistants assess individual situations, encourage parent's educational responsibilities as well as tackling family issues with the consultation and support of Neighbours. The project is the first of its kind in Austria.

The most crucial aspect is that they work in their recipient's respective native tongue. The aim is to activate newcomer's potential and spark motivation through self-empowerment. They want to achieve integration through professional support from their community via workshops and community events. The initiative interweaves intercultural knowledge with the expertise of social work innovating existing processes of social inclusion.

As can be seen from the above the association tackles the typical urban challenge of social integration of newcomers with fresh ideas from multiple angles related to integration, empowerment of mainly female migrants and strategic implementation. The project seeks to change social work from a reactive to a pro-active form by involving the migrant community from the start and operating face-to-face manner with their recipients.

Types of Innovation

1. Participation. From the very beginning local migrant consultants were part of the project. These women were vital sources of information/knowledge of what was needed in the community. Social assistants, as well as the recipient families, are part of the project. Social assistants adapted work materials, and the first training course significantly influenced the new curriculum for the next courses. Recipient families give feedback in exit interviews.

2. Enabling & Empowering. There was an individual based approach to support/needs. There is a focus on self-help through the provision of courses on German, Austrian bureaucracy and education systems. The project seeks to empower female migrants with free of charge qualifications, family advice and training to highlight their potential (on the labour market).

3. Active Scouting & Prevention. Neighbours actively looks for families with challenges in migrant communities and thus reach families that are excluded or unwilling to look for help from the usual sources. Target groups are (1) mothers with migration backgrounds to prevent health issues, domestic violence and social exclusion as well as (2) children in compulsory education to prevent dropouts and low education levels.

4. Sustainable Integration. The trained social assistants/workers adopt a face-to-face approach. Not only because they speak the same language, but also because they can relate to the experiences of being a migrant or refugee in Vienna. By doing this integration moves away from assimilation and uses the experience of migration as a valid basis for (sustainable) integration.

5. Transparency. The organisation documents each of its steps concerning funding, recruitment, training and targeting families in helpful detail. Available evaluations and monitoring reports give insight into the work, challenges and approaches of the project. In this sense, Neighbours is also an excellent example of the transferability of social innovation.

More generally, in the Austrian case there are wider factors that support and facilitate social innovation that can serve as important lessons to be learnt from. In particular, what might be described as the institutionalisation of social innovation. It is supported by national and local government and by private foundations, all of whom provide support including finance. Prizes are awarded for exemplar initiatives. There is also a social innovation research centre and it is been integrated into masters curricula. Moreover, it is seen as something all sectors (public, private and civil society) need to be involved in and work together.

From the above it is clear that there are general factors that drive social innovation:

1) The active involvement of public actors and public funding as well as networks and collaborations cutting across actor types;

2) At the local level SI addresses issues/challenges that existing approaches do not address;

3) Civil society and public institutions work together on Sis to improve life chances locally;

4) Public authorities and private bodies provide funding for new initiatives that solve social issues.

5) Not about reducing state involvement. Indeed, it is seen as an important factor facilitating SI, not just in terms of funding and accountability but also by supporting risk-taking. There is a concern SI

The presence of networks and collaboration between sectors, and where relevant across administrative boundaries, was also seen as important. Media support, lobbying and networking proved to be crucial in diffusing the awareness of new challenges and promoting collaboration among actors, especially in urban contexts.

4.1.2   Milan - WeMi La Città per il Welfare" ("The city for the Welfare")

The WeMi La Città per il Welfare" ("The city for the Welfare") project was developed in 2015 by Milan Local Authority to improve both access to and the quality of domestic welfare provision in the city. The overarching strategy of the project is to increase and develop the relationships between welfare providers and citizens, to improve the capacity of third sector organisations to meet citizens' social needs and to facilitate the sharing of domestic services among citizens. The project achieves this by the creation of two elements that citizens can access: WeMi spaces and a WeMi web platform[2.]. In addition, it provides three supplementary services: babysitting and elderly carers, financial education and family reunification.

WeMi represents a milestone in the reform of the welfare system implemented by the Local Authority that aims to strategically reorganise the social services in Milan based on the idea of a welfare system, which can involve the whole city and not just traditional welfare users. The project is promoted by

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[2] www.wemi.milano.it.

Milan Local Authority and the Cariplo Foundation[3], a banking foundation which carries out philanthropic activities in the area of Lombardy and Piedmont (Novara and Verbano-Cusio-Ossola provinces) Regions. It involves an alliance of 16 actors from public, private, third sectors and academia, which comprises the Polytechnic University of Milan, the National Association of Condominium and Real Estate Administrators and a number of social cooperatives and enterprises operating in the municipal territory.

The WeMi spaces and the web-platform address the 'broad demand' for domestic services, while the supplementary services aim to meet specific social needs and are coordinated directly by the Local Authority. WeMi spaces are commercial or community places dispersed across the city and managed by a third sector organisation where citizens who need a domestic service can go to interacting with professional staff, receive information on and access the services available through the WeMi web platform. This latter is a digital space of exchange among welfare users and providers, which lists all the domestic services provided by the third sector organisations affiliated with Local Authority. Most WeMi spaces have been created in existing commercial or welfare spaces and this has allowed the project to take advantage of a variety of material assets, renewing/readapting them, and making them accessible to a wider range of users. A small number of spaces were (re)designed anew as innovative multifunctional hubs where welfare service coexists with other functions.

More generally, it is possible to some key drivers of social innovation:

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[3] www.fondazionecariplo.it.

Key drivers of Social Innovation:

1. The presence of a multi-stakeholder partnership with a shared goal and carrying out a clear collective activity;

2. The coordinating, promoting and stimulating role of public administration; and

3. The effective mobilisation of endogenous territorial assets and resources.

In addition, the Italian case studies point to highlight general issues related to the embeddedness of social innovation. In order to do this it is necessary to focus on mechanisms and processes that may be exported to other contexts for conducing social innovation. Three examples of transferrable mechanisms were identified:

1. The role third sector organisations can play in reconstructing the needs of socially marginalised individuals within the existing welfare system. This may be achieved by creating a 'soft space' where relevant groups/subjects can be approached in an informal setting by a social employee who understands their social needs and can try to reconnect them to the existing welfare services. This mechanism would be particularly useful in contexts characterised by significant gaps between social needs and existing welfare policies.

