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Taco Brandsen
Sandro Cattacin
Adalbert Evers
Annette Zimmer *Editors*

Social Innovations in the Urban Context



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Editors

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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
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Part I
Introduction

Chapter 1

Social Innovation: A Sympathetic and Critical Interpretation

Taco Brandsen, Adalbert Evers, Sandro Cattacin and Annette Zimmer

1.1 The Promise and Challenge of Social Innovations

The effort to strengthen social cohesion and lower social inequalities is among Europe's main policy challenges. At the urban level, these great challenges become visible and tangible, which in many senses makes cities a microcosm of society. It means that local welfare systems are at the forefront of the struggle to address this challenge—and they are far from winning. While the statistics show some positive signs, the overall picture still shows sharp and sometimes rising inequalities, a loss of social cohesion and failing policies of integration and inclusion. When we focus on specific groups in society (e.g. migrants), the situation is even more dire. It is clear that new ideas and approaches to tackle these very wicked problems are needed.

Contrary to what is sometimes thought, a lack of bottom-up innovation is not the issue in itself. European cities are teeming with new ideas, initiated by citizens, professionals and policymakers. There are by now many examples of innovation, paraded by think tanks and policymakers as tomorrow's answers. This is certainly promising. Yet this altogether too rosy picture obscures some of the drawbacks,

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which are both practical and academic in nature. In public policy, there has often been the suggestion that such innovations will substitute for, rather than complement, present welfare arrangements. This has made the concept rather suspicious, in the eyes of many. It is not our wish to enter into a political debate here, but it must be observed that we as yet know little about the broader effects of innovations and how these compare to the effects of established programmes. Also, it is often implicitly suggested that social innovation is necessarily good, which is again unproven. As we will show in this book, while it is fine to regard social innovation with sympathetic eyes, it is misleading to ignore the contested and dark sides of the phenomenon.

Academically, there are also various reasons to be careful with the term. To begin with, the concept of social innovation is poorly defined and demarcated. Furthermore, innovations are too often presented as “pearls without an oyster”: They are pretty to look at, but we do not know where they come from. How do such innovations originate in a specific local context of social relations, regulations, space and politics? What exactly did they contribute to local welfare systems? And how can we ensure a positive interaction between these forms of social innovation and public policies for reform? The European Union (EU)-funded international research project “Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion” (WILCO) was set up to find out specifically how social innovations can help to deal with the challenge of social inclusion, in the context of established local welfare systems.

This entails a special perspective on the phenomenon of social innovation and the various promoters, agents of change and social entrepreneurs that are involved with them. The new approaches and instruments developed, which are part of social innovations, should, self-evidently, work “in the here and now”, in the place they are operating; but they also contain messages concerning values, hopes and assumptions. Other actors, such as the political-administrative system can then engage with and react to innovations in various ways. They can borrow successful instruments, adapting them to their own administrative and policy frameworks. But equally, these other actors may also feel challenged by the nature of these new instruments or by the innovators themselves. There is, then, a significant difference, as well as significant room for variation, between *making use* of innovations, their methods and instruments and actually *learning* from them. From that point of view, our analysis of innovation aims to facilitate a broader concept of policy learning that goes beyond making (greater) use of social innovations. It tries to understand them as socially embedded phenomena, with all the strings attached.

1.2 Social Innovation: A Contested Issue and the Concept Proposed by WILCO

The definition of social innovations is a bone of contention. In their overview written for the European Commission and the WILCO project, Jenson and Harrison have referred to social innovation as a “quasi-concept”, a “hybrid, making use of empirical analysis and thereby benefitting from the legitimising aura of the scientific-

ic method, but simultaneously characterised by an indeterminate quality that makes it adaptable to a variety of situations and flexible enough to follow the twists and turns of policy, that everyday politics sometimes make necessary” (European Commission 2013, p. 16). Indeed, it has achieved the status of a buzzword in national and European policy circles. US President Obama established no less than two offices for social innovation. The EU has used the term to fund several initiatives, including the research project upon which this book is based. It is then little wonder that the meaning has diluted, sometimes referring to anything that is considered new and that is not technical.

Although as an academic concept, it is less wide-ranging, there still remains a broad range of interpretations. Some posit simply that it must constitute a new approach to a particular kind of problem. The Stanford Centre for Social Innovation, for example, describes it as “the process of inventing, securing support for, and implementing novel solutions to social needs and problems” (Phillis et al. 2008, p. 34). This is a conveniently flexible interpretation, yet one could argue that, according to this definition, there is little that does not qualify as a social innovation. Other scholars are more specific in circumscribing the nature of innovation. For example, the SOCIAL POLIS project defined it as “the satisfaction of alienated human needs through the transformation of social relations: transformations which ‘improve’ the governance systems that guide and regulate the allocation of goods and services meant to satisfy those needs, and which establish new governance structures and organizations (discussion forums, political decision-making systems, etc.)” (Moulaert 2010, 2013). This implies not only that an innovation must be radical (transformative), but also that it changes the power structure within the system where it is introduced. The problem with this kind of definition is less with its normative character, but with its essentialist nature. It is true that innovations are about new ideas and purposes deriving from established paths and patterns getting practical; however, it must be likewise considered that they are about processes and ways of development under conditions and in contexts where interaction is not determined and foreseeable *ex ante*. Innovatory effects of a new product, strategy or service can be path breaking to different degrees. Thinking this way it becomes clear that what is needed is a *concept* of social innovation as a complex societal process, rather than a mere classificatory *definition* of an action or product.

For the purposes of the WILCO project, we defined social innovation as both products and processes; ideas translated into practical approaches; new in the context where they appear. It was important for us to use such a definition, rather than a more specific one, because one cannot clearly predict what comes out of even a very promising innovation in the course of its development. The problem with defining social innovation resides less in “innovation” and much more in the meaning one attributes to “social”. Studying the current literature on conceptualising and defining *social* innovations, one finds that “social” is mainly equated with “improvement” (Phillis 2008), finding better answers to basic needs and more satisfying social relations (Moulaert 2010), and a range of other “good things”.

One way of challenging such an interpretation of “social” has been proposed by Johnson in his essay asking “Where good ideas come from” (2010). He argues that there are four different environments that create new ideas, processes and things:

(a) the ideas of individual inventors working as or with businessmen, (b) ideas of individuals in society that may be taken up at different places, (c) market-networked innovations, generated by (clusters of) enterprises and their R&D departments and finally (d), what he calls “the fourth quadrant” (2010, p. 213), non-market/networked movements inventions and actions making them practical innovations. It is then not the more or less technical nature of an innovation, nor the degree to which its final (by)effects are beneficial, but the offspring from the realms of society and social interactions that might make a difference between innovations at large and *social* innovations. He also tries to show that in the last centuries, there has been a swing from individual and business based to what he calls “non-market/networked” based (social) innovations. It would be tempting to discuss then in which ways there is a link between more *social* innovation and more *civil* society as a fertile ground for processes that generate and give room to such innovations.

The view proposed by Johnson may allow a more subtle understanding of the prevailing broad consensus on the positive definition of the “social” aspect of social innovation (see BEPA 2010; Mulgan 2006). They may not always be seen unambiguously as good, but possibly as more promising or attractive than previous arrangements, or in comparison to the lifestyles created by the innovative products, services or regulations of big business and big government. While this allows us to feel sympathetic towards social innovations, we must still remain critical about statements and definitions that declare them as inherently good.

Interpretations of the added value and success of social innovations, which reflect what is seen as good and better for society, will often be widely contested. By definition, innovations differ from prevailing routines, forms of thinking and acting. It is possible that they may become a mainstream practice, but this is never the case at the outset. They can be linked with a diverse range of goals and come to take on different meanings over time. Just as important as the initial goals of social innovation are wider political concepts and institutional systems in which they become embedded (see e.g. Osborne and Brown 2011), reactions of the social and economic environments, and the hopes for better coping strategies and solutions that they attract. The enormous impact of social environments for the shape and directions innovations take is a well known topic from the older and more established research and debates on technological innovations (see e.g. Chesbrough 2003). Basically all innovations, technological and social innovations, are, as convincingly argued by Nowotny (1997), marked by a high degree of risk and uncertainty in the course of their development.

Altogether, this shows that defining innovation—and more specifically social innovation—is an issue in an evolving area of study undergoing a great deal of change and often linked with normative assumptions.

Against this background, our definition avoids objectifying what is a matter of processes involving not only proponents and activists and their initial goals but also the ways contexts react and shape the ways and directions social innovations develop. We employed the simple criterion *that social innovations are those that, created mainly by networks and joint action in social realms beyond business and government routines, at any given moment, raise the hope and expectations of progress towards something “better” (a more socially sustainable/democratic/effective*

society). Whether or not these hopes and expectations come to fruition is harder to ascertain, as they depend both on the values and strategies of change agents and on the impact of context on these social innovations, which can often only be verified in retrospect. Thereby we have tried, first, to avoid working with a normative concept that is imposed on social processes from a purely academic perspective and second, to take account of the fact that innovations are processes with future directions and meanings that depend on many factors.

Furthermore, we have avoided assuming an inherent link between social innovation and specific organisational forms such as “social enterprises” or an individual character or attitude represented by the “social entrepreneur” (for an overview on this perspective, see the contributions in Nicholls 2006). The link between social innovations and organisational forms should be an empirical question, not a presupposition.

1.3 Aims and Methodology

The findings described in this collection derive from the research project WILCO (“Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion”, 2010–2014). The project was funded by the EU under the 7th Framework Programme and included universities from ten countries (Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK), coordinated by Radboud University Nijmegen. Its objectives were twofold:

- a. To chart patterns of social inequality and exclusion in European cities.
- b. To identify (socially) innovative practices in European cities, specifically related to local welfare. It is on the second objective that this book focuses.

With respect to both points, it must be emphasised that our project was not about comparing countries and their welfare regimes or systems of governance. Instead, we studied urban patterns of inequality and exclusion, and the social innovations related to them, within a wider framework of reference than the national level only. Today’s social innovations, the patterns and instruments that make them different to what exists, are not primarily about regime differences, but about dealing with the insufficiencies of traditions and trends shared across European countries. Innovations generally have to cope with (a) typical patterns of traditional post-war welfarism and (b) more recent modernisation strategies building on neo-liberal and managerial concepts. As the respective chapters on social innovations in this book will show, it is with regard to this international heritage in welfare and governance that social innovations make a difference and show commonalities.

Taking an international perspective and looking at commonalities does not, however, deny the importance of context. Our work has been guided by a perspective that underlines the impact of *local* contexts, of the peculiarities of cities and urban areas. These local contexts are not merely local representations of national regimes. Cities and their governing elites have room, sometimes wide room, to manoeuvre,

as our city chapters in part II of the book show, and these different local contexts determine the conditions for the emergence and development of local social innovations, for example, the space given to them, the opportunities for sustainability and the scope for policy learning.

In accordance with our understanding of social innovation, focus on the axis between specific contexts of local and urban settings on the one hand and innovations taking shape there on the other has been central to our research and constitutes the basis of this book. Part II looks at it from the perspective of urban contexts and regimes, whereas part III is focussing on typical examples of such local innovations and the various ways in which they interact with their local context. To what degree and in which ways the interaction of local contexts and innovations is mediated by national traditions and trends is a challenge for further research. It was not central to this project.

The first period of our research work was devoted to mapping the context of social innovations at the local level. We described the historical-institutional backgrounds on the basis of two dimensions: the structure of the overall welfare state and the degree of centralisation and the position of “the local” in shaping welfare. For this purpose, we made an inventory of variables that must be regarded as formal preconditions for local welfare policies and initiatives, including key regulations, financial provisions, contractual arrangements and entitlements. Because at this concrete level there were many changes in key variables (e.g. in financial and regulatory conditions), we set a time frame covering the last 10 years. The variables were specified for three policy fields central to the project: childcare, employment and housing.

We started with a literature review and conducted six interviews per country (two in each of the three policy fields, with public officials and professionals), 60 overall, to make sure our information was up-to-date. After mapping the national backgrounds to social innovation, we moved to the local level. We chose 20 European cities (two per country) on which we focused our further research. The chosen cities were: Münster and Berlin Friedrichshain—Kreuzberg (DE), Zagreb and Varazdin (HR), Amsterdam and Nijmegen (NL), Barcelona and Pamplona (ES), Milan and Brescia (IT), Stockholm and Malmö (SE), Birmingham and Medway area (UK), Warsaw and Plock (PL), Lille and Nantes (FR), and Bern and Genève (CH). For the 20 chosen cities, we gathered data about social inequality and exclusion in the local labour market, housing market and childcare facilities, as well as more general data on patterns of social cohesion. Specifically, we identified the relative position of age, gender and migrant groups with respect to general patterns of social inequality and exclusion. Data collection consisted of two parts. The first was an analysis of the Eurostat Database Urban Audit that includes data for more than 200 European cities; it constituted the background for our comparative analysis. The second part consisted of 360 intensive interviews, 36 in each country (six interviews for each group mentioned above in each city). The analysis was aimed at describing the living conditions of people experiencing difficult situations and at identifying the strategies they adopt in order to deal with them. This first stage of the project has been the subject of a separate book (Ranci et al. 2014).

Having identified the contexts of social innovation in local welfare in the first period of the research, the project then turned to the innovations themselves. In order to do so, a distinction was made between the core ideas behind local welfare and the concrete approaches and instruments through which local welfare is implemented.

The first part of this second stage of our research focused on discourses on social inequality, social cohesion and their links with overarching concepts for local economic growth and urban development. We examined the ways these shaped the three policy fields mentioned above, revealing the locally prevailing practices, core ideas and discourses that drive local welfare systems and their governance.

In the second part of our analysis, interviews were conducted with experts, policymakers, administrators and key persons in the three policy fields, which included questions about what they considered new and promising in their local context in terms of activities, concepts and organisations. This matched with our concept of looking at social innovations as risky and basically open processes, leaving it to central stakeholders what to qualify as new, innovative and promising. Our final choice of local social innovations to be studied (three to five per city) was thereby guided and informed by local knowledge.

We described instruments and approaches used to fight against social inequality and stimulate social cohesion. By virtue of the knowledge accumulated in previous phases of the research, we could assess how instruments and approaches were innovative in their contexts. It allowed us to generate a more concrete knowledge about what kind of shared patterns make up for social innovations. What instruments and approaches do they use when they try to act different and better? We were interested in styles of services rendered, forms of organisation and working patterns and in issues of governance. The development of such local innovations was understood as a co-product of their own strategies and of the impact of local discursive contexts. In total, we gathered information about 77 social innovations. This was done primarily through an additional 180 interviews (Table 1.1).

The key methods used were:

- An analysis of documentation, including policy documents produced by the stakeholders in the chosen policy fields, parliamentary protocols produced at the local level discussing choices taken in the policy fields and newspaper articles produced in the local press concerning the policy fields.
- Qualitative semi-structured interviews with stakeholders both within the analysed fields and at the level of general policy with policymakers, civil servants, representatives of civil society organisations and representatives of our three chosen groups. In total, we carried out about 12 interviews per policy field per country and 360 interviews overall.
- To involve stakeholders in the progress of the research, focus groups were organised in each city to invite policymakers, civil servants, representatives of civil society organisations and representatives of the three groups of interest.

Table 1.1 Overview of methods

Stage of the project	Focus	Data collection
Stage one	Collecting data about social inequality and exclusion in the local labour market, housing market and childcare facilities, as well as more general data on patterns of social cohesion	Analysis of the Eurostat database urban audit Interviews with migrants, young unemployed, single mothers (360 overall)
Stage two—preparatory phase	Update on the state of the art	Literature review Six interviews per country
Stage two—analysis of cities	Cities (Münster and Berlin Friedrichshain—Kreuzberg (DE), Zagreb and Varazdin (HR), Amsterdam and Nijmegen (NL), Barcelona and Pamplona (ES), Milan and Brescia (IT), Stockholm and Malmö (SE), Birmingham and Medway area (UK), Warsaw and Plock (PL), Lille and Nantes (FR), Bern and Genève (CH))	Analysis of policy documents, parliamentary protocols and newspaper articles Qualitative semi-structured interviews (12 per policy field per country, 360 overall) Stakeholder meetings (20 overall)
Stage two—analysis of innovations	Social innovations (3–5 per city, 77 overall; full list available on www.wilcoproject.eu)	

1.4 Contributions to the Book

Part II of the book summarises the overall findings, addressing the topics of how local development and its innovative elements are framed and shaped by urban regimes and local governance arrangements. Contributions illustrate how local context and urban welfare politics with their respective governance arrangements function as a framework that defines room and limits for social innovations. As such, the contributions of this chapter exemplify the general findings of the research as regards specific governance arrangements with a detailed analysis of a city. Each city corresponds to a specific arrangement and thoroughly highlights the identified dimensions.

The introductory chapter on urban governance and social innovations by Sandro Cattacin and Annette Zimmer highlights the urban governance arrangements identified by WILCO. These arrangements provide very different opportunity structures for social innovations. They are characterised by following dimensions:

- The *governance of cooperation* is characterised by a general orientation on innovation in politics and economics; the search of synergies between economics and social policies to foster the urban character of the city operates as the main orientation.
- The *governance of growth* prioritises economics and economic interest groups. Social problems are individualised and innovation in the social field is relegated to the self-organisation of groups.

- The *governance of social challenges* develops social policies through state-oriented initiatives that are coordinated with private non-profits.
- The *conflicting governance of social and economic challenges* describes policy developments based on a competition for public investment in economic or social initiatives. No clear priorities are stated and decisions depend on the mobilisation of interest groups.

The next chapter in this part, by Christina Rentzsch, concerns the German city of Münster. This city's governance regime is influenced both by traditions and structural changes. In line with this political context, economics and local welfare policy appear to be geared towards innovation—which is characteristic for such a regime. Furthermore, non-profit organisations are heavily integrated in local welfare provision. The underlying idea is the attainment of broad-based involvement of various actors from different sectors of society. Nevertheless, this orientation towards collaborative governance of innovation has started to change, that is, increasing competition between municipalities led to stakeholders focusing intently on strengthening the attractiveness of Münster as such. Therefore, over the last few years, Münster has gradually shifted away from being the poster-child of such an ideal regime towards a more economically oriented regime. This regime transition could, moreover, pose a threat—in the long run—to the tradition of third sector involvement and citizens' influence at the local level, to the benefit of investors' interests.

The chapter on Malmö by Ola Segnestam Larsson, Marie Nordfeldt and Anna Carrigan serves as an illustration of how urban governance arrangements provide structures for social innovations and where the city of Malmö could be categorised as an example of the governance of social challenges. The chapter contributes to the debate on social innovations by arguing that attention must be paid also to the relationship between inertia, clearings in local contexts and innovations in order to understand the underpinnings of social innovations in local welfare regimes. Specifically, in addition to describing the local welfare regime and a set of social innovations in the city of Malmö, the chapter analyses the different types of clearings that proved fertile for the development of the social innovations under study. Rather than arguing that social innovations come to the fore as a result of the quality of certain individuals or being locally and socially embedded, the authors put forth that innovations also may emerge in clearings as a consequence of inertia, in the case of Malmö in the shape and form of an unwillingness to change due to political and ideological factors.

The next chapter, by Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton, focuses on Birmingham, the UK's second largest city with a growing number of residents, the youngest population of any major European city and significant diversity in terms of ethnic composition. There is general agreement across the city that a local welfare system should support vulnerable people and promote equality and inclusion, both socially and economically. In the UK, however, social policy tends to be centrally driven and funded, although there is often scope as to how this is implemented at a local level. There is consensus in Birmingham on the nature of social

problems and the local political decision-making process allows for policy solutions to be developed. Another reason for consensus is economic growth, important for all cities and enhancing the quality of life of residents, usually linked to social inclusion. Although social policy coordination in Birmingham is characterised by partnerships, decisions are not usually implemented without the involvement of local government.

The chapter about Geneva by Patricia Naegeli shows that Geneva's governance arrangements are built on a strong local and cantonal state that uses the support of subsidised non-profit organisations in order to implement local welfare decisions. In the Swiss context, which is based on the principle of subsidiarity, this is quite an exception. It can be explained by a strong public administration that influences all local welfare decisions in a conservative way and the presence of a relative consensus among political forces to have "generous" social policies. Yet since the 2000s, newcomer parties have challenged political stability and long-lasting conflicting debates within the city council and the cantonal parliament. Both the influence of neighbouring France, where social policies are centralised and state-oriented and the strong economy of Geneva that can finance "generous" social measures are part of the explanation. However, in the *governance of social challenges*, social innovation tends to be incremental, and seems to happen within the public sector or at least, under the guidance of the local or cantonal state.

Milan, the focus of the chapter by Giuliana Costa, Roberta Cucca and Rossana Torri, can be described as a city lost in transition. For more than two decades, Milan has been ruled by a strongly market-oriented system of governance, following the rhetoric that creating a "good business climate" is not only an effective way to foster growth and innovation, but also to eradicate poverty and to deliver higher standards of living. This approach has led to (a) a disinvestment in welfare services directly provided by the municipality, in favour of a more residual welfare system based on non-profit and private involvement and (b) a huge investment in neo-liberal tools of government for the economic development of the city, such as the promotion of international events (Expo2015) and large real estate investments through public-private partnerships. After some scandals as well as a huge increase of social inequalities, municipal elections rewarded a new coalition following a style of governance oriented to a social innovation approach. However, the difficult financial situation of the municipality has reduced ambitions of the current government.

The chapter by Benjamin Ewert on Berlin shows that for a long time the city benefitted immensely from the myth to be "poor but sexy". The popular slogan, referring to the coexistence of impoverishment and creativity in the city, expressed very well the Berlin Zeitgeist promising "a good life for little money". Hence the city has been a home for creative workers, artists, cosmopolitans and young people from all over the world, literally speaking "change agents" that sustainably co-designed Berlin as a place for unconventional life styles and innovative solutions for everyday challenges. This chapter argues, however, that Berlin's sources for innovative capital may dry up in the near future due to the re-emergence of social challenges that tend to eclipse the improvements emanating from social innovations. There are very different ways of giving innovatory practices and organisations a preliminary place in the architecture of public policies and forms of governance. A new system

for establishing a back and forth between the political administrative system and social innovations has still to be developed.

Part III *of the book* focuses on distinctive types of innovations, describing two basic aspects. The first concerns their internal characteristics, approaches and instruments used. The major goals of innovators and innovations will be sketched, as well as the internal governance and organisation of innovations. The second aspect concerns the context of the innovation and the ways the innovators deal with it. The creation of innovations is to a large degree contingent and their dynamic risky. The focus is on their interplay with the urban and city context of the innovation, the climate(s) of a city and the locally prevailing political strategy and its role in the policy field where the innovation is located. Contributions in this part represent a choice of more detailed and elaborated case studies carried out as part of WILCO, published in an e-book in 2014 (see: Evers et al. 2014).

The introductory chapter to this part on the nature and relevance of local social innovations by Adalbert Evers and Taco Brandsen deals with two issues. First of all it identifies and analyses recurring approaches and instruments in local social innovations that differ from those dominating in the past and prevailing presently. These include the search for new ways of addressing users and citizens; the emphasis on new risks and related approaches to the issues of rights and responsibilities, ways of organising and working; and finally the concern with issues of governance. The features of these local innovations may have significance for welfare systems at large, going beyond the introduction of special new items in special fields. Secondly, the chapter discusses the kinds of typical relationships of innovations with their environments, as they are embedded in local contexts, reaching from tolerance to policies of mainstreaming. This helps to determine the local conditions and support innovations required for innovations to unfold, blossom and become part of changing local welfare systems in various ways. For the discussion of policies on social innovation, that is, approaches and instruments, and of politics of social innovation, shaping the processes of their development over time, a common metaphor is used: understanding social innovations as messages with a content that may be read and understood differently by the addressees in the (local) contexts, assuming such messages find their ways, are read and interpreted with some degree of interest.

The next chapter in this third part is on *the MaMa Foundation, Warsaw, described by Renata Siemieńska, Anna Domaradzka and Iлона Matysiak*. It is a non-profit organisation established in June 2006 by young, highly educated mothers. Its activities are based on the idea that mothers and fathers with young children should be able to increase their participation in local public and social life through the elimination of cultural and architectural barriers. MaMa Foundation's modes of working include social campaigns, such as "O Mamma Mia! I cannot drive my pram in here!"—a campaign for adapting public spaces to prams and wheelchairs; campaigns for employees' rights, such as "Horror Stories", which lists examples of dismissing mothers from their jobs; legal and psychological advice; and workshops for female refugees. MaMa Foundation starts many cultural and artistic initiatives as well as educational projects. It also supports local moms' clubs organising workshops for mothers and local leaders and promotes the economic value of women's housework.

“RODA” (“Parents in Action”) in Zagreb, described by Gojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević and Danijel Baturina, is a civil society organisation founded in 2001 by a group of mothers as direct answer to the reductions of maternity leave benefits. Over time, the organisation evolved into a group of concerned and engaged citizens interested in promoting and protecting the rights to a dignified pregnancy, parenthood and childhood in Croatia. Being fully engaged in meeting the needs of their members, and equipped with an entrepreneur spirit, the organisation launched the production of cotton diapers, organised in sheltered workshops. It was the first organisation of its kind that emerged in the broader field of family policy. It is actively involved in advocacy for changing regulations in family and health policies at national and local levels.

Francesca Broersma, Taco Brandsen and Joost Fledderus discuss the *Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development (Buurtwinkel voor Onderwijs, Onderzoek en Talentontwikkeling, BOOTs) in Amsterdam*, an initiative of the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. In BOOTs, the students of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam (HvA)—under supervision of teachers and professionals—provide certain (welfare) services for residents in so-called problem areas. In this manner, the students develop practical skills while also assisting the residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, either directly by offering services to residents themselves or indirectly by offering services to partner organisations. The services offered by BOOTs include financial, legal, and social consultation hours, homework support for 6–10-year-olds and an atelier for urban renewal. In addition, depending on the needs of a specific neighbourhood, BOOTs may also engage in other activities.

The chapter on *Ilot Stephenson, the co-production of housing in a major urban renewal district in Lille*, written by Laurent Fraisse, analyses how an historical local dispute in a renewal operation has led to an emblematic housing innovation called Ilot Stephenson at the periphery of one of the biggest urban renewal projects in the Roubaix-Tourcoing-Wattrelot district. A protest by inhabitants against the demolition of popular housing led to co-production between architects, local authorities and inhabitants. Access to homes at reduced cost has been achieved thanks to an innovative mode of architectural intervention that encourages inhabitants’ participation in the self-rehabilitation of their neighbourhood. The building phase is no longer considered as a parenthesis in inhabitants’ lives, but as an important opportunity for public expression and civic participation.

The *Neighbourhood Children Services in Pamplona*, analysed by Manuel Aguilar Hendrickson and Marta Llobet Estany, are social activities aimed at the prevention of social problems amongst children in Pamplona. They are the result of a movement of community associations that developed leisure activities for children and their integration into the local government structure of social services while retaining a specific way of working. They show a blurring of limits between practitioners, volunteers and service users, who in fact become co-producers of services. It shows as well some of the ambivalence that may be found in social innovation projects. Born out of an initiative of grassroots associations, it was integrated into the municipal structure due to its effectiveness and efficiency by local authorities

that did not have much initial sympathy for such organisations. It has been criticised by advocates both of traditional public responsibility on the Left and of a more corporate approach to service management on the Right, but it has been able to find support on both sides of the political spectrum for different, sometimes opposite reasons.

Benjamin Ewert and Adalbert Evers argue that the innovation of “Kreuzberg Acts—entrepreneurship in the district” in Berlin results in the intertwining of two issues that are usually separated: On the one hand, individual consultancy for (future) entrepreneurs and, on the other hand, a concern with community development and urban planning addressing different local groups. “Kreuzberg Acts” bridges economic and social concerns. For instance, those interested in founding a start-up are coached by local mentors how to apply for public subsidies and how to launch an effective marketing campaign. Yet, the project is also striving for street credibility by building bridges to the local economy. Project leaders and participants develop strategies how local people may benefit from the district’s booming economic sectors such as health care or tourism. Respective inventions are designed in a neighbourhood-friendly way, for example, by devising small-scale business ideas that fit the local social ecology.

The Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano in Milan, discussed by Giuliana Costa and Stefania Sabatinelli, was created by a heterogeneous group of actors to support individuals and families dealing with short-term risks and reducing economic precariousness. It promotes access to micro-credits by persons who lack financial guarantees and/or have a past record of “bad payers”. Two types of micro-credits are available: “social credit”, reserved to persons who can hardly afford crucial expenses (such as the payment of university fees for their children or unexpected health expenditures) and credit for self-employment, to overcome unemployment or under-employment. The basic guidelines for actual and future programmes are an active approach to hardships following the idea of “we help you to help yourself” and the rotation of existing funds in order to be sustainable long-term.

Children to single (lone) mothers, analysed by Marie Nordfeldt, Ola Segnestam Larsson and Anna Carrigan, is a project carried out by Fryshuset, a well-known and entrepreneurial third-sector organisation with a wide range of activities within the field of youth policy. This project started with the aim to support and strengthen children living with a single mother in economically vulnerable circumstances. From a health perspective, the focus is on the everyday situation of children and mothers. This represents an example of an innovation initiated within civil society, in line with the traditional role of third-sector organisations to be pioneers and to focus attention on new needs and new groups with needs that are not covered in other ways. There are elements of advocacy in this innovation with the aim to raise attention to the issue of child poverty and the situation of unemployed or low-income single mothers. Fryshuset implements this by developing cooperation with different stakeholders and spreads awareness on this subject through these channels.

Joost Fledderus, Taco Brandsen and Francesca Broersma discuss “work corporations” in Nijmegen, social enterprises that aim at reemploying social assistance recipients with a considerable distance to the labour market by offering them a place

where they can combine work and education. Participants are supposed to become more job-ready by actively taking part in courses or educational programmes and by getting used to a work rhythm. Furthermore, they sell products or offer services together with other participants in order to raise money that is invested in the programme itself. This means that a highly active role of participants is expected. For the municipality of Nijmegen, the new policy of work corporations represents a radical shift: from providing subsidised jobs towards co-produced activation. This chapter investigates the origins of this shift and the current organisation and functioning of work corporations.

YEER (Youth Enterprise and Employment Rehearsal) in Birmingham, which Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton have analysed, was set up by The Future Melting Pot, a community interest company, to provide business support to black and minority ethnic young people who were not in employment, education or training. The main aim was to enable participants to set up their own enterprises. The project included training, support and access to accredited advisors. The approach was innovative in that it offered young people an alternative to the conventional focus on getting a job by providing the opportunity to explore the option of self-employment in an environment that was needs-led. The approach could be described as intensive, personalised support to stimulate entrepreneurialism and an example of integrating economic and social domains.

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton also discuss the locality approach to worklessness in Birmingham, an approach to tackling worklessness developed by the city. It was locality driven and focused on areas where worklessness was high. Detailed consultation took place to agree on neighbourhood employment and skills plans and services commissioned on that basis. It also had a strong client focus adopting an Integrated Employment and Skills model. The aim of the model was to offer a continuous service, incorporating the provision of targeted action and support that each individual required no matter which provider they accessed. It enabled an in-depth understanding of issues for local residents where worklessness was high, provided the opportunity for provider organisations to work together for the first time and the development of small-scale innovative projects. Key was agreement of the major players in the local welfare system and their signing up to the model.

Andrea Walter and Danielle Gluns discuss innovations in childcare in Münster. The general orientation in Münster is collaborative. As such, local elites utilise networks and resources in order to put their ideas into practice. The chapter outlines the implementation of prevention visits as an example for the use of expertise, political connections and negotiating skills. The head of the Youth Office—who initiated the visits—is very well connected in the city and used these networks in order to improve local child protection. The chapter shows how structures and individual agents act in synchronism with regards to childcare policy as to obtain the observed outcomes.

The “Citizen’s Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona” is described by Teresa Montagut, Gemma Vilà and Sebastià Riutort. The program “Citizen’s Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona” is an innovative policy in the field of social welfare

of the city. It represents a different model of governance based on a new decision-making process where local government and civil society organisations act together with a common strategy. They join efforts and resources with the aim to improve social cohesion in Barcelona. One of the powerful outputs of this program is the creation of several action networks to carry out concrete welfare policies. The chapter will analyse the social processes that allowed the emergence and development of the program, its effects and expectations of future.

The integration guidelines in Bern are the subject of a chapter by Maxime Felder. In the second half of the nineties, due to growing heterogeneity and fragmentation of the social and urban structure, and the arrival of new lifestyles (of nationals as well as of migrants), Swiss cities started taking charge of the challenges of migrant integration. In order to overcome an ageing foreigners law and diverse understanding of concepts and procedures, the city of Bern decided to elaborate a concept of guidelines and recommendations regarding integration of migrant populations. A large consultation resulted in a widely publicised document compiling recommendations addressing everyone, and particularly institutional actors. The document was meant to inform the population about the position and aims of the city council regarding integration. This way of discussing, negotiating and writing down guidelines supports participation and acceptance through involvement of stakeholders and acknowledges the limits of traditional welfare governance operating by enforceable rules in a field like integration.

The fourth and final part of the book (Part IV) is devoted to crosscutting and conclusive issues.

A chapter on the dark side of social innovation by Ola Larsson and Taco Brandsen critically appraises the concept and practice of social innovation. Normative assumptions behind research on social innovation tend to obscure the dark sides of the phenomenon, such as failure, political conflict and oppression. One of the aims of the WILCO project was to identify lessons for social policies and ultimately improve social cohesion. Such an optimistic approach should not, however, prevent us from discussing the more disturbing elements that the researchers identified.

The final conclusive chapter of the book by Taco Brandsen, Sandro Cattacin, Adalbert Evers and Annette Zimmer, gives an overview of the Good, the Bad and the Ugly in social innovation. It discusses the implications of the findings, for policymakers and professionals as well as the academic research agenda. “Good” signifies what innovations can contribute to a society’s ability to cope with change and, more precisely, to do it in a way that change can be perceived as progress in civility. “Bad” signifies the shortcomings of social innovations—especially their limited impact in an overall averse social and policy context. “Ugly” stands for discourses that deal with social innovations as if they were something else—usually, treating them like market-based products and technologies. On the basis of the overall evidence on the potential and limits of social innovation discourse, the chapter will give a balanced assessment of the state of the art of social innovation and of social innovation research.

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Part II
Urban Contexts for Local Innovations

Chapter 2

Urban Governance and Social Innovations

Sandro Cattacin and Annette Zimmer

How do social innovations come to the fore? Are they exclusively based on the entrepreneurial spirit of change makers? And what makes social innovations work? Can a solid business plan make innovations sustainable? In other words, does *survival of the fittest* also hold true for social innovations? From this Darwinist perspective, social innovations are perceived as *new products* geared towards addressing new societal needs in competitive markets.

We question whether this perspective, based on microeconomics, really helps us understand how social innovations emerge, are further developed and finally integrated into the repertoire of welfare politics at the local level. Instead, we argue that, particularly at the local level, the emergence, development and firm establishment of social innovations constitute a political process whose outcome is highly dependent on both a decisive set of environmental factors, including coalition building, and specific constellations of actors. From our point of view, social innovations are highly embedded in their environment.

And indeed, environments differ significantly. Research has demonstrated that some environmental factors, like freedom, diversity and density of contacts, are correlated with innovation (Evers et al. 2014). That is why cities have always been places of innovation (Cattacin 2011). But the innovative capacity of cities differs, and we think that these differences are related not only to the factors mentioned but also to strategies and dynamics linked to government decisions and lobbies in the economic and social spheres. In particular, analyses of *social* innovation have to take into account these decisions and these actors. European cities, which are at the centre of our analysis, stand out for their diversity in terms of government set-up, social-policy traditions and local political cultures.

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Hence, we argue that social innovations have to be analysed against the background of their specific contexts or, to put it differently, that social innovations at the local level are the outcome of a political process and as such a reflection of city-specific (welfare) cultures—the institutional perspective—and local governance arrangements—the political perspective. These city-specific settings create both opportunity structures and constraints for new ideas and concepts that are put forward by agents in alliance with like-minded persons and *brokers* and which develop into locally embedded social innovations.

Although European cities are renowned for their specificity, their local traditions and their particular flair, the rich empirical material we have collected within the framework of the European project Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO)¹ allows us to identify groups of similar urban-governance arrangements.

This chapter provides portraits of these *arrangements*, which constitute the bedrock on which social innovations are built, based on a comparative analysis of governance and social innovations in the 20 cities included in the project. Doubtlessly, characterising specific constellations and hence developing a typology of governance arrangements that might enable, foster or discourage processes of social innovation constitute a courageous undertaking. We are aware that the governance arrangements we identify do not do justice to the complexity and variety of governance constellations to be found in European cities. But the typology of constellations we lay out here may be helpful for researchers of urban governance as well as policymakers trying to give meaning to the puzzling world of new ideas and approaches grouped together under the umbrella term *social innovation*. The typology may also help us better understand why some social innovations face a tough time being accepted and integrated into local welfare politics.

Of course, we have not developed the typology out of the blue. The four specific governance arrangements we identified are the outcome of in-depth analysis of the rich empirical material that researchers from ten different countries collected from Amsterdam to Warsaw.² From a methodological point of view, we took advantage of various distinct streams of research and theory building. In particular, we have drawn on the results and the repertoire of theoretical approaches put forward by urban sociology, and especially comparative urban governance, policy analysis and welfare research. We specifically tried to link together recent approaches in urban sociology and local governance.

The first section of this chapter outlines the theoretical approaches we refer to in order to develop a typology of different urban governance arrangements in core

¹ For details on the project see www.wilcoproject.eu and the first publications of this EU-financed comparative project in Ranci et al. 2014. The project involves 20 European cities from ten different countries, namely Stockholm, Malmö, Birmingham, Dover, Milan, Brescia, Barcelona, Pamplona, Warsaw, Płock, Zagreb, Varaždin, Berlin, Münster, Lille, Nantes, Amsterdam, Nijmegen, Geneva and Bern.

² Data were collected from various administrative and political documents linked to debates in local parliaments, local newspaper articles, interviews with stakeholders and focus groups organised with the intent of clarifying stakeholders' diverging or shared positions.

welfare domains. The second section describes how we analysed and systematised the empirical data in order to develop our typology of four urban welfare governance arrangements, and it offers an analysis of the *common trends* throughout Europe that trigger the need for social innovations in urban settings because established social-policy routines and welfare services no longer meet the demands and needs of major parts of the urban population. The key third section describes the four ideal types of urban governance arrangements. The conclusion summarises our findings and discusses the nexus between the identified urban governance arrangements and the emergence and development of social innovations in European cities.

2.1 State of the Art: The Governance Approach

In recent years, the social sciences have moved away from simplistic one-size-fits-all analyses and increasingly turned towards more complex and multi-layered methodological approaches. A textbook example of this trend is the shift from the study of *government* to the study of *governance*. Indeed, the concept of *governance*, first used by scholars of international relations, has become ubiquitous in the social sciences (Levi-Faur 2012). From an analytical point of view, *governance* stands for *horizontality* in the sense of non-hierarchical modes of co-ordination, steering and decision-making, in which, in contrast to classical top-down *government*, new constellations of actors are involved, among them, besides government officials, stakeholders such as representatives from civil-society organisations and the business community. As such, *governance* is used as synonymous with *regulation through networks of agents*, which constitutes a third mode of coordination besides *market* and *hierarchy* (Powell 1990).

But *governance* is not restricted to describing how decisions are made; the concept also involves a structural component, the limited set of options that are embedded in a distinctive local culture. A *governance arrangement*, therefore, encompasses the constellation of actors in a given setting as well as path dependency, or the prevailing and hence limited set of choices that are inherent to a particular urban context. Simply speaking, *urban governance* constitutes the set of rules by which a city operates. However, urban governance arrangements are not simply a set of rules imposed by local politicians and government officials; instead, they are the outcome of complex coalition-building processes through which core values are framed, and in which multiple stakeholders are involved. Urban governance arrangements are highly influenced by local traditions and cultures, and they are embedded in and hence affected by multi-layered institutional settings, including supranational frameworks, specific national administrative structures (federal or unitary state, self-government) and particular local and national welfare regimes (Ferrera 2005).

The ubiquitous use of the concept of *governance* has created a situation in which urban sociologists unanimously declare that it is very difficult and perhaps unrealistic to comprehend most recent developments in urban settings and cities through

any single orientation or theoretical framework (Blanco 2013). This is particularly the case in the field of comparative urban studies. Although the so-called classical schools of urban sociology (Lin and Mele 2012), with their focus on the analysis of urban structures, processes, changes and problems, are still acknowledged as an important point of departure, they are no longer exclusive points of reference. Instead, recent scholarship in urban sociology favours multifaceted approaches that build on various traditions and models that previously enjoyed a stand-alone position and were treated as distinct paradigms (Mossberger and Stoker 2001).

2.1.1 *The European-City Approach*

For analyses of how cities cope with current challenges and try to reconcile social and economic policies, urban sociologists nowadays turn to what is called an *integrated approach* to urban governance (DiGaetano and Strom 2003) that builds on different theoretical perspectives and combines distinctive methodological approaches (DiGaetano and Strom 2003; Kazepov 2005). In their seminal and widely cited article “The European City”, Häussermann and Haila identify four theoretical traditions of urban sociology, each of which provides useful insights into *urbanism*. In particular, they refer to the work of Georg Simmel, the Chicago School, political economy and the “global city” perspective. However, they advise against trying to ground empirical urban studies in a single “abstract urban model” (Häussermann and Haila 2005, p. 43) such as those developed by the Chicago or the Regulation Schools. Instead, in accordance with the work of Bagnasco and Le Galès (2000), they underline the specificity of the European city.

In the tradition of Max Weber, Häussermann and Haila argue convincingly that we must acknowledge the special features of European cities that make them distinct from cities in other parts of the world. The most important feature of the European city is its multi-faceted character. In the words of Bagnasco and Le Galès, European cities are simultaneously “political and social actors and [...] local societies” (Bagnasco and Le Galès 2000, p. 3). Hence, in contrast to cities in other regions, European cities traditionally constitute stand-alone arenas for policymaking, although there are significant differences with respect to the degree of autonomy European cities enjoy from their respective national governments.

In particular, since the heyday of industrialisation and urbanisation in the nineteenth century, the so-called social question has always been a central topic for European cities (Isin 2008, p. 273). In Europe, the welfare state began locally within internal city borders. Since then, the guaranteed provision of public services by city governments has emerged as a further key feature of the distinctiveness of European cities (Kazepov 2005, p. 13). Finally, citizens’ involvement in urban affairs, either through local self-governance or via civil society and its broad spectrum of organisations and initiatives, adds an additional facet to the specific character of the European city. But despite these distinguishing characteristics, European cities also display an impressive variety. Here regional differences and hence cultural

aspects come into the picture. As Häussermann and Haila have correctly remarked, in Europe there are “remarkable differences between cities with different welfare regimes and different political-institutional and cultural contexts” (2005, p. 50).

2.1.2 Analysing Urban Governance

In our WILCO research, we have focused on conceptualising the European city while simultaneously acknowledging the empirical variance among European cities and in particular among cities within any given country. Drawing on the results of studies of policy analysis and urban governance, a key point of departure is the recognition of the embeddedness or nestedness of governance arrangements (Granovetter 1985) within complex environments. In accordance with DiGaetano and Strom (2003), and in line with comparative policy-analysis studies (Kazepov 2008), we differentiate between the following (Fig. 2.1):

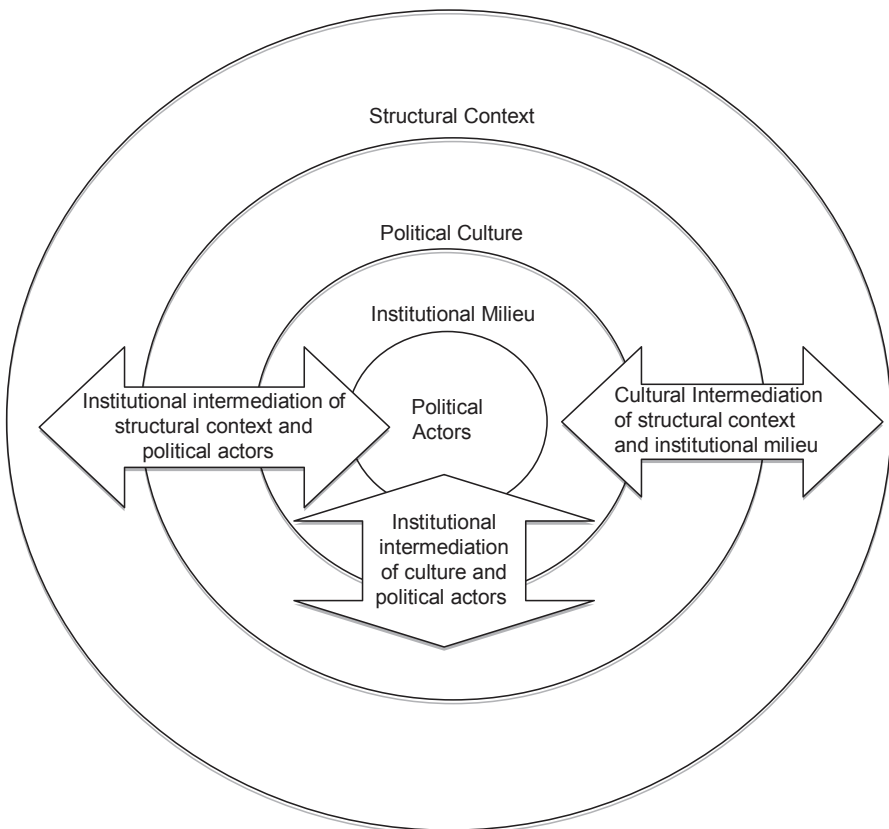


Fig. 2.1 An integrated approach to urban governance. (Source: DiGaetano and Strom 2003, p. 373)

- The institutional context of administrative structures and state organisation
- The welfare-regime context in which the local welfare regime is embedded
- The local political culture as an expression or outcome of specific norms and values

These environmental parameters serve as the background or—to put it differently—set of coalition-building opportunities for actors who aim to develop and stabilise social innovations as remedies for current social problems. At the same time, however, these institutional structures or parameters might also significantly hinder social innovation. In particular, metropolitan cities, thanks to their cultural and ethnic diversity hubs for innovativeness and productivity (Florida 2005), are not necessarily prone to making social innovations sustainable by integrating new concepts and ideas into the repertoire of local welfare politics.

2.1.3 *Urban Welfare Governance Arrangements*

In order to understand the multiple challenges faced by cities, we developed an analytical scheme that makes it possible to reconstruct why specific decisions were or were not made. We tried to identify the agents that contest social policies and propose a new way to handle them—through policy brokers that mediate between different coalitions' values and orientations—but also to comprehend the values, politics, technical constraints and especially expert discourses that have been developed by local *epistemic communities* (Majone 1997). The latter define the core ideas of what good local welfare practices are, i.e. what successful or innovative efforts to combat social inequality or encourage social cohesion look like. Epistemic communities are not only responsible for the coherence of local discourses regarding how policies should be implemented or problems should be interpreted but also related to other networks of specialists and stakeholders, which creates convergences between cities and policies at all levels of regulation (Ferrera 1996).

There are at least two approaches to analysing core values. The first is that of Sabatier, who assumes that there exist coalitions of values (or belief systems³) and power relationships between these coalitions in specific policy areas or constellations of actors (Sabatier 1998, 1999). A coalition is a discursively coherent group that produces intersubjectively shared realities or truths, which are then reflected in the group's discourses and in documents.

³ According to Sabatier, building on the philosophy of science by Lakatos (1970), a belief system is made up of three strata: the *deep core*, a set of normative axioms (what is fair, values such as freedom, defence of equality rather than preservation of status differences, etc.); the *near core*, which is about policy-oriented approaches and consists of general choices regarding the relevant patterns of intervention; and *secondary aspects*, which consist of instrumental decisions and the search for relevant information to implement specific public programs.

The second is the approach of Jobert and Muller, who analyse public administration's global and sectorial value orientations, which they call *referential*⁴ (Jobert and Muller 1987). Value orientations can be found easily in official public administration documents and debates in the local parliament that also reflect coalitions. We have tried to combine these two approaches by not only describing general and sectorial orientations, or configurations of coalitions of differences, but also focusing on the coherences and contrasts between majorities and minorities, and between the public administration's general and sectorial orientations.

2.1.4 *Social Policies at the City Level*

Cities are changing from a hierarchical model of governance to a heterarchical (Willke 1992) one, with many centres of decision. This change can lead to the horizontal integration of actors in the city, synergies between the producers of services and even solidarity in the city if the different actors are recognised as producers and if their resources can be combined.⁵ But this combination can take different forms, as indicated by studies on the alternative orientations of the local welfare state in the areas of social and health services (Blanke et al. 1986). For a given orientation to be successful, the actors involved have to recognise each other's relevant role in the creation of a workable urban society. But in relation to disadvantaged neighbourhoods or vulnerable individuals, it is clear that only capability-building policies lead to the creation of new (and autonomous) resources.

As Donzelot and Estèbe argued in their significant work on the *état animateur* (or *enabling state*) in French suburbs, the shift from a paternalistic to a capability-building policy helped improve living conditions in these neighbourhoods (Donzelot and Estèbe 1994). Urban development policies for these areas provided a kind of self-governance that empowered the powerless—although one may wonder whether this outcome was the product of a planned strategy on the part of the enabling state or just an accidental side effect.

In any case, this policy was discontinued in the 1990s—as a result of financial cutbacks, and not because the policy had failed. As a consequence, and as many authors have pointed out, living conditions once again deteriorated (Kokoreff and Lapeyronnie 2013). In other words, incorporating the resources of the poorest people requires that they have the opportunity to develop their own resources—an

⁴ We aim to understand the *referential* of the local welfare system, that is, the set of beliefs, values and technologies shaping how participants deal with social inequalities at the local level. More precisely, the referential refers to three dimensions: cognitive, normative and instrumental. The cognitive dimension regards how people interpret and define the problems that should be solved; the normative dimension is about values taken into account in the definition of problems and the implementation of measures to resolve them; the instrumental dimension regards the principles of action through which plans and programs to solve problems considered relevant or legitimate are separated from those that are considered illegitimate.

⁵ See Evers on the logic of “synergetic welfare mixes” (Evers 1993).

opportunity they generally take advantage of. This is an investment strategy that has been well documented by Sen's analyses on the building of capabilities (see, e.g., Sen 1992).

This political strategy of social responsibility is not necessarily opposed to a city's economic-growth strategy. The *growth machine* (Molotch 1976) needs social policies to be effective as an *innovation regime* (Häussermann and Wurtzbacher 2005). That is why our analysis was sensitive to the relationship between economic and social policies.⁶

2.2 Twenty Cities Compared

Based on these concepts and on the empirical analysis of 20 cities, we have developed a series of variables that reflect the political context, coalitions, orientations and values in the area of social policies and the context in which social policies are produced.⁷ These variables are at the core of the empirical analysis in each of the 20 cities (Cattacin et al. 2012) and have been treated as independent variables whose specific constellations explain why social innovation takes place. In particular, in both the case studies and this comparative analysis, we have focussed on variables able to describe the political context, value orientations and conditions of social-policy production.

The political context has been measured with the following variables:

1. Local government making intercity competition a top priority. With this variable, we measured the intensity with which governance is oriented towards growth and the attraction of elites (Molotch 1976).
2. Rescaling and deregulation policies at the national level. This variable measures the pressure on cities from national decisions to take responsibility for social policies (Kazepov 2005).
3. Political coalitions governing the city. With this variable, we measured the size of a coalition governing the city. It informs us about the strength of decisions taken by urban governments.
4. Social democracy or economic liberalism as the dominant orientation. This variable identifies the general reference system in the city.

⁶ Traditionally, economic and social policies were thoroughly interwoven. As outlined in Esping-Andersen's seminal *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (1990), capitalist economies and social policies developed concurrently with the welfare state, which either buffered the negative side effects of economic development or even facilitated economic growth by providing the necessary resources or supporting a business-friendly culture (Kaufmann 2015).

⁷ The 20 cities were part of the WILCO project and chosen heuristically with the idea to represent the different parts of the European urban landscape. Each country is represented by two cities, permitting to verify the impact of the nation-state but also the autonomy of cities inside a national and international legal framework. A secondary criterion was the presence, in these countries, of experienced research groups known by the research leaders of the WILCO project.

5. Co-operation or confrontation between social and economic lobbies at the local level and the attitude of the economic lobbies towards social welfare. This variable measures the level of conflict or co-operation between economic and social interests (Häussermann 2008).
6. Strong external political influence on the local level regarding social policy (in particular through the policies of the European Union (EU) and the European Social Fund). This variable measures the independence of the city in developing solutions to social challenges.

The value orientations in the area of social policies were operationalised with the following variables:

7. Orientation towards individual responsibility and empowerment. This variable indicates how social policies adapt to differences in the population through measures to individualise services, and how far social policies diverge from old schemes of resource scattering.
8. Prevention policies and social investments. This variable measures whether cities are proactive in recognising social problems. It allows identifying cities that have a systematic approach towards social policies.
9. Changing or stable social-policy orientations. This variable measures cities' orientations towards innovation in regard to social policies.

The context of the production of social policies was summarised through three key variables:

10. Federalism and local autonomy. This variable measures the independence and financial autonomy of the city from national social policies. It also measures the strength of the local welfare state.
11. Co-decision logics of local welfare-state institutions (participation in networks of actors) and co-operation with non-profit organisations in the production of social policies.
12. The dominant welfare mix. This variable measures the degree to which the production of social policies is distinguished by logics oriented towards the state or society (non-profit organisations).

In all cities, qualitative and partially quantitative data have been collected, permitting us to describe the different ways in which social policies and social innovations are produced and how they are embedded.⁸ The data concerning the 12 variables are largely descriptive and were interpreted in various meetings involving the authors of the individual city reports until we arrived at a consensus concerning a general classification of each city through a simple scheme of representations of the values. Following the logic of the qualitative comparative analysis (QCA, see Ragin 1987) we dichotomised all variable values as 1 or 0 (some disputed cases received the value 0.5). The result was a sort of truth table indicating the combination of the presence or absence of specific characteristics from the above-mentioned variables.

⁸ City reports are available on the WILCO project's website: www.wilcoproject.eu.

In the first step, all variables were eliminated that indicated the same value. These variables describe common trends for all cities (presented in Chap. 4.1), while the other variables describe the configuration specific to each city (see Table 2.1).

For general information about the data collection during this part of the project, we refer the reader to the introductory chapter. For specifics on the data collection and sources for each of the 20 cities and for the city chapters in this volume, we refer to the city reports available on the project website www.wilcoproject.eu.

The comparative analysis then tried to simplify the results of the truth table in different ways. First, it isolated variables that have the same or similar values (in Table 2.1, they are in italics); they probably influence social policy outputs but are not likely to determine key differences between cities. Second, it reorganised the table in a simplified way by putting forward similar constellations of variables. Table 2.2 indicates the final result of this reorganisation. Similar variables are excluded and cities with similar constellations or the same constellation are grouped. Four groups with similar constellations of variables resulted from this analysis.

Third, analysis had to address why certain cases are similar but nonetheless differ on some crucial variables. In Table 2.2, we identify four constellations and some varieties inside the constellations, which concern Varaždin, Geneva, Nijmegen, Plock, Warsaw and Zagreb (the explanatory differences are indicated in light grey). For the cities of Eastern Europe, we undoubtedly found that the explanation for the specific constellation of variables that places them in a given group is the strong influence of the EU on local social policies. Concerning Nijmegen and Geneva, the presence of a coalition government (the first variable in the table) is explained by the logic of the political system, which favours coalitions (Kriesi 1996). It is less easy to explain why Geneva is in the second group even though it is embedded in a strong federalist context. Patricia Naegeli, in her chapter in this book, explains this specificity through Geneva's political orientation towards France. Naegeli argues that Geneva uses federalism to organise decision-making and policies according to a hierarchical, state-oriented logic, putting it nearer to French cities. Finally, we had to make sense of these groups and argue for a typology.

2.3 A Typology of Urban Governance

Analysing our 20 cities, we focused on common trends and main differences. We were interested in particular in a constellation of variables used to develop a typology, more than on causalities, that were hard to postulate for such extreme differentiated realities. Nevertheless, in the conclusion, we describe some elements that seem to indicate some kind of relation between a governance style and the potential for social innovation.

Regarding the common trends, all cities are experiencing major challenges and transformations in their attempts to improve the competitiveness of their economy without exposing the population to increased social threats. In the area of social policies, the driving forces are related to the competition between cities in the context

Table 2.1 Conditions for social innovation at the urban level. (Source: WILCO project 2014—city reports)

Variable	1. Intercity competition	2. Rescaling	3. Coalitions	4. Social democrats/liberals	5. Conflicting lobbies	6. External influence	7. Individual responsibility	8. Prevention	9. Change	10. Federalism and local autonomy	Co-decision	Welfare mix
Variable num.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
Values	Strong: 1 Weak: 0	Strong: 1 Weak: 0	Yes: 1 Small: 0.5 No: 0	Sd: 1 Lib: 0 Mix: 0.5	Co-op.: 1 Conflict: 0 Middle: 0.5	Strong: 1 Weak: 0 Middle: 0.5	Strong: 1 Weak: 0 Middle: 0.5	Strong: 1 Weak: 0	Strong: 1 Weak: 0	Strong: 1 Weak: 0 Middle: 0.5	Strong: 1 Weak: 0 Middle: 0.5	State: 1 Civil society: 0
Cities												
Amsterdam	1	1	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Barcelona	1	1	0.5	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Berlin	1	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Bern	1	1	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Birmingham	1	1	0.5	0	0	0.5	1	0	0	0.5	0.5	1
Brescia	1	1	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0.5	0.5	1
Dover	1	1	0	0	0	0.5	1	0	0	0.5	0.5	1
Geneva	1	1	1	1	0.5	0	0.5	0	0	1	0.5	1
Lille	1	1	0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	1
Malmö	1	1	0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	1
Milan	1	1	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	1	1	1	1	1	0
Münster	1	1	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Nantes	1	1	0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	1
Nijmegen	1	1	1	1	0.5	0	0.5	1	0	0	0.5	1
Pamplona	1	1	0.5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.5	0.5	1
Plock	1	1	0	0	0.5	1	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	1
Stockholm	1	1	0	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	1
Varaždin	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.5	1	1	0	0.5	1
Warsaw	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.5	1	1	0	0.5	1
Zagreb	1	1	0	0	0	1	0.5	1	1	0	0.5	1

Table 2.2 Grouping similar constellations: Towards a typology. (Source: WILCO project 2014—city reports)

Variable	Coalitions	Social-democrats/liberals	Conflicting lobbies	External influence	Prevention	Change	Federalism and local autonomy	Welfare mix
Variable num. Cities	3.	4.	5.	6.	8.	9.	10.	12.
Amsterdam	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	0
Barcelona	0.5	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	0
Bern	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	0
Münster	1	0.5	1	0	1	1	1	0
Varaždin	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Berlin	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	1	1	0
Milan	0.5	0.5	0	0	1	1	1	0
Brescia	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0.5	1
Geneva	1	1	0.5	0	0	0	1	1
Lille	0	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	1
Malmö	0	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	1
Nantes	0	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	1
Nijmegen	1	1	0.5	0	0	0	0	1
Plock	0	0	0.5	1	0	0	0	1
Stockholm	0	1	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	1
Warsaw	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Zagreb	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Birmingham	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	1
Dover	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	1
Pamplona	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	1

of the diminishing strength of the welfare state at the national level (as underlined by Kazepov 2008, 2005). Cities have been forced to increase their economic attractiveness by social challenges. If cities are not able to handle social problems, not only do they no longer attract new investors but existing investors also disappear, together with innovative elites (Häussermann et al. 2004).

In this context, the national welfare state not only finds it difficult to respond to urban social problems from the financial point of view, but it is also limited by the complexity required by policy answers. The regional and urban levels thus appear best suited to provide adequate services for complex social problems. There is no new front between national and urban levels, but there is a rearrangement of the welfare state, in which, as in the nineteenth century, the local (and in particular the urban) level becomes increasingly important (Reulecke 1995).

In this context, it is not surprising that cities in federal states (like Bern or Münster) have fewer difficulties in responding to these challenges or that cities' room for manoeuvre depend on their economic strengths (as with Geneva and Nijmegen) and their political relevance. The contrasting figures are cities in unitary states that exhibit poor economic performance or that are marginal in their country or region. In our sample of cities, we find this weakness in Plock (Poland), Varaždin (Croatia) and Pamplona (Spain).

2.3.1 Major Policy Trends in the Governance of Social Challenges

These shared driving forces produce similar policy results, to a greater or lesser degree. Thus, common to urban policies in the area of social problems is the idea of

enablement: people, agents and networks must be helped to become as autonomous as possible. The legislative framework for such policies must be flexible in order to permit the continuous adaptation of policies, following evaluations and experiments. Consequently, urban social policy is characterised more by pragmatism than by ideology or populism. In particular, the orientation in concrete situations opens a field of compromises and consensus, but also possibilities for preventive thinking. Four specific common trends in the governance of social challenges can be highlighted: co-production, a capabilities-based approach, decentralisation and territorial focalisation:

- Co-production indicates the growing model of partnerships between public, for- and non-profit organisations found in all 20 cities (for the concept of co-production, see Verschuere et al. 2012). The common trend indicates a transformation from state- or economy-driven urban governance to the co-production of policies and services.
- Investment in individual capabilities is the second common trend in these cities. It can take different forms, like individual accountability for solving problems, help to empower people to help themselves and orientations towards differences and capabilities. The trend has clearly moved from a perspective that focuses on welfare recipients to one that focuses on persons and person-centred services.
- Common to all cities is also a focus on democratic decentralisation. Instruments like participatory projects and mechanisms in neighbourhoods open public administrations democratically. The trend is away from a hierarchical decision-making system towards forms of co-decision-making.
- A final trend concerns the ways problems are addressed. In the cities we analysed we noted tendencies to focus less on groups and more on situations and territories, that is, to analyse concrete contexts before intervening and to act preventively through urban planning instruments and neighbourhood involvement. The general trend is away from specific problem orientation towards the search for a better quality of life in the city, for the wellbeing of inhabitants and visitors (commuters or tourists).

Beside these common trends, the 20 cities are characterised by some major differences concerning the ways in which social policies are tailored and related to urban governance.

2.3.2 Urban Welfare Governance

Working with the data gathered in the WILCO project makes it possible to understand how social policies are situated within each specific city's logic of governance. Our 20 cities certainly have common features, but they differ in the ways in which social policies are ideologically and practically justified. Following the process of typologising presented before, including temporal dynamics and information about values and policy choices, we have identified four kinds of regimes characterised by different relationships between social and economic policies at the city level.

The first type of governance can be called the *governance of co-operation*, which is characterised by the continuous search for synergies between economic and social policies. The political consensus is fragile, but it stabilises ambivalences in the city's driving coalitions around the idea of the innovative or creative (Florida 2005) city. The coalition's major orientation is towards fostering urbanity as a project and as a way of life, bohemian and innovative, open to differences and responsive to marginality. Through urbanity—and this is the guiding hypothesis of this type of governance—economic dynamics can be improved. From the organisational point of view, this governance style privileges welfare-mix solutions. Values that all actors share are the idea of urbanity, pragmatism and efficiency. Ideologies are secondary in the definition of policy priorities. Examples of this governance style are Amsterdam, Bern, Münster, Barcelona and Varaždin. Varaždin's orientation was developed following guidance from the EU.

The case of Münster, analysed by Christina Rentzsch in this book, illustrates these synergies between social and economic interests. A tradition of subsidiarity that developed in the shadow of the Catholic Church is characteristic of Münster's social-policy tradition. Similarly to Geneva, Münster, a mid-sized town in northern Germany, is embedded in a federal system that assigns many duties and responsibilities in welfare and social-policy areas to the local level. In accordance with the tradition of a conservative welfare regime, public-private partnerships, in particular with non-profits, are a further hallmark of social-service provision in Münster. Since the city used to be economically better off than many towns in northern Germany, and specifically in the Ruhr region, Münster is well known for its high standards regarding the provision of social services. Core beliefs regarding the importance of social policy in creating a liveable city are deeply embedded in Münster's Catholic tradition and have always been supported by the Christian Democratic Union, which remains the most important political force in the city. Although the dominant role of the Christian Democrats has been increasingly challenged since the 1970s, first by the Social Democrats and nowadays by the Green Party, neither the Social Democrats nor the Greens follow a neoliberal course questioning the necessity of policies trying to safeguard social cohesion.

But does the tradition of subsidiarity combined with a conservative party in power provide a fruitful ground for social innovation? The answer, based on the results of our empirical work in Münster, is yes. However, the "yes" comes with a question mark, indicating that the city provides space for social innovation but must still overcome hurdles and avoid risks. In a nutshell, it is not easy to make social innovations sustainable in Münster. In particular, two requirements must be met. First, if the innovation is developed or at least significantly supported by the municipality, there is a high chance that it will be accepted. Second, from a marketing point of view, the innovation has to be framed and advertised according to rationales that are developed and shared by an inner circle composed of the city's most relevant stakeholders. Interestingly enough, starting in the late 1990s Münster initiated its strategic development process, titled City Marketing, with the aim of making the city more attractive to high-potential investors, specifically in the areas of housing and upscale retail.

Today, there are two core beliefs that are widely shared by Münster's business community, chief administrators and key representatives of the two major parties. The first is an "investment frame" according to which any policy has to pay off in the long run. Hence also in the area of social policies, any initiative has to either be an "investment", for example in human capital, or aim at enabling the respective individual, group or local community to become self-sustainable. The second is a so-called prevention frame, according to which action, in particular in the area of social policies, should be taken at an early stage in order to prevent a downward development. Thus, the two frames correspond and are related to each other. In order to attain legitimacy, social innovations have to be in accordance with both.

However, social innovations also have to be initiated and promoted by "the right people" in town. The results of the WILCO project show that there is a relatively small circle of stakeholders in Münster who meet regularly in the various round-table and working-group settings initiated by the municipal administration in which crucial policy issues covering a broad range of topics are discussed. Indeed, the local parliament long ago stopped being the central forum for decision-making. Since Münster's business community is very homogeneous, consisting primarily of retailers and representatives of saving banks and insurance companies, the municipal administration constitutes "the spider in the net": it sets the agenda and promotes new initiatives. Newcomers—social entrepreneurs that are not mainstream and do not belong to the inner circle of decision makers—find it difficult to be acknowledged and accepted in Münster and to have their proposed social innovations validated. Hence the city is characterised by a co-operative governance arrangement as regards social innovation, but innovative concepts and new ideas have to make their way into the "inner circle" of decision makers in Münster in order to be heard and recognised.

The second type of governance, called *governance of growth*, gives priority to economic policies. The orientation is anti-urban, and politics are strongly influenced by economic interest groups. This *growth-machine* orientation (Molotch 1976) privatises social problems as individual faults. Pamplona, Dover and Birmingham are examples of the predominance of this kind of governance. Birmingham in the UK, analysed in this book by Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton, is a fine example of a city that follows this model in its attempt to reconcile social and economic policies. In the nineteenth century, the city used to be the "workshop of the world". Even today, Birmingham's political and welfare culture is consistent with the paradigm posed by Adam Smith, according to which a vibrant economy is the most effective underpinning for community development. Accordingly, governance of growth assigns social policy a subordinate role. In the case of Birmingham, this subordinate role is consistent with the tradition of a liberal welfare regime in which the market constitutes the prime source of individual wellbeing. Hence, as Brookes, Kendall and Mitton argue, "the city council has focused over the years on the promotion of local economic development, and the two policy priorities of economic growth and labour market activation and social inclusion have usually been dealt with separately".

Additionally, Birmingham constitutes a textbook example of how a city that is embedded in a unitary state is not in the position to develop visionary social policies that are independent from those of the central government. Instead, the city, in particular in the area of social policy, follows a stop-and-go policy of investment and retrenchment in lockstep with the policy directives and money that emanate from London. Against this background, innovations in the area of social policy are generally small-scale initiatives that have a realistic chance of becoming sustainable if they encompass a “market dimension” and are based on an entrepreneurial concept that safeguards at least some financial independence from London. The overall shift from traditional big-industry managerialism to the current entrepreneurialism of the service and creative industries might provide Birmingham with the ability to reconcile its governance tradition with the demands of today’s local economies. However, the social innovations that emerge from this environment are not likely to be able to surmount the decisive problems faced by a large segment of Birmingham’s population that is not well educated and does not have the skills to work in the increasingly important creative sector. Therefore, it is most likely that the divide between rich and poor, and hence between the entrepreneurs and workforce of the new economy on the one hand and those who continue to identify with the way of life of the old working class on the other, will grow further and will not be significantly addressed by small-scale social innovations that largely translate into the production and provision of social services for specific constituencies.

The third type of governance, called *governance of social challenges*, gives priority to social-policy orientations in the production of services. Economic dynamics are handled parallel to social policies and are neither related to nor in conflict with them. This governance arrangement follows more traditional social-welfare policies in which the local state plays the primary role in the production and distribution of services. Political parties and party politics define this more paternalistic orientation in the area of social policy. Shared values are solidarity and the social responsibility of the state. Cities like Malmö, Stockholm, Geneva, Lille, Nantes, Nijmegen, Brescia, Zagreb, Warsaw and Plock are examples of this kind of governance. Concerning Zagreb, Warsaw and Plock, we find again that the EU is the dominant partner in defining this governance style.

In Sweden, Malmö is an interesting case study regarding social innovation. Similar to Birmingham, Malmö used to be a major industrial centre. But in the 1970s, the city was hit hard by the downturn in shipbuilding. Rising rates of unemployment and the deterioration of urban areas were some of the results of this development. Since then, Malmö has had to struggle with societal and economic difficulties that are not very common in Sweden. Furthermore, Malmö’s population, probably due to its geographical location vis-à-vis Continental Europe, had always been comparatively heterogeneous. When transnational migration started to intensify, Malmö developed into the most popular destination for immigrants to Sweden. At least one third of the citizens in Malmö were not born in Sweden. In some parts of the city, more than 80% of the residents are of foreign origin. Again, this is very unusual for Sweden. From an institutional perspective, Sweden, much like the UK, is a unitary

state, but unlike in the UK, Swedish local communities enjoy a larger degree of independence from central government because public administration in Sweden is modelled after Germany and its tradition of local self-government (Gustafsson 1988).

Against this background, the central topic addressed in the contribution by Ola Segnestam Larsson, Marie Nordfeldt and Anna Carrigan to this book is whether, how and to what extent Malmö's urban governance arrangement turns to social innovations in order to tackle the city's decisive problems and societal challenges. Again, the results of the empirical research conducted by the Swedish team in Malmö highlight a significant degree of path dependency in local politics and urban governance. There is no doubt that the city council attempted to attract new industries and shift Malmö's economy from the "big industry" of shipbuilding to services in the areas of education, the arts and culture. In Malmö, like elsewhere in Europe, urban economic development is synonymous with establishing a service-, science- and arts-oriented industry.

However, similarly to Birmingham but for a very different reason, the city's master plan of rebuilding the economy does not allow much space for social innovation. Certainly, from a political point of view Malmö stands out for continuity. Very much in contrast to the rest of Sweden, social democracy has not been abandoned in Malmö since the recession in the 1980s. This decision translates into a situation in which norms and values that have always been linked to social democracy, such as "social justice" and "fighting inequality", continue to have a strong impact on local politics in the city, thus keeping neoliberal thinking, which has definitely gained ground in Sweden over the few last decades, at a distance. The public sector and hence the local government still perceive themselves as responsible for addressing social problems in Malmö, which the authors of the chapter characterise as "a city of many welfare projects". However, there is some space for social innovation, as the chapter also demonstrates. And again, the projects are in line with the Swedish tradition of empowerment since they are put in place with the aim of integrating citizens into the labour market. But in contrast to the past, integration is not achieved in the traditional way, through education. Instead, the innovative aspects of the projects—the social innovations—consist of on-the-job learning and the embedding of education and training within an entrepreneurial approach towards societal problems.

A similar situation can be found in Geneva. Naegeli's contribution provides an in-depth analysis of the multi-layered governance structure of welfare policies in the city and the greater metropolitan area of Geneva. In many respects, Geneva, when compared to other Swiss cities, constitutes a deviant case. According to Naegeli, Geneva, highly influenced by the French tradition of generous welfare benefits, looks back to a legacy of state-oriented welfare policies that have always been backed by a coalition of leftist parties in power in the city's municipal council. Although politics in the cantonal parliament have always been dominated by centre-right parties, cantonal and city levels have never been in disagreement regarding the core values of the welfare domain. Solidarity, a society of opportunities and equality

constitute the key features of a value set that is shared by parties across the political spectrum. According to Naegeli, key players largely agree on core values, but they differ significantly regarding how they should be put into practice. The left favours state action and a more or less top-down approach of social-policy implementation that does not leave much space for innovative approaches. The conservatives are more in line with the Swiss tradition of subsidiarity, which favours bottom-up approaches that preferably include non-profit organisations, civic engagement and citizen participation.

Since Geneva is one of the most affluent cities in Europe, support for social projects is not a controversial issue. As Naegeli argues, there are many social programs and a multitude of actors and providers of services that “constitute a labyrinth of local welfare organizations”. However, the availability of resources and the complex set of actors do not translate into a promising and supportive situation for social innovation. The reasons for this stalemate are at least twofold. First, the political and business communities are more or less disentangled in Geneva; the two do not have much in common. Accordingly, social and economic policies are not interwoven; they each follow a separate road. The social domain therefore has developed into a prime domain of party politics. Second, the political arena in the city of Geneva is dominated by the left, which favours low-profile social innovations enacted primarily within state services. In sum, the city follows a more traditional approach towards social policy that addresses social challenges primarily through publicly funded programs and services.

Finally, we have identified a fourth, conflictual, type of *governance of social and economic challenges*. In this governance arrangement, the combination of a weak local government and strong economic and social interest groups creates conflict between economic and social investments. The value orientation in the area of social policies is a conflictual one, with an opposition between a social and an economic lobby. Each social policy creates a debate between individualism and individual responsibility on the one hand and solidarity and collective responsibility on the other. Berlin and Milan are examples of this conflictual governance arrangement.

In the last few decades, Berlin has developed into one of the most attractive cities in Europe. Why? Why, in particular, do youth from all over Europe come to Berlin as a location to study, to live and to party? Benjamin Ewert, who emphasises the path dependency of urban governance and urban development in Berlin, addresses this issue. In a nutshell, his chapter argues that Berlin—due to its special situation as a border city in the middle of Europe, where two very distinct political systems and ideologies used to meet—provides plenty of space for different lifestyles, new projects and what Germans called “alternative” orientations. Ewert portrays the former West Berlin as a bohemian city in which the arts and culture flourished during the Cold War and where artists from all over the world used to work and simultaneously look for the experience of living in a so-called “frontier city”.

The specificity of West Berlin during the Cold War was made possible by a very generous transfer system of public subsidies. Until the breakdown of the Soviet bloc, almost everything in Berlin—jobs, rents, theatre tickets, etc.—was subsidised

by the German Federal Government. In terms of urban governance, this benevolent situation translated into a decoupling of the city's social and economic politics. Or, to put it differently, for a long time the ability to attract business was very limited in West Berlin, in particular due to the logistics of a city situated very much in the Soviet bloc. Therefore, confronted with a declining population, the prime goal of West Berlin urban politics was to keep the city attractive for newcomers, students and members of the so-called creative class of artists and bohemians. However, with the fall of the wall, the geopolitical situation of Berlin changed significantly. The city is again the capital of Germany. Even today, it lives on public subsidies, although support from the federal government has been reduced continuously since the 1990s. Confronted with many societal challenges, the government of Berlin, similar to other cities, started an economic development program in which the creative industries—arts, culture and fashion as well as so-called lighthouse projects—play a decisive role.

Similarly to Malmö, however, urban governance in Berlin was and continues to be influenced by ideas and concepts from the left, social democracy included. With some interruptions in the 1980s and 1990s, the Social Democratic Party has been in power in Berlin. The research under the umbrella of the WILCO project has focused on the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, with a population of more than 270,000. Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is still perceived as one of the bohemian hotspots of Berlin. The district government continues the long-standing tradition of the left being in power. Currently, the district is governed by a coalition of the Green Party and the Social Democrats. But the Left Party also has a traditional stronghold in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. This situation translates into a policy orientation in which social policy issues play a significant role, and in which the more traditional social policy orientation of the Social Democrats is combined with the more participatory and entrepreneurial attitude of the Green Party. But in sharp contrast to former times, resources are scarce, and the ability of the ruling coalition to significantly support social innovations with public money is therefore limited. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to former times, Berlin has become very attractive for investment, particularly in the area of housing, which for decades was a real “no go” for investors because of what was then a declining population.

In sum, Berlin is still perceived as an El Dorado for “cheap living” and creative work. This image is supported by the Berlin government and in particular by the district government of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. However, due to fiscal constraints, Berlin increasingly faces difficulties in living up to its image. The tradition of urban governance in which social and economic policies are largely de-coupled leads to the paradox that Berlin is still perceived as the metropolis of societal innovation and bohemianism while it is simultaneously becoming increasingly similar to other big European cities, where the flip-side of economic prosperity is increasing poverty and social exclusion.

Milan, analysed in this book by Giuliana Costa, Roberta Cucca and Rossana Torri, provides another interesting case study of this conflicting relationship between economic and social challenges. In this city, social policies have shifted sig-

nificantly during recent decades. The Italian centre of banking and commerce used to be known as a “benevolent” city with a long tradition of social policies aiming to safeguard social cohesion. The social domain was also perceived as necessary to a striving economy. “Milanese citizenship” translated into a situation in which residents of Milan could count on the provision of social services and welfare programs that were exceptional in Italy.

However, at the beginning of the 1990s the attitude towards social issues significantly changed in Milan. The local government struggled with far-reaching corruption scandals that challenged the then widely accepted image of Milan as the place in Italy “where business and ethics went hand in hand”. Moreover, left-wing city governments were followed by centre-right coalitions headed by mayors from Berlusconi’s party. Accordingly, the city significantly changed its attitude towards “the social”. Social policies were no longer perceived as an investment in the future of the young generations of Milan, but instead as having a negative impact on the economic development of the city. The move away from classical social policy was intensified by the fiscal crisis and the need to introduce austerity politics. At the same time, rent and housing costs increased steadily, in particular in the centre of the city, while the local government simultaneously abandoned a housing policy that did not exclusively address the needs of the middle class but also provided affordable housing for less well-off members of the community.

At the turn of the millennium, a new coalition came into power that was and continues to be of a more leftist orientation and which has tried to replace the restrictive social policies of the past with a new approach focusing more on social cohesion, citizen participation and a renewed social-policy agenda. However, times have changed significantly. Against the background of fiscal crises and decreasing support from the regional and federal governments, there is not much space for either social innovations or social policies that genuinely make a difference. What the current government tries to achieve is in accordance with a policy approach found all over Europe. So-called lighthouse projects, currently the Expo, are implemented with the goal of both attracting investment and improving the image of the city. However, these high-profile endeavours are increasingly out of reach for large portions of the Milanese population, who struggle to make ends meet. In other words, governance in Milan does not address social and economic issues simultaneously. Instead, the local government tries to promote the economy, and it takes action in the social domain only if there is a significant challenge, as can be seen clearly in the area of housing. The social innovation in this policy area, which is described in the chapter by the Italian team, strongly builds on a public–private–partnership approach. The policy is made possible through the initiative of a large Italian foundation. Hence, this path of innovation shows some similarities to those in big cities in the USA—Harlem in the 1980s and Detroit today—where private-sector foundations provide the seed money for innovative policies.