2. The mechanism of exchange of transferring a material asset to another organisation and getting back a service.

3. The creation of an instrument for integrating welfare supply and demand. The innovation here resides in supporting and linking up processes of domestic welfare sharing among inhabitants living in close proximity to one another and developing ways to address the multiple needs of an increasingly differentiated and complex population. This instrument would be helpful in cities characterised by a highly fragmented welfare system and by mismatches between demand and supply of services, and would allow for the best use of the resources of welfare providers and reduce the costs of services and to make them affordable to a wider range of people.

4.1.3   Gdańsk - Talent Development Centre (*Centrum Rozwoju Talentów*)

This project was established by the Employment Office in Gdańsk in 2016, the centre aims to improve the self-awareness of employees and young people entering the labour market, which in turn should increase the compatibility of employers' needs and employees' potential. Establishing this centre required a rethink with regard to a very traditional model of the public employment service. It had to be re-thought and transformed to create a new institution with carefully designed space for workshops and meetings, a new type of services delivered for the local community, and new cross-sectoral partnerships. While the primary goal of the centre is to deliver individual and group professional counselling, it also plays an important role in coordinating the Vocational and Educational Training (VET) and Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP) on the local and metropolitan scale.

The centre decided develop tools for local ALMPs and extended its offer beyond the usual target group – unemployed – and beyond the typical services, it has been offering (similarly to other public employment offices located in each county). The centre is a response to the mismatch between the skills required by local employers and the educational background of the graduates entering the labour market. This innovation originates from a top-down process, however, despite this, it is embedded within a particular local community and it was not incentivized by the upper levels of government. It proposes new (at least in the scale of the country) institutional solutions to use local assets and resources, with a particular focus on the quality of human capital and the match between individual predispositions (talents) and career choices.

The main challenge addressed related to the sectoral division between VET and ALM policies and between the public educational sector supplying the labour force and the private sector searching for suitably qualified employees. Formally, policy coordination between secondary education and labour market is provided at the county level, as county authorities in Poland are responsible for the management and delivery of both services. However, the instruments for coordination used by the local authorities are rather weak due to the high level of uniformity and legal constraints. Very often this process is superficial, limited to the consultations of the schools' profiles and curricula and strongly driven by path dependencies. The decision to establish the centre in Gdańsk was motivated by the fact that career counselling was one of the most neglected functions of the public employment service. Despite the introduction of career counsellors in schools (which was a nationwide policy established by the educational reform about a decade ago), the educational choices, particularly these taken between the primary and secondary schools, were still not sufficiently informed and based on the proper recognition of individuals' strengths and predispositions. Despite the recent investments

in vocational training in Gdańsk (and more generally – in Poland) the supply of the candidates for the vocational schools, and later – the supply of their graduates on to the local labour market was unsatisfactory. Too few young people chose vocational schools, instead opting for general upper secondary education and university programs, which did not match their predispositions and labour market needs. The director of the Employment Office, supported by the political leaders of Gdańsk (mayor and deputy mayor) decided to adapt the policies to local circumstances created by a very favourable situation on the local labour market (e.g. negligible level of unemployment).

Factors supporting innovation:

1. The ability to build appropriate partnerships and openness for cooperation was crucial for success.

2. The presence of highly qualified personnel and a network of external collaborators (instructors, counsellors, etc.). They have been able to create the space open for collaboration, learning, empowerment, and self-reflection, which broke with the traditional model of the public employment office.

3. The need to address the appropriate scale for policy interventions in order to make them place-sensitive on one hand and to efficiently manage the available territorial assets and organizational resources on the other.

4. Multifunctional and adaptable institutions are a key to social innovation.

5. The role of good leadership. In Gdańsk, there was charismatic leaders who combined vision with great dedication for encouraging civic activism along with a leadership style that was based on consensus-facilitator style and invited stakeholders from various sectors and local government tiers to participate in policymaking and policy implementation.

4.1.4   Bristol – The One City Plan

The City of Bristol *One City Plan*[4]; the initial plan was published in 2019, an annual update was published in 2020. It is supported by and based on an Inclusive Growth Strategy and linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The One City Plan sets out the 'vision' while the Bristol Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out the strategy to achieve the former.

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[4] https://www.bristolonecity.com/about-the-one-city-plan/

The One City Plan is a 'co-production' based on extensive consultations over an 18-month period with organisations from the private, community and third sector. In terms of the process of developing the One City approach community umbrella organisations (e.g. VOSCUR[5]), the private sector, other public sector organisations and the city's two universities were engaged with during the formation of the plan. This took place through City Gathering and dozens of workshops across the city. City Gatherings bring together civic leaders and have been held on a regular basis since the City Office founders meeting held in July 2016. City Gatherings, which take place every few months in different locations across the city. They create highly interactive 'city conversations', with participants working together in cross-sectoral teams, to examine the major challenges facing the city and to explore ideas on how to tackle them. Typically, City Gatherings attract between 70 and 180 participants (Hambleton 2019). It was written in-house by Bristol City Council civil servants in the newly created 'City Office' rather than by external consultants.

A key driver behind the initiative has been the directly elected mayor, currently Marvin Rees, elected in 2016. The approach also seeks to develop a new more inclusive approach to 'civic leadership' related to the place-based approach, as a 'new way of governing a city'.

The Plan and the accompanying document(s) represent an attempt to engage with 'multiple audiences' and gain their consent for the One City Plan and ensure its longevity. The approach explicitly emphasises a place-based approach to territorial cohesion, territorial governance and collective efficacy. The Plan highlights key themes to be addressed such as: health and wellbeing, environment, connectivity, homes and communities, economy and learning and skills. In the context of the UK, Bristol is an affluent and competitive city with high levels of economic, human and social and cultural capital along with improvements in institutional capital, albeit one with significant embedded social and spatial inequalities. It is acknowledged as an attractive place in which to live. This set the overarching context within which the Plan was developed.

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[5] VOSCUR is a charity that provides direct support services and specialist advice to organisations and social enterprises across the city in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector. Website: https://www.voscur.org/

The One City approach involves several forms of innovation:

1. An Inclusive Growth approach. It is inspired by a number of other cities within the UK and cities such as New York and Melbourne and the OECD's advocacy of such an approach. On this basis, Bristol set out to develop its own inclusive growth approach tailored to the needs and problems of the city.

2. A new approach to 'civic leadership' centred on place-based leadership that brings together civil society, the private sector and the public sector. Underlying this approach to leadership is a recognition that the One City Plan should be a 'co-production' based on extensive consultations with organisations from all three sectors of society. By doing so, the aim is to ensure the development of a common sense of 'ownership' and thus the longevity of the Plan beyond the political cycle.

3. A new mode of organisation (process change). Following on from (2) the Plan brings together hundreds of previously unaligned strategies, which are now within one framework to harness collective power to benefit the city as a whole. It is thus about systems change. In order to bring about this change at its core is a City Office that seeks to bring together stakeholders from across the city and encourage them to make contributions to addressing both current and long-term challenges facing Bristol. It also aims to support the development of leadership in the different sectors, including the emergence of new forms of leadership.

4. Each year there will be 18 tangible aims based on the Plan (totalling 546 by 2050), with three priority themes voted on each year at a City Gathering, regular City Gatherings are held throughout the year and this links back to the notion of 'civic leadership', identified above in (2).

4.1.5   Athens – Athens Open Schools

The Athens Open Schools" project was designed to transform public schools in various neighbourhoods of the municipality of Athens into vibrant community centres alongside operating as places for "conventional" educational during morning hours. The strategic purpose of the project was to strengthen social cohesion, especially in the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city, creating common open spaces where all citizens can meet and interact. In order for the project to be

implemented, the municipal authorities mobilized various public organizations and services and their staff, obtained contribution by private institutions, facilitated collaboration between the public and the private sector, and, last but not least, engaged with a large number of stakeholders from all sectors of society. The activities and workshops offered by the project were proposed by individuals or by civil society institutions and were finally selected after undergoing an evaluation process.

In financial terms, all procedures mentioned above were implemented due to an exclusive grant by the (leading and very wealthy) Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF), which was the "Founding Donor" of the project. Additionally, during the period 2018-2019, a similar (again, leading and very wealthy) foundation, John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation, took over the role of a major "Activities Donor".

Along with the high significance of (private) funding, the project has been successful thanks to the effective cooperation between the public and the private sector. This very difficult (coordinating) role was entrusted to the well-known now "Athens Partnership". The Athens Partnership (AP) is a nonprofit entity, launched in 2015, with a founding grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and strategic guidance from Bloomberg Associates.[6] Its main role is to facilitate high-impact partnerships between the (public) municipal authorities and private actors, addressing public priorities, including poverty alleviation, health, education, and community development. By leveraging both public and private resources, the Athens Partnership works with municipal agencies, private actors, as well as community partners (such as service providers and educational institutions) to pilot programs, support successful efforts and evaluate their effectiveness.

The project was designed to transform public schools in various neighbourhoods of the municipality of Athens into vibrant community centres as well as for "conventional" educational purposes. The strategic objective of the project was to strengthen social cohesion, especially in the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city, creating common open spaces where all citizens can meet and interact. To achieve these public schools remained open from the end of school hours until 9:30 p.m., from 10:00 a.m. to 08:00 p.m. on weekends, and during holidays. The project offered a large variety of free, targeted activities and workshops to all residents of the city's neighbourhoods (including not

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[6] Bloomberg Associates is the philanthropic consulting arm of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable organization, Bloomberg Philanthropies. Founded in 2014, Bloomberg Associates works side by side with client cities to improve the quality of life for residents, taking a strategic, collaborative and results-oriented approach to make cities stronger, safer, more equitable and efficient. A team of globally recognized experts and industry leaders has worked with cities across the globe on hundreds of projects in order to ignite change and transform dynamic vision into reality. For more information on Bloomberg Associates and Bloomberg Philanthropies, see the official website: https://www.bloombergassociates.org/about/.

only Greek citizens but also immigrants and refugees) of all ages (from infants and children above 3 years of age to elderly people). Overall, the project took place in 25 different public schools, dispersed across all 7 Municipal Departments of Athens and, more importantly, also in the most deprived neighbourhoods. Although it is not possible to list here all (educational, scientific, cultural, creative, sports etc.) activities and workshops offered by the project, it is worth noting some of the activities targeted on certain population groups and certain activities: outdoor games for infants, children and parents; creative pastimes for preschool and school-age children with autism and other developmental disabilities; parent counseling; job interview preparation seminars for the unemployed; seminars on how to build a sustainable social enterprise; lifelong learning seminars for adults; courses on new technologies for the elderly; women's photo exhibition; language courses in Greek, English, Arabic, Farsi and Turkish for Greeks, immigrants and refugees; intercultural chorus; seminars on environmental awareness; seminars on familiarity with disabilities.

Factors of social innovation

1. The project has been systematically monitored and evaluated by an expert working group and by the participation of the project's "beneficiaries";

2. Early Childhood Education and Care-ECEC: The project takes place in school units in an everyday space for infants and children, expanding school's operating hours and, more importantly, the content and the role of education and care. It is also open to their parents and grandparents, as well as to all residents of the neighbourhood, who have the chance to benefit from a wide range of activities and workshops;

3. Vocational Education and Training-VET: The range of activities provided all participants with significant development opportunities such as lifelong learning (e.g. courses on new technologies for the elderly), supporting (re)integration into the labour market (e.g. job interview preparation seminars for the unemployed) and, more generally, improving life chances (e.g. seminars on how to build a sustainable social enterprise);

4. Urban regeneration: The city's neighbourhoods gained an additional (freely accessible, vibrant, safe and clean) public space, where all residents have the chance to meet and interact. This is extremely important especially for the multiply deprived neighbourhoods of Athens, where there is high lack of public spaces and infrastructure that reduce social ties.

5. Social Inclusion: In particular, the most deprived neighbourhoods gained not just an additional but also an inclusive public space, that is, open to all residents. The activities and workshops offered by the project responded to the actual needs of many different (often marginalized) groups, such as women, unemployed, elderly people, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities etc. In this way, the project contributed to the building of more cohesive social relations at the local level and, thus, enhances the quality of everyday life.

6. Democratic capacity: The project appears to be innovative also in terms of democratic capacity, entailing critical dimensions of territorial cohesion, such as multi-scale governance (including from top-down to bottom-up initiatives), civic engagement and participation, and collaboration between the public and the private sector.

4.2   Suburban Examples

In what follows we present two examples of social innovation from our case studies in suburban areas.