2.4 Conclusion

The urban welfare model as it has been developed since the Middle Ages in Europe is challenged by different contemporary tendencies. First, and most obviously, cities' approaches to social policy have to react pragmatically to the retrenchment policies of the national welfare system—as Grymer had already observed in the 1970s (Grymer 1979). Responsibilities are handed down to the local level, and problems, generally related to forms of new poverty, are visible.

Second, these social problems are rarely included in the general social-security systems of the national level and need to be addressed through social policies. Therefore, the urban level is also the primary place in which new social problems appear, and it is also the level that is forced to find solutions for them. The general trend towards a more diversified society—including marginality and other social problems that come with this diversification—finds its multifaceted reality in the city. Marginalised groups of all kinds, and not only a rich elite, are attracted by the promise of the city as a place for self-realisation and freedom (Cattacin 2009).

Finally, cities are confronted with the double task of meeting the demands by international mobile elites to produce an urban climate of well-being while dealing with crime attracted by that same climate. As wealth and poverty become concentrated in cities, municipal governments are challenged by the need to create social policies to compete for the rich.

The 20 cities analysed here are confronted with similar problems and challenges. Social innovations constitute just one tool to adjust their urban policies to changing conditions. Despite very different settings, the social innovations identified and researched in our project show many commonalities, as described in Chap. 9. The involvement of civil-society actors, the co-production of services, mixed financial arrangements and the rediscovery of the spatial or better urban dimension of social policy initiatives are just some of the characteristics of current social innovations. This chapter has focused on urban governance as a premise of any policy development. We have specifically asked whether and how urban governance may facilitate or hinder the development and sustainability of social innovations. We have worked with the hypothesis that context matters, and that the political, cultural and institutional dimensions of a given setting therefore have to be taken into account when analysing the emergence and establishment of social innovations.

The results of our analysis are mixed. There is no one best solution. But our analysis indicates that urban governance embedded in a federal system seems to facilitate the emergence and sustainability of social innovations because the local level is in a position to address social challenges independently. A strong tradition of local self-government constitutes a highly suitable environmental condition for social innovation. The same holds true for subsidiarity as a policy approach through which to address societal problems with the support of non-state actors, preferably civil-society organisations. Local governance arrangements that make use of subsidiarity to organise social services are comparatively more receptive to social innovations proposed by social actors. In contrast, countries with a top-down and government-based tradition of social-service provision, which constitutes one of the

key characteristics of a social-democratic welfare regime, are rather reluctant to accept and integrate new initiatives into their repertoire. Finally, coalitions of core actors that share common norms and values acknowledging that capitalist economies have to take the social into account in order to be sustainable are also conducive to social innovation. Interestingly, it does not really matter whether these core values are based on a social-democratic or a conservative tradition. The difference between the two traditions translates into a difference in the instruments and tools used, as the examples of Malmö and Münster clearly indicate.

Although social innovations are necessary tools for the reform and adaptation of the welfare state to the new societal challenges of our century, we also have to address at least one caveat. The social innovations we analysed are all small-scale initiatives; they are not related to citizen rights. By and large, they have not been thoroughly integrated into urban policies. Therefore, we have to be sceptical of expectations that social innovations are the one and only solution to the difficulties and problems of our mature welfare states and capitalist economies.

At the same time, the results presented here indicate that urban (and local) welfare is becoming increasingly important in dealing with social challenges. There is also evidence of common trends in the way social issues are tackled. An interesting result concerns the way cities from countries recently integrated into the EU shape their social policies. In these cities, policy prescriptions (and financial support) from the EU play a primary role in the production of concrete social policies—while the other cities experiment more with bottom-up and local solutions. The question arises of how sustainable imported solutions are in comparison with endogenous ones.⁹ An answer to this question would require longer-term monitoring, which could be based on dimensions and insights from our project.

However, this comparative analysis also opens other questions that we can only discuss briefly in this chapter. First of all, identifying contexts more open to social innovation, as we have done, can be interpreted as a recommendation to change the way policies are created in specific contexts. But this is only partially true. The reality we analysed indicates a link between the wealth of a given city and its way of handling social policies. Social innovation is probably easier if there is a context of liberal experimentation, but also if there is a government orientation towards funding such innovation. But if money is scarce, how can a government promote a more economically and socially sustainable city? As Gerometta et al. argue, we think that the first step has to be forms of self-organisation and civil-society initiatives (Gerometta et al. 2005) that can be the engine for a better quality of life—which is the foundation for the attractiveness and economic development of a city. It would be an error to think that the opposite approach—improving economic performance in a socially hostile context—has the same consequences because the flexibilised economy, based on mobility and creativity, needs more than money. In other words, there is an intimate relationship between the new growth-oriented city and social policies and social innovations that promote economic development

⁹ This question is not a new one as the discussion of the *imported state* by Badie, who analysed how Algerian institutions suffered from French domination, shows (Badie 1987).

while adequately responding to social challenges that cities—and no longer the national welfare state—have to deal with.

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Chapter 3

Everybody on Board? Opportunity Structures for Social Innovations in Münster

Christina Rentzsch

3.1 Introduction

In 2004, Münster received the international LivCom Award acknowledging the town as the *Most Liveable City in the World*.¹ Since then, the city has merchandised this image within and beyond the region (Hauff and Heineberg 2011; p. 5). The middle-sized town of Münster with its around 300,000 inhabitants is a flourishing city: immigration surpasses emigration, the large administrative and academic sectors provide employment opportunities for the well educated, and the overall eight universities and their approximately 50,000 students buffer demographic change. Simultaneously, the prosperous socio-economic situation of Münster is enveloped by a conservative-Catholic culture, emphasizing solidarity with weaker members of the society and referring to subsidiarity as a key policy principle.

This chapter addresses the questions of how social innovations emerge in Münster and how they are embedded within the city's governance arrangement. The analysis focuses on two major policy fields best reflecting Münster's specific governance arrangement: labour market and housing policy.² After an overview of administrative structures in Germany and specific city traditions (Sect. 3.2), the chapter

¹ The following article is based on research carried out as a part of the WILCO project from 2011 until 2014 in Münster. The author is very grateful to Patrick Boadu, Danielle Gluns, Thorsten Hallmann and Andrea Walter.

² The study and its data collection—conducted over the course of 4 years (2007–2011)—consisted of the following elements: interviews with politicians, administrative employees and civil society organizations at the local level; a detailed analysis of documents produced by the city council and the council's committees; an analysis of major articles of the leading local newspapers on selected issues, and for labor market policy an additional local magazine; several focus group interviews; as well as an analysis of the election programs of all relevant parties for the local elections in 2004 and 2009.

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analyses Münster's governance arrangement (Sect. 3.3) and addresses the topic of who makes things happen in the city in terms of coalition building. There is a strong focus on the interdependence between governance and social policy discourses. Despite some caveats, Münster is a city whose administration is inclined to open windows of opportunities for the implementation of social innovations (Chap. 4).

3.2 Münster's Embeddedness in Germany's Governance Arrangement

3.2.1 Cooperative Federalism, Self-government and Subsidiarity

In international comparisons, Germany stands out for a specific type of federalism: Sixteen states (*Länder*) are bound together by "co-operative federalism" (Scharpf 1976), a multilevel governance arrangement of interrelations between the federal, regional and local level, in which responsibilities are divided according to tasks and policy fields. Thus, German municipalities are not independent administrative units but embedded in a system of administrative regulations, inaugurated by the *Länder* and the federal government. Simultaneously, German municipalities look back upon a long tradition of self-government. Elections to the local parliament take place every 5 years, and local politicians enjoy a certain leeway of how policies are enacted. Albeit in close cooperation with the local administration, local parliaments guarantee the participation of citizens in local politics (Bogumil and Holtkamp 2006).

Furthermore, Germany is particularly noteworthy for neo-corporatist governance arrangements (Schmitter 1974), in which civil society organizations and associations (*Verbände*) traditionally play a key role in the policy process, bridging the different territorial levels (local, subnational and federal) of the country (Zimmer et al. 2009). Legitimated by the principle of subsidiary neo-corporatism at the local level translates into a situation in which civil society organizations or non-profit organizations (NPOs) are the prime providers of social services (Dahme and Wohlfahrt 2011; Evers et al. 2011a).

3.2.2 Münster: Desk of Westphalia—City Profile

Situated close to the Ruhr area of Germany, Münster has never been an industrial town, characterized by an entrepreneurial spirit and a governing elite of internationally oriented businessmen. Instead, in the nineteenth century, the town became the host of a Prussian Military Base and developed into a stronghold of the Prussian Provincial Government. Today, the legacy of history is still strongly in place. There

are numerous public and semi-public administrative units operating in Münster, such as the Regional Government or the Pension Insurance Institute for Westphalia-Lippe, a sub-district of the region of North Rhine-Westphalia. Until very recently, the British Rhine Army had their headquarters in Münster. Today, it only hosts the German Netherlands Corps, and soldiers no longer impact the culture of the city.

Against this background, Münster enjoys the image of being the “Desk of Westphalia” (cf. Heineberg 2011; p. 268), a city in which blue-collar workers are more or less absent and where civil servants play a decisive role in city politics. The presence of numerous institutions of higher education such as Münster University, Münster Polytech, the University for Public Administration or the University for the Police adds to the picture of a city dominated by middle-class inhabitants, most of them being civil servants. All in all, the public sector constitutes the most important economic force in the city. Public sector dominance is hardly balanced by a class of merchants who similar to other traditional European cities and former trading posts today still run their shops in the centre of the picturesque medieval old town that constitutes the prime tourists attraction in Münster.

Besides its long tradition dating back to the Middle Ages and times of the former *Hanse* and its middle class, civil servant population, Münster is famous for being a stronghold of Catholicism in the North of Germany. Indeed, Münster used to be the centre of the Catholic counter-revolution at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The famous Graf von Galen, who raised his voice against the rule of Hitler in the 1930s, served as Archbishop in Münster. Since the late nineteenth century, Münster has been a stronghold of political Catholicism, in particular the *Zentrum* Party during the German Empire and the Weimar Republic, and the German Christian Democratic Party after 1945.

3.2.3 *Winds of Change*

The legacy of Roman Catholicism, the impact of the surrounding rural area of Westphalia and the dominance of civil servants led the Christian Democratic Party to be the most important political force in the city. However, since the 1990s, new political forces, the Green Party and the Linke, have significantly challenged the conservative milieu of the city. Both were able to build constituencies within the post-materialist academic milieu in Münster.

In the 1990s, for the first time in Münster’s political history, the Christian Democrats were not in power for one electoral term. Since then, the Mayor has been a Christian Democrat again. However, the directly elected conservative Mayor does no longer enjoy a comfortable majority in the city parliament; instead, he has to govern with shifting majorities of which a so-called clandestine coalition with the Social Democrats turned out to be the most stable government arrangement. The grand coalition in disguise reached its peak during the late 1990s and the early 2000s, a period in which Münster embarked on a new approach of city development that slightly departed from classical neo-corporatism. Besides traditional civil soci-

ety players, a broad spectrum of groups and constituencies were addressed and welcomed to participate in a long-term consultancy process. The outcome was a master plan for city development, closely combining city development and city marketing.³

The master plan highlights the necessity of becoming a city attractive for investments from local and regional business communities. For the first time in Münster's post-war history, city development became a central issue based on a strategic plan for long-term investments and projects. Besides its novelty, however, the master plan also links up with Münster's tradition as a middle-sized town and European city looking back to a subsidiary tradition of taking care for constituencies in the community who need help and public support. From an institutional point of view, the master plan encompassed the establishment of a new unit within the town hall, "Münster Marketing". Münster Marketing is an independent organization hosted by the city administration and hence located in the town hall. Since its foundation in the early 2000s, Münster Marketing has developed into a very influential player within the city. Like "a spider in a net", the chairwoman of Münster Marketing is highly connected and therefore able to monitor any development within the city. The central task of Münster Marketing is to get relevant stakeholders around the table whenever a new initiative or a new project is about to start and inaugurated in Münster. Due to its peculiar organizational setup, Münster Marketing enjoys excellent contacts within the city's administration, the political sphere and the local business community. As such, Münster Marketing constitutes an institutionalized symbol for the Münster-specific "governance of co-operation".

3.3 Münster's "Governance of Cooperation"

As outlined in the previous chapter (Cattacin and Zimmer 2015), governance of cooperation is characterized by the continuous search for synergies between economic and social policies. Although the search for investments constitutes the driving force of city politics, actors in Münster are sensible not to lose contact with the social domain. The underlying rational of action is pragmatism combined with efficiency. Actors in the city search for practical solutions for today's problems without giving up an investment-focused policy orientation. As outlined in the following section on "innovations" in the areas of housing and labour market policies, there seems to be a division of labour with regard to economic and social policies. Social policy is by and large considered to be the prime responsibility of public and hence the city's administration, while business issues are primarily taken care of by the business community. Moreover, Münster's governance of cooperation is inclined to empower citizens in order to make them fit for the market and hence to be able to help themselves.

³ Stadt Münster 2004: Integriertes Stadtentwicklungs- und Stadtmarketingkonzept Münster (ISM) Münster-Profil, Leitorientierungen und Leitprojekte. (http://www.muenster.de/stadt/stadtplanung/pdf/Vor118_04_und_Erg.pdf).

This attitude is very much in line with the subsidiarity tradition of Münster in the welfare area. Overall, Münster's governance of cooperation tries to follow an encompassing approach of bringing people with similar problems together in order to work out most practical solutions. The city continuously attempts to balance its investment orientation of the city, taken up in the late 1990s and working with the paradigm of the city as "a growth machine". It refers to a "preventing frame" that is highly supported by representatives of the political parties, members of the city administration and civil society actors, including members of the local clergy. In the following, this chapter will first focus on the investment frame, which is linked to the "growth machine" paradigm; in the second step, this frame will be juxtaposed in opposition to the "prevention frame" of Münster's cooperative governance coalition (the following chapter is based on WILCO report 4, Boadu et al. 2012).

3.3.1 Münster as "Growth Machine": The Investment Frame

The "deep core" of the local coalition system is a frame of municipal management that invests all its resources in improving the city's capacity for enhancing local (economic) growth and growth sustainment. Moreover, growth is perceived as the main factor for the wellbeing of citizens and for the city development. The frame originates from the theoretical premises described by Harvey Molotch in "The City as a Growth Machine" (Molotch 1976), which argues that growth should be an essential imperative. The central conditions for growth are defined as follows:

1. A high level of competitiveness for companies and citizens with other cities, achievable through the improvement of both hard and soft site factors
2. A high level of attractiveness attained by means of city branding or marketing with a focus on high quality of life and a special lifestyle, as well as a "festivalization" of city policies: the concentration on highly marketable, prestige projects and actions (Häußermann and Siebel 1993)
3. An approach to city management that creates a market-friendly environment, thus making the city a viable target for private investment and enabling its effects to benefit the whole community

Since Münster fits these criteria perfectly, it presents a good example of "the city as growth machine". This general orientation significantly influenced local discourse and translated into the establishment of an investment frame widely considered a success story in Münster. Over the years, it has gained increasing acceptance by a broad coalition of different actors, resulting in a relative stability of the frame since the early 1990s. It continues to be perpetuated by political subsystems in Münster within a wider coalition system. Apart from superficial modifications in rhetoric and action, the frame remains stable. "Münster Marketing", the "Initiative for a Strong Inner City", a lobby group of Münster's merchants, the traditional guild of merchants "*Kaufmannschaft*" and of course the municipal department for the promotion of the local economy (*Wirtschaftsförderung*) support the investment frame.

However, in the welfare domain, it is counterbalanced and complemented by a very different frame, which originates in the subsidiarity tradition of the city.

3.3.2 Münster a City Based on Subsidiarity: The “Prevention Frame”

“We should be careful and avoid that people, kids included, are faced with difficult situations in their lives. Instead of simply letting things happen, we should be preventive and start to empower people as early as possible”, the chairwoman of the Children and Youth Department of Münster stated in one of our interviews. The quote nicely encompasses the central idea of policy action before a significant problem comes to the fore. The idea of avoiding problems by providing citizens with tools and skills to help themselves is embedded in both political traditions most prominently influencing politics in Münster, Social Democracy and Christian Democracy, influenced by subsidiarity. Interviews conducted under the framework of the Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO) project showed that the empowerment argument of the prevention frame was primarily referred to by members or representatives of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Münster. Their reference to the prevention frame was linked to considerations of equality, life changes and justice. Representatives of the Christian Democratic Party also turned to the prevention frame, in particular to legitimize social policies.

However, the underlying rationale they referred to it was quite different. In a nutshell, they pointed to a cost argument, claiming that it is cheaper to invest in prevention now than to have to pay more for removal of the damage. Hence, a somehow economic logic is also inherent to the prevention frame. In Münster, the prevention frame is referred to in various social policy fields, surpassing the classic welfare or social policy toolbox. Under the *Leitmotiv* of the prevention frame, policy measures aim to ensure that all groups and individuals are empowered to participate as successfully as possible in the market. Hence, the two dominant policy frames in Münster counterbalance each other. However, at the same time there is a slight bias in favour of the investment frame because prevention policies might also be inaugurated and put in place using the vocabulary of the investment frame.

3.3.3 The Policy Coalition

As indicated earlier, Münster is a very homogeneous city. Results of the WILCO project highlight that poverty and unemployment are not significant issues in Münster. Furthermore, the city counts among the very few in the region of North-Rhine Westphalia with a growing population. The number of unemployed citizens is below the country’s average rate of unemployment. The same holds true for the number of migrants. Indeed, the population with a migration background is very

limited in Münster. Furthermore, due to the attractiveness of the University, many citizens with migration background came to Münster in order to study. They stayed and started professional careers. Since big business is almost absent in Münster, homogeneity constitutes a characteristic feature of the city. Furthermore, some business entities are indeed semi-public institutions, such as a quite influential saving bank or a major insurance company. Against this background, it does not come as a surprise that numerous circles and semi-public initiatives in Münster are serving as forums for discussion and policy deliberation. There is also significant overlap between the different groups and round tables that constitute a semi-public discursive sphere in the city.

In summary, Münster is run and governed by a relatively small circle of engaged citizens, members of the city administration and representatives of merchants, civil society organizations and the two churches. The closeness of Münster's elite circles has been the subject of various studies (Termeer 2010; Schwab 2011; Paulsen 2015) that unanimously testified to the significant importance of the city or municipal administration. The important role of the administration has been further strengthened in recent years due to the fact that the Mayor, simultaneously head of the city government and chairman of the municipal administration, is directly elected by the local population and therefore enjoys a significant legitimacy.

However, homogeneity and a culture of making politics in small circles also have flip sides. As a newcomer, it is not easy to get access to those circles in the city where "fat cats keep in touch". Indeed, homogeneity with respect to gender, class and, in particular, age was also the most significant characteristic of members of the respective policy coalitions identified under the framework of the WILCO project. During the time of the investigation, individuals mostly ran the city in their late 50s or mid-60s, irrespective of their background (political parties, business community or local administration). In summary, this generation shares the same ideas and concepts. It is tied together by a common culture of a time when Germany started to emancipate itself from the post-war period. It is also this very generation that is responsible for the gentrification of the inner cities.

Also, this generation supports a classical divide between economic and social policy. Not surprisingly, the majority of innovations identified in Münster by WILCO were initiatives by the municipal administration, implemented through network governance or governance of cooperation between municipal administration and "outsiders", that is members of the respective policy coalition. In order to highlight the decisive role of the city administration for innovations in the area of social policy, two innovations identified in Münster as part of the WILCO project will be portrayed in the following section beginning with a brief outline of the policy fields labour market and housing (The following chapter is based on WILCO report 3, Boadu et al. 2011).

3.4 Governance Structures, Discourses and Innovations in Münster's Labour Market and Housing Policy

3.4.1 Labour Market Policy in Münster

Compared to neighbouring regions and Germany in general, the labour market situation in Münster is significantly better. Unemployment is relatively low, even for disadvantaged groups such as migrants and adolescents; the presence of nearly 50,000 students gives employers the possibility to recruit candidates from a vast pool of flexible, young and well-educated people interested in marginal part-time employment. Although Münster is not known for a long philosophy of local labour market policy⁴, a local labour market initiative was founded specifically targeting young adults; *Arbeitsmarktinitiative Münster* was launched during a social democratic and green party majority about 20 years ago. At that time, a number of youth training centres were started by the city or NPOs, but the conservative majority in Parliament largely reduced public spending on local labour market policies from 1999 onwards. The European Social Fund (ESF) and/or the State of North Rhine-Westphalia now fund initiatives formerly financed by the municipality. The ESF is an important financial pillar of local labour market projects.

Besides the two major public institutions responsible for labour market policies (Federal Agency for Employment and its local Jobcentres), the third sector and private organizations play a role in the provision of labour market programmes and activities as well (see Evers et al. 2011b/WILCO WP2 County report Germany). In Münster, the welfare associations of the churches are active in the field of labour market policy, that is *Caritas* and *Diakonie*, as well as local associations, initiatives and foundations. They offer personal advice and support on site, especially for specific groups of people, such as young adults or refugees⁵.

Additionally, relations between different actors in local labour market policy are institutionalized in the Advisory Board of the Jobcentre, which performs an advisory function for the municipality but does not have any decision-making power. Although this board is a legal requirement, it was given additional weight in Münster, asking various actors to serve on the board with the aim of assessing local labour market policy. The Jobcentre's Advisory Board consists of 16 regional representatives from the field of labour market policy from administration, civil society and political parties; it becomes increasingly involved in the development of local

⁴ As the parliamentary leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) states: "Economic and social policy is not made in Münster's town hall. This can be seen in the mentality of local politics handing over labour market policy to the private sector; the economy that is responsible for creating jobs." Interview with the parliamentary leader of the SDP in Münster.

⁵ One prominent example of a civil-society-driven project of collaboration between various actors in the field of employment policy is the MAMBA network, focusing on the qualification of refugees and other migrants with a legalized residency status.

labour market strategies in order to develop innovative approaches for the integration into the job market.⁶

Structural Change: *Optionskommune*

In Germany, the Federal Agency for Employment and its Jobcentres, local units taking care of the “hard-to-place” unemployed, is in charge of the implementation of labour market policies. However, the federal government provided an option for local governments to partly take over obligations and duties of the Federal Agency for Employment. Hence, the municipality was offered the possibility to integrate the local Jobcentres into their social service profile. This was decided by competitive process on the basis of careful testing of proposals handed in by the respective communities. Once decided positively, the community was awarded the title *Optionskommune*, the respective city becomes responsible for placement and job search of long-term unemployed.

The application for becoming *Optionskommune* was prepared in 2010 by the city administration, in particular by the Department of Social Affairs, without consulting many other constituencies. External expertise was called upon to highlight the advantages of the *Optionskommune*, but these documents only circulated within the administration. Nevertheless, the local parties supported the application for the *Optionskommune* because they hoped for a more purposeful, responsible and cross-linked local labour market policy. *More purposeful* means that in future local administration and policy-makers would deal with city-specific problems and federal funding would be used for different employment measures in Münster. *More responsible* implies that success or failure of certain measures would be evaluated locally, and that cooperation with subcontracting private or nonprofit partners would become more trusting and binding. Third, a *more cross-linked* labour market policy means improving the integration of social policy, educational policy, childcare and integration policy.

A municipality that “opts out” entrusts the local level with responsibility for the arrangements of local labour market policy and the allocation of federal funding. The introduction of this model constitutes a compromise between state and federal levels after the significant labour market reforms (the so-called Hartz laws) were approved in 2005. Jobcentres are responsible for payment, profiling and case management of unemployed clients as well as for helping them to access additional services such as childcare or debt counselling. Additionally, in order to increase employability, jobcentres have their own budgets at their disposal to pay providers responsible for the placement of unemployed people.

Labour Market Policy as “Investment in the Future?”

There is a broad consensus on the need to promote Münster both as part of a region and as a city in order to attract a broader spectrum of investors. This consensus

⁶ “Well, the composition of the advisory board included many different providers of job creation measures, counselling centres, the university, economy and chambers, and the social sector was strongly represented as well.” Focus group interview II: District executive director of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband. Original quotation: *Also die Besetzung des Beirates [...] waren ganz viele Beschäftigungsträger, waren Beratungsstellen, waren sicherlich auch Universität, Wirtschaft und also die Kammern, aber der soziale Bereich war relativ stark vertreten.*

follows the belief that new jobs will be created if the region can attract more investment and the relocation of companies, and thereby help to overcome unemployment. Münster thus relies on “lighthouse projects” to erase the obsolete image of “Münster as an administration town”. In order to achieve this, the instrument of benchmarking has been increasingly applied in the field of labour market policy.

Despite the dominance of the investment frame, several groups in the field of labour market policy follow the prevention frame, arguing that one should “become active before the damage has been done” instead of supporting individual “problematic cases”.⁷ Youth unemployment in particular requires a specific focus on prevention, since young people have limited access to the local job market. Youth unemployment (especially during the transition from school to work) is a topic widely discussed in politics—by the administration, local media and in party programmes. Young people are considered to be one of the only groups given continuous care. Moreover, prevention in the sense of furthering education also meets the future demand for skilled employees.

With the transformation to *Optionskommune*, a shift of responsibilities occurred. Proponents of the *Optionskommune* highlight the opportunity to play a more active role as a municipality in the field of labour market policy and to tap into the potential offered by the good connections between public and private actors in the city. Building on experience and close networks with local businesses and employers, many local public actors expect to be able to organize more effective and efficient labour market integration to establish better ways of taking care of the unemployed and to achieve a stronger focus on preventative work. However, there remains one caveat. People taking administrative decisions, as one informant states, unfortunately “do not speak the language of the people concerned. Not only do they not know how to address them, they do not speak their language”.⁸ Maybe the recently introduced advisory board will be able to break up these traditional lines of actions.

Optionskommune: An Example of Innovative Labour Market Policy

The *Optionskommune* follows the concept of subsidiarity, stating that the authority least centralized should handle matters. This concept fits into the overarching structure of the German welfare state and Münster’s main paradigms. As an innovative *approach*, it allows a different perspective on the unemployed: unemployment is not seen as an individual failure but mainly a structural problem. The development towards *Optionskommune* can be seen as an answer to these structural problems, as it brings social policy and the labour market together. The *Optionskommune* thus follows an empowerment approach: “We are moving away from taking care of the unemployed on the basis of software tools and towards the individuals and their

⁷ Interview with the head of the Section for School, Advanced Training, Economy and School, Occupational Qualification. Original quotation: *Mehr und mehr bemühe man sich darum, aktiv zu werden “bevor das Kind in den Brunnen gefallen ist”*.

⁸ Focus group interview II: Head of the “House of the Assistance to the Homeless” (*Haus der Wohnungslosenhilfe* = facility of the Bischof-Hermann-Stiftung for the support of the homeless). Original quotation: *Und auch nicht die Sprache [der Betroffenen, C.R.J. Nicht nur Ansprache, auch nicht die Sprache.*

histories”⁹. Essentially, this model follows a decentralized approach: it assumes that if the Jobcentre is a local institution, which relies on local expertise and networks, it will be better situated to take care of the unemployed than the Federal Employment Agency. The Jobcentre allows addressing users in more individualized ways, eventually placing more people in paid labour.

Local authority is also trying to decrease bureaucracy in the Jobcentres for the benefit of clients since it improves the focus on individuals and their specific situations. It also supports the idea of giving caseworkers enough room to make independent decisions in favour of the individuals. Altogether, the *Optionskommune* offers more freedom to use other more flexible and sustainable instruments in addressing users than the former model.

Even though this innovation is an instrument situated on a metalevel, it provides the context and structural framework for strategic and sustainable social innovations within the local welfare system. It can be considered a basic precondition to pursue integrated local social policy that enables the administration to incorporate labour market policy into their local governance approach. The most challenging goal in this process was to bring together different participants, since they “spoke different languages. People working in social policy and the labour market area used the same words but told different stories. Working together on labour market policy while focusing on the various target groups was not possible in the past [...] Being connected by the opting-out model is very valuable.”¹⁰

Therefore, the most innovative aspect of *Optionskommune* is the “chance of social policy and labour market policy in the city welding together”. *Optionskommune* opens up a potentially multipurpose scope for integrated approaches addressing social problems. Splitting funding between several social stakeholders is another positive outcome and a reason why the model seems to be a win-win situation for both the administration and social service providers. However, whether the *Optionskommune* Münster will be successful in providing jobs more efficiently will depend heavily on the availability of local networks between the administration and the local labour market.

⁹ Interview with the head of the Social Department of the municipality. Original quotation: *Sie nutzen nun einen anderen Beratungsansatz, der darauf beruht, einen Fall nicht mehr nur auf Basis von Software zu bearbeiten, sondern das Individuum mit ihrer oder seiner Geschichte anzuerkennen.*

¹⁰ Focus group interview IV, Chief executive of the Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband. Original quotation: *Man hat verschiedene Sprachen gesprochen. Die Sozial- und die Arbeitsmarktmen-schen. Die haben diesel-ben Worte genutzt aber was anderes erzählt. Das gab es früher nicht. Dass man zielgruppenorientiert an der Arbeitsmarktpolitik [gearbeitet hat, C.R.]. [...] Da sind dann auch alle Beteiligten durch die Option organisatorisch gebunden an einem Tisch. Und das ist sehr wertvoll.*

3.4.2 *Housing Policy in Münster*

Sexy Münster

From an investor's point of view, Münster is a highly attractive city. The population is growing and the average income ranks above average—building or buying flats and houses in such a rich, growing city allows for successful businesses. However, what happens to those who are financially less equipped in a city with rent rates similar to those of Munich or Milan? It is becoming increasingly difficult for low-income inhabitants to find affordable housing in Münster. Therefore, financially disadvantaged people only find flats by chance or among the rare offers of social housing associations. Nevertheless, providing sufficient social housing has not been a major issue for administration and politics in the last 10 years. The number of affordable social housing has significantly declined; new social housing is more expensive than old flats from the 1950s or the 1960s. But even those disappear rapidly as they are being converted into modern condos. Particularly in the centre of town, newly constructed buildings are chic, demonstrating wealth and prosperity. While in Münster's centre flats have undergone large value increases, housing situations in several suburbs are desolate. Gentrification of the city centre and selected investments in some suburbs resulted in a segregation of unemployed and working poor in social hotspots.

Similar to labour market policy, the role of local governments in housing policies is quite limited. Housing has become a key area of business interest in Germany. Policy interference has almost always been exclusively based on indirect policy instruments, mostly incentives through tax benefits decided at federal or regional level of government. Hence, besides investing in government-owned housing stock or selling municipal building sites, the municipality does not enjoy much leeway for policy action. Key responsibility of municipalities in housing policy in Germany is planning in terms of issuing zoning plans instead of building. Nevertheless, similar to other cities, Münster has worked out a strategic document for its housing policy. First initiated in 1993 and subsequently updated, Münster's "Local Action Housing Program" is also the result of a round-table-based process of deliberation. Representatives of various constituencies were involved but the Department of Housing and City Development continues to play the key role. A further key player of municipal housing policy in Münster is *Wohn + Stadtbau*, a housing association (planning, construction, selling and renting out) which is 100% owned by the city of Münster. As already indicated, in the area of housing there is a forum of communication, chaired by the Head of the Department of Housing and City Development who is also the official representative of the Mayor. The forum titled "Housing in Münster" was founded in 2004 as an initiative of Münster's administration. The working group exchanges information and provides political consultation, which means it is not in a position to make appeals or decisions for any political measures on housing. Since the group's purpose is to establish trustful working conditions, meetings are not open to the public.

Hotly Debated—Housing Policy

Although housing policy was always a topic for Münster's local politics, it is not clear if and to what extent the continuous problems of demand, high prices and growing segregation will become the focus of policy measures in the future. The anticipated problems, as well as the problematic focal points, illustrate the pressing need to address Münster's housing situation, since social division is becoming more and more visible. The city and politics are regarded as having little influence and steering competences in the housing policy field. Nevertheless, some experts in parties and administration recognize the growing pressure in the housing market and stress the necessity to act. This is why they work closely together in order to show that a cooperative governance arrangement exists in housing policy as well.

The well-established coalition system gives the impression of homogeneous opinion. Yet, this coalition is composed of the main agenda-setters, who aim for market provision whenever possible, *and* the local stakeholders, who propose "prevention strategies". Initially, the coalition sought to start an economic cycle in which the city would become more competitive in the acquisition of private investments in the local (high-end) housing market. The rationale was that this would provide economic growth and wellbeing to the entire community. Additionally, these new investments would raise the overall prestige and attractiveness of the city and spur new investments to keep the cycle going. Based on these assumptions, an important part of the city's self-conception derives from the promotion of a high standard of living and attractive housing options, prominently featured in the city's marketing efforts. Judging from the continuous and detailed coverage of such projects in the local media, larger and smaller urban development projects are of high interest to the local public. But housing and urban development issues are also debated rather fiercely in the city council and in its subcommittee. However, the market does not take responsibility for lower incomes. The dominating belief is that everyone will benefit from this development via "trickle down" effects.¹¹

Focus on recent housing debates, which were mostly open to the public, shifted away from initiating growth and development towards a discussion about the effects of a high demand for commodities on the housing situation itself, namely (1) that affordable housing is rare and hard to acquire for socially disadvantaged citizens, (2) that rents (for housing and business) are too high for healthy growth in the sector and (3) the acknowledgement that certain "neglected" neighbourhoods do not share positive growth and development effects. These effects are generally accepted as facts (cf. Breckner 2010; Holm 2011). Nevertheless, some still argue that rising rents are in fact an indicator for the success of the current municipal approach. On the contrary, others say that the municipality is not in a position to effectively influence the situation due to the structural characteristic of the housing field. Other

¹¹ "The housing market works by itself because demands are high. For the lower income section we have the city-owned housing association "Wohn + Stadtbau". But also if there is construction for the higher income section, other housing units will become available for the lower section and benefit the market as a whole" (Interview with the chief editor of the *Westfälische Nachrichten* in Münster).

advocates within the coalition claim that the city would have been able to do more in order to increase affordable housing yet gave up its prospects for action mostly due to budgetary restraints or voluntarily in favour of market provisions:

[...] All important projects in the last years have been investors' decisions. Basically, we did not put a municipal project through since the Municipal Library. Those were projects implemented by private investors or by the Catholic Church, not by the municipality. And I think that is a huge danger in a city with that kind of financial volume.¹²

The housing field also reflects the city's dominant discourse structure: Housing policy is mainly seen as an instrument for growth. The investment frame is again the dominant frame whereas social aspects play a minor role. Because of Münster's political culture, important decision-makers have always been vigilant about prohibiting developments that might seriously endanger the social balance in the city. This argument leads to a request for a more "sustainable" growth (prevention of market failure) and a call for caution about endangering the city's attractiveness through social cleavages. Since it is agreed upon that disrupting the city's social balance should be avoided, the need to improve the situation in already neglected neighbourhoods with reactive measures is relatively undisputed in the political arena and the general public.

In this context, several experts refer to "healthy mixes", understood as a mixture of different social groups inhabiting an area. They assume that if there is no such mix, people will be less likely to identify with their neighbourhood and owners will not invest in the housing stock as it may not pay off. "Sustainable neighbourhood development", a preventative "spatial" social policy, does not seem to be heavily disputed within the city context. A general need for sustainable neighbourhood development, a "healthy mix" of inhabitants and the need for affordable living spaces seem to be widely acknowledged by all actors involved, although the means to reach these goals are not agreed on since they are based on different problem analyses. In consequence, the question of how the lack of affordable housing shall or could be countervailed is clearly the main line of public political dispute in the field. With regard to local political actors, the controversies run along traditional party lines, between investment and social perspectives. The administration's role is criticized since it sides with market proponents, emphasizing that public housing cannot create enough affordable accommodation (Völker 2011).¹³ Local authorities think it is more "useful to support lower income tenants with accommodation allowances."¹⁴ The strength of the market thus remains the dominant line of argu-

¹² Focus group interview I: member of the state parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia for the Christian Democratic Party.

¹³ Karin Völker (2011) Wohnraum wird immer teurer—Stadt Münster setzt auf freien Markt. ("Housing space is getting more expensive—The city of Münster bets on the free market"). *Westfälische Nachrichten*, 16 September. <http://www.wn.de/Muensterland/2011/09/Zahl-der-Sozialwohnungen-nimmt-ab-Wohnraum-wird-immer-teurer-Stadt-Muenster-setzt-auf-freien-Markt>. Accessed 20 March 2015.

¹⁴ Dr. Winfried Michels, Institute for Settlement and Housing at the Münster University.

ment, which means that members of the administration and other actors remain convinced that “the market works” (cf. Uplawski 2009).¹⁵

Innovative Housing Policy: Osthuesheide

Osthuesheide is a neighbourhood consisting of several blocks of apartment buildings. Constructed by a private company, the housing stock was once inhabited by members of the British army. As the apartments were gradually sold to private investors or individual owner-occupiers, a “circular and cumulative process of degradation”¹⁶ started: The low standard attracted mainly tenants and owners with fewer resources and necessary investments were omitted. In consequence, several apartments became uninhabitable; poverty and a high fluctuation of residents have become symptomatic of this area.

The fragmented ownership structure and lack of financial capacities of many owners were identified as the main obstacles for further private investment. Legally, only owners’ associations (WEG¹⁷) are able to make decisions on major investments. Therefore, three associations were formed; two associations decided in favour of investments but the third and largest association lacked a majority.

The administration took on a significant role throughout this process. In the first step, the municipality tried to use social work to counteract the negative housing situation and reputation of Osthuesheide, which resulted in very limited success. Consequently, owners were identified as the main addressees of public efforts: Financial investors should be either forced to invest by majority decision or driven to sell their flats, whereas individual owner-occupiers should be convinced of joining the pro-renovation fraction and be assisted with the financial burden.

The core of the innovation Osthuesheide was the moderated process that followed, initiated by the municipality in two of the associations with a high share of owner-occupiers. The general aim was to foster decisions for renovation without the municipality’s further financial engagement.¹⁸ The municipality developed three financial options to meet the needs of heterogeneous ownership.

Despite this involvement, the direct intervention of the municipality was limited to improving the quality of the surroundings and changing the name of the neighbourhood in order to improve its reputation. The city’s initial plan to purchase units was soon considered inappropriate, as owning only a low number of flats would not

¹⁵ Klaus Uplawski (2009) Konfrontation in der Wohnungspolitik—Markt funktioniert (nicht) (“Confrontation in housing policy—the market (does not) work(s)”). Member of the Office for Urban Development, Urban and Traffic Planning. *Westfälische Nachrichten*, 28 May. <http://www.wn.de/Muenster/2009/05/Nachrichten-Muenster-Konfrontation-in-der-Wohnungspolitik-Markt-funktioniert-nicht> (accessed: 20.03.2015).

¹⁶ Title of a public protocol of the city council.

¹⁷ WEG = *Wohnungseigentümergeinschaften* are associations of all owners of an apartment building or a housing estate. In yearly assemblies, they decide upon, for example, renovation/modernization measures, contributions to a maintenance reserve fund, etc.

¹⁸ The aim of the renovation was not only to improve the living situation of existing tenants but also to attract new and well-to-do inhabitants to the area. The common catchphrase “to create a (healthy) social mix” was found with some variations in several council debates, some party programmes and a number of WILCO-related interviews.

generate sufficient influence. There were also concerns that the municipality could be in danger of being legally liable in the event that owners' associations were unable to repay their debts. In order to avoid this, a separate company was founded as a subsidiary of the communally owned Wohn + Stadtbau, "*Wohnungsgesellschaft Große Lodden (WGL)*". This company was commissioned to buy flats in order to gain a (in the end successful) majority share in the third association, where both the need for investment and the number of flats owned by corporations were highest. The close connection between the established public housing company and the new company allowed obtaining a substantial loan for renovations, since Wohn + Stadtbau offered other houses as guarantees.