4.2.1   Kaunas - Family-based Kindergarten

The "Family-based Kindergarten" model is designed for suburban districts close to the metropolitan area of Kaunas city – these are the Academy, Domeikava, Garliava, Ringaudai and Užliedžiai districts. By 2020, April 10 home-based establishments had started their operations (Kaunas district municipality official website, 2020). These districts are characterised by increasing numbers of working-age middle-class families with small children and suburban sprawl and they all report the continuing problem of a shortage in early-age childcare provision services subsidized by the municipality.

Home-based early age (0-2 years old) childcare provision refers to a specific childcare regime that reflects the extent of government-subsidized service provisions and national preferences vis-à-vis maternity leave. This type of social innovation is new in Lithuania where limited access to childcare is one of the most important factors reducing female participation in the labor market. However, the high female labour market participation rates in Lithuania and changing parental models and associated debates on the need for more available and, preferably, subsidized childcare services for families has highlighted this issue.

In general, the Kaunas district childcare innovation refers to enhancing and mobilizing territorial capital in terms of enabling private providers to solve the supply and demand problems in the territorial childcare system. The municipality carries out its own assessment of the demand and supply for this service and has searched for new options. It is also an example of how municipal authorities seek to implement and experiment with an innovative approach aiming to resolve the territorial issue of how to reconcile family-work needs.

Given that private childcare is a costly service not affordable for all families it was acknowledged there was a need to address this issue in the suburban districts of Kaunas. Families are treated as informed consumers of childcare whose purchasing can regulate the costs of services and quality in a private market. The Family-based Kindergarten is a hybrid option of early-age childcare services that combines both parental interest and a subsidized regulated childcare market. It utilizes young staying-at-home mothers and their entrepreneurial and educational skills to meet the care needs over

the working day of parents. It also integrates the educative and social skills of young mothers who can apply to become service providers in their private homes. By doing this Family-based Kindergarten model aims to fill the gap between insufficient municipal administrative skills and financial resources by providing a diverse patchwork of childcare services provision that working parent can access.

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1. The key driver for this particular social innovation was the recognition by Kaunas municipality that there was a deficiency in early year's child-care provision in the suburban districts of Kaunas for working parents who required such provision in a context where the financial resources and facilities/skills of the municipality were limited.

2. It is based on enhancing and mobilizing territorial capital in terms of enabling private initiatives to solve the supply and demand problems in a territorial defined childcare system.

3. It is also an example of how municipal authorities seek to implement and experiment with the innovative approach to resolve the territorial issue of how to reconcile family-work needs. In this sense it is both responding to social needs (lack of affordable childcare facilities) and gaps related to labour supply and the family.

4.2.2   Legnano – Integration Machine[7]

This is an urban regeneration project that aims to create a metropolitan cluster of housing and welfare services for the social integration of the most vulnerable sections of the population. The project was conceived in 2016 by the Milan Metropolitan City, in cooperation with three Local Authorities of the Alto Milanese area, Legnano, Rescaldina and Castano Primo, and it is aligned with 5 other projects involving a total of 30 Local Authorities. Here the focus is on the activities carried out in the suburban district of Legnano.

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[7] www.cittametropolitana.mi.it/welfare_metropolitano/progetti/alto_milanese.

The project focuses on Canazza, a neighbourhood located in the Eastern periphery of Legnano. Canazza is surrounded by congested infrastructural axes (a motorway and a provincial road) acting as physical barriers that cut it off from the rest of the city. The area consists of large social housing blocks built in the 1970s and 1980s to host the growing number of immigrants that moved to the city from Southern Italy to work in local factories. Locally Canazza is considered to be a precarious urban area in terms of social disadvantage and built environmental decay. In the past this has led to forms of discrimination which the inhabitants of Canazza were subjected to by outsiders, a situation that has been partly rebalanced in the last decade after the creation of a number of public services that have improved the urban quality of the neighbourhood, but also thanks to the explicit commitment by groups of local volunteers to tackle social problems. In addition, people living there feel the neighbourhood is insecure. This relates to the frequency of small crime in the social housing areas but also to the fact that until recently some residential buildings were inhabited by families related to organised crime.

The project engaged in two main forms of action:

- The restoration of a former care home (RSA Accorsi) which was abandoned in 2012 after the construction of a new building elsewhere, with the creation of new social housing spaces;

- The creation of a social programme including a range of activities and services aimed at improving social cohesion in the area with a focus on three main target groups: young, elderly and fragile people. A pivotal role in the implementation of the social program is played by the "Spazio Incontro Canazza", an existing community centre that was set up by the Local Authority some15 years ago. It is located very close to the former care home Accorsi, where the new social housing complex is under construction. The project does not attempt to build a new community space, but it mobilises an existing asset, by reinforcing the role of the Spazio Incontro Canazza as a 'social magnet' for the neighborhood and as a hybrid physical space where different functions and activities take place and different populations get together and socialize.

The importance of Integration Machine lies in its aim to fill in the gap between social needs and welfare supply and thus enable people excluded from the welfare system to access it. This lack of access has negative impacts on social cohesion and for marginal groups this potentially turn into social exclusion. To address this problem, the social program of Integration Machine acts as a filter between citizens and the welfare system, especially for those who are not able to access existing social services. An example of this is what happens within the Street Education Program. Social educators get close to young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEETs) who are

experiencing illness or marginality. It attempts to understand their problems and help them to access existing welfare policies. The exchange among educators and vulnerable teenagers happens in the public space, hence in an informal setting where there is greater space to engage with them compared to more traditional employment or counselling centres.

Forms of social innovation:

1. The project demonstrates a process of social innovation generated by a pragmatic state policy, which interacts with third sector micro-level practices;

2. The types of social activities act as a *filter* between socially vulnerable inhabitants and existing welfare services. This filter function allows for the creation of a 'soft space' where the third sector organisation (a social cooperative in this case) can improve the match between social needs and existing welfare services and successfully tackle problems such as the social and economic marginality of elderly and young people. Nevertheless, this function can be considered complementary to the welfare system because the social program fills some gaps present in existing social policies;

3. The project demonstrates a capacity to shape new social and institutional relations reinforcing social ties in the neighborhood. The presence of a lively community center with cultural and social activities has contributed to strengthening mutual trust among residents and a sense of cohesion and belonging to the neighborhood;

4. Overall social innovation is generated by a process according to which third sector organisations develop new actions for empowering socially marginalized and vulnerable individuals, reconnecting their social needs to the existing welfare system.

4.3   Rural Examples

4.3.1   Lemvig - Klimatorium

The Klimatorium[8] is an institute for knowledge creation about climate solutions and green transformation and a research and development centre for all types of climate issues. It was instigated from below but anchored in a partnership with the local municipality, Lemvig Water and Sewage A/S, civil society actors and the European research grant Coast2Coast. It is based on the quadruple helix idea of the importance of collaboration between research and education, the public sector, the private sector and civil society. The Klimatorium is part of realising the national vision of making Denmark an international frontrunner in supplying intelligent, sustainable and effective water solutions. It also aims to place Lemvig on the international map for places promoting solutions to climate change. It is an example that provides learning about how small and rural places can have a global orientation. It combines building on initiatives from below which over time have been institutionalised through interlocking relations across several scales.

It facilitates the exploitation and spread of knowledge about solutions to climate change and green transition. It will be a learning centre where researchers can have meetings or research visits, it will house firms that work with climate adaptation and green transition, and it will be an educational centre where e.g. schools can visit. The Klimatorium seeks to impact on various scales stretching from international, national and local level.

It combines funding from the EU to support knowledge production with funding from the water company and the municipality in the construction of the building. The ambition is that this centre will bring development to the area on several fronts. It is expected to influence the harbour front with its physical building, to place Lemvig on the European and international map for sustainability issues and to contribute to the development of the climate industry in the area.

The small size of Lemvig has not proved to be a disadvantage as this allows for quicker reactions to new ideas and changes but also closer interaction between the involved actors and therefore the possibility to develop common meaning to changes and public authority strategies. The

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[8] https://klimatorium.dk/en/

"Klimatorium" is a physical example of the effort of Lemvig to establish an identity as a globally oriented local society. It is thus an example of a neo-endogenous development in which Lemvig aims to be a Mikropol that develops local solutions to global problems. In this sense, the Klimatorium, the wind industry and the focus on solving climate problems in Lemvig are seen as the solution to the international problem of climate change and by generating development, growth and new learning spaces can be an element in addressing the local problem of depopulation.

Forms of social innovation:

1. It is a form of innovation that is the result of a local bottom-up initiative;

2. It utilises and builds on a local entrepreneurial culture;

3. Builds on an internationally oriented history;

4. Develops territorially cohesive interlocking relations to both different scales of government and the business sector; and

5. Successfully combines the above into a coherent project.

4.3.2   West Dorset - Dorset Coastal Forum (DCF)[9]

The forum was established in 1995 and is well known nationally and internationally for its proactive and innovative work with regard to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). It is an independent organisation for which Dorset council provides office space. Its area of focus is sub-regional (i.e. the Dorset coastal area) and cuts across administrative, professional and management boundaries. However, it is not a planning authority and responsibility for planning resides with local authorities to which it provides advice and cooperates with various bodies such as Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership. It is fundamentally a knowledge-based body and as such is an example of knowledge-based innovation.

It brings together a wide-ranging group of stakeholders related to a particular place and its management in order to encourage dialogue, knowledge sharing, mutual understanding and data collection as well as initiating specific projects related to the coastal area of Dorset. It has also

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[9] The website is: https://www.dorsetcoast.com/

engaged with national and European coastal and marine policy, elements of its work being shaped by EU Directives and funding. The issues it addresses are thus related to coastal planning and development, commercial fisheries and the recreational use of the coast. It seeks to do this through a collaborative and integrated approach to the Dorset coast.

It represents an example of a collective organisation/partnership organised around a set of specific identifiable territorial interests. However, it can only offer advice/proposals to other bodies such as local planning authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership. Nevertheless, over the years it has established a reputation as an effective and reliable form of Integrated Coastal Management by engaging in the provision of relevant evidence/practice based knowledge and engaging in demonstration projects. This means its 'voice' is listened to and it is able to influence both the policy agenda and policy.

What the Forum focuses on is the mobilisation of intellectual, professional, managerial and practice-based knowledge forms. The Forum is a form of bottom-up innovation arising from the recognition of the need to address a series of complex common inter-linked issues related to a particular place that cross administrative and professional/managerial boundaries. The form of innovation exemplified by the DCF primarily relates to knowledge exchange and dissemination, in a sense it may be described as a 'knowledge partnership' focussed on a particular place and those who live and work there. It brings together a range of different 'knowledge forms' (e.g. scientific, professional, managerial) as well as more local knowledge forms (e.g. from fishermen). It is thus about 'collective knowledge related to a place,' 'knowledge transfer' and the co-production of knowledge. However, as it has grown and developed it the Forum gone beyond merely the provision of knowledge and runs externally funded projects related to the coastal area.

The Forum is also based around a particular form of leadership that may be described as 'facilitative leadership' that brings together a range of different stakeholders to engage in a deliberation and knowledge exchange process within a 'neutral' situation. Those involved have engaged in a collective process of the co-production of new knowledge that is 'collectively owned' and the forum has produced new data that can feed into evidence-based decision-making. It demonstrates the importance of bringing together 'key decision makers' and those with relevant knowledge in a forum where they can put to one-side their own organisation's interests, exchange both knowledge and experience and freely discuss the development of a place-based approach to common territorial issues that no one organisation can address alone and thus encourages the development of a territorially integrated approach and the development of associated forms of territorial governance.

Forms of social innovation:

1. Brings together a wide range of stakeholders with a common territorial focus – the management of the Dorset coastal zone;

2. A knowledge based platform that brings together a wide range of knowledge forms;

3. Allows for dispassionate discussion of issues focussed on a common place involving decision-makers;

4. Involves the co-production/co-creation of knowledge and data that can feed into decision-making;

5. Has developed a form of 'facilitative leadership' to support the above; and

6. Has encouraged the development of a territorially integrated approach and the development of associated forms of territorial governance.

4.3.3   Pakruojis – Cultural Tourism

This form of social innovation is organised around cultural tourism development in the Pakruojis municipality where business efforts, economic growth strategy by local authorities and EU investments were integrated to re-construct Pakruojis manor complex (the manor house together with the other farm buildings, in total 43 buildings) for tourism needs. The Pakruojis manor complex is the largest fully surviving ensemble in Lithuania established in 17th century and it has a complex and rich history.

The local authorities took responsibility for integrating public and private resources to establish an effective tourism strategy in the area. In 2011 Pakruojis municipality received a financial grant for the project "Reconstruction of the buildings of the southern part of Pakruojis manor and complex arrangement of the territory, adapting to the needs of the society" prepared by the specialists of Pakruojis municipality administration. The reconstruction scheme received more than €753.600 from the European Union Cohesion Operational Program in the period of 2007-2013 under the measure "Creation of preconditions for faster diversification of economic activities in rural areas". The main

measures were related to urban development, preservation of cultural heritage and nature and adaptation for tourism development in rural regions.