Both the moderated process and the renovation in all three associations represent a governance innovation in Münster. Interventions in the ownership structure of neglected neighbourhoods were never executed before, especially not to such a high degree in terms of financial volume. But the representatives of the WGL and the Municipal Office for Housing disagreed about the discursive shift in Münster's local housing policy. According to the representative of the Municipal Office for Housing, a long-term re-communalisation of housing stock is unnecessary. Furthermore, it would suffice to take up an intermediary role, for example, neglected blocks could be bought and resold to private owners based on a contract that included obligations regarding the future development of neighbourhoods. This underlines the predominance of market mechanisms in combination with a certain level of municipal control. This reliance on market mechanisms was only broken up in the "single case Osthuesheide" due to the fact that state and reputation of the neighbourhood was threatening the overarching image of Münster as an attractive location for private investments. This worry activated a broad number of stakeholders and led to the acceptance of public intervention. Most of them consider the Osthuesheide renovation programme as highly successful and sustainable solution to the underlying problems (The following chapter is based on WILCO report 5, Boadu et al. 2013).

3.5 Windows of Opportunity for Social Innovations in Münster?

Which factors determine the success of the innovations "Optionskommune" and "Osthuesheide"? *Firstly*, drivers of the innovations had access to the local "coalition system" and argued in accordance with dominant investment and prevention frames. A network of supporters was easily established. *Secondly*, the social entrepreneurs who promoted the innovations were members "of the club", the elite network of those representatives of the local parties, the administration and the business community in Münster. Finally, in both cases, in-house lobbying within the local administration proved to be the most efficient path to success. In both cases,

it was the administration taking action, establishing a network of support and also safeguarding the necessary resources.

Although both innovations proved to be sustainable, their emergence and development was not the result of a democratic process, but heavily backed by a network of the Münster elite instead. Furthermore, both innovations were the results of top-down approaches initiated and put forward by the administration. Hence, one must admit that cooperative governance in Münster is pretty much a “closed shop” affair: homogenous groups of people sharing similar values and ideas what the city should look like and which direction it should develop. These members of the “club” are involved in different areas of social, economic and political life in Münster, a fact that further strengthens the coalition system and turns it into a quite sustainable and powerful governance arrangement. The “coalition” dominates the local discourse to such an extent that anybody who wants to accomplish something must accommodate the distinctive rationales of the investment or prevention frame. Hence, Münster provides a nice case study and textbook example for analysing the discursive turn in policy analysis. There is, indeed, the possibility to become a member of the “club”; however, he or she has to act and more importantly talk and argue in accordance with the discursive hegemony. Therefore, Münster is inclusive because getting people around the table and trying to get as many constituencies involved constitute a traditional trait of the city’s governance arrangement, but at the same time, there are a very few “fat cats” in Münster who are continuously in touch and who indeed govern the city.

Also, Münster can be characterized as a city in which the local welfare system is based on a coherent way of addressing social problems, referring to network-based solutions that include various actors of the society. Therefore, Münster does use various opportunities in order to become and stay a successful city—as long as one speaks the language of the dominant coalition.

Considering such a coalition system on the one hand and having a very specific (welfare) tradition in Münster on the other hand, the question arises how new ideas and social innovations can evolve when everything seems to be decided within a somewhat established “closed shop”?

The answer is that, in general, Münster is a city in which social innovations have a good chance of flourishing. However, such innovations only pick up speed in specific contexts. The general welfare frame has profound implications for social innovations since they are context-specific and embedded in a wider social, economic and political context (Moulaert et al. 2005). The context opens the windows of opportunity for social innovators and social entrepreneurs. It establishes the conditions these actors encounter and can thereby promote or inhibit new ideas.

Yet, “context” also means local governance arrangements. Four different dimensions are identified that characterize these kinds of arrangements and that stand for a specific type of urban governance. Münster represents an example of the dimension of “governance of cooperation”, characterized by a general orientation towards innovation in politics and economics. Particularly, the search for synergies between economics and social policies to foster the urban character of the city functions as

a guiding principle. From the organizational point of view, cooperative solutions between all local actors (administration, economy and civil society) are privileged in this search process. All actors involved broadly accept cooperation as the leading principle for city matters, resulting in the approach that “the more allies unite for a specific city matter, the greater the chance to push something through”.¹⁹ This governance arrangement supports the implementation of innovations and allows “another way of cooperative work could be established”.²⁰

Apart from the overarching logic of the discursive frame and governance arrangements, several other conditions must be fulfilled before social innovations can be implemented or even stimulated. The *first* condition concerns funding. Original idea and conditions must attract the interest of sponsors in the project. Sponsors have to be market-compliant, which means that they must comply with the lines of argument found in either the investment or the competitiveness discourse. They have to understand that this represents the dominant basis for decision-making. The *second* condition concerns legitimation, which means that basic legitimation for social innovation is given and accepted by the people involved. Referring to our results from the policy fields we analysed in Münster, an innovation is accepted as legitimate if it is presented within the investment frame. The *third* condition involves the aspect of appeasement: Any social innovation that challenges the dominant frame will only be supported if the innovators give up some of their resistance against the frame in exchange for financial or advocacy sponsorship. The support granted then serves the appeasement of possible opposition and is considered a win-win situation for all parties involved. Finally, the *fourth* condition concerns a pragmatic approach towards solving problems at the local level. Social innovations in Münster need to demonstrate a hands-on approach towards perceived problems. This relates to tangible target groups, deprived districts and so on, while more visionary approaches hardly have any chance of success.

The closed-shop mentality, the local welfare discourse with its focus on city growth, local governance arrangements, several conditions that have to be fulfilled to introduce social innovations as well as specific characteristics of local labour market and housing policies—all these dimensions can be found in Münster and must be considered in order to decide whether the initiation of social innovations is fostered or obstructed within the city. Hence, these dimensions create the context that opens the “windows of opportunities” for concrete social innovators and social entrepreneurs.

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¹⁹ Focus group interview II, original quotation: *Je mehr Bündnispartner sich zu einer Thematik zusammenschließen, desto eher ist die Chance, Dinge auch durchzusetzen.*

²⁰ Focus group interview III, original quotation: *...aber es ist eine andere Art der Zusammenarbeit [eingezogen]*

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Chapter 4

Inertia, Clearings, and Innovations in Malmö

Ola Segnestam Larsson, Marie Nordfeldt and Anna Carrigan

As social innovations move into the political limelight of many welfare societies, scholars are debating the underpinnings of such an appreciated phenomenon (e.g. Evers et al. 2014). Some argue that social innovations are primarily established as the result of the innovative nature of individual entrepreneurs (Hansson et al. 2014; Fagerberg 2006). The chapters of this book, in contrast, focus less on these types of micro-level explanations and more on how social innovations are connected to local welfare governance and politics (Cattacin and Zimmer 2015). With the support of a policy coalition framework (Sabatier 1998, 1999), local development and the formation of social innovations are studied in relation to local power structures and discourses. Hence, linkages are identified between particular social innovations and the local contexts that have served as fertile grounds, and research findings presented in this book highlight the centrality of these local contexts for how these innovations have developed as projects and processes (compare with Evers et al. 2014). Thus, the main approach in this book is to analyse the degree to which social innovations are embedded in their local welfare environment.

This chapter contributes to the overall focus of this anthology in two ways. Firstly, we will present a case study of the city of Malmö that will serve as an illustration of how urban governance arrangements provide structures for social innovations and where Malmö is categorized as an example of the governance of social challenges (Cattacin and Zimmer 2015). By governance of social challenges, Cattacin and Zimmer imply an urban governance arrangement in which state-oriented initiatives in coordination with private non-profits develop social policies and could serve as a fertile environment for social innovations. The governance of

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social challenges also implies that economic dynamics are handled parallel to social policies, the local state plays a primordial role in the production and distribution of services, and shared values are solidarity and the social responsibility of the state.

Secondly, this chapter also contributes to the debate on social innovations by arguing that one also needs to pay attention to the relationship between inertia, clearings in local contexts, and innovations in trying to understand the underpinnings of social innovations in local welfare regimes. While the policy coalition framework highlights how social innovations are connected to local development, power structures, and discourses (Sabatier 1998, 1999), we combine the framework with the concepts of inertia and clearings in order to explain the particular empirical and analytical results of the city of Malmö. Research on social and organizational change reveals somewhat paradoxically that inability and unwillingness to change may result in clearings being identified or opened in the social landscape in which innovations may develop (Ahrne and Papakostas 2001, 2002). In other words, rather than arguing that social innovations come to the fore as a result of the quality of certain individuals or being locally and socially promoted by various policy coalitions, we put forth that innovations may also emerge in clearings as a consequence of inertia among the various policy actors. The argument will be supported by a theory on how the establishment of new organizations contributes to social change—here adopted to the phenomenon of social innovations—and illustrated with case studies of social innovations in the local welfare regime of the city of Malmö in Sweden (Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2013; Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013).

Specifically, in addition to describing the local welfare regime and a set of social innovations in the city of Malmö, the chapter analyses the different types of clearings that proved fertile for developing the highlighted three social innovations. The main conclusion is that it could be argued that ideological inertia enabled a shadowed, a guarded, and an abandoned clearing to provide time and space for a neighbourhood programme, an incubator, and an employment and empowerment project to develop as social innovations.

4.1 Inertia, Clearings, and Innovations

Before presenting the local welfare regime and a set of social innovations in the city of Malmö, the relationship between inertia and innovation is discussed. Inertia and innovation are often regarded as opposites in the literature. One classical example of such a position is how Schumpeter talked about creative destruction (Schumpeter 1987). Periods of change are short and dramatic and are preceded and followed by longer periods of stability, and new innovations replace old structures by making the old structures disappear (cf. Bell 1974; Castells 1996; Giddens 1990). Ahrne and Papakostas, in their book *Organisations, Society and Globalisation* (2002; see also Ahrne and Papakostas 2001)¹, argue instead that there is a strong interdependence

¹ Translation by the authors.

between inertia and innovation, and that innovations do not have to be destructive in order to be established.

The assumption that inertia and innovations are interdependent does not imply total stability, however, as societies, sectors, and organizations change slowly, oftentimes along paths already laid out (Stinchcombe 1965). In understanding inertia as a driver to innovation, it is therefore useful to distinguish between the inability and the unwillingness to change or adopt quickly (Ahrne and Papakostas 2001, 2002). Inability may be understood in terms of constraints related to and competition over scarce resources, established decision processes, and in the inability to perceive the possibility or need for change. One source of inability to change could be related to resources. The collective resources of, for example, an organization enable it to accomplish its activities. At the same time, however, they set limits for what an organization can do and how things can be done. Unwillingness could be more related to vested interests, ideological or cultural factors, and a fear of change. Unwillingness to change could, for example, be argued to be typical of many civil society organizations whose members will not accept too obvious deviations from the original ideology.

Rather, inertia makes innovation possible as a consequence of spaces—or what we prefer to refer to as clearings—being identified or opened in the social landscape, and therefore enabling resources for new innovations and organizations to emerge. According to dictionaries, the word *clearing* has several meanings, one of which is defined as a tract of land within a forest or other overgrown area from which trees and other obstructions have been removed (Collins dictionary 2012; p. 79). In this chapter, the concept of clearings is used in a similar fashion, but to denote spaces between existing organizations and projects in a social landscape. The reasoning behind the concept of clearings is that the social landscape is not completely covered with organizations or projects. The space between the boundaries of different organizations may be wider or smaller, but there will always be some space. Such spaces, however, may become the site of other organizations, projects, or—as in the case of this chapter—innovations. Analytical opposites of clearings in a social landscape could be processes related to organizations, projects, or innovations being crowded out (Markovits 1988) or organizationally “outflanked” (Mann 1986; p. 7).

It is the existence of these clearings that makes it unnecessary for new innovations to attack and destroy old structures in order to establish themselves, as innovations in these clearings can develop to differing degrees independent of the old structures. In order to illuminate relations between inertia and innovation, a framework of different types of clearings could be distinguished (Ahrne and Papakostas 2002; p. 113). The framework is used in this chapter to analyse the relationships between inertia, types of clearings, and innovations.

Free clearings	Protected clearings
New	Guarded
Old	Regulated
Constructed	Shadowed
Abandoned	

First of all, a difference needs to be made between free and protected clearings. When it comes to clearings that are not protected, that is, free clearings, there are varieties, such as old clearings that have existed for a long time without being occupied by organizations. We can think of old clearings in terms of unemployment or in terms of people having spare time for potentially organized activities such as politics or sports. There are also new clearings that may evolve. The development of technologies could serve as an example where new technical possibilities have opened up clearings in the social landscape. Abandoned clearings emerge when old established organizations move or rationalize their activities, where old castles turned into conference centres could serve as examples. The final variety of a free clearing is constructed clearings. We can think of cities providing infrastructure such as roads or electricity in order to prepare the ground for new enterprises or construction.

In the case of protected clearings, guardians and regulations could keep the existence of a clearing open, but protected. It may be because of ideological, legal frameworks, or moral commitments against such things as organized prostitution or child labour, or political commitments against certain kinds of business activities such as privately run labour exchange. There are also shadowed clearings, when, for example, new innovations or structures grow in the shadow of old organizations by using their resources or by being physically protected. Examples are student organizations that grow in the shadow of universities or even new enterprises.

According to scholars Ahrne and Papakostas (2001, 2002), the different types of clearings interact in various ways with inertia in the form of inability or unwillingness to change. The existence of free and unoccupied clearings could, for example, be considered as a case of inability to even see the possibility of entering such as clearing. Moreover, in protected clearings, established organizations may often be aware of such possibilities but are unwilling to engage in them or preventing others from innovating.

In this chapter, we will analyse the case of social innovations and the local welfare regime in the city of Malmö in relation to inertia, clearings, and innovations. However, it should be mentioned that rather than to argue that the existence of clearings in a social landscape has a causal power in itself, we believe that analysing innovations in relation to existing structures and organizations with the support of the concept is, firstly, a way to illuminate mechanisms of inertia in general and, secondly, a way to understand other and additional mechanisms that somewhat paradoxically proved fertile for developing social innovations in various forms of structures. As such, clearings and inertia enable us to interpret the relationships among social innovations and local welfare regimes differently.

4.2 A City of Many Welfare Projects

In order to situate and understand the welfare regime in Malmö and the role of social innovations in addressing lingering and emerging social problems, the national welfare structure and tradition in Sweden first needs to be briefly introduced, as

there are strong links between the national and the local level with a well-defined division of labour in relation to social welfare.

Sweden has become a textbook example of a welfare state based on a large public sector, high taxes, and universal welfare services (Vamstad 2007). As an illustration, Sweden has spent a larger percentage of national income on welfare services than any other country in the world (Ginsburg 2001). One reason for this could be the shared consensus on the importance of the welfare state in Sweden by both Social Democrats and bourgeois governments, regardless of their ideological differences. Described as “a peculiar fusion of liberalism and socialism” (Esping-Andersen 1990; p. 28), salient dimensions—that taken together could be said to define the welfare state of Sweden—include, for example, the principles of universalism and de-commodification of welfare services. Ensuring same rights for blue-collar and white-collar employees, one universal insurance system works for all in accordance with earnings. In terms of family policy, the welfare state takes preventive measures to render the costs of family life into a social matter and encourages independence from family (Vamstad 2007). Free of charge education from elementary school to university is another important part of the Swedish welfare system.

Similarly to the national level, the city of Malmö has a long history of being ruled by the Social democratic party, and since 1994, the Social democrats have been in majority or have been able to retain their influence by entering into coalitions with the Left and the Green party (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). The dominant values impregnating the welfare regime could therefore be argued to be traditionally social democratic. For sure, statements found in the political party program for the Social democrats present the local welfare system as an instrument for fighting inequalities and an instrument that is closely connected to values such as social justice, class, equality, and sustainability (Social democratic party program 2012). Moreover, class differences and other inequalities are believed to constrain individuals and the overall society as well as causing society to “drift apart” (2012; p. 8). The local welfare system is also linked discursively to concepts such as democracy and empowerment (Green party program 2010; the Left party program 2012). There is also consensus among the various actors on the importance of local welfare for the citizens and that citizens should have the ability to influence the organization of local welfare.

Clear influences deriving from the national level pertain not only to the political ideologies but also to the actual organization of the welfare regime at the local level (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). When the development of the Swedish welfare state accelerated after the Second World War, the parliament and the government at the time decided to continue that tradition by placing a great deal of the responsibility for public services with the local authorities (Vamstad 2007). As a consequence, the local authority in Malmö is responsible for a broad range of facilities and services, entitled to levy income taxes on individuals, charge the citizens for various services, and legally obliged to provide certain basic services, such as education, care for the elderly, primary health care, social welfare benefits, local leisure activities, and the city district libraries (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Affecting the local welfare system in Malmö is also nationally organized but locally located employment offices, regionally organized hospitals and healthcare

centres, as well as the regionally organized public transportation system (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). In addition, the local welfare system includes local companies and other service and industrial companies requiring more business-like organizations. The city of Malmö also has a long history of civil society engagement.

4.3 Towards a Welfare Society

However, having introduced the particularities and stability over time in the Swedish welfare state and the welfare regime in Malmö, recent times have witnessed a number of changes with far-reaching consequences. Economic reforms, privatization, and deregulation over the past 30 years have altered the structural foundation of the welfare state in Sweden (Hvinden and Johansson 2007; Vamstad 2007; Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2012). With strained budgets and unsolved social problems, central and local governments have been struggling to find urban governance arrangements and sustainable solutions to these challenges.

Some of these solutions have included the introduction of management models and principles into the public sector, sometimes dubbed as new public management, in order to make the welfare production more effective and results oriented (Green-Pedersen 2002; Vamstad 2007; Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2012). Other solutions have pointed to the need to focus on and include the citizen in the production of welfare services by, for example, providing the citizen with more options and the ability to influence the governance and services offered (Hvinden and Johansson 2007; Pestoff et al. 2011). National and local governments have also been looking to the for-profit and the non-profit sectors to participate in the production of welfare services, challenging the previous preferences and ideological considerations for the public sector as the sole service provider (Rothstein 1994).

One outcome of these changes of a more discursive and political character is that the term welfare state is more and more considered as an antiquated leftover from the early phases of the Swedish welfare regime (Vamstad 2007). Many, politicians as well as academics, would like to replace the term with a new concept, focusing more on the welfare society. This phrase would according to its proponents imply a broader view of welfare that would include both public and non-public providers, but also formal and informal welfare activities (Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2013). It is within the context of the changing welfare society that one should interpret the awakening political interest in social innovations and social investments, at both the national and local levels, as a potential tool for addressing social problems and achieving social cohesion.

In addition to move from a welfare state to a welfare society, the local welfare regime in Malmö has also been affected by a number of changes taking place within the local economy (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). On a more general level, following a period of social and economic stagnation during the 1970s and the 1980s, with more than 35,000 people leaving Malmö, the city has made attempts at transforming itself from an industrial city to a knowledge city (Salonen 2012).

Today Malmö could be considered a demographically dynamic city. Young people move to Malmö to study or to work, and there is both regional and transnational migration to the city. Important factors in the transformation of Malmö are a set of large-scale initiatives, including the establishment of a university college in the middle of the city and the economically important Öresund bridge to Denmark, establishing an economic and social region that transcends national borders (Salonen 2012; Stigendahl and Östergren 2013; Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013).

4.4 Lingering Social Problems

Despite ambitions to simultaneously reinvent the welfare regime and the local economy, lingering social problems remain, however, and new social tensions have arisen in the wake of the social and economic transformations.

Malmö has for several decades struggled with severe social problems, such as high unemployment, high costs of social benefits, and growing segregation (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2012). The level of employment is lower in Malmö than on average in Sweden, and there are significant differences between people born in Sweden and outside of Sweden, leading to a higher degree of social exclusion and growing differences in living conditions among social groups (Stigendahl and Östergren 2013). To these recurrent social problems, a list of growing problems could be added. Income inequalities have indeed increased in Sweden overall, but since the year 2000 income inequalities have grown more in Malmö than average in Sweden. The dynamic, demographic character of the city has also resulted in a higher degree of illegal immigrants and inhabitants outside of the workforce and the welfare system than in other Swedish cities (Salonen 2012).

In interviews with politicians and civil servants in the city council, a set of social problems were highlighted, including unemployment and segregation (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). According to interviewed representatives, poverty is affecting people's health, life expectancy, and could be considered a matter of life and death (e.g. interviews 5 and 6). Child poverty is also part of the discourse on local welfare and the proposed main problems. Another major problem in the city of Malmö is believed to be unemployment, in general, and youth unemployment, in particular (e.g. interviews 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, and 16).

We have had an enormous arrival of people to Malmö from other parts of Sweden and we have not been able to catch up. That is simply the case. We have not been able to catch up with this influx of people and we have not been able to identify job opportunities to the degree that would have been needed (Interview 13).

A third major problem area, as constructed by the policy discourse on local welfare, is segregation. Several of the respondents talked about the so-called million program areas in relation to the perceived problem of segregation (e.g. interviews 1, 2, 6, 9, 12, and 13). One of the respondents talked about a clustering of problems due to segregation:

We have many geographical areas in which the population differs greatly from the average population in the city when it comes to participation on the labour market, results in school and so on. It is the concentration of problems in these areas that is the real challenge to the local welfare system (...) It is the housing situation that creates this kind of segregation. And as problems create more problems, these areas are, in a way, their own problem creator (Interview 12).

The interviewees also argued that a growing number of people have become excluded from the national social security system, for example, due to recent changes in regulations at the national level, among other things.

4.5 The Necessity to Act

An integrated part of the discourse on main problems in local welfare is the perceived necessity to act in relation to the formulated problems (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Traditional solutions proposed by politicians, public sector representatives, and civil society actors include to promote education and employment to battle poverty (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2012). In accordance with the traditional welfare state ideology, employment is also considered to be important for social reasons and integration, constructing employment as the welfare solution to many, if not all, social problems.

Considering the gravity of the arising and enduring social problems, there is also an increasing awareness in Malmö of the need to find new solutions, outside of the paths already laid out (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Sweden in general and the city of Malmö are struggling with various issues related to welfare and all actors agree on the need to reform existing structures and to be open to new ideas, values, and instruments (e.g. Green party program, Social democratic party program, interviews 4, 6, and 11). As put in one of the interviews related to employment: “We have to think differently to get the citizens into the work force, we cannot keep on with the old” (Interview 6). One example of a proposed solution in Malmö is that several actors agree on the need to collaborate among different sectors in society (Interviews 4, 6, 11, and 14). Accordingly, the Green party writes in its party program:

It is essential that the municipality has adequate resources in social services so that each person gets the help they need. At the same time, the non-profit sector carries out fantastic efforts and cooperation between the municipality and civil society is essential for creating a social safety net that works for everyone (Green party program 2010).

Other actors, such as the Swedish Democrats, concur:

With a clever design and marketing, we believe that many kind-hearted people living in Malmö are willing to make an effort in order to raise the quality of life for the old in our municipality and to support the many times hard working personnel in home care (Swedish democratic party program 2010).

Another answer to the increased level of collaboration and need for new solutions is spelled civil society. According to civil society representatives, there is a general

lack of knowledge regarding the role of civil society and what it has to offer (Interviews 3, 8, and 14). At the same time, there is agreement that new opportunities for civil society organizations in the development of local welfare should be created. The Left party argues that “associations and other organizations must be regarded as important review instances on political decisions” (Left party program 2012; p. 3).

One of the most talked-about solutions, however, is social innovation (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Innovations have been, and still are, mainly perceived to concern the launching of new products, inventions, and technical development in the minds of most politicians and practitioners in Sweden. Welfare development has, by tradition, not been considered as innovative (Rønning et al. 2013). Innovation within the field of social welfare is nevertheless a recently awoken interest in some parts of the Swedish context (Hansson et al. 2014). The phenomenon of social innovation has consequently been made a key discursive node in the policy arena regarding local welfare in Malmö (e.g. Stigendal 2012). Representatives also argue that social innovation should be considered a cross-political concept in terms of its social and economic values, as it is hoped to attract people and organizations from various ideological backgrounds and positions (Interviews 2, 5, 12, and 16).

4.6 Three Social Innovations in Malmö

A limited set of social innovations could be identified in the local welfare landscape of Malmö during the time of the research project (Evers et al. 2014; Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2013). Three examples of innovative activities will be described below. These innovations are of different size and composition and include a broad neighbourhood program, an incubator that at the same time is considered as a social innovation and a promoter of other social innovations, and an employment and empowerment project.

Starting with the broad neighbourhood program, “Områdesprogrammet” is a program aiming at revitalizing certain districts in Malmö out of socioeconomic stagnation. The program focuses primarily on creating more jobs and enhancing the living conditions first and foremost for the people living in selected districts. The program is organized into five “resource groups”, focusing on city development, culture and recreation, the elderly, youth, and the labour market, and economic growth. The main innovative feature of the Områdesprogrammet, according to the involved actors, is that new solutions are sought through collaboration. In this context, collaboration seems to imply engaging and cooperating with the people living in the selected areas—as partners and co-producers, challenging the municipal administration to work cross-administrational, and encouraging cross-sectoral cooperation among civil society organizations, companies, universities, and landlords, among others. Accordingly, involved participants highlight the importance of collaboration, working with existing means within existing infrastructures, and finding new solutions.

Moving on to the incubator example, Coompanion Incubator serves as a greenhouse for young and unemployed people and is financed by the European Social Fund. The target group is claimed to be challenged, inspired, and educated, and motivated by the Coompanion Incubator to set up their own business, be it private or organized as a cooperative. Only young and unemployed people registered with and directed by the national employment office are eligible for support, however, and it is the officer at the national employment office who decides whether or not a young unemployed person should be offered the support. The incubator could also offer the service of acting as an employer and managing mundane administrative tasks, enabling the individual to focus on the business idea. The combination of two features could be argued to function as the innovation in this example: the greenhouse service and the focus on a particular target group, young and unemployed people.

Finally, the employment and empowerment project, Yalla Trappan, is described as a labour-integrated social enterprise. The idea behind the project derives from an initiative financed by the European Social Fund that focused on women's entrepreneurship, integration, empowerment, education, and equality, and was later made permanent in the shape of Yalla Trappan. Today, the overall aim of the project is to provide work for women who otherwise would have had severe difficulties entering the labour market. In terms of activities, the project provides the local community with a conference centre, a coffee shop, a restaurant, a design and craftsmanship studio, and catering and cleaning services. The target group is offered employment and employment training in the various activities organized by the project in addition to Swedish tuition and education in health care. The project is organized as a cooperative enterprise. In terms of innovative features, the main contribution to the field of social innovations could most likely be linked to the focus on a particular, previously ignored, target group in combination with the project being organized as a cooperative enterprise.

The three highlighted social innovations in Malmö address social problems of political interest: stagnation, unemployment, and segregation. Common features across the three social innovations include training, entrepreneurship, empowering individuals, and collaboration among various actors and organizations. Portrayed in this way, the three social innovations could be argued to represent new ideas and new ways of addressing social problems in the local context of Malmö (Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2013). Using the framework developed by Evers et al. (2014), these innovations could also be seen as focusing on the strengthening of individuals by, for example, investing in capabilities rather than targeting deficits, and by bridging the gaps between professional services and people's life worlds. At the same time, when approached from the perspective proposed in this chapter, it could be argued that these innovations have developed in clearings, rather than being the outcome of certain enterprising individuals or being embedded within and supported by the legal and administrative framework of the overall welfare regime of Malmö.

4.7 Fertile Clearings for Social Innovations

We put forth that the three social innovations emerged in clearings as a consequence of this unwillingness to change in the local welfare regime. Using the framework presented earlier in this chapter (Arhne and Papakostas 2001, 2002), we analyse and identify in this section the different types of clearings that proved fertile for developing the neighbourhood program, the incubator, and the employment and empowerment project.

Starting with the neighbourhood program, Områdesprogrammet, it was said that the main innovative feature was that new solutions were sought through cross-sectoral collaborations. This feature could serve as an indicator of a free and perhaps a new clearing, in which collaboration could have functioned as the technology that enabled the clearing to evolve. However, the fact that involved actors highlighted the importance of cross-administrational collaboration, in addition to the processes taking place within existing structures and with existing resources, instead indicates a protected clearing. Based on these features, we argue that the clearing making the neighbourhood program possible was a shadowed clearing, that is a case of a social innovation growing in the shadow of old and established structures, in an area that will allow the social innovation to grow by using resources from the existing structures.

Moving on the Coompanion Incubator, the existence of funding from the European Social Fund would indicate a free type of clearing in the local welfare landscape, open for this and other social innovations to access and use as a resource for development. However, similar to the complexity of the neighbourhood program, a particular dimension of the Coompanion Incubator suggests that this instead was a protected clearing. The fact that only young and unemployed people registered with and directed by the national employment office were eligible for support, in combination with the officer at the national employment office deciding whether or not a young unemployed person should be offered the support, insinuates that the clearing should be regarded as a guarded clearing. The interpretation is therefore that the national employment office has recognized this clearing, but for various reasons has an interest in keeping it relatively closed by preventing anyone to enter without the consent of the office. Hypothetical reasons for guarding the clearing could be due to ideological or moral commitments or that the national employment office may feel threatened by the Incubator and therefore is trying to protect itself.

Finally, with regard to the employment and the empowerment project, Yalla Trappan, we argue that this is a case of a free clearing due to the existence of funding from the European Social Fund and the reliance on serving the local community. Having interpreted it as a free clearing, the question remains regarding the type of clearing. As the target group is described as previously ignored, we would argue that Yalla Trappan has emerged in a clearing abandoned by the local authorities. When organizations move or rationalize, all kinds of resources may be left behind, including people, and such resources may become the resources of new social innovations and fit better into their form of organizing. In other words, as the local authority in

the traditions of the welfare state has a responsibility to serve this group, but has stopped these activities for various reasons, the clearing could best be described as abandoned rather than new, old, or constructed.

The three highlighted social innovations could be described to have emerged in different types of clearings: shadowed, protected, and abandoned. Having analysed and identified the relationship between clearing and social innovations has allowed a discussion on mechanisms of inertia. It has also enabled a different interpretation of what types of clearings that proved fertile for developing these social innovations in the local welfare regime in Malmö. However, were all clearings the result of the same type of inertia, or were there other forms of inertia in play?

4.8 Ideological Inertia in Malmö

As outlined in this chapter, deregulation within the field of local welfare, a political interest in alternative providers, and a high degree of self-governance at the local level would seem to provide plenty of opportunities for social innovations (Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2013; Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). The description of the local policy context in Malmö would also indicate a favourable local context for social innovations to flourish. Surely, there is a shared view on the need for new solutions in local welfare, various actors agree on which social problems are most pressing, and there seems to be a political consensus with regard to the centrality of social innovation as a concept and practice. At the same time, given the relative lack of the number of social innovations as well as the negligible social impacts to date, it must be acknowledged that there exist elements in the political and social welfare landscape of Malmö preventing these and other innovations to grow. By adopting the concept of inertia and distinguishing between the inability and the unwillingness to change (Ahrne and Papakostas 2001, 2002), this section argues that these elements in the local welfare regime of Malmö could be interpreted as an unwillingness to change in the form of mainly political and ideological factors.

Even though there is agreement on which social problems are most pressing, one significant element of inertia is disagreements among the different actors and coalitions in Malmö regarding the methods and instruments to be used to address these social problems. As social innovation could be considered a method for addressing social problems, the political and ideological disagreements affect the possibilities for social innovations to take place.

Two points of disagreements related of relevance for social innovations are described here (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Starting with the role of the market and social innovations in local welfare, most political parties in Malmö seem to agree on the importance of creating a supportive institutional environment for private actors, entrepreneurs, and innovations in order to promote, for example, more employment opportunities (Social democratic party program 2012; Green party program 2010; Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2010). However, with regard to local welfare in particular, the coalitions disagree

on the role of private actors. The Left party does not recognize private actors at all, including civil society organizations, in local welfare.

These so-called voluntary choices are many times a way to put the responsibility for the structural problems on the individual; if you have chosen incorrectly, you are to blame. Choices that presume that there are winners also presume that there are losers in our society. It often has the consequence that those who are well off are even better off and those who are struggling are worse off—we will get a divided city. A policy of privatization is marketed as choice. Welfare should be conducted without losers, be free from speculation and be distributed according to each and everyone's needs (Left party program 2012; p. 10).

The political parties on the right, on the other hand, would like to encourage more private actors. Here follows an example from the Liberal party program:

More competition. It is the municipality's responsibility to finance its duties. It is also the municipality that should ensure that you, the citizens, will get value for your money. However, it is not a mandatory task for the municipality to produce the welfare services. Private contractors can often do this better and less expensively. The Liberal Party in Malmö wants therefore to procure all municipal operations that do not constitute core municipal activities. (Liberal party program 2010; p. 8)

A related matter to the role of the market in local welfare concerns the role of financial profit as well as for-profit organizations. Both the Social democrats and the Left party have taken a hard stance against financial profit in local welfare in contrast to the opposing right wing political parties, making the funding of social innovations restricted.

Regarding the role of local welfare in the redistribution of resources, it would seem as if the Social democrats and the Left party construct the welfare system as primarily an equalizing tool (Social democratic party program 2012; Left party program 2012), whereas the right-wing parties focus more on using the local welfare system to motivate unemployed to enter the labour market (Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2010). An example of the conflict over the redistribution of resources and the role of local welfare concerns the case of child care fees. When the Social democrats and the Left party decided to cut the fee for child care for the poorest households in Malmö, the opposition argued that lowered fees should not be distributed in such a fashion that they might conflict with motivation to enter the labour market. This example illustrates well the conflict over the role of local welfare in redistribution, as the opposition focused on the consequences for the level of employment in the area, whereas the majority focused child care as a tool for creating more equal living conditions. Moreover, the disagreement regarding redistribution of resources affects the possibilities for social innovations in general to develop, as no or very limited resources from the local welfare regime system were made available for the described three social innovations.

We interpret the disagreements on the role of the market and the redistribution of resources in the local welfare regime as an unwillingness to change rather than an inability to change. As described in section 4.1 of this chapter, inability may be understood in terms of constraints related to and competition over scarce resources, established decision processes, and in the inability to perceive the possibility or

need for change (Ahrne and Papakostas 2001, 2002). Even though the disagreements could be regarded as a competition over scarce resources, we believe that the disagreements also could be interpreted as an unwillingness to change related to primarily ideological factors. Acknowledging and understanding these types of political and ideological disagreements concerning the role of local welfare would enable us to explain the relative lack of a significant number of social innovations and the negligible social impacts to date in Malmö.

Hence, from an analytical point of view, it could be argued that social innovation as an idea, value, and instrument should be regarded as challenging established traditional welfare notions based on social democratic ideals in the city of Malmö, as inherent values are more related to a liberal political perspective on citizens, organizations and society (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). Examples of these values include the focus on the individual as a focal point and the positive views on cross-sectoral collaborations and partnerships. Even though actors across the political spectrum seem to agree on the notion of social innovation and its role in reshaping current local welfare regimes, ideological inertia in the form of an unwillingness to change significant rules and regulations surrounding the welfare regime prevented more social innovations to emerge.

4.9 Shifting Scenery

This chapter has described the local welfare regime and a limited set of social innovations in Malmö in the context of an urban governance arrangement that could be categorized as the governance of social challenges (Cattacin and Zimmer 2015). In addition to highlighting common features and ongoing social and economic transformations, the chapter has analysed and identified the clearings (shadowed, guarded, and abandoned clearings) that proved fertile for developing the highlighted three social innovations. The overall ambition, however, has been to contribute to the debate on the origins of social innovations. Rather than arguing that social innovations come to the fore as a result of the quality of certain individuals or being locally and socially embedded, we have put forth that innovations may also emerge in clearings as a consequence of inertia, in the case of Malmö in the shape and form of an unwillingness to change due to political and ideological factors. This ideological inertia resulted somewhat paradoxically in clearings being identified and opened in the social landscape in which the three innovations could develop.

By having analysed how different types of inertia generated different clearings in Malmö, we have also provided a tentative and an alternative answer as to why social innovations emerged rather than established structures having addressed the identified social problems. In this way, we can see how the ideological inertia of the local welfare regime could be considered a precondition for and not an obstacle to the innovations. Hence, social innovations do not have to destroy the old ways of producing social cohesion in order to access resources, and the result may very well be an increased density of projects, organizations, and structures with new combinations

of old and new forms and changing patterns of interconnections (Ahrne and Papakostas 2001, 2002). In other words, Malmö may yet witness a shifting scenery where many old forms and ingredients may be recognized, but in new constellations.

Approaching social innovations from the perspective of inertia and clearings has enabled us to interpret the relationships among the identified social innovations and the local welfare regimes in Malmö differently. It has also initiated a discussion on how ideological inertia related to a shadowed, a guarded, and an abandoned clearing proved to be fertile for developing the three identified social innovations in the city. As such, it would seem as if one of the main recommendations stemming from this chapter would be that politicians and practitioners, wishing to promote social innovations as an instrument for social cohesion, also would have to fuel more ideological inertia in existing structures, as inertia could be considered one of many significant preconditions for change.

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Chapter 5

Birmingham, Priority to Economics, Social Innovation at the Margins

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton

5.1 Introduction

Birmingham is located in the West Midlands region of England and after the industrial revolution became the ‘workshop of the world’, an economically important manufacturing centre (Aldred 2009). Today, Birmingham is the regional centre for business, retail and leisure. It is the largest city in the United Kingdom (UK) outside London and has a growing population of just over 1 million inhabitants. It has the youngest population of any major European city, over half the population is aged less than 35 years, and it is significantly diverse in terms of ethnic composition. Over half of Birmingham is within the most deprived 20% of England and nearly 40% is in the most deprived 10% (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). Local government for the city is the metropolitan authority of Birmingham City Council, the largest local authority in the UK made up of 40 wards (administrative/electoral districts).

Birmingham differed from many other large English local authorities following the second world war as these tended to be dominated by the Labour Party (Di Gaetano and Lawless 1999). In Birmingham, control of the city council moved back and forth between Labour and Conservative administrations until 1984 when a period of 20 years of Labour Party control began. The 2004 local elections resulted in no political party with an overall majority and the Conservative Party and

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the Liberal Democrats entered into a governing coalition. The Conservative leader of the council used the term ‘Progressive Partnership’ to describe the coalition, but over time Conservatives from within and outside Birmingham publicly accused the Conservative group of teaming up with the Liberal Democrats to pursue ‘quasi-socialist’ policies (Birmingham Post 2011). Following the 2012 local elections, in a widely predicted result, the Labour Party won control of the city council once again.

Regardless of which party was in power, the city council fostered a cooperative relationship with the local business community. This strengthened in the 1980s with joint efforts to protect Birmingham from the negative economic effects of swift industrial decline. Also, at this time the Conservative central government did not support a central role for local authorities in local economic development, and partnership with local business was a way to circumvent this. For the past few decades Birmingham has pursued a pro-growth agenda and this has been described from different perspectives by several authors, particularly in the period between 1984 and 2004 when the Labour Party controlled the Council. For example, the validity of the distributional consequences of growth-orientated economic development policies, in particular property-led approaches, have been questioned (Loftman and Nevin 1996), and the relationship between urban governance and industrial decline has been explored (Di Gaetano and Lawless 1999).

This chapter focuses primarily on the period from 2004 and begins with an examination of the values and orientations influencing social policies, followed by an analysis of what this means for social innovation, with a focus on labour market and housing and urban regeneration policy. In the final section, findings are brought together to illustrate how Birmingham as an example of a ‘governance of growth’ regime (see chapter on urban governance and social innovations) leads to social innovation ‘at the margins’.¹

5.2 Context and Governance of Social Policies

To understand the interplay between welfare policies and social innovation it is necessary to understand the local context in which these occur. Several important factors are highlighted here which have had an impact on the local situation, including the endurance of the pro-growth agenda, the importance of partnerships, the influence of central government, the role of devolved decision-making and the recent financial crisis.

¹ The source material for this chapter included nine interviews with civil servants, policymakers, representatives of the third sector and independent observers (plus a further eight connected to innovative projects within the city). Documentary analysis was conducted of: relevant local newspaper articles (2002–2012, 1493 sources), national newspaper articles relevant to the local situation (2002–2012, 354 sources) and minutes of council meetings and other documents/reports (2005–2012, 147 sources).