This cultural tourism innovation is based on the integration of horizontal policy bundles bring together in a coherent strategy private initiatives, top-down financial and managerial actions and the local community. It combines their knowledge and resources to solve the economic growth problem in a rural locality. The case also highlights the importance of EU funds that foster the development of cultural tourism strategy. Economic development, tourism planning and local branding schemes were articulated to correspond with the profile of the rural locality. It is also an example of how municipal authorities experimented with a public-private partnerships approach to take advantage of scarce local economic and social resources.

Forms of social innovation involved:

1. It builds on the effective use of a range of local resources. This entails mobilizing local managerial and financial knowledge, business entrepreneurship and a local labor force. Currently, approximately 68 people are employed in the cultural facilities in hospitality, educational and recreational services, and maintenance. In the tourism field, the company is the largest employer in the locality.

2. It emphasizes the importance of historical and cultural heritage. The strategic focus of the social innovation example is increasing the attractiveness of the rural Pakruojis locality and creating a new cultural heritage complex that provides multifunctional services on the Lithuanian scale. The other strategic goals deal with promoting local tourism, ensuring more efficient use of public tourism infrastructure, and revealing the uniqueness and diversity of services and products of the locality.

3. It has created valuable socio-economic effects in the locality. The cultural services model is more orientated towards targeting external national and international tourists (cross-border region with Latvia), especially families and large tourist groups. Additionally, the company works as a large employer for local inhabitants and contributes to the development of the local and national tourism sector. Services provided by Pakruojis manor are designed for outsourcing the economic impacts from incoming tourism and contributing to the socio-economic development of the locality.

4.3.4   Debrzno - Association for the Development of the Town and Municipality of Debrzno (ADTMD)

Debrzno is a peripheral rural location in Poland, its economic and social situation dramatically declined in the 1990s as a result of the transformation, which swept away its economic pillars: the State-Own Farms and the army garrison. As a result, the unemployment rate soared 37%. Without its main employers and social care providers, the community had to create a way forward in the new socio-economic reality. In the face of the crisis and no signs of a coherent vision of the municipality's future development a group of active citizens recruited from various backgrounds (a priest, a school principal, a bank manager, farmers and unemployed people) set up an association in order to access external funds (European etc.) and make Debrzno "an agricultural and industrial municipality with European standard of living". The Association was established in 1998 to support the municipal authorities in overcoming the crisis. Its foundation formed part of the first municipal development strategy as an instrument for generating funds and invigorating the local economy – a solution rarely found in Polish local government practice and definitely novel at that time.

ADTMD is an independent entity from both a legal and financial perspective, a non-governmental organization with its own legal identity and its own chair and management board. One of its first objectives was to open a business incubator to provide jobs in the private sector, offer appropriate training and change peoples' attitudes and help overcome stagnation and inspire entrepreneurship. Ever since ADTMD has been the engine of social activity, the local pathfinder in the area of external funding and an example for other organizations. Its effectiveness in obtaining grants inspired others who replicated their model – similar associations were founded in municipalities of Czarne and Lipki. It is estimated that over 20 years the Association had helped acquire approximately 100-150 million PLN of funding (€24-35 million). Furthermore it carried out, participated in or inspired initiatives such as two business incubators, a Local Action Group "Necklace of the North", a Local Fishermen Group, renovation of the town's landmark and tourist attraction – The Mill Tower (Baszta Młyńska). ADTMD concentrates its efforts on increasing the available stocks of human capital and supporting entrepreneurship. However, its understanding of entrepreneurship goes beyond business activities. The Association is also engaged in promoting civic activism and facilitating social initiatives. The organization's mission and main objectives formulated in its founding documents are based on three key pillars.

1. Participation in active labour market policies and promoting local development. These objectives are realized by providing vocational training for people seeking employment but

also providing state-of-the-art, practical and academic knowledge about the management of small companies.

2. Civic participation activities where ADTMD plays both the role of key actor and a facilitator. The Association has as one of its objectives engaging in all matters concerning the municipality, including local government and the development of local democracy while also addressing issues of unemployment, ecology, healthcare, culture and education. It has taken part in drawing up the key local strategic documents and is involved in the local regeneration programme. As a facilitator ADTMD is an organizer of multiple training sessions delivered to local activists and non-governmental organizations and a "go to" institution for local actors (e.g. village heads) needing support in grant applications.

3. It is also a networking-oriented organization aiming to collaborate with partners from different sectors and tiers of local government, which share its objective of local development and amelioration of life quality.

Forms of social innovation:

1. From the start it has adopted a strategic approach to the areas problems. Unlike many non-governmental organizations, ADTMD's activities are not guided purely by the available funding (grant hunting approach). The agenda of ADTMD has always had a clear objective of supporting local development and increasing the quality of life drawing on local assets. As well as helping to prepare key strategic documents, it seeks to articulate a vision for the area's future.

2. Effective leadership in economic development include engendering collaboration, trust, the sharing of power, flexibility, entrepreneurialism and a willingness to be proactive.

3. Cross-sectoral and multi-level cooperation. Cooperation is the *modus operandi* of ADTMD. We can distinguish several layers of its collaborative practices. These include empowering of weaker or less experienced actors, community-building initiatives and goal-oriented coalitions.

4.4   Conclusion

It is clear from the above that in practice social innovation takes many different forms and must be understood in relation to the context in which it takes place. Indeed this is consistent with what was pointed out in the brief literature review in Section 3. What is also clear is that many of the social innovation initiatives are embedded in local contexts and not easily transferable in any straightforward sense. Nevertheless, it is worth looking at the mechanisms and processes associated with social innovation in the different contexts that provide the opportunity for lesson learning.

In a general sense several of the case studies pointed to the significance of creating spaces (physical and virtual) where relevant groups/subjects, especially marginalised/excluded individuals and groups, can be approached in an informal setting by a social employee who understands their social needs and tries to reconnect them to the existing welfare services or to the new services being provided. This mechanism would be particularly useful in contexts characterised by significant gaps between social needs and existing welfare policies. Such approaches tend to be based on the role of third sector organisations.