The Enduring Pro-Growth Agenda

In the early 1980s Birmingham experienced industrial decline alongside deep recession and this had a lasting influence on the city's political thinking (Di Gaetano and Lawless 1999). Both main political parties made strong commitments to a pro-growth agenda with the aim of reviving Birmingham's economic performance. This agenda was an overlapping set of strategies which included those to preserve manufacturing and diversify industries, city centre regeneration and training and employment (Birmingham City Council 1989). The Labour administration that came to power after the 1984 local elections supported and protected the council leader who took forward plans to develop an international convention centre, an idea initially proposed by the previous administration. This convention centre was the start of what became to be known as the city's 'prestige project', a strategy to regenerate the city centre. The administration subsequently planned the financing and implementation of other projects such as retail and office developments. Council civil servants were willing participants in this style of council decision-making as it enabled the projects to move forward with minimum disagreement and disruption. It has been suggested that this policy agenda resulted in a focus on economic growth rather than delivery of services and has been examined (and often criticised) by various academics, most notably Loftman and Nevin, and in the local press.

As Di Gaetano and Lawless (1999) describe, in 1993, a power struggle within the Labour group led to a new leader for the city council, who initially tried to replace the pro-growth policy with a 'back-to-basics' agenda focusing on education, social services and housing. Fewer resources available for economic development as a result of central government directives led to a focus on welfare areas. Despite this, the pro-growth coalition ensured that economic development remained a key element of the city's policy agenda and there were still a number of large-scale development projects after the change in leadership. There were several reasons for this; a central government initiative, City Pride, brought the Labour leaders into increased contact with business leaders which in turn led to a closer working relationship. Also, within the Labour leadership there was a wide range of views on economic development, and several prominent Labour politicians actively supported the pro-growth agenda. Lastly, the pro-growth coalition had become deeply rooted in Birmingham's governance arrangements. The Labour leadership and the pro-growth supporters came to an understanding where each publicly acknowledged the importance of the other's policy priorities.

The developments in Birmingham began under a strong Labour council who had a solid economic development and regeneration strategy. Albert Bore, council leader between 1999 and 2004, chaired the Economic Development Committee of the council throughout the whole period which contributed to continuity of local economic development policies. From 2004, the deputy leader of the council, a Liberal Democrat, was a millionaire entrepreneur and also a member of the growth coalition in the city. However, the new leadership was less embedded in the partnerships of the city and their approach 'less pro-active and decisive in getting things done' (Coulson and Ferrario 2007). However, the 'prestige project' still continued

with city centre projects such as the redevelopment of the main railway station and the building of the largest library in Europe taking place.

In 2012, following the Labour victory in the local election, Albert Bore was once again leader of the city council. His election campaign focused very much on the local economy, boosting local jobs and businesses such as: a new standard for achievement for schools to educate and train children for the skilled jobs of the future; fast-track plans for 6000 private sector jobs on derelict manufacturing sites; a requirement the £ 7.5 billion spent by public services supports local jobs and businesses; and new Birmingham housing partnerships to build affordable homes, creating jobs for local people (Labour Party 2012).

‘Closed’ Partnership Arrangements

‘Partnership’ has been a key feature in city council documents and a part of governance arrangements in Birmingham from the early 1980s. A partnership approach was seen as necessary for the delivery of the economic regeneration agenda, especially in the years when Conservative central government policies were largely unfavourable towards local government involvement in this. The overall view was that in Birmingham there were and are many organisations willing to collaborate with each other but not ready to give up their position and act in a secondary role. Organisations such as the council were dominant as they had clear roles, resources available to them, evidence of being able to deliver on plans and were seen as representative of Birmingham. Therefore, Coulson and Ferrario (2007), for example, have described the institutional framework in Birmingham as having a core of dominant organisations with a number of less powerful ones at the margins.

The city council is the central organisation in the city and has been an innovator in terms of the partnership approach; it has had a seat on almost all local partnerships and promotes and supports their effective working. For many years, this was a relatively ‘closed’ partnership of existing local political and economic power holders. However, this power dimension has evolved, a focus away from physical regeneration nationally, where the council had a significant role, to social issues that has meant that many other organisations have had a key role to play. The significance of Be Birmingham (the local strategic partnership) is an example of this with its role in implementing national programmes, and highlighting and co-ordinating discussions locally about an ‘inclusive city’. The influence of the third sector has been described as relatively weak with the relationship with the city council compared to a ‘parent and child’, but currently there was acknowledgement amongst local actors that this was improving.

Central Government Influence

Social policies in the UK tend to be centrally driven and funded, although there is often scope for local government to influence how these are implemented locally. After the Conservative government (1979–1997), urban regeneration programmes and initiatives were funded by resources allocated to partnerships on the basis of competitive bidding from local authorities through funds such as the City Challenge Fund and Single Regeneration Budget. This gave social issues a more prominent role and community participation entered the policy discourse. The new Labour

government (1997–2010) maintained the focus on community involvement and promoted a ‘joined up’ approach to urban regeneration, and central government funds were allocated on the basis of need. Birmingham has had a wide range of these regeneration and renewal programmes and initiatives over the years targeting both the city centre and neighbourhood areas. The Coalition government (2010–present) greatly reduced the funding available for existing programmes from 2010 and phased out the initiatives of the previous national government which impacted significantly on the city’s ability to continue welfare projects.

Devolved Decision-Making

In 2003, the Labour group took a decision to devolve some services and governance; devolved decision-making at a local level or ‘localisation’ was and is seen as the most effective way of defining social problems and coming up with appropriate solutions. Localisation in this context means giving local areas more freedom to design services according to local needs and priorities, services such as leisure, housing, neighbourhood advice, libraries and youth and adult services. In the following year, the political party in control of the council changed and the governing coalition did attempt to introduce a version of devolution at various points in their administration. Alongside this, in 2005 disturbances occurred in certain areas of Birmingham partly as a result of racial tensions which resulted in the council focusing on efforts to engage certain communities with the democratic process. There was a process of capability-building to help the dialogue between the council and the affected communities to lead and shape local programmes to address social issues. It was not until 2008 though that responsibility and budgets for a number of services were devolved to district committees across the city (11 then 10). However, locally there was a view that the policy ‘lost its way’ as no real decisions were made about changing the way services were delivered such as using the third sector or basing provision on established local priorities. The loss of funding from central government for neighbourhood management was seen as one of the reasons for this as these council employees based in local areas had initially supported the process.

In 2010, there was a consultation about continuing with local decision-making and retaining executive powers with district committees, and all parties were keen to pursue the existing model. The Labour Party since their return to power in Birmingham has set out their intention to ‘reinvigorate’ localisation, and restructuring of the council included a return to having a local services directorate with a framework to deliver localisation. The aim is for 80% of council services to sit out with the district committees. This is taking place in the context of a national government localism agenda which as one council officer stated is about “community-led interventions and the state not being so necessary”.

Social Inclusion

In 2010 and 2011, a number of factors came together which led to issues of social inclusion being brought to the fore in a way they had not before. Be Birmingham raised concerns about the continued existence of significant inequalities across the city after the publication of the Closing the Gap report (Be Birmingham 2011); in 2011 disturbances once again occurred in Birmingham, and unprecedented budget

cuts were announced which would inevitably impact on local residents. Despite the urban regeneration of the city centre it was acknowledged by all political parties that inequality still existed and lasting change for people living in Birmingham's most deprived neighbourhoods had not been achieved.

As a result of this, in 2011 the then deputy leader of the governing coalition asked the Bishop of Birmingham to lead a 'commission' to look at social inclusion. The Be Birmingham executive commissioned the Social Inclusion Process project with the aim of developing a new approach to raising aspirations and the quality of life of the most disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods. When the Labour Party took control of the council they stated their intention was to make this their "number one priority" and one interviewee held the view that,

The attitude of the previous administration in Birmingham was to turn a blind eye to some of the, not necessarily the visible signs of the inequality, but some of the causes that sat behind it. And there was a political discomfort, if you like, in addressing what some of those things were. I mean we come from a slightly different position of being prepared to have an open discussion about why these inequalities are created and the root causes behind them.

The Social Inclusion Process has been widely acknowledged as a success in terms of starting a dialogue between a wide range of organisations and individuals across Birmingham, many of whom had not had this opportunity before. This is a move away from the more 'closed' partnerships of the past to a more inclusive engagement with other local actors, but at present is still relatively marginal. Various actions and recommendations have been made which could have a direct influence on the local welfare system and how it operates, but it remains to be seen whether any lasting impact can be made without resources behind it.

Austerity

As with all local authorities in the UK, the majority of the city council's income comes from central government. In the light of the national Spending Review by the current Coalition Government in 2010 and the accelerated reduction in the structural deficit, the current financial challenge facing the city council is to save approximately £ 300 million by 2014/2015. Birmingham City Council spends around £ 3.5 billion each year, about half of this is ring-fenced by central government or has statutory constraints (such as protecting the welfare of children) which means that the burden of savings will fall more heavily on certain areas of council services (such as social care, leisure facilities and economic regeneration) and on the council workforce (Birmingham City Council 2010a). In combination with the wider recession and the return to power of a leader who has always championed local economic development, this could mean there is potential for a continuing focus on economics rather than a broader social policy reform agenda.

5.3 What Does Context Mean for Social Innovation?

As mentioned earlier, the centralised nature of government in the UK means that most social policy is determined at a national level. Local authorities such as Birmingham are responsible for providing services to local residents such as education, social care and building planning permission. Direct responsibility for local housing policy does lie with the local authority but for other areas such as employment strategies this is more of a ‘caretaker’ role. With reference to the wider social policy framework described, this section highlights the two policy areas of the labour market and housing and regeneration, and the opportunities or space this provides for social innovation.

Labour Market Policy

Birmingham has unemployment rates twice the national average and in some areas over 50% of the working age population are not employed. The city also has the highest youth unemployment (those between the ages of 18 and 24) nationally. In some areas of Birmingham, unemployment has been an issue for two decades or more and there is recognition that this is a generational issue, as one council officer stated,

It is a generational issue now, it’s not just that they are unemployed, but the parents and grandparents have been unemployed.

Or more likely locked in a cycle of periods of unemployment and periods of low paid insecure work and then back into periods of unemployment again.

Birmingham has been affected more than other cities by the recession, with welfare benefit claimant count rates rising faster and to higher levels than in other cities. A structural weakness in skills and a relatively high dependence on manufacturing are thought to have contributed to this.

The two policy priorities of economic growth and labour market activation or social inclusion have usually been dealt with separately; for example, the city council and business stakeholders adopted an entrepreneurial model for infrastructure projects, but this may also have a knock-on effect of job creation. Access to labour market or social inclusion initiatives have been area-based, targeted at individuals, time-limited and conceived and funded by central government, but implemented at a local level.

The pro-growth emphasis can be illustrated by the comment of one council officer,

A key driver for Birmingham under any administration has been access to jobs and that means both an investment in skills for the population but also actively creating jobs and then connecting people to those jobs.

To address the decline in employment in traditional sectors this was linked to the regeneration strategy led by the city council. This aimed to encourage knowledge intensive professional services and also sectors involved in the visitor economy such as tourism, conferencing, hospitality, leisure and retail. However, many local residents lacked the skills to access the new jobs created in the service sector and these were increasingly filled by commuters in from neighbouring areas (Brookes et al. 2012). In 2008, it was still acknowledged that one of the challenges for the

city would be ‘maintaining growth in an increasingly knowledge-based economy without leaving behind a significant proportion of local residents’ (West Midlands Regional Observatory 2008). Birmingham was seen as good at creating jobs but not necessarily for people in those wards where unemployment sat at a higher level.

The new Labour administration still has a focus on job creation, promising to create thousands of jobs and tackle ingrained unemployment and poverty on a journey to make Birmingham the ‘enterprise capital of Britain’. The leader of the council has said that his priorities are jobs and enterprise, helping to get 52,000 unemployed Birmingham residents into work. New economic growth zones are to be created, which are likely to benefit from incremental tax funding schemes (Birmingham City Council 2013).

In terms of labour activation strategies, these are largely a function of national government. Delivering labour market integration in a ‘different way’ is not seen as possible without central government support financially. Employment strategies are a web of interlinked programmes and funding streams, and this complexity is due to the national agenda governed by more than one government department. In Birmingham, local activity has been co-ordinated by JobCentrePlus and the Learning and Skills Council, national organisations with local delivery arms. The council has a small budget in comparison to the other organisations, but has been the accountable body for a number of funding streams and therefore decisions as to how money is spent locally (usually through Be Birmingham). All three have been brought together through partnership arrangements.

Various central government initiatives aimed at the most deprived areas have been implemented through the city council in Birmingham since 2000, with either employment as their sole objective or one amongst others. For example, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (2001–2008) did lead to strategies for local employer engagement and access to employment and training but comparatively little of the locally determined spend was directed at employment targets. The most common approach was support for local voluntary organisations helping people who were out of work. The Single Regeneration Budget (2000–2007) included a number of innovative job creation and employment and skills projects focused on particular areas of the city. Unemployment did fall in the areas covered by the Single Regeneration Budget but also the number of jobs available fell with the continued decline of the manufacturing sector.

The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF 2008–2011) resulted in the local coalition using the resources available to set up a cross-agency Integrated Employment and Skills model as the basis for employment support across the city and to fund projects targeting different groups and needs. The council, Learning and Skills Council and JobCentrePlus all signed up to this new way of commissioning and delivering services for the unemployed at a neighbourhood level. This was seen as a risky and radical strategy as it involved a major change to existing practice taking the focus away from a city-wide approach to contracting services locally.

The projects funded through the WNF covered a wide range of activities to support people to work. The Worklessness Innovation Fund set up through the WNF provided small grants for feasibility studies, demonstration projects and innovative actions. Projects had to contribute to the outcome of increasing employment

and reducing poverty through targeted interventions to reduce worklessness in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the city. A total of 40 projects were supported and evaluation of the fund highlighted that it had been successful in trialling and developing approaches with a focus on the nature and quality of interaction with clients. Ultimately, with the withdrawal of both the WNF and resources for neighbourhood management, this approach was not sustained beyond 2011, and represents the last time local innovative activity in this area was directly supported on this scale.

In 2009 and 2010, elected members across all parties expressed concern that after regular updates on strategies and approaches to tackling unemployment and large amounts of money spent since 2007, they were still unclear as to the impact this had made (Birmingham City Council 2009). One initiative instigated by the central Labour government, the Future Jobs Fund (a subsidised employment scheme) was widely believed to be a success in Birmingham. Around 2000 young people, 45% of whom went on to unsubsidised employment, benefited from the initiative. The national Coalition government abolished the Future Jobs Fund programme against the recommendations of the council. The current Labour administration has plans to recreate this with resources drawn together from a variety of sources (a recommendation which came out of the Social Inclusion Process). This was widely reported in the local press. As the Council Business Plan (Birmingham City Council 2013) indicates,

We...are putting together £ 15 million of funding for our Birmingham Jobs Fund, to support employers taking on young people and give additional training and support to young people themselves. With such bold initiatives we are showing what we can do by working in partnership with others who share our aspirations for the city.

The initiatives and funds provided by central government to support areas with high unemployment have been both a facilitator and a barrier for the innovation 'journey' in Birmingham. These initiatives have resulted in opportunities to fund a large number of locally selected, innovative, 'successful' projects which would not otherwise have occurred. However, ultimately the innovative projects funded have been small-scale and time limited. Some of the social innovations were perceived as a success but were still vulnerable; once grant funding was withdrawn there was no mainstreaming of services after each programme finished. These were low risk for the council to test out but alongside this they could only have a limited impact due to scale and were responsible for their own plans for sustainability beyond the life of the programmes. This was not always easy for the large number of third-sector organisations who ran these projects where services were linked to contracts or grant income.

Housing Policy and Urban Regeneration

Birmingham is one of the largest social landlords in the UK with a long tradition of large-scale local state provision of housing services. It is currently responsible for 65,396 dwellings, holding 17% of the housing stock of the city. Registered social landlords (RSLs, or third-sector housing associations) currently hold 40,579 dwellings across 40 providers, the largest being Midland Heart. The council has a strategic role as well as a regulatory and house-building function. The council has

a long history of working in partnership with the local housing sector through the City Housing Partnership, comprising the council, housing associations, voluntary organisations and the private sector. At a national level, the Housing and Communities Agency and the HomeBuy Agency provide finance and co-ordinate the low-cost homeownership schemes. Regeneration of the physical environment and housing policy has often been intertwined.

With regards to social housing, in 2002 Birmingham decided to pursue the stock transfer policy option promoted by the national government to enable access to private finance and to pass management of its stock to housing associations. The reasons for this were a significant backlog of outstanding repairs and structural problems and a significant capital debt, but no resources to meet these commitments. The national government inducement of cancelling existing capital debts and allowing the replacement landlords to borrow capital was attractive to Birmingham politicians and council officers. However, when balloted tenants rejected stock transfer by two-to-one and although the Labour leader of the council was in favour of this, there were many within the Labour group overtly opposed to stock transfer. The 'no' vote was seen as the result of weak political leadership, insufficient trade union support for transfer and a lack of faith by tenants in proposals, mainly unconvinced by assurances about the extent of housing demolition and future rent levels (Daly et al. 2005).

The current challenge for Birmingham's housing policy is that the city's population is increasing and is projected to grow by 100,000 residents to 1.1 million by 2026. In total 90,000 additional households will be formed due to this and other demographic changes (Birmingham City Council 2010b). With the average city income insufficient to buy an average priced property, there is collective recognition that additional social and affordable housing is needed across the city. Demand for social housing significantly outstrips supply and in 2012/2013 there was a waiting list for council housing of over 30,000 applicants. This has been a growing trend since the 1980s.

In terms of house-building, a conducive climate for new private housing development was created from the 1990s through a link to the physical regeneration of the city centre, and residential development grew slowly but steadily in subsequent years (Barber 2007). This city living strategy was a significant driver for change in Birmingham's housing markets. More than 9000 homes, 85% for private sale were completed between 1995 and 2007 and there was evidence that these were adding to the diversity of housing options for middle- and high-income earners. However, city living remained a narrow market, dominated by young professionals, investor purchasers and rental occupation. The fact that no affordable housing was planned as part of this city centre regeneration strategy to encourage the creation of a new housing market was criticised by some local politicians.

The major debate in Birmingham, particularly since 2008, has been around the provision of affordable housing. The economic downturn resulted in a slowing down of the housing market, a major drop in house building and a more challenging environment for those seeking mortgage lending. A reduction in private-sector development activity and investment and the restrictions on public- and private-

sector funding were seen to be affecting the provision of affordable housing. Local media reported frequently about the ‘housing crisis’ and included several reports about a group ‘Justice not Crisis’ who occupy derelict buildings in protest at the lack of affordable housing. For a number of years, the coalition council had sought to maximise receipts from land sales to assist with programmes such as the national Decent Homes Programme (which stock transfer was meant to support). Some observers thought that this was resulting in less land available for social and affordable housing developments. These claims were strongly refuted by the coalition Cabinet Member for Housing and the Birmingham Social Housing Partnership.

Regeneration activities in Birmingham received funding from the national Labour government from the late 1990s, the New Deal for Communities (1998–2008), Single Regeneration Budget (2001–2007) and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (2001–2008). The Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders (2002–2011) focused on housing in particular, a controversial scheme of demolition, refurbishment and new home-building which aimed ‘to renew failing housing markets in nine designated areas of the North and Midlands of England’ including Birmingham (Cole and Flint 2007).

Regeneration in Birmingham was viewed by some local politicians and the press as having to a large extent ignored the social and community aspects. In some areas of Birmingham there was evidence of progress in physical change but not in ‘bottom-up’ economic development, the social and community aspects and the connecting of these to the physical changes taking place. The approach was very much embedded in what has been described as the ‘old style’, with a focus on land and property interventions, securing funds and driving projects through (Barber and Eastaway 2010). This traditional approach which suited the city well in the past was embedded in local governance structures, and policymakers found it hard to work differently. Innovations were therefore only modest in scope. This way of working was also less helpful in delivering the ‘place-shaping’ role given to local authorities with the aim of creating places where people want to live, work and do business in collaboration with local communities.

Specifically in relation to housing, traditionally the housing associations were considered to be the house-builders. However, the coalition council moved to a more interactive exchange between the public and private sector to encourage house-building, supported by innovative practice in financing and planning. The council devised a way of delivering affordable but high-quality new homes that limited financial risk through the formation of the Birmingham Municipal Housing Trust (BMHT). Properties on BMHT sites were a mixture of council homes and those for outright sale built on council-owned land. An innovative financial model was developed in consultation with contractors that reduced up-front costs and reduced uncertainty over planning permission. Planning consent for each site was gained and paid for by the council before tenders were invited so potential partners could tender risk-free financially. The houses were then built on council-owned land with an agreed number of properties on each site allocated for social housing. Payment for property land was delayed until developers sold the homes and on a plot-by-plot basis. This model still operates in the city and has won awards for its innovative approach. However, the scale of house-building through BMHT will not

solve the issue of the need for homes required alone. Outside of this there has been small-scale innovative activity within the local housing sector but limited in scope.

The current Labour council set out its vision for housing in Birmingham (Birmingham City Council 2013),

Our vision is to make individuals and families proud to live in Birmingham in a decent home at a price they can afford, enjoying stability whether they rent or buy.

To achieve this vision the council states it will: provide new affordable homes; aspire to provide decent homes for all; introduce a new deal for council tenants; give people a say in the future of their communities; and focus on homes and jobs. Various council statements and documents have given their support to innovation and creative thinking in housing policy but this has yet to translate into social innovation in this area.

5.4 Summary and Conclusion: Innovation at the Margins

This chapter has described a governance system in Birmingham that over the decades has been rooted in a pro-growth strategy. This resulted in an environment not typically conducive to large-scale social innovation. The impact of history is of great significance with the devastating impact of recession and deindustrialisation that started in the 1980s, and that still continues today, influencing the policy and practice of actors in the city. The major, lasting innovation in the city is partnership working seen as essential to deliver the economic regeneration agenda. This occurred in Birmingham long before it became part of popular policy discourse in the UK. This partnership approach was characterised by a focus on economic priorities and comprised a closed group of business and political leaders; however, over time there has been a shift to more inclusive engagement.

The situation in Birmingham reflected the change in urban policy described by Harvey (1989) as a shift from managerialism to entrepreneurialism. The city council has focused over the years on the promotion of local economic development and employment growth and to a lesser extent on the provision of services. However, the council has always seen economic development as also serving the objective of improving the quality of life of its citizens. Therefore, policies do not always show a clear cut divide between social and economic policy.

In terms of employment strategies the focus has been on economic development and job creation but this has also been influenced by central government which has direct responsibility for activation policies. Innovative practice has been supported locally but only where this has been possible through central government resources; once this has been withdrawn the majority of projects cease to exist. The loss of a consistent integrated approach to employment and skills pioneered by Birmingham and other small-scale, promising projects is linked to this withdrawal of resources which has occurred due to not only the end of national programmes and austerity measures but also a change in national political outlook. The current local political

leadership will need to find ways to use existing resources more creatively if any innovative activity is to be supported as cuts to public spending are set to continue.

The huge housing problems in Birmingham mean that large scale social innovation would be required to make any impact on this. However, there is little evidence of social innovation in housing and regeneration policy apart from the award-winning BMHT which whilst successful in its current form is too small in scale to meet demand and therefore has limited impact. One local actor did highlight the fact that the housing sector more generally is not known for its innovative capacity so there may be wider issues at play.

To conclude, the situation in Birmingham describes a case of urban governance where solutions to social problems were stated in terms of economic priorities. Innovation does occur but very much at the margins, through opportunistic and short-term support for small-scale projects usually through national funding streams. Looking to the future, devolved decision-making was seen by local actors as a potential vehicle for innovation at the (very) local level. This approach had not been without its difficulties over the years and so was not perceived as a solution that would happen ‘overnight’.

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Chapter 6

Social Policies and Governance in Geneva: What About Social Innovation?

Patricia Naegeli

6.1 Introduction

The governance of the Swiss welfare state is marked by the principle of subsidiarity (Bütschi and Cattacin 1993), which favours private initiative before state action and according to which tasks are divided between the three territorial levels: the Confederation, the cantons and the municipalities. The result is *multilevel governance* (Scharpf 1994), both hierarchically within the state and, in principle at least, horizontally between all the welfare organisations involved (public and private for and non-profit; see Cattacin 1996). Until the mid-1970s, *federal* social policies and insurance were marginal, social benefits were mostly in the hands of private, subsidised non-profit associations and social insurance was private and mutualised by working sector, ideology or religion. From 1975 to 1985, when other European countries were already cutting social benefits, the federal welfare state caught up and finally *normalised* its position within the rest of Europe (Cattacin 2006, p. 50). So, if in Switzerland basic social insurance¹ has been progressively introduced and centralised (Gilliand 1988, pp. 39–58), following the principles of subsidiarity and federalism, the federal state determines through legislation a minimum level of social protection, giving the cantons and municipalities a great degree of freedom to improve and manage their own social policies.² This *path dependency* (Merrien 1990) results in significant cantonal autonomy and gives rise to huge differences

¹ For an overview of the adoption and implementation of social insurance legislation in Switzerland, see Gilliland (1988, p. 58).

² In Switzerland, cantons and municipalities have a high degree of autonomy, particularly in areas such as education, healthcare and social policies. As a result, social policies can be very well developed in a canton or kept to the minimum level required by the Swiss Confederation. But it is precisely at the local level (cantons and municipalities) that innovation can be implemented most easily. An example of the division of powers between the federal and cantonal levels in social policy matters can be found in Armingeon et al. (2004, p. 22).

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in social benefits throughout the country (Armingeon et al. 2004; Höpflinger and Wyss 1994).

As argued by Cattacin (1996), it is exactly this local autonomy—a result of Switzerland’s federal structure, according to which the national territory is divided into 26 cantons—that makes possible innovative social policies at the local level. According to Bertozzi and Bonoli (2003), this cantonal freedom makes it possible to match local social needs and territorialised social policies. In their words:

While the federal structure of the state may have hindered the development of certain social policies, it has also fostered innovation at the local and cantonal levels as well as adaptation with respect to the social needs of territorial units. (Bertozzi and Bonoli 2003, p. 13)

So Swiss cantons should have enough room to manoeuvre to adapt their social policies to particular, territorialised needs. The major question of this chapter is whether this cantonal autonomy, particularly with respect to the *governance of the social*, really does lead to the implementation of innovative social policies.³ As an example, we analyse Geneva, which is known for its comparatively generous social policies (Höpflinger and Wyss 1994, p. 55, IDHEAP/BADAC 2010a, b, c, d, e⁴), and which, as a city-canton,⁵ has a particularly large degree of autonomy in determining its social policies. In the case of Geneva, references to the “local level” mostly apply to cantonal measures rather than city ones, for reasons that will appear throughout this chapter. We explore whether Geneva’s governance arrangements tend to favour or disfavour innovative social policies and which elements appear to hinder their emergence. As was underlined in Chap. 2 (Cattacin, Zimmer), by governance arrangements we mean the outcome resulting from complex processes that involve a multitude of actors (the state, non-state organisations, the market) and which have to be understood in their context (the institutional context, the context of welfare governance arrangements and the local political culture). It will become clear that Geneva’s governance of the social policies, embedded in its context, tends to place the state and its administration, especially state councillors and civil servants, as the legitimate provider of social services. But this state orientation is only possible with

³ What we mean by innovation will be defined later in this chapter.

⁴ Statistics on the website of the IDHEAP/BADAC (Institut des hautes études en administration publique/base de données des cantons et des villes suisse) show that the Canton of Geneva, in comparison with the other 25 cantons, has high expenses for culture and social activities (6.41 % of public expenses, rank 1) and social security (23.18 % of PE, rank 1) (IDHEAP/BADAC 2010a); has the second-highest per capita expenditures, after Basel-Stadt (IDHEAP/BADAC 2010b); has the second-highest income inequality (a Gini coefficient of 0.45) (IDHEAP/BADAC 2010c); has, together with the Canton of Zug, the second-highest number of additional social benefits (IDHEAP/BADAC 2010d); and is the administration with by far the highest number of subdivisions (105 services for 7 departments, rank 1) (IDHEAP/BADAC 2010e). It is important to notice that while Geneva consistently ranks second in many of these measures, the first place is not always occupied by the same canton.

⁵ Geneva is both a canton and a city. The Canton of Geneva encompasses 45 municipalities and 476,000 inhabitants in a territory of 282 km². The city of Geneva is the most important municipality in the canton, with 195,160 residents. Its territory measures 15.9 km² (statistics for end of 2013). See Swissworld and Département fédéral des affaires étrangères (2014) and Ville de Genève (2014a). It is for this reason that we argue that the city is almost the canton and vice-versa.

the support of non-profit organisations,⁶ which are heavily subsidised and whose demarcation from the public sector is often unclear. Furthermore, the importance of political parties in Geneva's political culture and the influence of the republican model of neighbouring France, where power tends to be concentrated, may partly explain our findings. Economic actors are excluded from this state-orientated welfare system. As a result of these factors, we hypothesise that social innovation is above all incremental and that when it does occur, it does so due to a certain consensus among the implied actors. Indeed, despite political differences, the idea of working against poverty (what stakeholders call "solidarity") seems to be, together with "personal responsibility", the key deep core *value*, and the necessity of imposing it mostly top-down justifies the state orientation. This basic consensus on this fuzzy concept of "solidarity" was emphasised by our interviewed stakeholders and is in line with our own observations.

This chapter was written within the framework of the European project Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO). It includes a wide range of sources: political debates in city council and the cantonal parliament, the political programmes of most important parties, local newspaper articles, grey literature, statistical data provided by the public administration, 12 semi-directed interviews with local stakeholders⁷ and two focus groups to clarify diverging or shared positions regarding local welfare.⁸

The chapter is divided into five parts. First, we will introduce the main challenges in Geneva's governance and identify the general tendencies of its local welfare governance arrangements. Second, its local welfare state and social policies will be situated in the Swiss context. Third, hypotheses concerning Geneva's main actors in the field of social policies will be developed. Sabatier's approach (Sabatier 1991, 1998), which assumes the existence of coalitions of values, and of power relationships between these coalitions, leading to majorities and minorities in specific policy fields, will guide Part 3.⁹ More specifically, emphasising the importance of political parties within these coalitions, the balances of power over the last 20 years will be described. Fourth, an examination of the actual programmes of the main political parties and interviews with local stakeholders will reveal the core values of the local welfare state, while specific issues in the fields of unemployment and

⁶ By non-profit organisations we mean organisations that provide welfare benefits but which are also an essential "[...] 'public space in civil societies' [...] at the intersection between the state, the marketplace and the informal sector" (Evers 2000, p. 567).

⁷ For more information about the interviews, please see footnote 62.

⁸ I would like to thank the following people who have collaborated with me on the WILCO project: Nathalie Kakpo, who did part of the field- and deskwork in Geneva; Sandro Cattacin for his critical and pertinent input; and Maxime Felder for his support and comments during the writing of this chapter. I would also like to thank Christian Jöhr of the Social Service of the City of Geneva, who was a helpful discussion partner regarding concrete issues in the city, and all persons who agreed to be interviewed during this research.

⁹ This approach assumes that the cities' policies are influenced by a constellation of actors, namely policymakers, fieldworkers, scholars, civil servants and journalists, who share a common belief system (values, problems and perceptions) and are capable of acting in a coordinated way.

childcare will strengthen our understanding thereof and permit us to define value coalitions. Fifth, we will question Geneva's capacity to innovate in the area of social policies and examine whether its *governance of social challenges* results in innovative social policies or the preservation of the status quo.

6.2 Geneva's Challenges: Multilevel Governance and Multiple Territories

Geneva is part of one of the most dynamic regions in Switzerland, situated at the extreme southwest of the country. Home to several international organisations, an important banking sector and quality business services, as well as world-class research centres, including the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva is definitely an important international player in the globalised economy.

This aspect of the "International Geneva", oriented beyond Switzerland's national borders, is emphasised by local stakeholders and Geneva's city marketing and goes hand in hand with its geographical location, which is almost *outside* the country (Cattacin and Kettenacker 2011). Indeed, Geneva is situated at the very edge of Switzerland, sharing only a 4.5-km border with the rest of Switzerland but a 103-km border with France.¹⁰ Notwithstanding its economic and international importance, the canton occupies a somewhat marginalised position within the country, and it is common to hear that Geneva is not "really Swiss", whatever that might mean.¹¹

This assumption is reinforced by the fact that Geneva's main social challenges are not contained within the logic of borders and concern the whole metropolitan area of 918,000 inhabitants,¹² namely the *Grand Genève*, which includes neighbouring France and the Canton of Vaud (District of Nyon). At the end of 2013, cross-border workers, officially defined as "non-Swiss" people who live in neighbouring France and work in Geneva, numbered 68,800. This is one quarter of all the cross-border workers in the country.¹³ It is interesting to note that the high numbers of Swiss who live in neighbouring France, often clandestinely, are not included in these statistics.¹⁴

Geneva's social challenges are de facto supra-regional, although the logic of governance remains strongly territorialised, confined to the municipal and cantonal levels, as a result of which there is no territorial authority to solve important challenges such as delays in the construction of more public transit, traffic problems and the enormous problem of the lack of affordable housing. This incongruence between

¹⁰ Source: Ville de Genève (2014a).

¹¹ Source: Der Spiegel (1985).

¹² Source: Grand Genève (2014a).

¹³ (Office cantonal de la statistique — OCSTAT/Département des finances 2013).

¹⁴ In 2009, two out of three new immigrants to France were Swiss (Grand Genève 2014a). But most of them do not declare that they live full-time in France and therefore do not pay taxes where they live, a significant problem for the French municipalities concerned.

the nature of the problems, which are cross-border and regional, and the problem-solving structures, which are strongly territorialised, is not unique to Geneva, of course, and it is especially common in states with different relatively autonomous and powerful levels of government, as is the case in Switzerland. According to Klöti 1985, p. 13, 17, this situation can result in steering and legitimation problems in urban policies and conflicts of interest between the different levels of government:

That is why urban policies have to be able to handle a conflict of interest between supralocal requirements and local needs. Above all at the level of the agglomeration, there is no authority that can intervene in a regulatory and coordinator manner (Klöti 1985, p. 17).

In the case of Geneva, a Grouping for Transfrontier Co-operation¹⁵ was officially created in 2012 for the purpose of governing the *Grand Genève*. It is an autonomous body under Swiss public law with legal personality and its own budget, and it is charged with realising projects within the Franco-Vaud-Geneva conurbation and deal with regional challenges. But uncooperative local authorities and regional governments on both sides of the border confront this grouping and, most importantly, by the rise of the populist MCG (Geneva Citizens' Movement),¹⁶ which leads to an “anti-cross-border workers” attitude, the most recent example of which is the recent popular vote against a cross-border construction project.¹⁷

While *Grand Genève* must remain in our minds when we speak about Geneva, this chapter focuses on the Canton of *Geneva*, which includes 45 municipalities, including its most important, which is of course the City of Geneva.¹⁸ Geneva's unusual way of doing politics and governing its “small” territory, where the canton is almost the city and vice versa, is often pointed out by other parts of the country, which more or less explicitly criticise Geneva's multilevel governance, where no one really knows “who does what” and that “wouldn't exist if Geneva weren't so rich”, as stated in a Bernese newspaper article (Chapman 2012).

Indeed, the same newspaper article refers to a crucial point in Geneva's multilevel governance—disagreements between cantonal and city governments on important political issues—and the ability to block important (cantonal or city) projects by exercising the municipal or cantonal right to a veto, for instance, for construction projects, not least because of NIMBYism.¹⁹ While tensions often crystallise between the city and the canton, the canton's 44 other municipalities also represent

¹⁵ Groupement de coopération transfrontalière (GLCT; Grand Genève 2014a).

¹⁶ In Part 3, we will discuss birth and rise of this political party.

¹⁷ In the aftermath of the Swiss popular initiative on 9 February 2014 (accepted by 50.34% of voters), which requires the introduction of immigration quotas (60.9% of Geneva's population voted against it), the canton's population voted against financial participation in a cross-border parking construction project, following the arguments of the MCG, which is opposed to any financial investment on the “French side” (De Weck 2014; La Tribune de Genève 2014).

¹⁸ For more details, please refer to footnote 5.

¹⁹ “More formally, Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) refers to the protectionist attitudes of and oppositional tactics adopted by community groups facing an unwelcome development in their neighbourhood” (Dear 1992, p. 288); see also Kübler (1995), who analysed these kinds of strategies in the field of urban drug policies.

important political and financial constraints, even if their powers and financial resources are less important than in other Swiss cantons.²⁰ The consequence is that important projects may be paralysed, sometimes for decades,²¹ which is evidence for the argument that Geneva is stuck in a *joint decision-making trap* (in the sense of Scharpf 1985) that makes it difficult, because of cantonal or municipal “veto coalitions” (Czada 2003, p. 183), to overcome the status quo. According to Czada, a government’s ability to solve (social) problems rapidly (Czada 2003, p. 197) depends on the interplay of three dimensions: the degree of agreement between political parties, the degree of corporatism and the nature of constitutional veto structures. In his opinion, Swiss democracy compensates for the threat posed by potential vetoes by producing strong legislative majorities, which has resulted in a political landscape that has been stable for many years. But this stability can also be endangered, as has been the case in Geneva (see Part 3 on the evolution of political forces). Furthermore, difficulties related to multilevel governance also interfere with what we call the *governance of the social* and the provision of social services and benefits. Indeed, overlapping services between cantonal, city and municipal administrations, coupled with the multiplicity of private, above all non-profit, organisations, makes it difficult to even identify governance arrangements and service providers in this sector. The analysis of 120 qualitative interviews of vulnerable migrants who were or had been in touch with local welfare services in the 20 cities of the WILCO research²² indicates clearly that a multitude of (overlapping) services significantly discourages (vulnerable) people from claiming social benefits and leads to mistrust of the public administration (Cattacin and Naegeli 2014).²³ Furthermore, services have also been criticised for not being able to address complex life situations resulting from intersecting problems, which may increase the risk of multiple discrimination (Hankivsky and Cormier 2010).

In Geneva, duties have been split between the canton, which is responsible for individual social assistance, and the municipalities, which are responsible for “communitarian” and collective problems. For instance, the canton provides basic financial and *individual* social assistance through the *Hospice Général*, an autonomous public institution that was created in 1535 and is mandated by the canton.²⁴ These financial benefits are sometimes supplemented by the City of Geneva through its own *Social Service*, meaning that a resident of the City of Geneva may receive a greater social allowance than someone who resides in another municipality within

²⁰ According to a newspaper article, the allowed budget for the municipalities constitutes less than 20% of all public expenses in the canton, which, according to Mabut (2014), is very low for Swiss municipalities.

²¹ For example, after 50 different proposals since the nineteenth century, plans to create some kind of link between the two shores of Lake Geneva (*traversée de la rade*) have still not been implemented. See, for instance, Francey (2014).

²² For a description of the research, please refer to footnote 7.

²³ If we add mistrust of public administrations to the mentioned overlapping services, which result in the feeling that one is lost in a labyrinth of welfare organisations, it is easy to understand why vulnerable people (in this case vulnerable migrants) may simply avoid claiming social benefits.