There is a need for greater coordination and collaboration across, between and within sectors. In this sense who takes the lead role is significant and this will vary from country to country and place to place. In some countries, local government needs to take on this role, especially where the third sector is relatively underdeveloped. But this requires local government to take a less 'directive role' and more of a facilitative role. In other countries greater responsibility can be devolved to third sector organisations while in others the business sector may be more involved though the establishment of public-private partnerships. Whatever particular form coordination and collaboration may take at local level it is quite likely it will need support from higher levels (e.g. national or European) in terms of resources. As a result, this entails addressing issues of both horizontal and multi-level governance, in some cases it may also involve territorial governance where problems cross-administrative boundaries.

It is also worth pointing out the increasing significance of web-based platforms that can act both as sources of information and spaces of interaction. Clearly, these are places where many people feel comfortable operating in, but they may only be a first point of contact while for others access may be a problem. This means that more traditional physical spaces should not be neglected. What are needed are places/spaces configured to encourage people to attend and which are run and staffed by knowledgeable people from third sector organisations based in the locality and trusted by those who

use these spaces. The combination of web-based and physical spaces would seem to be the most appropriate way forward.

Local leadership also appears to be important, although again this can take a variety of forms. Nevertheless what is clear is traditional top-down bureaucratic and directive forms of leadership do not support social innovation and the presence of forms of what has been termed 'facilitative leadership' and 'consensus building leadership' are important. Also, what are termed social entrepreneurs can play an important role in catalysing social innovation as well as inspiring the transition from 'pure' social initiatives to socially responsible businesses that can generate a profit and benefit the local economy. Without these forms of leadership, it is unlikely that the sort of space needed to allow social innovation will be created.

The Austrian and Italian examples in particular point to the need for an 'infrastructure to support social innovation', particularly if social innovation is to become an ongoing and sustainable activity rather than a one-off event related only to particular initiatives. The role of government at all levels (from European to local) is clearly significant, but so too is the role of private foundations, independent research centres focussed on supporting social innovation and the embedding of social innovation in educational curricula. In addition, resources need to be made available to support it. Also, and this is significant, there should be a willingness to recognise that some initiatives will 'fail' and that lessons need to be derived from 'failure'.

Another important issue is related to knowledge and the need to bring together in a coherent and focussed manner different knowledge forms including scientific, managerial, economic, entrepreneurial, local, every day and professional in order to understand what the problems are, how to address them in a coherent manner and establish new models of service provision, maximise their impact and thereby create better ways of meeting the needs of different groups of people. This also may mitigate against a one-size fits all approach.

Many countries have experienced prolonged austerity regimes that have seen major reductions in government funding which has either led to withdrawal from the provision of some services and/or severe reductions in their standard and availability. This may have served as a stimulus for local forms of social innovation to fill in gaps and to develop new forms of service delivery at local level that are better targeted and address the needs of marginalised/excluded groups. This can take a variety of forms such as creating new joined-up delivery systems, linking (marginalised) people in to welfare services, employment training or entrepreneurial activities. These activities may represent a win-win process given that local authorities need third sector organisations to respond to increasingly complex

social needs, and the third sector actors need the local authority for visibility and the organizational infrastructures. However, they may also reflect a wider restructuring of welfare provision and entail the 'abandonment' of the most marginalized/excluded sections of the population and this means that social innovation can become a 'double-edged sword'.

One other issue stood out sharply from across our case studies that is worth considering in a little more detail. This is the under representation of social innovation initiatives in suburban areas. There is a variety of potential explanations for this:

- Such areas may have a looser/less developed social infrastructure, or a more fragmented social infrastructure that is not conducive to social innovation;
- That they are struggling with a less well-defined sense of place identity;
- That the above means there is a need for processes of community building, e.g. building bridges between 'newcomers' and 'old residents';
- That social projects are required that may, over time, act as a catalyst for community building processes to develop;
- Suburban areas are not a homogenous category, some suburban areas are a 'town' while others are commuter zones rather than 'a place' and this makes a difference;
- That these different types of places makes for different conditions for social innovation;
- That urban sprawl areas or urban hinterlands in some suburban housing areas be characterized as 'ghettos' in which no one wants to live and those already living there wish to leave. Although the Legnano example does suggest that where areas are characterised as some form of 'ghetto' action can be taken to address the issue and (re)build community.

What the above does suggest is that there is no single-factor explanation for the under representation of suburbs.

5   Policy Recommendations

In terms of searching for policy recommendations that can to applied to particular types of areas/places (i.e. urban suburban and rural) what become clear from our examples is that in terms of social innovation this is not feasible. Nor can we think in terms of examples of social innovation simply being transferrable to other geographical and institutional contexts. There are serious issues in terms of identifying practices that may be applied elsewhere due to their embeddedness in the social and economic contextual conditions and the different levels of territorial assets, social cohesion and collective organising capacity characterising each practice. Our view is that an alternative approach would be to consider the mechanisms and the processes that are helpful in creating conditions conducive for social innovation, it is these that could be disseminated to other. Indeed this seems to be entirely compatible with the place-based approach.

Nor can we assume that social innovations will necessarily support any or some combinations of territorial cohesion, ALMP, VET or ECEC. These links have to be consciously constructed in each place (e.g. as in Gdansk where links were made between ALMP and VET or in suburban Kaunas where links were made between ECEC and the labour market). However, very often such links are beyond the scope and capacity of the relevant initiatives. What almost all the examples we have provided do address are inequalities, often of access to welfare services or in terms of meeting previously unmet needs or new emerging needs. In addition, a number of the examples address issues of social cohesion. However, these tend to be place specific (e.g. at the neighbourhood level) and the problem remains of scaling up. All of the forging merely emphasises the wide variety of forms of social innovation and the simple fact that this is a category that cannot easily be related to particular policy fields. Given this we have chosen to focus on identifying 'factors' (including processes and mechanisms) that are conducive to social innovation, however, they will not necessarily lead to social innovation, much depends on the actions taken in each place.

5.1   The General Policy Environment

In order support social innovation there needs to be what might be termed a supportive policy environment. Support from different levels of government can be provided in a variety of ways. For some years the European Commission has supported and encouraged social innovation (see European Commission, 2010, 2013, 2017, 2018; see also Sabato, Vanhercke, B. & Verschraegen, 2017 for an overview of how social innovation has been incorporated into the EU policy agenda). Funding is

available through a variety of funding streams and there is a plethora of advice websites under the banner of the European Union. At the national and subnational level among our case study countries Austria stood out as an example of the creation of a supporting infrastructure for social innovation. This involved not only government but private foundations and the education system. The Italian and Greek examples, to varying degrees, also had elements of such a system. If countries are to take social innovation seriously then it would seem sensible to put in place an appropriate version of the Austrian approach.