²⁴ In the Swiss context, this is an exception; social assistance is usually provided by municipalities.

the canton. Furthermore, the municipal *Social Service* works from the perspective of proximity to and the prevention of social problems and has developed a territorialised “communitarian” approach that aims to reinforce social cohesion.²⁵ As a result, a multitude of actors constitute a labyrinth of local welfare organisations, mostly non-profit organisations. Aware of the overlapping public services between the canton and the city, the current cantonal government has decided to disentangle its duties from those of its 45 municipalities (Mabut 2014; Moulin 2014), a task that it wants to complete in close cooperation with the *Association of the Municipalities of Geneva* and its representatives. A first technical report has just been published (Groupe de travail technique (GTT) 2014), whose purpose is to assess the current situation. According to this report, there are 12 main areas in which there is significant overlap, including social services, where it is not always clear which duties belong to the municipalities and which to the canton because “the distinction between these two fields of public action is difficult to make, because every community social action aims finally to improve the social and economic situation of individuals” (Groupe de travail technique (GTT) 2014, p. 8).²⁶

Our interviews with 12 local stakeholders and two focus-group discussions have shown a relatively clear consensus in the political arena regarding the necessity of keeping a strong local welfare state and on the view that it is the responsibility of the state (and e.g. not the private sector) to help vulnerable people. We may assume that this *state-oriented welfare mix*²⁷ is specific to Geneva in Switzerland, which is known to correspond to a hybrid conservative-corporatist model with liberal tendencies, according to the classical typology of Esping-Andersen (1990, pp. 74–77), or to constitute a “compromise between Liberalism and Socialism” (Möckli 1988, p. 27). Indeed, for a long time the Swiss welfare state has been considered a *welfare laggard* (Bonoli and Mach 2000, p. 140), especially regarding health insurance (which only became compulsory in 1996), family policy and long-term unemployment benefits. But this *welfare laggard* reputation has to be taken with a grain of salt. Indeed, Möckli (1988, pp. 24–25) has shown the pioneering character of some social and political laws, for instance, laws regarding the social protection of children in factories (1815)²⁸ and the first Swiss factory law of 1877, which introduced

²⁵ One of the innovations selected for study by the WILCO project was one of the organisations involved in implementing this “communitarian” work at the city level, namely the UAC (Union for Community Action), which is located in four areas of the city and whose principal aims are to connect relevant associations with interested civil-society participants and, therefore, to reinforce collective action through better coordination and networking (City of Geneva 2014).

²⁶ Original quotation: “La distinction entre ces deux champs d’action publique pour sa part reste malaisée, toute action sociales communautaire visant au final à l’amélioration de la situation sociale ou économique d’individus” (Groupe de travail technique (GTT) 2014, p. 8).

²⁷ By welfare mix, we mean the interplay of public and private (non- and for-profit) organisations in the steering, planning and providing of social welfare services, or “the combination of different actors and sectors involved in coproducing welfare programs, services and/or goods” (Oosterlynck et al. 2013, p. 19). To examine the welfare mix is also to examine the diversity of the organisations involved.

²⁸ The two pioneering cantons were Zurich and Thurgau, which were the first jurisdictions in Europe to pass legislation in favour of child labourers in factories, although it did not have any

the 11-h day, pioneering legislation for continental Europe. And more recently, as Cattacin (2006, p. 49) has demonstrated, the 1970s were a decade of growth for the Swiss welfare state, in contrast to other European states, which had already begun cutting their social spending by then. Furthermore, the specificities of federalism result in complex cohabitations between public and private structures, between the state, the economy and civil society (Cattacin 2006, p. 50), which can lead to the belief that the welfare state at the federal level is weak. But the author underlines that today the Swiss federal welfare model, rather than being an exception, has become an international reference point for individualisation and *activation* processes:

The transformations of *welfare pluralism* in Switzerland in recent years have resulted in the fact that it no longer is an exception, retarded, particularly complex or catching up, or reveals a counter-tendency, but has instead become an international reference point for the individualisation of responsibilities, the activation of citizens and even the strengthening of incentives and the moderation of the different welfare providers (Cattacin 2006, p. 69).²⁹

Also, Swiss pensions and unemployment benefits tend to be generous in comparison with those of other European countries (Bonoli and Mach 2000, p. 140). As regards innovative and pioneering social policies, in short, Geneva once had the reputation of having both.

6.3 Pioneering Local Welfare State?

According to a newspaper article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Geneva was once “a future-oriented laboratory for Switzerland [...]” (Büchi 2012). It was the first canton, together with the Canton of Vaud, to introduce the right to vote for Swiss women in 1959, long before it was introduced at the federal level in 1971 and in other cantons. According to the same article, Geneva also had progressive urban planning and the most generous social policies of all the cantons, thanks to its expanding financial sector. But the article also claims that Geneva’s potential for innovation has run its course, and that “today, the Republic of Geneva is only a shadow of its former self” (Büchi 2012).

Even if it seems true, at first glance, that Geneva has actually lost its force to propose future-oriented projects and policies, some recent examples regarding Geneva’s pioneering³⁰ social policies can still be found. Indeed, in 1991, Geneva was

impact (Möckli 1988, p. 24).

²⁹ Original quotation: “Les transformations du welfare pluralism en Suisse durant ces dernières années en font aujourd’hui non plus un cas exceptionnel, retardé, particulièrement complexe ou encore en récupération en contre tendance, mais une référence internationale en ce qui concerne l’individualisation des responsabilités, l’activation des citoyens ou encore l’incitation et la modulation des acteurs producteurs de bien-être” (Cattacin 2006, p. 69).

³⁰ Of course, what is pioneering in a certain context is not necessarily so in another. In this example, the context is the Swiss Confederation. We will return to this point when defining precisely what we mean by social innovation.

the first and only canton to introduce the right for undocumented children to go to school (Halle 2011). In 2001, it implemented maternity leave at the cantonal level, while it was only adopted federally in 2005, exactly 60 years after a right to maternity leave at the federal level was inscribed in the constitution, and this only after having been rejected four times by popular vote. Even so, federal maternity leave benefits are quite minimal—14 weeks of paid maternity leave at 80% of the last salary—and address only working mothers or those who are at least registered with the unemployment office.

This example illustrates the function of the federal state: It intervenes only when it has to fulfil shortcomings in cantonal regulations and when broad coalitions at the national level demand its support to implement social policies that are not developed enough at the cantonal level (Cattacin 1996). Indeed, as said before, social policies are mainly managed at the cantonal and city levels, the three levels—federal, cantonal and municipal—cohabitating in *multilevel governance*, based on the constitution and history of the Swiss Confederation, which is directly linked with the principle of direct democracy, and which itself requires negotiations between all actors that could potentially, and easily, launch a referendum against new laws. The *path dependency* characteristic of Switzerland³¹—the decentralisation or *rescaling* of social policies—seems to be common to most European countries, according to Kazepov:

As a reaction to the crisis of the welfare state, reform processes—in their double meaning of vertical and horizontal subsidiarisation—produced a steady shift from a vertical towards a horizontal coordination of social policies, which finds its ideal level of implementation in the local dimension. Despite the fact that these tendencies are common to most European countries, the development and institutionalisation of the new governance arrangements do not converge. On the contrary, the results of these processes of change seem to produce a territorially structured diversification [...]. This diversification varies according to socio-economic context and institutional arrangements, with all the specificities this might entail: from a high degree of freedom of the *Comunidades Autonomas* in Spain, the *Länder* in Germany or the Cantons in Switzerland, to the relatively low intranational differentiation in France (Kazepov 2010, p. 49).

But this cantonal jurisdiction over social policy does not explain why Geneva's social policies often exceed the minimal federal level and tend to be generous by Swiss standards. In their article “Swiss Worlds of Welfare” (Armingeon et al. 2004), the authors explain the significant variation in cantonal *welfare regimes* by socio-economic variables and above all by the degree of urbanisation, which seems to be positively correlated with the election of left-wing parties, which favour a state-oriented welfare policy. According to the authors:

³¹ The Swiss Constitution, which was adopted in 1874, did not grant any jurisdiction over social policies to the federal state. In 1890, a popular vote made it constitutionally possible for the first time for the Swiss Confederation to create national social policies through legislation. This vote was a key moment in the establishment of a national welfare state, which became increasingly powerful. This constitutional change resulted in the adoption in 1911 of the first national health and accident insurance (implemented in 1914 and 1918, respectively), and in the adoption of the old-age pension in 1946 (implemented in 1948). See (Gilliand 1988, pp. 55–57) for details.

Urbanisation is obviously a major socio-economic explanatory variable for cantonal social security systems. Left-wing power is strongly and positively correlated with urbanisation (0.64): the more urban a canton, the higher the share of left-wing parties in government. On the other hand, the more rural a region, the better the odds for centrist parties (correlation with urbanisation: -0.54). In contrast, the power of right-liberal government is not significantly related to urbanisation. Hence, one could argue that urbanisation is the major background variable explaining both worlds of welfare and the political strength of the left in Swiss cantons (Armingeon et al. 2004, p. 39).

Accordingly, Geneva's high degree of urbanisation should tend to favour left-wing parties and could therefore explain the state-oriented development of social policies. Moreover, Armingeon et al. (2004) categorise the Canton of Geneva as a social-democratic regime for three out of four of their selected variables,³² emphasising that it is one of the only cantons to possess a somewhat coherent welfare regime. It is also the only one that can be classified as social-democratic in the country (Armingeon et al. 2004, pp. 34–35).

6.4 Actors and Power Relations Around Social Policies

These interrogations raise the question of who are the actors who define social policies and the values behind them. According to Neidhart (1970, pp. 287 ff., 294, 313) and Kriesi and Jegen (2001), direct democracy implies that political projects are largely debated in the administrative or pre-parliamentary arena and that these debates have to integrate negotiations from all kinds of actors to avoid the launching of a referendum against the proposed law or project. So direct democracy often implies the finding of a consensus between the implied actors, and sometimes, when the debate is very conflictual, we can speak about a compromise rather than a consensus. According to Sabatier (1991, 1998), the actors are constituted in competing *advocacy coalitions*³³ within a policy subsystem³⁴ that share a common belief system organised around *core values* and *secondary aspects*. Within the *core values*, he

³² The four variables are employment, education, taxation and social security.

³³ "An advocacy coalition consists of actors from many public and private organizations at all levels of government who share a set of basic beliefs (policy goals plus causal and other perceptions) and who seek to manipulate the rules of various governmental institutions to achieve those goals over time" (Sabatier 1991, pp. 151; 153). These coalitions develop power relations, which result in the emergence of majorities and minorities. Another definition is provided by Kriesi et al. (2006, p. 342): "[...] at a given moment, in a given subsystem, we are likely to find a limited number of coalitions with varying influence on the political processes within the subsystem. [...] Coalitions can be composed of one type of actor only (homogeneous), or they can incorporate different actor types (heterogeneous)."

³⁴ "A subsystem consists of actors from a variety of public and private organizations who are actively concerned with a policy problem or issue, [...] and who regularly seek to influence public policy in that domain" (Sabatier 1998, p. 99).

distinguishes the *deep core*, meaning fundamental normative and ontological axioms, from the *policy core*, which are the strategies used to achieve the core values. Furthermore, Sabatier argues that the coalitions and core values remain relatively stable for a decade or longer and are therefore difficult to change. So policy learning most often only applies to the *secondary aspects*, which comprise a multitude of instrumental decisions that are necessary to implement the policy core. Kriesi et al. (2006, pp. 342–343), building on Sabatier’s theory regarding advocacy coalitions and the *power distribution* between them, add the idea of a *relational perspective* on the policy process. According to this theory, power is either fragmented or concentrated, and the type of interaction is characterised by the predominance of conflicts, bargaining or cooperation.

Of course, these policy-specific power structures are determined by the macro-political context, meaning, among other things, the extent to which political actors are induced to co-operate informally (related to the distribution of power) and the policy phase, assuming that the type of interaction becomes more conflictual in critical policy phases. The power relations vary from one policy domain to another. According to Kriesi et al. (2006), Switzerland’s distribution of power is clearly fragmented and interaction tends to be cooperative rather than conflictual. But this does not mean that consensus democracies cannot be conflictual or bargaining as well, depending on the political issue involved.

Based on these theoretical findings, we assume that in Geneva, with respect to direct democracy and the *welfare mix*, which includes by necessity a fragmentation of power, state actors (state/city councillors and the related civil servants, often themselves members of political parties) and political parties are the dominant actors in determining local welfare policies. Therefore, they have a strong impact on defining the welfare state’s core values. If, following the principle of subsidiarity, non-profit organisations play an important role in welfare provision and are part of the debate, we expect their core values to largely be in line with those of the state, not least because of the important state subsidies they receive. In other words, we hypothesise that the above-mentioned groups dominate the advocacy coalitions that shape the core values of social policies, and that their goal in public debate is to link themselves with state-oriented welfare services, which develop from the values defined by them. In turn, we assume that the presence of this “strong” welfare state legitimises the predominance of political parties and state actors in public debate, leading to a sort of virtuous circle in which fundamental changes in values, and therefore in policies, are difficult to make. Following this logic, we assume that policy innovation therefore tends to be incremental, remaining within the existing logic of state orientation.

Finally, we may also attribute the predominance of political parties and stakeholders from the public administration to the influence of neighbouring France, where power is more centralised. In this sense, Geneva presents a certain concentration of power and conflictual and ideological debates between political parties that

challenge state-centred administration and its stakeholders, sometimes leading to political deadlock.³⁵

Following these assumptions, it is first necessary to examine the development of political forces in Geneva over the past two decades. We may then apprehend the core values of the local welfare state, especially in the fields of unemployment and childcare.

6.4.1 *Canton of Geneva: From Two Coalitions to Three (and a Half)*

As said before, Geneva has two elected assemblies: a cantonal parliament and a city council.³⁶

The cantonal parliament (*Grand Conseil*) comprises 100 members who are elected by popular vote for 5 years,³⁷ according to a proportional-representation electoral system. At the city level, the 80 members of the city council (*Conseil Municipal*) are elected every 4 years. There has been an important evolution in the constellations of power within these two legislative bodies over the past two decades. Regarding the composition of the Grand Conseil, between 1993 and 2001, there were only two (mutually opposed) coalitions: the *Entente* (centre-conservative parties, including the Liberals, the Radicals³⁸ and the Christian Democratic Party) and the Alternative (left-wing parties, including the Socialists, the Greens and the Labour Party, the latter becoming the Left Alliance³⁹ between 1993 and 2001). Traditionally, except in

³⁵ Examples of political deadlock are the linking of the two shores of Lake Geneva (footnote 22) and the expansion of the main railway station, which provoked lively debates and mobilised the inhabitants of the area behind the railway station; see, for instance, Pasteur and Armanios (2011). But also in Geneva, there is a desire for more political pragmatism and less ideology. One example is the recent cross-party group, which includes members of all political parties except the Swiss People's Party (UDC), to start a pilot project to regulate the consumption of cannabis through Cannabis Consumer Associations; see, for instance, Zünd (2014).

³⁶ Of course, all the other 44 municipalities also have their own city councils.

³⁷ The mandate can be renewed indefinitely. Before the introduction of the new cantonal constitution in 2013 (accepted in October 2012), members were elected for 4 years (République et canton de Genève 2012a, Arts. 80–81; Arts. 101–102).

³⁸ The Liberal Party and the Radical Party merged and became the Liberal-Radicals in 2013, after having lost four seats in the 2009 elections (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2013a).

³⁹ The Labour Party sat in the cantonal legislature from 1945 to 1989. In 1989 it was renamed the Left Alliance and gathered various far-left coalitions (for instance Solidarités and Independants). The party changed its name again in 2005 to the Ensemble à Gauche. It continues to group various far-left coalitions and sometimes struggles with internal divisions. Together with the Greens and the Socialists, it constitutes the so-called Alternative, in opposition to the Entente. It is interesting to note that the Ensemble à Gauche was absent from the cantonal legislature between 2005 and 2013. For more information, see the official statistics of the canton (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2013a).

the 1997 election,⁴⁰ the centre-conservative parties have always held a majority in the cantonal legislature. But since 2001, the legislature has also included the clearly right-wing Swiss People's Party⁴¹ (UDC: *Union Démocratique du Centre*), and from 2005 on the Geneva Citizens' Movement (MCG: *Mouvement Citoyen Genevois*), which bases its programme on the protection of Geneva's residents from the "invasion" of cross-border workers. This new party made a dramatic entry. Between 2005 and 2013, it increased its seats from 9 to 20, and it also placed one member in the cantonal executive in 2013. The fact that the MCG shared a common list for the elections of the 2013 executive with the far-right UDC allows us to assume that it lies at the right end of the political spectrum, even though it claims to be "neither right nor left",⁴² a dichotomy that it claims is "history" and is perpetuated by political parties that do not respond to the needs of Geneva's population.

So, regarding the cantonal parliament, we can speak about the end of an era of polarisation between left (*Alternative*) and centre-conservative parties (*Entente*), in favour of the existence of three or even four groups and a situation in which there is no longer any clear majority, and where the "historical parties" have to compete with far-right and populist parties, the latter (MCG) alternating between right and left ideologies, depending on the issue.⁴³ Overall, the right is more powerful in parliament.⁴⁴

The cantonal executive⁴⁵ is also dominated by representatives from the centre-conservative and right-wing parties. Except after the 2005 election, when four members of the *Alternative*⁴⁶ faced three members of the *Entente*, the executive has always been right wing. As mentioned before, what was new in the 2013 elections was the election of one member of the MCG, placing the two members of the *Alternative* (one Socialist and one Green) in a very marginalised position.

The cantonal governance of Geneva historically has always been consistently conservative, a stability that is currently being challenged by the presence of the self-styled "non-determined" populist party MCG. At city council, however, until 2011 the forces were exactly the opposite.

⁴⁰ In 1997, the *Alternative* won a majority with 51 of the 100 seats (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2013a).

⁴¹ The translation of the *Union Démocratique du Centre* as the Swiss People's Party follows the party's original name, which is *Schweizerische Volkspartei*.

⁴² "Neither left nor right" (MCG—*Mouvement Citoyen Genevois* 2014b).

⁴³ Some argue that the MCG is on the left on social issues and on the right on security, European and immigration issue (Favre 2013).

⁴⁴ Composition of the Geneva cantonal parliament 2013: *Entente* 35, *Alternative* 34, UDC 11 and MCG 20 (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2013a).

⁴⁵ The cantonal executive is composed of seven state councillors who are elected directly by the population by majority vote. Since the 2012 change to the Geneva Constitution (entered into force in 2013), they are elected for 5 years. One member is designated president for the whole period and is the head of the newly constituted presidential department. The other six members are each in charge of a specific department (*République et canton de Genève* 2012b).

⁴⁶ Two Socialists and two Greens for one Radical, one Liberal and one representative of the Christian Democratic Party (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2013b).

6.4.2 *The City of Geneva: From the Dominance of the Left to Complex Coalitions*

From 1995 to 2011,⁴⁷ the Alternative held an absolute majority in Geneva's city council. It is interesting to note that in 1999, the Left Alliance, a coalition of far-left parties, was the most important party in city council, before the Socialists, which are the most important party today, followed directly by the Liberal-Radicals. As in the cantonal parliament, city council is no longer composed of its two opposite coalitions (*Entente* and *Alternative*); instead, since 2003, and especially since 2011, it has also included the two "newcomers": the Swiss People's Party⁴⁸ (UDC, far right) and the Geneva Citizens' Movement (MCG). So, since the 2011 election, with 39 of 80 seats, the Alternative has been just shy of an absolute majority and is obliged to seek some alliances outside of its long-term coalition, for instance with the MCG or the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), which can sometimes tilt the balance towards their political preferences. As in the canton, the minority parties have the power to tilt the balance between the two "traditional" coalitions, if we assume that the latter vote as a bloc in accordance with their parties' instructions. As we will see below, however, things are not always that simple: Internal conflicts (above all within the far-left coalition) and moving coalitions depending on the policy issue involved are affecting the stability of the established coalitions.

At the executive level, things are more stable. From 1991 to 2011, the left had a majority—three out of five seats between 1991 and 1999, and four out of five between 1999 and 2011.⁴⁹ So we have to keep in mind that the executive's majority is no longer the same as that of the city council on which it relies, which creates additional tensions and sometimes causes political debates to take a long time when the issues are conflictual. One current example is the finally accepted renovation of *Les Minoteries*, a complex of 329 subsidised apartments owned by the city whose maintenance has been neglected for the past 40 years. The executive proposed a renovation of 90 million CHF (about 72 million €). The proposal was rejected twice

⁴⁷ Composition of the city-council coalitions from 1991 to 2011. 1991 Entente 40, Alternative 40; 1995: Entente 36, Alternative 44; 1999 Entente 36, Alternative 44; 2003 Entente 27, Alternative 44, UDC (far right) 9; 2007 Entente 29, Alternative 42, UDC 9; 2011 Entente 22, Alternative 39, UDC 8, MCG (populist) 11 (République et canton de Genève 2014).

⁴⁸ In fact, the Swiss People's Party (UDC) may be new in Geneva, but it is well established in the Swiss-German part of the country, being the predominant party in several regions. For an analysis of this party, see Mazzoleni (2008).

⁴⁹ Executive, City of Geneva: 1991 Liberals 1, Radicals 1, Socialists 1, Greens 1, Labour Party 1; 1995 same as in 1991, but instead of Labour Party, Left Alliance; 1999 Liberals 1, Socialists 1, Labour Party 1, Left Alliance 1; 2003 same as 1999. 2007 Radicals 1, Socialists 2, Greens 1, À Gauche Toute 1 (new name for the Left Alliance); 2011 same as 2003, but À Gauche Toute became Ensemble à Gauche (Together on the Left). In 2012 a by-election replaced the radical magistrate with a member of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC). Note that the composition of the Left Alliance/Labour Party and its name changed for every election, so we can assume that the Left Alliance's coalition is not stable at all. Source: (Office cantonal de la statistique—OCSTAT/Chancellerie d'Etat 2012).

by city council, and debates have been heated between the Alternative, which favoured the renovation and the rest of the council (*Entente*, UDC and MCG), which was opposed, principally because of the cost, demanding for a third time that the project be scaled down. Finally, a narrow majority accepted the renovation.⁵⁰

6.5 Core Values and Strategies in the Political Arena

During these lively debates, the different parties' core values become clear, as they do in the different party programmes⁵¹ and in our interviews and focus groups. We will focus on the core values regarding the local welfare state and specify the coalitions that have emerged for specific policy issues. Unemployment⁵² and childcare will serve to illustrate concrete policy orientations.

6.5.1 *More or Less State Intervention?*

In Geneva, core oppositions between political parties regarding the local welfare state are transforming the *importance of the state*, the fields of its interventions and how far its contributions are expected to go. It is not surprising that the more the parties can be categorised as being “on the left”, the more the state's intervention is legitimated. For the Socialists, the state has a crucial role to play in the construction of society, which is based on *solidarity*, a *society of opportunities and equalities*, not of privileges. Other notions such as *redistribution*, *access to public services*, *gender equality* and *jobs for all* are the core values (deep core) indicated in their 40-page programme for the 2013–2018 cantonal legislature.⁵³ The Left Alliance's policies are similar, but it emphasises class struggle and advocates policies that

⁵⁰ The third and final debate took place on 25 March 2014 at City Hall. These debates are always broadcast by *Léman Bleu*, the local television channel. The renovation project was finally accepted by a vote of 38 (the Alternative and two Independents) to 36 (*Entente*, UDC, MCG, the conservative, far-right and populist parties). There was one abstention (a member of the Greens), see Dethurens (2014).

⁵¹ Cantonal and city party programmes being identical, no distinction between the two levels has to be made.

⁵² In Switzerland, the economic crisis at the end of the 1980s marked a turning point regarding unemployment policies. In 1995, following the recommendation of the OECD Making Work Pay (Giraud 2007, p. 96), the Federal Unemployment Law was revised in the direction of workfare, activation, reciprocity and increased control over the unemployed. But this logic has been implemented in different ways in different cantons. In Geneva, for instance, the focus has been on reintegration or even inclusion rather than control (Giraud 2007, p. 100). Since 1995, the cantons have had to fill the gap left by the reduction of federal assistance and implement social-assistance measures for the long-term unemployed who have exhausted their unemployment benefits, a new phenomenon in the country.

⁵³ Party Programme of the Socialist Party of Geneva, 2013–2018 (Parti socialiste genevois 2013).

are more radical and require maximal state intervention, for instance in matters of housing, childcare, unemployment and redistribution.⁵⁴ For the Greens, the third traditional partner of these two parties, state intervention has to integrate the notion of sustainability.⁵⁵ So all three parties propose greater redistribution and take on the wealthy in the canton, which, they claim, do not contribute as much as they should to public expenses. A shared value of this coalition is that the state should be the main regulator and provider of social services.

For the conservative and far-right parties, in contrast, state intervention should be kept to a minimum and bureaucracy and state expenses must be reduced (Radical-Liberals and Swiss People's Party), or their increase has to be controlled (Christian Democratic Party), overlapping public services at the cantonal and federal levels have to be eliminated and public administration and civil servants have to be re-evaluated. Notions like *liberty*, *responsibility*, *solidarity*, *equality in rights and duties* and *prosperity* are deep core values for the Liberal-Radical Party,⁵⁶ while the Christian Democratic Party prefers a *welfare mix*, where non-profit organisations are seen as more able to solve social problems than the state⁵⁷ but for-profit organisations are also understood to be essential for the well-being of society. All the three parties propose tax reductions. The MCG proposes that social welfare be maintained, but at the same time underlines the necessity to combat social fraud⁵⁸ (this last point is crucial for the UDC too). It has also adopted the slogan "Geneva first", which is common among far-right and populist parties.⁵⁹

From these party programmes, the differences between the political parties appear insurmountable, and we wonder how it is possible for Geneva to continue to have a "strong" welfare state with more social benefits than other cantons, as was

⁵⁴ In their programme, we can find phrases such as "social resistance", "block the antisocial and antipopular politics of the right and far right" and "stop employers' abuses" (Solidarités Genève 2013).

⁵⁵ See Les Verts Genevois (2013).

⁵⁶ "The Liberal-Radical Party rejects the principle of assistance, rampant statism and all attempts at levelling on the basis that they kill personal initiative, the satisfaction derived from effort and work, entrepreneurship and exploration, all of which it promotes" (Les Libéraux-Radicaux de Genève—PLR 2013, p. 6). Original quotation: "Le PLR rejette le principe d'assistanat, l'étatisme rampant et toutes les tentatives de nivèlement par le bas qui tuent l'initiative personnelle, le goût de l'effort et du travail, la volonté d'entreprendre et d'explorer, qu'il promeut."

⁵⁷ "Indeed, the PDC believes that associations are the most effective way of promoting the politics of solidarity." Original quotation: "En effet, le PDC considère que les associations sont les plus à même de mener des politiques de solidarité" (Parti démocrate chrétien Genève 2013).

⁵⁸ Point 3 of the political charter of the party (MCG - Mouvement Citoyen Genevois 2014a).

⁵⁹ For analyses of extreme-right movements in Switzerland, see Skenderovic and D'Amato (2008) and Skenderovic (2009).

emphasised in the field of unemployment by the head of the Solidarity jobs⁶⁰ at the Cantonal Office for Employment, during his interview.⁶¹

In my sense, this is rather unique in Switzerland: we are the only canton that has so many important additional cantonal welfare measures, at the cost of about 60 million CHF,⁶² that are not covered by the LIASI.⁶³ This is real, the human part of Geneva. And there is the real will of a canton-city to have a politics that reintegrates people (iIII, p. 8).

But if we look more attentively at the core values that are mentioned in the party programmes and also by our interviewed stakeholders, we can also see shared deep core values, characterised by notions like *solidarity*, *humanism*, *individual responsibility*, *respect for people* and *equal access to social opportunities*. But with respect to the *policy core*, meaning the strategies used to attain the identified deep core, and even more the secondary aspects, we notice significant differences that correspond to classical right- and left-wing dichotomies regarding the role of the state, its legitimate fields of intervention and, consequently, the amount of public taxes that have or do not have to be spent in these fields.

This agreement about deep core values, sometimes accompanied by a massive divergence in the policy core, is particularly pronounced in the fields of childcare and unemployment.

6.5.2 *Childcare and Unemployment: State Versus Mixed Solutions*

In the field of childcare, all parties except the Swiss People's Party agree that there are insufficient numbers of childcare places available in the city and the canton.

⁶⁰ Solidarity jobs are jobs in the secondary labour market that are subsidised by the canton and target the long-term unemployed, are implemented by the Cantonal Office for Employment and were legitimised by popular vote in December 2007 (68.5% in favour), see (République et canton de Genève 2007). While the Socialists and Greens agreed with the law, the far left, including trade unions, fought against it with the argument that it would result in downward pressure on wages and the use of cheap labour for public-administration jobs. Seven years after its introduction, debates on the issue remain heated, and there is increasing opposition to Solidarity jobs, including from the current socialist mayor of the city. See Syndicat interprofessionnel de travailleuses et travailleurs (Sit) (2013) and Salerno (2013).

⁶¹ As indicated above, 12 semi-directed interviews were conducted in Geneva with local stakeholders during the WILCO research (see footnote 7) with a view to understanding their positions and core values regarding unemployment, childcare and housing, but also the local welfare system. The following topics were discussed in the interviews: the main problems and solutions in these areas; the reasons for a need to act, coalitions and the main differences between the stakeholders and between the parties in their positions and reasons for the importance or unimportance of the local welfare system. The analysis of the interviews is based on the actor-centred-institutionalism approach (Mayntz and Scharpf 1995; Scharpf 1997).

⁶² About 49 million €.

⁶³ The cantonal law regarding social assistance and social inclusion.

There is a fundamental agreement about the need to increase the number of child-care places, the legitimacy of childcare outside the family and the idea of the *social investment state*.⁶⁴ But the strategies the parties advocate to attain this aim differ, the left advocating public childcare places, funded by public taxes and standardised by public regulations and norms, including qualification criteria for its personnel, the far-right and conservative parties demanding more of a welfare mix with public–private partnerships, enterprise nurseries, nannies, etc., and less state regulation.

Regarding unemployment, coalitions are moving regarding *secondary aspects*. Traditionally, right-wing parties advocate individual responsibility and claim that it is up to the individual to adapt to structural changes in the labour market and make the main effort to (re)integrate. By contrast, left-wing parties stress structural problems, the inadequacy of the jobs on offer, and the need to reform the labour market itself, for instance by adapting it to help resolve long-term unemployment by creating a subsidised labour market for some employment areas, as was the case with the Solidarity jobs. So while the *core* legitimacy of the Solidarity jobs was not really questioned, the concrete application caused lively debates and disagreements inside the leftist coalition itself, mostly regarding the type of contracts and the pay. Finally the far left (including the trade unions) was and continues to be opposed to the Solidarity jobs, criticising their tendency to reduce wages and their poor working conditions. Surprisingly, the conservative and far-right parties (and the employers' association) accepted the idea, not without difficulty, of creating this secondary labour market for long-term unemployment, but only under certain circumstances (salary below the market prices, no competition with the private sector).

These two examples show us that political parties agree on the fundamental *deep core* of the existence of a local welfare state, which guarantees protection and help in case of need. Conflicts therefore revolve around the *amount* of financial assistance, for instance, or who the *provider* of the services should be. But we may assume that the shared deep core values are relatively stable⁶⁵ and that discussions and consensus or compromise occur with respect to the policy core and especially secondary aspects.

As stated above, debates take often place in pre-parliamentary arenas, as a result of which coalitions also include non-state actors. According to the previously quoted head of the Solidarity jobs, the creation of these jobs was a real partnership. Before the law was passed, we had people around the table who were in favour or against. We reflected together on what the legislation should look like. It was a first in terms of partnership (iIII/p. 8).

This partnership between different stakeholders seems to indicate that political parties and civil servants in the public administration have to take associations (for

⁶⁴ For a constructive critique of the social investment state, see Vandenbroucke and Vleminckx (2011).

⁶⁵ Even the Swiss People's Party speaks about the "need to guarantee social security for future generations" (UDC 2013, p. 27) but argues that the best way to do so is through "more market, less bureaucracy, less state regulation" (UDC 2013, p. 29). Regarding childcare, it claims that a child will never feel better than at home with its family (UDC 2013, p. 25).

instance, non-profits) into account in debates or even look to their expertise. Other interviewees stated that non-profit-sector lobbies carry a certain weight in political debates, which would seem to contradict our claim that social policies are above all shaped by state actors and political parties. Indeed, it is clear that the canton and the city often work with non-profit organisations in the field of social policies. But what about the for-profit sector? How *mixed* is Geneva's welfare system, and what does it indicate about its governance and the distribution of power and type of interaction? And lastly, what about *social innovation*? Are the local welfare *governance arrangements* favourable to social innovation?

6.6 Geneva's Welfare Governance Arrangements: State and Non-Profit Without For-Profit? What About Social Innovation?

Debates about social innovation have given rise to a large body of literature in the social sciences. The concept itself is ambiguous and has become a confusing “buzz-word”, as underlined by Moulaert et al. (2013, p. 13):

In our opinion, the lack of clarity about the term “social innovation” can be attributed not only to its evolving analytical status but also to its over-simplistic use as a buzzword in a multiplicity of policy practices associated, for example, with the rationalization of the welfare state and the commodification of sociocultural wellbeing. The appropriation of the term by “caring liberalism”, in one of its new incarnations, has added to a Babel-like terminological confusion. (Moulaert et al. 2013, p. 13)

Following the definition of Oosterlynck et al., social innovations are “locally embedded practices, actions and policies that help socially excluded and impoverished individuals and social groups to satisfy basic needs for which they find no adequate solution in the private market or institutionalized welfare policies through processes of social learning, collective action and awareness raising” (2013, p. 4).

So while one important aspect of *social innovation* is that it occurs on the local level, it must also be understood over a larger scale and be spread by collective action. According to Evers and Ewert, social innovation also involves the novelty of an idea in the given context. Social innovations are ideas, turned into practical approaches; which are new in the context where they appear; attracting hopes for better coping strategies and solutions; marked by a high degree of risk and uncertainty due inter alia to the specific context wherein they appear. [...] Social innovations are, in a significant way, new and disruptive toward the routines and structures prevailing in a given (welfare) system or local setting (Evers and Ewert 2014, p. 11).

It is obvious that what is new in a certain context is not necessarily so in another. As a result, *social innovation* can be overlooked by researchers if the practice is already well known in other countries or localities.

In Geneva, the policies analysed by the WILCO project⁶⁶ and the social innovations pursued⁶⁷ reveal a welfare system in which the state (either the canton or the city), and particularly the stakeholders in the public administration, has the predominant role in establishing social policies and concrete programmes, backed (more or less) by the political parties. However, in the matter of the *delivery* of social services, the state relies on non-profit organisations where possible. These organisations are heavily subsidised, and their rules and programmes are built on those of the public service. Indeed, the Solidarity jobs are subsidised by the canton and located *only* in non-profit organisations, creating a secondary labour market. Subsidies are therefore given directly to the relevant associations, which *execute* the decided measure (to give work to long-term unemployed individuals far from the primary labour market). Other programmes and measures, such as the social innovations examined here, reveal the same tendency, where for-profit actors are either absent or marginal.⁶⁸

In contrast, regarding for instance the integration of (young) unemployed individuals, the City of Bern has chosen to build coalitions with economic partners and creates job opportunities in the primary labour market. These public-private partnerships are initiated and coordinated by the state and are a type of “quasi-market solution”⁶⁹ (Felder 2013, p. 25) to unemployment.

In Geneva, the welfare *governance arrangements*, which favour the interplay between the state and non-profit organisations, and in which economic actors are absent, raise different issues. Battaglini et al. (2001, p. 18) demonstrate the relatively high degree of autonomy of non-profit organisations to realise public policies in the Swiss context. But they also emphasise their weak formal recognition by the state,

⁶⁶ The policy fields examined by the WILCO project (running time 2010–2013) were childcare, subsidised housing and unemployment.

⁶⁷ The three social innovations that were examined during the WILCO project were as follows. (1) The UAC, which is part of the city’s Social Service, and which has four offices, located in different areas of the city. Its principal aim is to connect relevant associations with interested participants in civil society and, therefore, to reinforce collective action through better coordination and networking. (2) The ORIF project, an NGO that works to reintegrate young marginalised adults who experience multiple difficulties (health, disabilities, learning problems, etc.) that hinder them from entering the labour market. Support is long term (3 years) and multi-dimensional. The project is funded by the Office for Disability Insurance and is therefore a public programme. (3) The Unit for Temporary Housing (ULT) offers subsidised, temporary housing to vulnerable populations, taking into account various dimensions of social marginalisation by offering support from a team employed by the city. More information about these three innovations can be found in the relevant chapter of the e-book of the project (Kakpo and Cattacin 2014, pp. 367–380).

⁶⁸ This is the case for the ORIF project (see previous footnote). Its Geneva office, located in Vernier, focuses primarily on education and training rather than on professional integration but with the aim of building partnerships with private enterprises. However, the ORIF project is not specific to Geneva but was instead created by a medical doctor in the Canton of Vaud in 1948 and implemented in nine locations in the French speaking cantons. The office in Vernier opened in 2007 (ORIF 2014).

⁶⁹ In fact, the subsidies are part of the wage; for instance, if an individual working in a private company can only work part-time because of a disability, the state provides the other half of the salary. That is why it is only a “quasi-market solution”.

not least because of a certain mistrust of these collective actors (2001, pp. 55, 58). Furthermore, non-profit organisations run the risk of being instrumentalised by the state, of being asked to *act* in neglected fields. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to clearly define the border separating the state from non-profit organisations, whose intertwined nature contributes to the blurring of that border. For Evers (2000, 2005), the borders between the different providers of social services have to be questioned and newly defined, because

changes in the development of welfare states (such as trends towards more autonomy of single service organizations and an increasing intertwining between state and market spheres), linked with a stronger impact of new forms of participation in civil society, have led to a hybridization process in many organizations that provide social services. [...] It is often hard to say where the third sector ends and the public sector begins. Drawing a line between the state-public and the third sector is thus an essentially political task (Evers 2005, p. 745).

In Geneva, it is not so much that the public sector is influenced by non-profit organisations, as it is that non-profit organisations have to adapt to the regulations and logic of the public sector.

So, in a context characterised by a strong state actor, dependent non-profit organisations that tend to be instrumentalised and the clear separation of social policy and private economic activity, what about social innovation?

In the social policies we analysed,⁷⁰ we witness innovation in governance (consultation between the public administration, political parties and non-profit organisations), for instance, for the Solidarity jobs. Regarding the Union for Community Action,⁷¹ the innovation involves the ways in which users are addressed, regulations and rights, modes of working and financing. But our observations did not reveal innovations in the *nature* of the local welfare system—for example, outreach to all sectors of the local welfare system, decreased standardisation and increased diversification of welfare arrangements, increased reliance on community components such as families and support networks in mixed welfare systems, the integration of economic and social logics or the integration of welfare and urban politics (Evers and Ewert 2014, pp. 22–24). Furthermore, the instrumentalisation of non-profit organisations by the state is not indicative of a major social innovation because “this instrumentalisation of organisations issued out of civil society runs the risk of destroying their potential for innovation and the renewal of grassroots democracy” (Battaglini et al. 2001, p. 58).⁷²

This does not mean that non-profit organisations in Geneva cannot propose any innovative ideas but rather that the canton or city puts its *pattern* on them. Furthermore, what could be identified as bottom-up initiatives at first glance actually

⁷⁰ For the innovations investigated by the WILCO project, see footnote 68.

⁷¹ See footnote 68.

⁷² Original quotation: “[...] cette instrumentalisation des organisations issues de la société civile risque de mener à la destruction de leur potentiel d’innovation et de renouvellement de la démocratie de proximité”.

correspond to city policy: Citizens are “encouraged” by the city to organise⁷³ and express themselves. Since 2008, the City of Geneva has for example set up some “district” or “neighbourhood contracts” that enable people from the area to express themselves in working groups or neighbourhood assemblies.⁷⁴ Or social innovation is linked to citizens’ everyday lives, to their active involvement, which is part of the design of the local welfare state and has to be included in the analysis of the governance (Evers 2005). It is not surprising that Geneva has the lowest rate of formal and informal volunteering in Switzerland (Gundelach et al. 2010; Kettenacker and Cattacin 2008; Office fédéral de la statistique (OFS) 2011, pp. 7–10).⁷⁵ Or active citizen involvement is also part of bottom-up initiatives, which are a key component of innovative social policies (Oosterlynck et al. 2013, p. 4).

An interesting hypothesis for this low degree of citizen engagement is the lack of an established city identity, or in other words, “the identity of not having one” (Cattacin and Kettenacker 2011). This could explain why the city tries so hard to provide a link between the citizens and the “international” city.

These considerations lead us to conclude that Geneva’s social innovations tend to be incremental and happen above all within state services, and that, because of attempts to control spending, new services are rarely created. Therefore, social innovations tend to be initiated from the top or are quickly regulated and standardised by the state. This state orientation is in line with the key *core values* of the welfare state as outlined in this chapter. Indeed, we think that the strong state orientation in Geneva, preoccupied by rising inequality over the past two decades (Beer 2013, pp. 35–44), results from its desire to safeguard *equality* and *solidarity* among citizens, values that are shared by the stakeholders and political parties. But we also witness state control over social and urban policies and the wish to remain the legitimate source of them.

6.7 Conclusion

According to a former state councillor, Geneva’s governance is like a machine built by the famous artist Tinguely: “his nuts and bolts are very complex”.⁷⁶ In this chapter, we have demonstrated that Geneva’s welfare governance follows a more traditional social-welfare policy approach in which the state endorse social responsibility for its citizens and adopts the leading role in the production and distribution of services. Furthermore, political parties and state administration prevail in deciding which social policies are adopted. In this dynamic, economic considerations are

⁷³ An example is the annual Neighbours Day (La fête des voisins). Invitations can be downloaded from the city’s website. Neighbours Day began in Paris in 2000 and is now celebrated in 1400 cities in 36 countries). Geneva participated for the first time in 2004 (Ville de Genève 2014b).

⁷⁴ For further information, see Ville de Genève (2013).

⁷⁵ In general, engagement in informal and formal volunteering is much more important in the Swiss-German parts of the country than in the French-speaking parts.

⁷⁶ Public conference, 07.04.2014, University of Geneva.

not related to social policies but handled separately. Furthermore, in its approach to social policies, Geneva focuses on *social problems* and aims to integrate or *include* those who suffer from social exclusion, or, even better, to avoid having socially *vulnerable* individuals become socially excluded.⁷⁷ Key values are equality and solidarity. To fulfil social policies, the state relies essentially on non-profit organisations whose mandates are in accord with the public sector. As a result, non-profits run the risk of being instrumentalised by the state.

In Geneva, it is difficult to implement anything other than incremental social innovation for several reasons. First, conflicts between the two state levels involved in Geneva's governance (overlooking the governance of the *Grand Genève*) coupled, second, with the constitutional possibility of vetoes (by the two levels of government and also by popular referendum) are a clear obstacle to social innovation. While Czada (2003, p. 175) argued that these veto-structures are compensated for by a strong, stable, legislative majority, such is no longer the case in Geneva, whose politics are challenged by two "newcomer" parties. Third, moving coalitions in the political arena in recent years and the fact that there is no clear majority often leads to long and heated debates, and we can hypothesise that the consequence is that possible innovations are not adopted in a timely manner. Fourth, a strong state orientation, which excludes partners from the private for-profit sector and whose structures and routines are difficult to change, decreases the likelihood that any social innovations other than incremental ones are adopted and favours "top-down" innovations over "bottom-up" ones. We also witness "weak active citizenship" in Geneva. The question of whether the observed state orientation is responsible for this lack of civil participation or if it is vice versa remains open.

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⁷⁷ The distinction between social exclusion and social vulnerability has emerged together with the emergence of the concept of new social risks, which are the most difficult challenge facing welfare systems today. According to Ranci, social vulnerability does not mean permanent poverty but instead "is characterized by instability in a context of harsh constraints. Social vulnerability can be considered as a situation concerning individuals who are at the intersection of risk of poverty, severe material deprivation, and unemployment or inactivity" (Ranci et al. 2014, p. 17).

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Chapter 7

Milan: A City Lost in the Transition from the Growth Machine Paradigm Towards a Social Innovation Approach

Giuliana Costa, Roberta Cucca and Rossana Torri

7.1 Introduction: Milan and Its Pragmatism in Local Welfare

Milan is considered to be the economic and financial capital of Italy. The apex of the former industrial triangle with Genoa and Turin in the Fordist era, it was one of the main destinations of internal migration from southern regions during the 1950s–1970s period. Employment demand was very high, and it was a key factor in the social inclusion and upward mobility of newcomers. Employment opportunities also fostered the city’s capacity to pragmatically develop and consolidate social

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solidarity networks and supports. A deep-rooted tradition stemming from a mediaeval religious principle defined “Milanese citizenship” as a status that anybody coming to the city could obtain by contributing to its welfare through work (Sabatinelli and Costa 2014; Costa and Sabatinelli 2013).

Until the 1980s (and since the end of WWII), Milan was also a highly dynamic context in terms of welfare provision, given that the municipal government was a very important actor in designing and providing social services, especially through huge investment in social and educational policies, sometimes also in some sort of competition with the national government (Agnoletto, 2006). This favourable situation started to change and deteriorate at the beginning of the 1990s, when the city was profoundly shaken by a far-reaching corruption scandal known as *Tangentopoli* (Bribesville). The “moral” capital of the country (so called also in opposition to Rome, the city of “opaque powers” and bureaucracy) thus in some way lost its image as the place where business and ethics went hand in hand.

After the political collapse of the early 1990s and the introduction of the direct election of mayors in 1993,¹ 20 years of centre-right local governments followed, first with a Northern League majority (1993–1997) and then for 14 years with mayors from Berlusconi’s party (Costa and Sabatinelli 2013). In that period, the political coalition governing the city changed the approach to welfare. Social services started to be considered more as charitable actions for the most disadvantaged individuals than tools of social integration helpful for the economic growth of the city as a whole. Public expenditure devoted to sustaining the huge network of public services inherited from the previous administrations was increasingly considered to be more a cost for the local administration than a public investment for the social and economic development of the territory. In terms of local development, the city started to adopt “entrepreneurial” policies aimed at the maximization of property values, which closely mirrored the ideal type of pro-growth urban regimes (Harvey 1989). This was done especially through strategies of urban planning that favoured the use of land more for private investment than for public purposes (Molotch and Vicari 2009). Consistently with this approach, housing policies aimed at fostering affordability were almost abandoned for more than two decades, and this can be considered one of the most important institutional factors worsening the conditions of social and spatial inequalities in Milan, which is regarded as the most unequal city in Italy (D’Ovidio 2009) and one of the most unequal urban contexts in Europe (Cucca 2010).

Analysis of this transformation has been the focus of a large body of literature over the past decade, both in terms of social and economic trends (Ranci and Torri 2007; Bonomi 2009; Lodigiani 2010) and as regards the city’s style of governance (Bricocoli and Savoldi 2010). In particular, as far as social policies are concerned, the literature has described how government coalitions boosted the use of some New Public Management instruments at municipal level, especially the contracting out or privatization of the provision of public and welfare services (Gori 2010). This fitted coherently with the frame being developed in the same years by the Lombardy region, which was characterized by the same continuity of centre-right coalitions (more specifically of Catholic inspiration; Gori 2005) emphasizing the

¹ For municipalities with more than 15,000 inhabitants, based on a two-ballot system.

creation of quasi-markets, users' freedom of choice, the centrality of families as the main actors in the fight against social exclusion, and the use of cash-for-care tools such as vouchers (Pesenti and Merlo 2012). Also important in this period was the political emphasis on security issues, which went along with countering migration flows and tightening illegal migrants' rights in terms of access to services either regulated at the local level (childcare services, school canteens, municipal housing) or delivered through national/regional programmes (health care; Sabatinelli and Costa 2014). As regards housing policies, scholars have highlighted the progressive reduction of initiatives in favour of the most marginal groups (Agustoni et al. 2012) also through stigmatization of the municipal housing stock as a place for migrants' segregation, which was replaced by a new interest in the housing needs of the new "vulnerable middle class" (Cognetti 2011; Bricocoli and Cucca 2014; Costa and Sabatinelli 2013). To sum up, this approach led to disinvestment in welfare services directly provided by the municipality in favour of a more residual welfare system based on the involvement of non-profit and private organizations and investment in market-oriented tools. The city's economic development through the promotion of international events (especially Expo 2015, see Costa 2014) and large real estate investments (Memo 2007; Anselmi 2013) moved to the forefront.

After scandals involving political actors, entrepreneurs, and also some non-profit organizations, as well as a huge and progressive increase of social inequalities in the city's social structure, the municipal elections brought a new coalition to power. In the spring of 2011, a major change took place in the local administration. A candidate from a small leftist party (Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà, SEL), Giuliano Pisapia, who conducted a campaign widely supported by grassroots movements, won the primary elections of the centre-left coalition against the official candidate of the main centre-left party (Partito Democratico, PD). As a mayoral candidate, supported by a coalition of eight centre-left political parties and civic lists, Pisapia later won the municipal elections against the outgoing centre-right mayor by calling for a new style of urban government more oriented to social justice and the wider participation of citizens in the decision-making process. "Participation" then became one of the watchwords of the new municipal administration, particularly in the field of social policies, as reported in the Development Plan for the Welfare of the City of Milan (2012).²

² Where one reads: "The City of Milan has decided to share the methods, resources, and risks of construction and implementation of what should be considered a real 'Strategic Welfare Plan'... [whose goal is] to move beyond the traditional logic of the Area Plan. This makes it possible to create a system of relationships and networks able to express, in a completely original way, social demands and the responses to them. One of the guiding principles for the construction and management of this local welfare plan is greater participation and the real involvement of all the protagonists of local society. In the area of personal services, it is necessary to enhance the wealth of knowledge, skills, and experiences that the city has accumulated over time. According to the original Ambrosiano spirit, we have to combine solidarity with creativity and the capacity to innovate. This comes with the idea of reallocating the resources available in order to fight fragmentation and promote 'social integration'" (p. 11, authors' translation).

Against this background, the aim of this chapter is to fill a gap in the existing literature by describing some developments of the governance system in the field of social policies between 2011–2014. It focuses on the housing sector because of the importance of the problems related to housing affordability in Milan and to the shortage of public housing provision. In the next section, we describe the transition period that the welfare governance system is now undergoing, especially as far as values and policy discourse are concerned. We will concentrate on the previous social policies governance system in the city, the values and objectives characterizing the political coalition's welfare programme, and the governance system between 2011–2014. We will argue that the current situation represents a compromise between new values and plans for municipal welfare and the legacy of the past (especially in terms of financial budget constraints), and we will highlight continuities and discontinuities with previous administrations.

In the third section, we will focus on trends in Milan's housing policies in terms of governance and problematic issues, the purpose being to show why and how Milan is, according to the title given to this chapter, a city "lost in transition". In the concluding section, we will discuss how the current municipal government is dealing with the heavy financial legacy of the past and the barriers to promoting social innovation in housing and social policies according to the values that characterized the electoral campaign and its underlying political programme.

7.2 The Changing Governance of Social Policies in Milan

In this section, we analyse how the governance approach to local welfare has changed in Milan in recent years. Our focus is on the main transformations and on the obstacles to innovation that the current municipality is facing in governing and changing the city.

The last municipal elections represented an important turning point in terms of the rhetoric, values, networks of actors, and tools that have characterized the welfare system governance in Milan. However, as the chapter highlights, a range of interrelated factors are hampering social innovation processes and outcomes in the city.

One issue concerns the role that public regulation assigns to local welfare. At the national level, the legal framework in the field of social policy is defined by Law 328/2000, which is based on the logic of vertical and horizontal subsidiarity.³ This law introduced a cascade regulation pattern in which the state is responsible for the definition of general objectives and minimum assistance levels; regions are responsible for the planning and designing of social policies; provinces coordinate and support local levels; municipalities, also in associated form (social districts or ambits), are in charge of the implementation and delivery of services and supports

³ This approach was confirmed by the 2001 constitutional reform, which strengthened this setting by introducing the concept of subsidiarity into the constitution (Constitutional Law 3/2001).

(Barberis and Kazepov 2013).⁴ The principle of horizontal subsidiarity is instead interpreted as the engagement of the various social actors in the community through their involvement in both policy design and the provision of services.

The centrality of the regional level is particularly important in the case of Lombardy, where the regional government has over the years designed a welfare model with its own strong identity (Pesenti and Merlo 2012; Gori 2005). In general, the municipality of Milan in all its main pillars adopted this governance model until 2011. It is centred on the principle of horizontal subsidiarity (Pesenti 2007), and also on the leading role of the family as both supplier and consumer of services, which is recognized as comprising important social resources to be empowered and exploited (Gori 2005). Another pillar of this system is the freedom of choice for citizens as regards social services, which only need to be “accredited” by municipalities so that they can be implemented by the local social assistance system. Since the introduction of the regional law no. 3/2008 (“Government of the Network of Social and Socio-Medical Services”), the practical application of these principles has been founded on the implementation of services that are granted annually after winning a public tender. The new municipal coalition has in part challenged the regional approach to welfare, in particular with new keywords leading its action in the field of social policies: “a universalistic approach, not residual social policies” and “welfare as a tool to develop social capital”. Within this framework, welfare is also described as “a tool for local economic development that cannot be removed merely by following the rhetoric of the financial crisis, because welfare enables people to be creative, business-oriented and productive...” (Milan Municipality 2012, p. 5).

Another important change concerns policy targets. Roughly, we can state that centre-right parties claimed that families should be the beneficiaries of policies, defining “family” as the one based on marriage; they systematically opposed any proposed reform to regulate *de facto* couples, and even more so gay marriages. Rejected by the former administration, a municipal register for equal rights and duties for all forms of family arrangements was promised and then introduced by Giuliano Pisapia in September 2012. Enrolment on this register permits whatever kind of couple to be recognized by the city council (in terms of housing, assistance, school, culture, and sports), also in order to combat all forms of discrimination (particularly those related to sexual orientation).⁵ The first practical effects are already apparent. For example, the municipal anti-crisis fund⁶ has been opened up to unmarried couples enrolled on the municipal register regardless of their sexual orientation (also, the requirement of 5 years of residence in the city has been removed).

⁴ A recent national law (no. 56/2014) has introduced another level of government, the “Metropolitan City”, which will require changes in terms of welfare policy planning. However, it is too early to state anything about this innovation.

⁵ A delegate of the senator for equal opportunities was also appointed to deal with anti-discrimination issues.

⁶ See Chap. 16 in this volume by Sabatinelli and Costa, “Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano, Milan: ‘We help you to help yourselves’”.

Table 7.1 Social participation process architecture for design of the welfare plan. (Source: Milan Municipality 2012)

	Conference	Actors
Intra-institutional level	Local social insurance agency/municipality	Representatives of the municipality and the local welfare agency
	Intra-departments	Municipal deputy mayors
Municipality	“Local Welfare Tomorrow”	Young people under 30
	Citizens and associations	Citizens and associations
	“Cultures of Welfare”	Representatives of social services and professionals
	Neighbourhoods	Representatives of neighbourhood councils
	Negotiation	Unions and employers’ associations
Metropolitan region and Italy	Large Italian municipalities	Deputy mayors on social policies at national level
	Metropolitan municipalities	Deputy mayors on social policies at metropolitan level

However, it is mostly in terms of governance architecture that it is possible to recognize the greatest break with the past. Three years after the last municipal elections, the promotion of participation can be regarded as the main innovation in the local welfare system, while actions for more universalistic social policies have been blocked especially by the scarcity of funding. In terms of participation, close attention has been paid to the involvement of citizens and third-sector actors, mainly associations. Firstly, two editions of the municipal “Social Policies Forum” have taken place in preparation for the local 3-year social plan (Piano di Zona, foreseen by the national law 328/00 entitled by the present administration “Welfare Development Plan of the City of Milan 2012–2014”). Two editions of a participatory process linked to the “Milan Children” project on childcare and family policies have also taken place,⁷ as well as the recent first edition of the “Forum of Youth Policies” (named “MI Generation Camp”), as shown in Table 7.1. The feature shared by these events is the participative method, which is used with the declared aim of including organized groups and individual citizens in public agenda setting and decision-making. In some cases, these processes have explicitly included steps and events localized in the municipality’s various districts.

This “participation turn” is a major difference with respect to the previous administration’s approach, which predominantly consisted of hierarchical relations. It applied top-down decisions and transmitted information about changes already decided with little room for discussion and very few occasions for feedback and voice from the peripheral levels, such as the service-level workers, the beneficiaries/users/citizens, or the neighbourhood-level representative bodies. However, to 2014, the promotion of this large-scale process of participation has been the most important innovation. The local administration has made great efforts in implementing

⁷ See Sabatinelli and Costa 2014.

this process. However, at the same time, actions to create a more universalistic welfare system (with the exception of the institution of the municipal registers for common-law marriages, as mentioned above) have been more limited. This has been due to various factors.

The first concerns severe budget constraints due to the concurrence of several phenomena, in particular the financial crisis and the increase in social demands. Since 2008, the economic downturn has led to an increase in unemployment, in the use of short-time work schedules and in atypical and fixed-term contracts instead of open-ended ones (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). Another reason relates to austerity measures as well as to the related cuts to transfers from the national level to local bodies. It has been estimated that, over the past 5 years, the total amount of funding from the national to regional level has decreased from 1231 billion € in 2008 to 575 million € in 2013, i.e. a reduction of 53.3% (Polizzi et al. 2013). The third factor concerns the negative consequences of risky financial investments made by the previous administration that have further worsened the situation.

Moreover, it should also be stressed that the current local government has not always promoted welfare interventions as real priorities for the city, despite the efforts of the Social Policy Department to keep a decent budget. This attitude can be observed, for example, on analysing the municipality's approach to the Stability and Growth Pact. Contrary to other municipalities in Italy, Milan has made great efforts to respect the pact.⁸ These efforts have significantly affected the ability to cope with the negative social effects of the crisis. Given the insufficiency of public resources with which to respond to greater economic needs, especially third-sector and private actors have created solidarity funds and distributed forms of support, monetary and in-kind, to individuals and families hit by the recession. These funds are managed independently from the municipal administration.

It is, however, interesting to note that the municipal government instead pressed for a less restrictive pact in order to afford the development of infrastructural projects needed for the international Expo 2015. Expo 2015, indeed, can be considered the main significant project to promote the local economy in recent years.

Despite the great efforts of the local administration to open up the decision-making process through participation, the most important plans for the city's future (i.e. Expo 2015) and, to 2014, the priorities of the urban agenda have not been significantly changed.

Within this general framework, in the next section we focus on housing policies as a case study to illustrate the dynamics described above. We have selected housing because this policy area is extremely important for understanding the ambiguities that characterize the governance mechanisms of economic and social policies in Milan. However, housing policies have also been the area in which some of the most interesting cases of social innovation have occurred. In the next section, we

⁸ In 2012, the mayor of Turin, for example, decided to depart from the Stability Pact in order to preserve more funding for local welfare, especially in this period of economic crisis and particular social vulnerability for citizens.

describe the specific governance of the housing sector in Milan and analyse social trends and the main policies related to housing. We present a significant case of social innovation in this field and discuss its strengths and weaknesses.

7.3 Affordable Housing Policies in Milan: Conflicting Narratives, Social Effects, and Governance Styles

Milan is classified as a “high tension municipality concerning housing”. Like other cities, it is subject to specific national and regional policy interventions, such as tax benefits for landlords that agree to rent out at prices lower than market ones or to postpone/suspend the eviction of tenants. For more than two decades, affordability problems in the housing sector have been disregarded by the local administration. This is because the housing market has been viewed as the main driver of the local economy’s expansion, according to the neo-liberal notion of a “growth machine” where the public and private sectors merge in a shared consensus that the central function of a city is to grow (Logan and Molotch 1987). The Milan private housing market is considered one of the most effervescent in the country (Costa and Sabatinelli 2013). Since the early 2000s, it has been positively affected by the reconversion of many areas to residential use, after a broad and rapid process of deindustrialization in strategic semi-central neighbourhoods. A large number of urban transformation projects have been launched, many of them via the so-called Integrated Action Plans (Piani Integrati di Intervento, PII), which aim to accelerate the administration’s approval of projects by providing exceptions to existing urban planning regulations. These large renewal programmes have been mainly based on property-led urban regeneration enabling the production of high-value housing in terms of the technology, size, and quality of the dwellings (Cognetti 2011; Mugnano and Palvarini 2011). Because of these characteristics, such dwellings are generally intended for medium-upper-class households and have very limited impact on a growing demand for affordable rental housing. The outcome of these processes has been the launch of approximately 150 urban transformation projects. In the coming years, this real estate development is likely to continue by using areas obtained from the sale of public properties and the conversion of land occupied by marshalling yards (Mugnano and Palvarini 2011).

The effect of introducing a high number of prestige housing units is an increase in total sales and the growth in sale and rental prices at the city level, not only in the areas developed. Also because of the presence of this prestigious and central segment of the housing market, the economic crisis (2007–2010) did not significantly affect house prices in Milan. In the past 10 years, prices have continued to increase (especially in the historic centre) with a pause only in 2008–2009, which was very limited compared with other cities and trends in international housing markets (OECD 2010; Costa et al. 2014).

Nevertheless, housing issues have entered the public agenda because of the severe tensions in the market. While the centre-right local governments (1997/2011) intervened in the development to attract the affluent to the inner city, broader areas of the already-settled population—low- and medium-income households—have been made more vulnerable by the lack of affordable housing. As a consequence, growing amounts of young people, especially low-income ones leaving the parental households, have been expelled from the city. In the meantime, Milan has not yet been able to attract new residents. The inhabitants of the municipality increased by 0.6% between 2005 and 2010, while over the same period the provincial population grew by 3.2% and the regional population by 4.6% (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). Moreover, the number of households with severe housing needs—such as extremely low-income households—has been increasing. In the period 2006–2009, the waiting list of households eligible for a public dwelling grew from approximately 13,000 to 20,500 (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012).

The recent global financial crisis and the ensuing long economic recession have exacerbated the problems by expanding the groups at risk of housing deprivation (Mugnano and Palvarini 2011). The number of families in difficulties with rent and loan repayments have increased. Eviction procedures—especially for arrears—started to grow again after 2006 with a huge acceleration in 2010, and they almost tripled between 2009 and 2010. In 2013, eviction proceedings numbered 11,700, of which 7600 were for rent arrears (Ministry of Interior, various years). In public dwellings, the arrears on total due revenues rose from 5.5% in 2001 to 10.2% in 2006 (Censis-FederCasa 2008)—an important indicator of the hardship suffered by the families resident in those dwellings.

In response to these pressures, the public housing stock—intended for households with severe housing needs—has progressively decreased owing to the lack of maintenance and the sale of significant amounts of units to tenants. The revenues raised from these sales have been mainly used to cover budget deficits, and they have only minimally been reinvested in the rehabilitation of social housing units or the construction of new ones. The overall public stock in Milan consists of 70,000 public housing units, 30,000 of which are intended for the lowest income groups (*canone sociale*), while approximately 18,000 eligible families are still on the waiting list. During 2010, only 700 public dwellings were assigned (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012). Moreover, housing benefits like rental subsidies for low-income families in private dwellings (Fondo Sostegno Affitto) have been reduced owing to the current phase of fiscal retrenchment. In this context, the public response to the affordability issue in Milan has mostly consisted in a new generation of policies and programmes called *housing sociale*. This new concept has had great influence on the public debate in the past decade (Plebani 2011), catalysing change and “innovation” in the housing policy field. *Housing sociale* is the way in which the Lombardy region reflects the new intent and concept of housing policy: Social housing is no longer conceived as permanent support for disadvantaged people in economic difficulties, rather, it is starting to be viewed as a service to help tenants emerge from

a situation of uncertainty (Plebani and Marotta 2011). In this frame, social housing action is not directed to the weakest social groups, but is the instrument with which to respond to temporary critical housing situations of the middle classes.

This new approach has been mainly implemented in the Milanese context through exploitation of different urban planning regulations and tools, such as equalization in the “Transfer of Development Rights” (TDR), planning gains, and negotiations, which have recently been introduced in several municipal schemes. In this context, “social housing” mainly consists in a public–private partnership where the public actor provides building areas free of charge for private developers to build housing, which is partly to be rented or sold below the market prices. The public–private integration concerns both the actors and the resources although public participation is a small part of the total investment, which creates a “flywheel effect” for private initiatives. A large number of public areas have been made available to private investors in order to produce houses both for sale at fixed prices and as accommodation at moderate or social rents. In order to involve private operators, the State Property Office puts these areas, which were planned to provide public services and facilities, out to tender, but no rules have been introduced so that the private schemes provide for a quota of rented social housing (Pogliani 2011). For example, two of the main projects ongoing in the city centre do not comprise any public provision of social housing, which is provided by private operators, entirely to their advantage. In 2005, the municipality launched the programme entitled “20,000 housing units for social aims” to be developed on 46 publicly owned areas according to a scheme whereby land is given for free to developers under public bid procedures. In 2009, 3380 housing units (Abitare 1, 2, 3) were under project in 15 mixed neighbourhoods, where private developers, cooperatives, and third-sector organizations were involved. As we shall see below, a further 580 housing units in three neighbourhoods have been delivered by a bank foundation (Fondazione Cariplo). A total of 3960 housing units (instead of the 20,000 promised) have been constructed, but only one third of them (1200) for rent (Pogliani 2011).

As a matter of fact, the overall outcomes of this measure have been rather scant. On the one hand, the new stock provided a certain number of rental units affordable only by a small proportion of vulnerable households, the rent rate being not much less than the comparable market rate (called in Italian *canone moderato*). On the other hand, the number of social housing units affordable by low- and very-low-income families has been even smaller, if compared to the former, because developers have preferred to invest in more profitable high-quality housing. As a consequence, also the idea of “social mix” extensively used in the argumentative register of public action (Bricocoli and Savoldi 2014) has been very weakly promoted, given that the bulk of the new stock consisting of high-profile housing is to be sold on the private market. At present, and to sum up, one observes a sort of “polarized scenario” in the Milanese housing system, which is characterized, on the one hand, by the presence of housing exclusion or housing deprivation and, on the other, by a large proportion of well-housed people (Mugnano and Palvarini 2011).

The most important innovative experience in this new field of *housing sociale* concerns the Fondazione Housing Sociale (FHS), a pioneering actor that created the first ethical fund for social housing in Italy, anticipating ad hoc legislation and policymaking (Costa and Sabatinelli 2013). The Fondazione Cariplo, the largest “foundation with a bank origin” in Italy, founded the FHS in 2004. Since 1999, it has tackled the issue of disadvantaged housing conditions by contributing to the realization of housing projects dedicated to the weakest segments of the population mainly through grants to third-sector organizations (Barbetta and Urbani 2007; Urbani 2009). Aware of the limited amount of resources available in the form of grants, the foundation decided to experiment with innovative financing instruments based on sustainability and ethical investments (and no longer on grants) in order to extend the range of social housing projects involving other public and private institutions and actors. The initiative thus took concrete form in the Social Housing Programme and the creation of the FHS, instituted to implement the former.

Supported by the Lombardy region and Anci Lombardia (the association of Lombardy municipalities), FHS plays an active role in the Italian real estate sector by taking an innovative approach to social housing as a way to handle diverse housing needs. It promotes access to housing by persons in the “grey area” (those who are not eligible for public housing but at the same time are not financially able to enter the private market), and it seeks to ensure the empowerment and social integration of residents. The work of FHS has been developed along three main axes: promoting ethical financing initiatives (and in particular real estate funds dedicated to social housing), testing innovative non-profit management models, and developing project design tools to be shared by trans-sectorial operators. The initial endowment by Fondazione Cariplo enabled the FHS to enter the real estate sector and create an ethical fund, the Fondo Abitare Sociale 1, in 2005. The fund was restricted to institutional investors such as public institutions, large firms, and bank foundations. Its purpose was to finance housing initiatives (new stock and services) aimed at supplying affordable rental dwellings by supporting the efforts of the public administration and the third-sector agencies, and with particular regard to students, elderly people, one-income families, migrants, young people, and, more generally, those unable to afford market prices to cope with their housing needs. The fund, now transformed and called the Fondo Immobiliare Lombardia (FIL) was open to “non-speculative investors” and assured yearly returns in the range of 2–4% plus inflation. The fund’s investors have been described in the literature as “patient investors” (Giaino 2011). The FHS’s task is therefore a complex one: to encourage different actors to pursue common goals, attract investments in social housing projects, monitor their results, and develop sustainable management models that can be replicated in contexts other than Milan or Lombardy. In Italy, seeking sustainability mainly means finding economic and financial conditions that make social housing projects attractive not only to dedicated actors (like the FHS) or public ones but also to private actors. Accordingly, the FHS must and wants to be fully embedded in the local welfare system, in the awareness that its projects need to be supported by local

authorities and partners that have (by mission or convenience) the same long-term horizon for investments.

Since the FIL was established, four projects have been developed in the municipality of Milan, namely Cenni di Cambiamento, Figino Borgo Sostenibile, Maison du Monde 36, and Abit@giovani. All these projects have been developed with the Milan municipality and are based on various public–private partnerships, as well as trying to respond to middle-class housing needs.⁹ At present, only one of these projects—Cenni di Cambiamento—has given rise to lived spaces. The project's final costs amount to around 21.7 million €, and 123 dwellings have been constructed, of which 40% are devoted to sustainable rent, 10% to social rent, 40% to rent-to-buy, while the rest have been granted to third-sector associations to be assigned or put out to tender by the Cariplo Foundation. The average monthly rent of a 70 m² apartment is around 450 €. Eligible applications (by persons with an annual income of less than 40,000 €, but 2.5–3 times higher than the annual rent) are almost three times greater than the supply. A protest by housing activists was staged on the occasion of the inauguration of the new buildings. Its purpose was to fight evictions and propose self-building and self-renovation practices instead of expensive social housing projects (national newspaper *La Repubblica*, local pages, November 2013).

The most positive aspects of this scheme (that need to be developed further for definitive conclusions to be drawn in terms of sustainability) have been the alignment of the FHS's policies with public ones, the enactment of public–private partnerships and resource pooling, the development of new models of social housing oriented to high building standards and focused social mix criteria (which is possible because of the derogation of allocation criteria for public dwellings), and, above all, the scaling up of the first ethical fund, which now is much wider and richer, and the inspiration for other contexts and groups of actors around Italy. But the case of the FHS should be read considering that it is backed by a very large and rich institution. Fondazione Cariplo is one of the biggest foundations in the world. In all its key initiatives, the FHS has been able to rely on Cariplo's resources, both financial and more intangible. Moreover, the FHS has been able to use some of the last empty plots to develop its projects thanks to conventions with the municipality of Milan. Social housing initiatives generally require complex management and the participation of different actors if they are to be attractive and compatible with private and public aims at the same time.

Some observers maintain that the FHS and the FIL are using their resources very slowly and that they are not risking enough to produce affordable dwellings. Moreover, they are using (like other operators) public resources (mostly public land) to produce too small amounts of housing to rent. Some criticisms are stronger, in the sense that they accuse subjects like the FHS of draining extremely scarce public resources from the most needy and deprived in the housing market (Sabatinelli and

⁹ All of them aim to develop communities of residents that organize themselves to manage their spaces and common life.

Costa 2013). Whatever the case, it can be stated that this experience has numerous shortcomings. Firstly, on the public land granted by the municipality (land that is extremely scarce in the city) very few affordable dwellings have been provided, especially if one considers the housing emergency in Milan. Secondly, this innovation is especially oriented to test social, functional, and tenure mix, while the housing emergency especially affects very-low-income citizens, who crowd the long waiting list to access the municipal housing stock.

After 3 years of the new municipal government, however, it is not possible to find other significant social innovation schemes in this strategic policy area. Numerous rhetorical discourses on the capacity of *housing sociale* to deal with housing needs have presented private actors and mixed ones (like the ethical funds) as a panacea for the city's housing problems. In fact, local difficulties are also represented by the resignation of the deputy mayor for housing policy in 2013 (who now represents the centre-left alliance in the regional council, governed by the centre-right), who tried, while in the municipality, to work on some important issues: among them, a new governance system for the municipal housing sector (with more responsibility for management of the stock given to the municipal government); the correct allocation of many vacant public dwellings; and experimental regulation of the private rental market. Instead, the main expectations for the future are now placed in the new Piano di Governo del Territorio (the urban planning instrument adopted in Lombardy cities), which imposes a very modest share of affordable housing units for new housing projects. However, it is quite probable that, owing to the critical situation of the construction sector in the city, few social housing units will be provided in the coming years.

To sum up, while a social innovation approach in housing policies is widely recognized in the case of the FHS by both the social innovators and the policy community at the local and the national level, we would highlight some general conditions that make policy innovation especially difficult to implement and spread in Milan.

According to Moulart et al. (2005), social innovation is driven by history and the social context. This is partly structural, partly institutional determination. In regard to the institutional dimension, Milan has a legacy of social pluralism and multiple power centres, which has always engaged the municipality in constant confrontation with an array of economic interests and social issues. This fragmentation has hampered the capacity of the local administration to affirm an integrative and inclusive vision connecting the multifaceted networks of actors in Milan. Some argue that this lack of strategic governance capacity and the traditional weakness of formal government are offset by innovative capacities in the economy and civil society (Bolocan Goldstein 2009).

On the other hand, the lack of strategic governance and a poorly developed "public realm" within which the opportunities and challenges created by all these inventive actions can be retained generates the continuing neglect of many social issues and the ignoring of major future problems. Furthermore, multiple innovation and bottom-up initiatives tend to compete and clash with each other (Healey 2007).

7.4 Concluding Remarks: Local Development, Social Innovation, and Governance Alternatives

In this chapter, we have described the transition of the ongoing welfare policies governance system in Milan over recent decades. Milan as a case study yields understanding of the barriers that local governments, especially in the countries most affected by the recession, face in promoting a system of governance oriented to social innovation, and in which social policies (even if weak) are supposed to play an important role in promoting local development. After many years of profound changes, Milan has currently reached deadlock in terms of policy innovation. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the city was highly dynamic in terms of welfare provision, given that the municipal government was a central actor in designing and providing social services as tools for economic and social development. From the 1990s to 2011, the municipal government instead played a weak role as director of a system of governance in which welfare was residual and was based on the involvement of non-profit and private organizations, but only as providers. During those two decades, the right-wing coalition governing Milan adopted a basically market-oriented style of governance (Molotch and Vicari 2009). The period was dominated by the rhetoric that creation of a “good business climate” was an effective way to foster growth and innovation but also to eradicate poverty and to deliver, in the long run, higher standards of living to the mass of the population (Harvey 1989). However, those years were marked by a huge increase in the social inequalities characterizing the social structure of the city (D’Ovidio 2009).

In 2011, municipal elections rewarded a new coalition proposing a style of governance more oriented to a “social innovation approach”. However, the difficult financial situation inherited by the municipality from the past, and austerity measures imposed by the national government, have reduced the ambitions of the current municipal government in regard to social policies. In this chapter, we have highlighted that values expressed in the welfare plan have not yet been translated into effective actions. According to this document, for example, welfare measures are important investments for local development “that the rhetoric of the economic crisis is not supposed to limit” (Municipality of Milan 2012, p. 5). However, the efforts to respect the Stability Pact have greatly restricted welfare investments. Moreover, the municipal government has been pressurizing the national government to redesign the Stability Pact so that it was able to afford the public costs of the forthcoming International Expo 2015, while pressures to support welfare services have been weaker. Indeed, also the new municipal government regards this event as the main chance for the city’s future economic and social development. Within the dimensions proposed by Cattacin and Zimmer in Chap. 2 of this volume, we can argue that Milan has been following a pattern of local development based on a concurrence of public investment in economic or social initiatives, while the rhetoric and values of the electoral campaign and the coalition programme have been more oriented to governance of social innovation.

In fact, social innovation has to date been promoted mainly in some procedural aspects of governance (the large-scale participation in the definition of the welfare plan) and as regards certain social rights (the register to regulate de facto couples). Conversely, welfare provisions and services have not been innovated to a significant extent.

The analysis of housing policies as a case study highlights this situation very well. This is a policy field crucial for Milan because affordability problems are among the most important factors affecting social inequality and social exclusion in the city. However, this issue has long been neglected, while the real estate market has functioned as *the* driver of the city's economic growth. At the same time, this is also a sector where some interesting innovations involving private and non-profit actors, such as the FHS, were proposed by the previous administration. This is an interesting case of "process innovation" because it emphasises a different way to provide affordable housing through new financing instruments and more collaborative and participative management models. On the other hand, some argue (Moulaert et al. 2005) that, in the current phase of welfare state retrenchment, the "product" dimension (provision of public services and redistributive measures) is re-emerging as a major issue. The lack of a clear, comprehensive strategy by the public administration to solve the urgent problem of providing affordable housing for low-income groups tends to undermine the innovative capacity of such projects, which are not fully recognized by people and are often criticized for creating a mismatch between the new supply (targeted on middle-income families and partly oriented towards home ownership) and a growing social demand for affordable housing (largely unsatisfied for low-income groups). Moreover, the strategy's potential for replicability and transfer is rather limited because of the unique conditions under which the projects described have been developed (above all, the financial role of the Cariplo Foundation, which guarantees against all potential risks and critical events). Furthermore, from the recent enforcement of laws and regulations at the central level (Legislative Decree 112/2008), a clear definition of what housing for the most vulnerable groups should be remains highly undetermined (social housing, subsidized housing or the Italian expressions "housing sociale" and *Edilizia Residenziale Sociale* designate with different emphases a way to provide affordable housing solutions to low-income households). Nor has the municipality of Milan spelled out a clear strategy to remedy this vacuum: a strategy to tackle inequalities and promote social inclusion at the local level risks being missed.

To sum up, Milan's situation describes a case of urban governance where no clear priorities are stated in terms of the city's social and economic development. Social innovation in Milan can be viewed as an array of largely disconnected and fragmented activities and projects. As far as housing policy is concerned, emerging innovative approaches (such as those described above) suffer from a lack of integration within common frames of reference, values, and orientations, which would make priority setting more objective, systematic, and transparent and impacts more clearly measurable. The city, pressured by the crisis and the austerity measures until the beginning of Expo 2015, has had little room for manoeuvre in defining a new municipal agenda that can significantly make the difference in comparison with the

previous administration. In fact, the local government and other important actors in the city's governance system (such as third-sector agencies involved in social policies and entrepreneurs) have been heavily concentrated on the very difficult preparations for this international event (Costa 2014). Within this context, the desired transition to a style of government more open to social innovation and social justice has been "postponed", being affected by strong path dependency. Only after the end of Expo 2015, it will be possible to assess if the city will be able to recover the beneficial effects of a season of local mobilization in favour of a more inclusive approach to social innovation. Some recent programs launched by the Social Policy Department and the Department for Innovation and Labour Market Policies seem to be oriented towards this direction.

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Chapter 8

Poor but Sexy? Berlin as a Context for Social Innovation

Benjamin Ewert

8.1 Introduction

Since Germany's reunification, Berlin has benefitted much from the myth of being "poor but sexy" (Mayor Wowereit in Frey 2003). The popular slogan, referring to the coexistence of deprivation and creativity in the city, was a good expression of the Berlin zeitgeist. Representing a kind of social compromise, Berlin promised "a good life for little money" for everyone, not at least because of low rents.

Hence, for many years, Berlin provided a favourable context for social innovation. From the 1960s onwards, the former "front city" had been an eldorado for agents of change—bohemians, alternative and creative people—who came to West Berlin to pursue unconventional solutions to everyday problems. For instance, new forms of parent-run childcare stem from that time, as do participatory schemes for housing and urban renewal. However, those attempts at "making a difference" took place against a backdrop of huge state subsidies and redistributive welfare policies that provided leeway for "social experimentalism". Today's social innovations in Berlin are still shaped by this "cultural heritage", which has contributed much to the city's self-promotion as "poor but sexy". However, as it is the main argument of this chapter, Berlin's innovative capital may dry up in the near future due to the re-emergence of social challenges that tend to eclipse the rewards and improvements emanating from social innovation. Because Berlin is no longer an "island" but a part of international relations under the rising pressure of global investment and capitalist dynamics, traditional social problems are back: a sharper divide between rich and poor people, insecurity and gentrification. As a result, the space for many citizens that could afford to live in Berlin on a low income is increasingly being squeezed. For them, the "new" Berlin entails no promises in terms of wages, personal development and social security.