There are a variety of EU funding opportunities available to support social innovation as well as research into social innovation through programmes such as Horizon 2020 and its successor. The LEADER programme has had innovation at its heart and there is much to be learnt from this. While it was mainstreamed in the 2013-2020 programming period for the Structural Funds it is worth looking at its experiences. In this programming period, Community Led Local Development also had supporting social innovation as one of its core aims. Finally, the experiences of the various URBACT programmes provide a wealth of information on social innovation. It might well be sensible to create a single European 'clearing house' website that can be accessed and provide information and advice to those looking for support on social innovation. This would offer a single 'one-stop shop' to which groups and individuals can easily refer.

COHSMO builds on these and adds to them by providing a range of social innovation case studies that cover urban, suburban and rural places. While appreciating the embeddedness of most cases of social innovation provided here this provided the opportunity to compare social innovation in very different contexts and identify common processes and mechanisms along with factors that facilitate social innovation. This adds substantially to the existing stock of knowledge and enhances the basis for policy learning.

During a period of austerity, the role of private foundations that support social innovation should be acknowledged and encouraged. Their flexibility may allow them to respond more quickly than the state sector to new needs and processes of experimentation to meet those needs. The results from the Austrian, Greek and Italian case study reports point to the significant role such foundations have played in supporting social innovation. It would be sensible for the EU and all countries to look at taxation regimes and consider if these could be amended to encourage such foundations where they exist and the setting up of them where they are absent.

As well as focussing on the support of individual initiatives part of the general policy environment is the presence of networks and collaboration between sectors, and where relevant across administrative

boundaries. Media support, lobbying and networking can be crucial in raising awareness of new challenges and promoting collaboration among actors and disseminating lessons learnt from individual initiatives. Much of this is about raising the profile of social innovation and ensuring its relevance is understood and appreciated by a wider audience of policy makers, business leaders, private funders and local communities.

5.2   Factors Supporting Social Innovation

What is clear from our case study reports is that social innovation can take a wide variety of forms according the different times and places. Given this there is no 'off the shelf' social innovation pack that can simply be picked up and transferred elsewhere. Nor is there a simple 'check list' of social innovation that can be followed. Correspondingly it would seem unwise to try and develop a 'general policy'. However, based on our cases studies it is possible to identify a number of general factors related to and likely to support the development of social innovation that can be drawn upon and used as 'lesson learning' aids for a wide range of places (i.e. urban, suburban and rural situations). These are:

1. At a very general level, it is important to recognise there is a *problem* and that past policies have failed to address it. This in itself is a generic issue, but nevertheless important;

2. In part related to (1) political *leadership* that acknowledges past failure(s) and the necessity of developing a new approach;

3. Following on from (2) it increasingly appears to be the case that the more traditional top-down directive form of leadership is inappropriate and that a form of leadership, which is more collectively orientated, is required. A leadership approach that is open to co-decision making and *enhanced democratic engagement*. In a sense it may be described as *facilitative leadership and consensus leadership*;

4. A multi-actor partnership approach that combines public, private and voluntary/community sectors as the situation requires;

5. As far as possible reducing bureaucratic requirements that may hinder the supply of services in the long term;

6. Stable funding regimes that are multi-annual that give social innovation initiatives a degree of freedom to develop and experiment;

7. Related to (6) utilising endogenous resources, such as training individuals from relevant communities/groups to be active, in both a paid and voluntary capacity, in the initiatives and interact with the relevant groups and individuals;

8. As part of this approach to innovation it will be necessary to bring together a range of *different knowledge forms* (e.g. professional, managerial, local, everyday) to inform policy development and create a local evidence base that has the potential to be scaled up;

9. Following on from (8) embedding social innovation in relevant educational, professional and managerial curricula;

10. A crucial element is *empowering local communities and voluntary sector organisations* to address problems at the local level as part of a wider approach;

11. Innovation in terms of addressing what are often complex and multifaceted problems requires bringing together a wide range of *key actors and decision-makers* from a diverse range of organisations;

12. Selecting the most appropriate scale (i.e. the most effective one) for policy interventions in order to make them place-sensitive on one hand and to efficiently manage the available territorial assets and organizational resources on the other;

13. Developing suitable web based platforms and associated physical spaces staffed by trained individuals, preferably from the local community, who can meet with relevant individuals/groups and help assess their needs and link them into existing services;

14. Where necessary developing new services and/or service delivery systems to meet existing or emerging needs.

By engaging in the above, or an appropriate combination of them, this will help create collective ownership and the sustainability of any innovations. It is, however, important to adapt them to the particular problems and situation of individual places as part of a context sensitive place-based approach that takes into account the need to simultaneously address and promote economic, social and territorial cohesion.

More generally and in relation to Cohesion Policy social innovation needs to be a key part of the place-based approach as advocated by the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion and the Barca Report (2009). The Barca Report is aware of many of the general issues noted and the need to engage in

institutional change if this approach is to be successful. In every case, there are multifaceted problems to be addressed and as the report points out:

> The intervention needed to tackle these problems should take the form of the provision of integrated bundles of public goods and services aimed at triggering institutional change, improving the well-being of people and the productivity of businesses and promoting innovation. The goods and services concerned need to be tailored to places by eliciting and aggregating local preferences and knowledge and by taking account of linkages with other places (Barca 2009, p. XI).

If such changes take place arrangements for citizen/community participation will need to be developed that bring together spatially and socially disparate groups to create 'deliberative fora' that can adequately represent their interests in policy development and implementation.

To date the problem has been that while documents such as the Green Paper and the Barca Report have pointed to the significance of social innovation this has all too often not been translated into action at the local level or supported by national programmes. What the COHSMO project has done is to provide clear examples of how, in a wide variety of places (urban, suburban, rural) various forms of social innovation can be developed, with appropriate exogenous support, and have a real impact on the local context helping to improve the local economy, improve employment opportunities, enhance social cohesion and improve the well-being of people. Moreover, it has identified a range of mechanisms, processes and factors that facilitate social innovation. Taken together these examples can provide learning opportunities for others, contribute to the existing evidence base and inspire other places to develop forms of social innovation appropriate to their local situations and needs.

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