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This chapter deals with Berlin's changing context factors to foster social innovation. In this respect, two major developments are crucial: On the one hand, state welfare policies have become much "leaner", i.e. efficiency oriented and risk averse, conceiving every investment as something that has to "pay off" in the future. On the other hand, the scope of markets has colonized many life worlds and settings (making Berlin to a "catwalk" for flashy lifestyles and tastes) that once provided the "creative class" (Florida 2009) with shelter and inspiration. Welfare innovations for social cohesion eke out a niche existence, struggling continuously for resources and public attention. In short, it remains to be seen whether welfare politics and social innovators will find new interplays for remaking social policies innovative and powerful, or whether social innovations and their support will become limited to subsidizing rescue and emergency programmes.

This chapter is divided into four parts. Part one (Sect. 8.2) focuses on theoretical strands that have to be addressed in order to make a context-centred perspective valuable in the analysis of social innovation. Part two (Sect. 8.3) deals with Berlin and city policies as a specific context for social innovation. Part three (Sect. 8.4) of the chapter sheds light on the general shift in Berlin from a traditional social policy to a policy of modernization that allows limited space and resources for social innovation. Part four (Sect. 8.5) relates the theoretical insights concerning context factors to the empirical findings.

8.2 What Makes a Context-Centred Perspective Valuable?

Setting aside all their differences, major theoretical concepts in policy analysis (Majone 1997; Sabatier 1998) share one basic assumption: Ideas, orientations and values in politics and policies matter a great deal. They make a decisive difference when it comes to a context-centred perspective (see for an overview Pollitt 2013) that sheds light on the ways in which local welfare systems and political administrative systems (PAS) cope with cultural, social and economic challenges that co-shape the urban context. For instance, most of the innovative approaches, studied in Berlin, are kind of knot-points, where needs, ideas and aspirations assume concrete organisational forms that differ from the local mainstream of policies in place. Yet at the same time, they are interrelated with them, be it due to the fact that an innovation can also be part of a reform approach in the PAS, co-funded by it or simply linked to it through the criticism, suggestions and messages that come from the innovators.

In order to outline the orientations and values that are shaping the Berlin context and discussing these orientations in relation to innovative approaches in housing, childcare and family care and employment policies, three particular concerns guide the analysis:

- *Plurality of discourses*: To understand the interplay of politics and social innovations, it is important to view them within the tension field formed by the juxtaposition and rivalry of different discourses (see Schmidt 2010)—as, for example, one that is very much about classical welfare issues, another that is much more

managerial and still another where concerns of autonomy, participation and pluralism prevail (Evers 2010). Berlin has always been characterized by competing concepts of “a better city” that were not exclusive but coexisted and stimulated each other. In other words, they all left their mark on the urban landscape. For instance, in the field of housing and urban revitalization a plurality of discourses has long meant that large-scale programmes, such as those to promote “careful urban renewal”, pursued by the city government were challenged (or even subverted) by various citizen initiatives such as the squatter movement (Holm and Kuhn 2011). Similarly, alternative concepts for childcare (e.g. so-called *Kindergarten* pursuing an anti-authoritarian upbringing of children in West Berlin) and concerning working life (e.g. rejecting the use of “state dosh” for alternative projects in the field of social work) emerged from Berlin’s counterculture.

- *The impact of history*: Practices and values that guide action and politics have been very much affected by the historical developments and experiences that make up the “multi-layered historicity of the present” (Haggrén et al. 2013). A tableau of coexisting values and policy orientations and reasoning about its possible changes can only be created when one takes account of these historical underpinnings. Thus Berlin, and in particular its local welfare policies, can only be understood against the backdrop of the changing history of the city. For instance, average rents in Berlin are still relatively low compared to other major German cities (e.g. Hamburg and Munich) because the housing supply was heavily subsidized by the federal state until the 2000s. Nevertheless, the steady rise of rents and its effect on the social mixture within inner-city districts has today become Berlin’s most controversial issue. Likewise, developments in the field of employment may be misinterpreted without a healthy dose of historical evidence: While some regions in southern Germany (e.g. in some regions in Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg) are heading towards full employment, unemployment in Berlin is still in the double-digit range. One reason for this is the inherited structural weakness of the local economy that is service based but lacks jobs in traditional industries (Allon 2013, p. 289). With regard to childcare and family care, Berlin remains a divided city (despite a process of gradual convergence) due to different policy legacies: In East Berlin (where childcare policies were characterized by a “work-centred approach” during German Democratic Republic (GDR) times), childcare coverage (and supply) for children aged 0–3 is significantly higher than in West Berlin, where traditionally there was part-time care for children aged 3–6 in kindergartens.
- *Differences between policy fields*: It is not only the difference between old and new, and left and right orientations that can be observed but also the specificity of discursive constellations in policy fields constituted by “‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ components” (Kendall 2003, p. 7), i.e. local and federal competences to change politics. While there may often be a kind of overarching narrative, shaped by national politics and dominating local coalitions, due to a number of factors, situations in policy fields may vary quite considerably. Moreover, innovative ideas, while backed by the community of experts in a policy field, may often be restricted by the locally prevailing general discourse or vice versa.

For instance, the impact of a pronounced productivist discourse in the field of childcare emanating from the federal level implies fewer limits for innovative concepts at the local level compared to labour market politics where federal guidelines are much more rigid. Hence, local innovations in child and family policies such as family centres are promoted and supported by authorities because there is an overall agreement that “their time has come”. On the other hand, Berlin’s few innovative projects in the field of employment—in terms of style, approaches pursued and the addressing of users—have to be seen in sharp contrast to official, employability-guided policies.

The line of argument in this chapter takes place against the backdrop of this theoretical framework. If appropriate, references to single concerns will be made. Moreover, due to significant differences within policy fields, the empirical section of the chapter is structured by them (see Sect. 8.3).

8.3 Context Factors in Berlin

To analyse the interplay between welfare politics and social innovation in Berlin, a profound understanding of the local context is needed. Three factors, briefly introduced below, are crucial in this respect: the city’s creative and innovation-friendly citizenry, the socio-spatial concept of the “Berlin mixture” and legacies of social policy. Despite significant differences within policy fields (e.g. due to federal legislation), these factors make up the sociocultural framework, including dominating attitudes and mentalities through which social innovation has appeared in Berlin.

Creative Citizens

Historically, Berlin’s sociocultural attraction has been boosted by its special position during the era of division between East and West, its role in the times of the new social and cultural movements of the sixties and seventies and the dynamic that was set free in the aftermath of Germany’s reunification (Häußermann and Kapphan 2009). All three phases swept large numbers of people, literally speaking “change agents”, into the city who sustainably co-designed Berlin as a place for unconventional lifestyles and creative solutions for everyday challenges. The former West Berlin, in particular the district of Kreuzberg (Kil and Silver 2006), played host to the students’ revolution and the new ecological, feminist and anti-authoritarian movements and their counterculture, becoming the ultimate vanishing point for dropouts, nonconformists and “artists of life” who built up a collective alternative model to West German mainstream culture by pursuing innovative social practices such as living in autonomous communities, working in cooperatives or establishing anti-authoritarian forms of childcare. At each turn and under changing conditions, the aspirations behind social and cultural innovations changed in colour and composition. Since the 2000s, city marketers have promoted Berlin actively as a “metropolis of creativity” (Schmidt 2014) that seeks to give *culturepreneurs* “a stage set for their activities” (Colomb and Kalandides 2010, p. 185).

“Berlin Mixture”

It is an open secret that “Berlin has always hosted poverty better than other European capitals” (Slobodian and Sterling 2013, p. 2). But what is this judgement based on? Against the backdrop of lower industrial development, a distinctive territorial and social mix characterizes Berlin where rich and poor people live loosely together. On the one hand, this mix refers to the sound balance of inhabitants in Berlin’s numerous *Kieze*, a local synonym for integrated urban neighbourhoods. On the other hand, the term refers to a specific local settlement structure, supported by authorities, that allows the juxtaposition of housing facilities and local businesses. A combination of both aspects, a mixed structure of residents and settlements in the neighbourhoods, became known by the term “Berlin mixture” during the years of rapid industrial expansion in Germany in the middle of the nineteenth century and remains to this day.

Social Policy Legacies

Local authority policies had a huge impact on Berlin’s urban and social development. Largely in the hands of social democrats (who have taken part in every administration since 1945 bar one), public servants have worked under the banner of “equality” and “social protection”. However, Berlin’s special status also has had to take account of the fact that, although until the 1960s Berlin was an example for classical, post-war welfare policies, West Berlin became “the front of the Cold War” after the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and was, therefore, heavily subsidized by the federal government in order to compensate for the city’s weak economic situation and to remain competitive with East Berlin and the GDR. Traditionally, public authorities have been inclined to pursue large-scale development programmes known as “careful urban renewal” (1979–1987), “urban renewal areas” (since 1994) or “urban redevelopment scheme East and West” (since 2002).

In a nutshell, the lesson emanating from these contextual factors, especially in terms of their impact on innovations, can be summed up like this: Berlin had over the years been home to a juxtaposition of traditional local welfare politics and values with a strong sense of innovation and innovators focusing on values that were more to do with personalising welfare systems and opening them up to new lifestyles and aspirations. During the long period before reunification, the city was subject to limited growth pressure and served as “a window of the West”, supported by considerable welfare subsidies, all of which made Berlin an affordable and rather secure place for both the large array of lower-income groups—“the scenic poor and the clever unemployed who make the city so attractive” (Slobodian and Sterling 2013, p. 2)—and those groups that formed part of new social and cultural movements and searched for new forms of quality of life with different ideas about risks and chances. Now, under the rising pressure of international investment, capitalist dynamics are back and along with them greater inequalities, insecurity and gentrification. Classical social problems are now setting in. In times of financial crisis, the city government cannot mitigate these problems using the traditional means of social and urban policies. This represents a clear danger to the space and support enjoyed by innovators who sought to create a better quality of life and refine social support systems bottom-up.

8.4 Insights from Three Local Contexts of Social Policy

What do these context factors mean for social policy in practice? What impact do historical developments and legacies have on today's structuring and design of different policy fields? Empirically, with a particular eye on social innovation and social cohesion, three areas were crucial for our research: housing and urban development, labour market policies and childcare and family care. With respect to the overall orientations and values that guide local politics in Berlin, the debates around issues of housing and urban development currently have the strongest link with the dominant political and public controversy around Berlin's development and the blend and balance of values that guide it. This section has therefore been placed first. After that, the sections that follow describe the situation in policy fields such as childcare and family care and labour market policies. Each section includes a separate subsection on "Spaces for Innovations", making references to routine-breaking initiatives and projects within the respective policy field.

In methodological terms, this chapter is based on 18 interviews with civil servants, policy makers and representatives from third-sector organizations and innovative projects in the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, which represents a kind of showcase for developments in Berlin as a whole. Additionally, a document analysis of local newspaper articles, party programs and city council minutes was carried out. Moreover, we draw on a transcript of a grassroots meeting organized in February 2013, documenting a lively debate between the experts mentioned above.

8.4.1 *The Context of Housing and Urban Planning*

Berlin is constantly growing. According to estimates, the city's population (3.53 million in 2013) will increase by about 7.2% (250,000 people) by 2030. The rising population leads directly to the question of where newcomers should live in the future. Today, there is a shortfall of about 428,000 affordable homes for Berlin's recipients of social assistance. While currently rents are rising everywhere in Germany, the situation in Berlin, where average rents of 7 €/m² are still much lower than in Munich (9.99 €/m²), Stuttgart (7.42 €/m²) or Cologne (7.36 €/m²), is critical because the city has been traditionally a "paradise for tenants". No other major city in Germany has had such a generous amount of "cheap space" at its disposal—not only as a place for everyone to live but also as a place to realize new ideas of urban living through innovative projects. On the one hand, this kind of decadent charm and aura of decay made Berlin a "Mecca for the creative class" (Slobodian and Sterling 2013, p. 2). On the other hand, bohemians and hipsters—the harbingers of gentrification—were followed by "investors and real-estate interests" (Allon 2013, p. 299). Consequently, housing, ignored as a policy field for a decade, has moved to the top of the political agenda and with it a range of unresolved conflicts. The complexity of the issue concerns its interconnected dimensions of equality (housing

as a social right), social cohesion (which depends on mixed neighbourhoods) and general priorities of urban planning (based on citizens' involvement or the prospect of profits).

Old and New Challenges in Urban Planning

In 2001, the Berlin Senate decided to downsize their social housing programmes to zero and embarked on a rigid austerity policy. Practically, the follow-up funding for social housing from the federal state of Berlin, substituting West Germany's subsidies after 1989, was abolished and housing stocks were privatized en masse. From 1990 till 2010, the number of state-owned dwellings shrank dramatically from 480,000 to 270,000 and with it the Berlin Senate's impact on the local housing market (Holm 2011).

Officially, this critical juncture (the end of federal subsidies and privatization of dwellings) was legitimized by the view that "Berlin has no housing problem but a poverty problem", as one interviewee put it. In 1999 the Berlin Senate reacted to early signs of urban decay and two-tier neighbourhoods by implementing "neighbourhood management" (NM) areas, an approach to "soft urban renewal" and social cohesion belonging to the federal programme "social city". In a sense, NM, rebuked by critics as a helpless attempt to compensate the previous social housing policy, ought to have been a remedy for the presumed losers from neoliberal urban development processes: the long-term unemployed, poor and/or poorly educated people, the elderly and migrants. By concentrating more on qualitative (e.g. social and economic conditions of neighbourhoods) than on quantitative problems (e.g. more social housing), NM has marked a paradigm shift in urban development policies (OECD 2003).

Nonetheless, in terms of traditional housing policies, the 2000s were, retrospectively, almost "wasted years" during which cost containment outweighed any attempts to regulate rents or expand the capacity of social housing. This had explosive social consequences, for instance, the displacement of long-term residents from inner-city districts (a process that started in 2011), which have hit Berlin politics catching it quite unprepared. Suddenly, the official line of reasoning, downplaying the existence of any problems by referring to the (relatively low) average level of rents and housing vacancies in outskirts of the city, conflicted harshly with the public perception: The loss of neighbours and friends forced to move into cheaper flats. In the face of these displacement processes, Mayor Wowereit's motto "there is no right to live in the city centre" (quote from 2011) seemed rather cynical, and the need for a new, post-austerity housing policy was clear for all to see. But how was it possible to reinvent social housing in a city that was simply "broke" and that has only 270,000 flats (Holm 2011) at its disposal? This shifts the perspective to a more fundamental question: How should public space be handled?

Space for Innovations

While questions of city planning remain an issue for professionals, a more public and more general debate on a revised property policy for Berlin has recently started. Calls for a structural policy change, claiming a balanced set of criteria for the tendering of urban property, which has been solely based on profit maximization in

the past, came from actors outside the established political arena. Ad hoc groups of tenants who risked losing their homes and a citizen initiative called “Rethinking the City” have evoked fresh discussion on the old question “who owns the city”. As a first success, Berlin’s senator of finance announced a pilot project, providing for the sale of up to 14 state-owned properties for a fair market value to non-profit housing companies. However, many more far-reaching goals, such as more participation by citizens in the development of public property and a moratorium on all current property sales, are requested by the initiative. “It’s impossible to change Berlin’s property policy all at once; we therefore need a moratorium that allows public reasoning”, says a speaker of the initiative.

The issue of ownerships concerns not only housing but also non-profit projects, promising “social dividends” instead of easy money, as in urban gardening. In this respect, *Prinzessinnengärten* in Kreuzberg are a glowing example of creative urban renewal. The project, which uses urban waste land on a temporary basis (meaning that the project may end abruptly if the city council decides to sell the area to an investor), has generated multidimensional returns for the district such as providing a green oasis, educating urbanites on the basics of gardening and bringing very different people together. “This is what it takes to maintain the *Kiez*”, states Robert Shaw, co-founder of the *Prinzessinnengärten*, who claims planning security for the project. Franz Schulz, district mayor of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg (from 2006 to 2013), supports the idea of changing public property policies. “Urban property has to be sold with regard to investors’ concepts for neighbourhood development and requires dialogue with the citizens concerned in advance”, says Schulz. The mayor refers to pioneering projects in his district such as the art and creative quarter *Südliche Friedrichstadt*. There tendering for vacant lots is based on the quality of the investors’ concept of urban renewal in the first place and is linked to a structured consultation procedure involving residents, applicants and decision makers. The actual amount of the respective bid plays a role as well but only accounts for 40% of the final decision. Obviously, such innovative procedures of participatory tendering cannot stop large-scale gentrification processes; nevertheless, they have an immense symbolic value by setting a counterpoint to the ongoing reshaping of “previously marginal spaces like Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg” (Allon 2013, p. 299) into “centres of wealth generation, middle-class employment, and valuable real estate” (Allon 2013).

Another attempt at more sustainable urban development in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg tries to bridge concerns of saving space and diversifying the local economy. For instance, a so-called owner salon has been invented—a regular occasion where small-business owners in distinctive neighbourhoods gather informally under the patronage of the unit for business promotion. The goal of such meetings is to sensitize owners, who normally have little “real” contact with the district and its residents, for social and economic concerns in the neighbourhood, in particular the loss of diversity in the local settlement structure (which characterized the “Berlin mixture” in the past) due to the process of gentrification. “Nowadays, letting a building to rich tenants and investment firms is much more lucrative than letting it to local businesses”, states Martina Nowak, head of the district’s unit for business promotion. Consequently, the district’s colourful collection of residents, retail

shops and service providers risks disappearing, which in turn may affect homeowners' long-term returns on investment. "Nobody, moves to Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg because of its uniformity; it's the district's vivid mixture that inspires newcomers", adds Ms. Nowak whose unit is searching for empty plots and vacant premises that might be interesting for start-ups and creative businesses. Since the existing potential has been largely exhausted, local owners' commitment to co-design the future of the district is of the utmost importance. In this respect, *Planet Modular* is a local role model: The alliance of small- and medium-size companies from the hobby and crafts sector has revitalized the local economy by building a huge "creative store" at the *Moritzplatz* in Kreuzberg. Furthermore, *Planet Modular* is part of a creative network that aims to integrate economic, social and cultural projects into the urban environment.

8.4.2 The Context of Child and Family Policy

Essentially, the local public discourse on child and family policy in Berlin conforms to federal policy guidelines. Accordingly, an expansion of crèches and day-care places combined with family-minded approaches such as family centres are almost the only alternatives. Hence, local policies have been evaluated solely to the extent to which they conform to "good practice" as defined by newspapers and the parliamentary public. Critique or genuine local debate—where contradictory statements are reciprocally related to one another—do not exist; instead, local particularities (or "obstacles" to achieving the policy goals mentioned) are reported from time to time. In this respect, three facts make Berlin distinctive: First, Berlin is the "city of babies" with the highest birth rate of any German metropolis. Among Berlin's districts, Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg's baby boom is the biggest (with 11.9 births per 1000 inhabitants). Second, one third of all families in Berlin are "one-parent families" which in almost all cases are socio-economically deprived. Third, about one fifth of families are considered as "less educated" and, as such, reliant on support measures. As a result, questions of sufficient provision and (equal) access to childcare facilities make up the local contribution to the general German debate on child and family policy. Key values and recurrent issues in this context, expressed by interviewees and in official statements by stakeholders, are "equal opportunities", "choice", "early childhood education" and "more flexible time schedules and regulations" at childcare facilities.

At first glance, the situation concerning childcare arrangements in Berlin seems much better than elsewhere in Germany. The city charges minimal fees for childcare places. Moreover, the percentage of children being cared for in a kindergarten or crèche in Berlin is very high: 94% among children aged 3–6, 77% among 2-year-olds and 49% among 1-year-olds. Thus Berlin is a national pioneer with regard to children aged 0–3 visiting a crèche. However, local problems concern the distribution of childcare places available, flexible caring arrangements and low-threshold support for families under stress. With a special view on Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg,

it is clear that district authorities pursue strong “family-oriented” policies. The diversity of local needs is regularly assessed through a very detailed analysis. For instance, the child and youth welfare office has built up a standing working group called “baby boom”, after miscalculating the demand for kindergartens in the early 2000s, in order to react to the district’s increasing birth rates. In addition, the district is a pioneer within Berlin because it pursues integrated concepts such as family centres conceptualized according to the “early excellence approach” and involving parents closely (see e.g. Lewis 2011). However, there is a lack of supply with regard to crèches, kindergartens and family centres equally. “Currently, we are unable to satisfy families’ demand for services”, admits Thomas Harkenthal, head of the local child and youth welfare office. The department projects a shortfall of about 1600 childcare places until 2015. In practice, this scarcity undermines the claim for equal opportunities among all children—a key value of the local authority. Some local childcare providers take advantage of the imbalance between demand and supply by charging parents just to put them on the waiting list for a place at their facility or demanding admission fees of up to 500 €. Others collect fees, up to 300 € per month, for “additional services” such as early language support, music or sport lessons. Although this de facto practice of social selection violates public law, anxious parents tend to be willing to pay extra charges.

Space for Innovations

Overall, there is strong local coalition between public servants and civil society actors in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg to invent and pursue more complex and innovative approaches in childcare policies. Three examples of social innovation should be mentioned. First, family centres, recognized as very effective facilities for children and parents in the neighbourhood, are innovative institutions in the context of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. Nonetheless, family centres are still widely perceived by authorities as add-on arrangements rather than as regular service providers. In order to consolidate their position, family centres’ services—for instance additional educational services for children or occasions for informal meetings for parents—require continuous financing (currently centres are run on 1-year-contracts) from the Berlin Senate. Second, the neighbourhood mothers project—migrants as mentors, bridging the gap between troubled (migrant) families and the requirements of public life—is a flagship project in the district, managed by the *Diakonie*, a welfare association. The work of the neighbourhood mothers project—despite being underfunded and time-limited—is especially welcomed as complementing support concerning the integration of migrant families. Furthermore, district authorities have committed themselves to take on some neighbourhood mothers, completing a vocational training as “social assistants”, after the project runs out. A third innovation deals with women, especially lone mothers. They are supported by *Frieda*, a local women’s centre. Like the neighbourhood mothers project, *Frieda* provides informal help based on the assumption that clients need more than a kindergarten place. *Frieda* not only advises lone mothers but provides several low-threshold services such as a café, regular breakfast meetings and excursions so that women who are often socially isolated can make new social contacts.

As the interviewees representing the three innovations reported almost unanimously, cooperation with district authorities and councillors and, vice versa, with childcare and family care providers is marked by mutual understanding and very much focused on issues and problem-solving. For instance, heads of family centres and project leaders praise the district authorities for their support and local pragmatism (e.g. when dealing with legal requirements) but accuse the senate (which decides the budget for Berlin's family-minded policies) for its lack of action. Actually, the political clout of the local coalition for child and family issues at the district level remains rather weak. Both, project operators and district authorities are equally "supplicants" of the Senate that cannot do much except put forward arguments for more financial support. On the other hand, their powerlessness in terms of budget planning reinforces the bonding effect among local actors, who perceive themselves equally as victims of the Senate's austerity policy, which is regarded as family unfriendly.

8.4.3 *The Context of Employment*

Generally, the discourse on employment is, even more than the field of child and family policy, dominated by federal policies and decisions. The reasons for that are, on the one hand, the fact that the employment field is centrally regulated by the Federal Employment Agency (FEA) and its local branches and job centres and, on the other hand, the enormous impact of the *Hartz* reforms, which came into force in 2003. Especially, *Hartz IV*, a federal law that merged unemployment and social assistance and forces job seekers to accept any job that they are offered, represents a paradigm shift in the German labour market. As a result, almost any discourse on employment in Germany centres on the consequences of the *Hartz* reforms such as the implementation of activation schemes, the punishment of those who refuse to cooperate, the quality of labour and the special needs of children and youngsters with unemployed parents. Moreover, *Hartz IV* recipients face strict housing regulations: For a single household, rent subsidies are capped to 415 € in Berlin. Given the overstretched housing market, this "frozen subsidy" banishes de facto the long-term unemployed from better neighbourhoods in the city centre.

Beyond these ongoing controversies, there is relatively little space for debate on the innovative features of the local labour market, and policy programmes that give employment issues a local flavour are few and far between. Browsing through Berlin newspapers, one easily gets the impression that the city combines many negative aspects of the contested labour market reforms of 2003. The city is dubbed "capital of the long-term unemployed" or "capital of the poor and uneducated", and this is (more or less) backed up by data: In 2011, 20.7% of Berlin's population received *Hartz IV* benefits. Particularly problematic was the situation for youngsters, who face a local unemployment rate of 13% (twice as high as the German average) and children, since every third child lives on social transfer money. In addition, in 2012, 126,000 employees depended on substituting social benefits despite having a job, indicating a massive extension of the low-pay sector during the last years.

Space for Innovations

Visions outlined for the whole city, attempting to reposition Germany's capital as one of Europe's truly global metropolitan areas, include for example a "new industrialization of Berlin", or the building of a "creative and sustainable city", where good labour is equally shared between all inhabitants. Berlin's creative economy also has its cultural roots in the new social movements that sprang up in the 1970s which promoted new forms of micro-solidarities and participatory concepts as an alternative to the much-criticized traditional forms of state-based solidarity (Evers 2010, p. 52). In contrast to the initiatives for employment mentioned above, such a perspective focuses on new concepts of growth and economic development and only indirectly on the creation of jobs. Instead, discourses such as the "creative economy" aim to change the dynamic of doing business and business promotion in a post-industrial age. However, there is a significant gap, which has not yet been filled by the political concepts of urban and social change, between the vague, cultural ideas of Berlin's future and the vast number of promising local projects (Schneekloth 2009). Boosting Berlin's creative class—e.g. music and fashion labels, clubs, ateliers but also IT start-ups and (social) media companies—has become a strategy within local economic policy since the 2000s. In the absence of strong traditional industrial sectors, local politics embrace "creativity" as a value and a vehicle for future economic growth. According to Senate authorities, Berlin's rising "creative cluster", which generates 16% of the city's overall economic output per year (25 billion €), employs about 200,000 people. In order to consolidate this positive trend, a steering group, initiated by the Senate, is developing integrated policy recommendations and providing an online portal where entrepreneurs and creative workers can network across sectors. In particular, entrepreneurs and creative start-ups require infrastructural support, such as affordable office buildings that allow exchange between creative workers. Due to the enormous dynamism of the creative economy, leaving Berlin for another, more favourable, business location is a permanent option for start-up companies. The problem of the Senate's current "cluster management" is its relative blindness to the local conditions for creative entrepreneurialism. A "creative urban wonderland", as one interviewee remarked mockingly, needs more than an "ultimate master plan"; above all, a flourishing of creative business ideas needs local spaces for entrepreneurial leeway.

In conclusion one might say that the example of Berlin demonstrates that unemployment as an issue can be tackled from a number of perspectives: as a side effect of low economic dynamism, as a structural problem with a long local history, as a challenge to create better transitions from schools and vocational trainings to the labour market and, finally, from the perspective of reintegrating people into the existing labour market (public and private). In Berlin, employment policy is very much focused on the employability-oriented job centre approach, while more complex approaches that involve new concepts for growth and sustainable jobs have, so far, been secondary.

What are the main differences between local innovations—such as "job explorer", a project in Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg that matches local companies and pupils at an early stage—and mainstream employment policies? First, projects for labour

market integration operate at the district level and focus on the particularities of the local context, while the job centre pursues large-scale, standardized programmes. Second, local approaches deal with unemployed people in groups, acknowledging that they are part of a local community, while mainstream policies address jobseekers as individuals whose social relationships are rather irrelevant. Third, complex approaches offer tailor-made and personalized support packages, while the portfolio of the job centre is limited to managerialist and impersonal devices. To sum up, the key difference concerns the overall perspective of the employment policy: Does it combine aspects of social and labour market integration or is it reduced to the principle of employability?

8.5 Summary and Conclusions

Mayor Wowereit's dictum of 2003 that Berlin is "poor but sexy" seems outdated and appears rather shallow today. Instead, one may conclude without cynicism that "Berlin has embraced an economic model that makes poverty pay" (Slobodian and Sterling 2013, p. 2) by attracting creative people and tourists in large numbers. At the same time, Berlin is well on its way to dry out the breeding grounds for its "sexiness", perceived as the city's constant capacity to invent alternative lifestyles and unconventional solutions to daily-life challenges. However, Berlin's unspoken promise to its citizens that a decent but also exciting life remains possible despite a lower income and a marginal social status was validated only for a finite period of history. In this respect, the impact of history cannot be overstated: The city's attractiveness rested much on its previous status as an "island of bliss" where real-world hardships were at least partly suspended and where people's self-realization was supported through low rents and generous social benefits. In the aftermath of Germany's reunification, Berlin's social appeal increased temporarily due to the doubling of space and, therewith, the emergence of additional niches for nonconformist ways of life and living. In addition, "constant change, experimentation, trend setting and creativity" (Colomb and Kalandides 2010, p. 184), which the city had produced before in abundance without making a fuss, became ennobled as "hallmarks of Berlin" (Colomb and Kalandides 2010). Retrospectively, it is difficult to identify at which point exactly Berlin's social beat got out of sync, though it must have been in the early 2000s when the city arrived on the brightly illuminated stage of the globalized world (Krätke 2001). From then on, the city's rare gift for embracing pluralism and innovation was no longer protected by historical particularities and privileges but contested by, above all, the same capitalist dynamics that have been observed in other metropolis many times before (see for an overview: Kazepov 2005).

However, this climate of comprehensive change has affected each area of social policy differently due to powerful discourses that shaped previous policies, historic crossroads and field-specific regulations. What conclusions can be drawn for Berlin from the empirical evidence compiled in this chapter? Once more, the answers vary significantly in each policy field.

Changes in the field of housing are the most severe and irreversible in the short term. The selling off of state-owned dwellings to private investors during the early 2000s has reduced the Berlin Senate's room for manoeuvre to reinvent a social housing policy drastically. What is more, city authorities have developed no new strategies for mitigating the problem of rising rents and scarce living space. Instead, they stick to rather "mechanical master plans" that are doomed to failure because of their inability to react to the diversity of the urban landscape. Innovative approaches do exist, such as the piecemeal restructuring of Berlin's inner-city districts in order to use space resources more efficiently, but the Berlin Senate does not support them. Meanwhile, the crowding out of tenants in inner-city districts like Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg is intensifying.

Despite also being affected by austerity policies and rising demand, the situation is different in the field of childcare and family care. Berlin benefitted much from the political and cultural shift in this field, as shown in the expansion of crèches decreed by federal legislation and the increased international attention to discourses such as those on "early childhood education" (Moss 2008) and "family-minded policies" (Clarke and Hughes 2010). Moreover, existing innovative offers, such as family centres or neighbourhood mothers, enrich the local provision of services. However, what is still missing is a clear commitment, in terms of long-term financing, from the Berlin Senate to integrate such innovations in the regular local welfare system. In the face of rising social inequality and the creeping disintegration of the "Berlin mixture", which guaranteed a certain level of social cohesion in the past, future investment in complementary and preventative childcare and family care services seems inevitable.

In Germany, the field of employment is regulated by the FEA in a highly top-down manner. Consequently, attempts to implement labour market integration in a "different way" are hardly possible without support by and cooperation with FEA branches or job centres. However, just a few small-scale projects (e.g. "Neighbourhood Mothers" or "Job Explorer") pursuing an innovative approach towards work integration have been devised by joint efforts. What is also missing is an integrated approach to deal with the growing urban underclass (e.g. uneducated migrants and youngsters, bohemians, single parents and long-term trainees). Current initiatives by the Berlin Senate are of little help for local jobseekers. Instead, ambitious attempts to re-establish the city as a hub for services and the creative economy are attracting mobile and better-educated people in the first place. Once more, local projects are the most promising, such as those that stimulate entrepreneurialism (see e.g. "Kreuzberg acts", Chap. 15 of this volume) and thereby help people to benefit from booming sectors such as the creative industry, healthcare or tourism.

Finally, the question remains whether Berlin remains to be a "daredevil social experiment" (Schmidt 2014) where social innovations of the future will be developed, tested and promoted. Much will depend on the city government's capacity to forge a new framework of innovation politics that goes beyond opportunistic support and short-term subsidies for projects that are useful on a temporary basis. Such politics requires a risk-taking culture, financial support and, above all, an understanding that innovators need free space for experimentation—both physically and mentally.

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Part III
Local Social Innovations

Chapter 9

Social Innovations as Messages: Democratic Experimentation in Local Welfare Systems

Adalbert Evers and Taco Brandsen

9.1 Social Innovations as Messages—an Approach and a Metaphor

The aim of this contribution is a twofold one. First of all, we want to present in a concise manner what kind of inspiration can be derived from the 77 local social innovations in the 20 cities that have been analysed in the welfare innovations at the local level in favour of cohesion (WILCO) project. What can be learned from them for the further development and restructuring of local welfare systems when dealing with the challenge of strengthening social inclusion? Secondly, we want to shed light on the procedural aspect of innovation—how can civil society actors, policy-makers and administrators make better use of such social innovations, or to put it in more analytical terms, how to understand better the interaction between given social and welfare systems and innovations? With respect to both of these issues, innovative contents of cases and problems of diffusion of innovation, we propose to use the “message” metaphor.

First, let us briefly describe the empirical and methodological basis of this chapter. The introduction to this book already outlined roughly the concept of social innovation we worked with and the general method of analysis of the international research project. Therefore, we can restrict ourselves to point out the guiding orientations for selecting innovations.

First of all, we selected only local innovations that were past inception stage. According to this criterion, every innovation selected for investigation has existed for at least 1 year (since March 2011). Thus, all social innovations we looked at were

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about ideas or approaches that had already been implemented in practice to some degree. Each innovation selected by our teams entailed a practical project that had been realised. As it turned out, this project was either an organisation or an organisational subunit with new services that clearly differed from what existed so far in the field or a measure/intervention such as a new transfer, tax or resource arrangement. However, as the selected cases in this chapter show, local social innovations can also take other forms. Innovations always have a background of orientating streams of values and thinking as well as associated practices that back up and inspire them. A local network rather than a single organisational unit may represent innovations. Therefore, speaking about social innovations can refer to a large project, but also to a cluster of small, similar projects. In such case, the task was to describe the whole cluster and zoom in on one or two of the small cases, to get a sense of the micro-dynamics. In case the innovation was part of a government program meant to promote, finance and regulate an innovative approach, only those innovations from wider national programs that could be seen as “local”, in the sense that there was a considerable degree of freedom to shape them in the local context, were selected. It was a mandatory requirement of WILCO to feature between three and six innovations in each city. The actual number of cases chosen in a city depended largely on the complexity of the respective cases.

Given the enormous diversity of social innovations, we suggested only three “analysis grids” for all teams to use when observing selected innovations. Hence, the selected case studies in this chapter have been organised along three basic themes: (a) conceptions and ways of addressing users, (b) internal organisation and modes of working, and (c) interaction with the local welfare system. Altogether, we tried to obtain both a very concrete and sensitive picture of the individual innovation and an intelligible way to draw “messages” that were interesting also for colleagues working on the issue in other countries and settings.

9.1.1 The Concept of Messages

What do we mean when we suggest understanding innovations as “messages”? First of all it means that beyond their immediate effect in the location where they take shape they may trigger similar actions elsewhere. In the field of welfare policies and services, which we studied, this may take the form of values and convictions that inspire them and which they want to promote, proposals they entail, and lessons to be learned. Obviously this calls for an analytical process of looking at the more general meaning of innovative ways of coping with problems that have come up recurrently in different local settings and circumstances. In the first part of this chapter, we will therefore present our reading of the messages implied in the innovations under study. References will be made to five dimensions of these innovations that we found especially telling.

However, understanding social innovations as messages also means looking at innovations as processes of transmission between actor and local context. Such a

process can set a new practice into motion and address broader networks of civil society, political and administrative actors, possibly market actors as well. Are they willing to pay attention to such messages? What determines the different degrees of readiness among these actors to take up messages? And moreover, what influences the capabilities to “read” and the ways of interpreting them? All this may concern innovations and innovators themselves, the degree to which they actively care for broadening their action and winning support, but it mainly concerns contexts and the ability of systems—here welfare systems—to adopt innovations. The second part of this chapter will reflect on these questions, focusing on the difference it makes once an innovation is non-market based and in its essence non-technical, such as *social* innovations, taking shape in local milieus and welfare systems.

Obviously the metaphor of “messages” may in many ways be insufficient and questionable. Studies of innovation usually prefer the “diffusion” metaphor, and we also use it in this contribution. It takes account of the fact that innovations are a kind of “message into the open”, without any specific or exclusive addressee. Many effects and messages of innovations are beyond the control of the innovators. However, speaking about “messages” has the advantage of including not only processes (of diffusion) but also issues related to content (new values, practices, policies). Furthermore, looking for “senders” and “receivers” allows us to study not merely systems and structures but also the actors who are responsible for dealing with a message, its contents and readings.

What are the main messages we found in the approaches and instruments used in local social innovations studied as part of the WILCO project? The first part of the chapter will deal with this question. What can be said about the processes of transmitting, accepting, rejecting or reading such messages (what is mostly called the process of diffusion)? What are the challenges when it comes to linking social innovations and social policies? This will be taken up in the second part of the chapter.

9.1.2 Recurring and Shared Features of Welfare Innovations— Five Key Messages

When analysing the cases of innovation, our aim was to find out whether there are recurring features that give them a distinct profile. Altogether they represent forms of acting and thinking that can be defined first of all in negative terms—breaking up with the traditions both of what we call “industrial welfare” and the more recent wave of managerial and neo-liberal reforms.

However, as we will show, these innovations can also be defined in positive terms. Recurring features point to a certain style of doing things, *a shared culture and perspective of thinking and acting across national borders that makes a difference to the past*. It was a key task of our analysis to deal with the question what can be generalised from these innovations, their approaches and the tools and instruments developed by them—not only in the special local system within which an innovation was taking place but also at the level of an international debate on

local welfare systems, their institutions, rules, services, modes of governance and kinds of welfare mixes. Therefore we focused on commonalities and messages they entailed for the actors concerned, especially for policymakers, administrators and experts. Our findings (for a more detailed analysis of the findings presented in this paragraph see Evers et al. 2014 and Evers and Ewert 2015) have been ordered under five headings:

- Ways of addressing users
- Regulations and rights
- Governance
- Methods of working and financing
- Challenges to framing welfare systems

Table 9.1 shows in which areas the main emphasis of the respective 14 cases is to be found, but it notes as well one or two other fields where the basically polyvalent social innovations can be seen as illustrative.

The innovative approaches found in above fields obviously do not represent a kind of social or political programme. Rather, they are *messages in terms of a loose assemblage of elements of a kind of “cultural turn” in dealing with issues of welfare and more specifically social inclusion*. Different political actors and parties can take up concerns and aspirations of innovations and turn their contents and uses into different directions. Therefore the following points listed will attain more precise meaning over time, according to the way wider social and policy context integrate them into their discourses (Schmidt 2010). Linking social and economic concerns or striving for more flexibility and personalisation, for example, can take on quite

Table 9.1 Five dimensions of local social innovation—the emphasis of the cases presented

	New ways of addressing users	Innovations in regulations and rights	Innovations in governance	Innovative methods of working and financing	Challenging the local welfare system
Warsaw	XX				X
Zagreb		XX		X	
Amsterdam	X			XX	
Lille	X			XX	
Pamplona			X	XX	X
Berlin	X			X	XX
Milan	X	XX		X	
Stockholm	XX			X	X
Nijmegen	X	XX			X
Birmingham(1)	XX				X
Birmingham(2)	X		X		XX
Münster	X	X	X		XX
Barcelona	X		XX	X	
Bern			XX		

different meanings. We will take up the importance of (discursive) contexts and the different faces of “mainstreaming” innovations in the second part of this chapter.

Message One—About New Ways of Addressing Users

The majority of social innovations chosen for inclusion in the study were service innovations. Since services are generally organised along less-closed and standardised lines than income transfer (for example, in pensions systems), it is little wonder that they provide more fertile ground for small-scale innovations.

The overall message of finding new ways of addressing users shows itself primarily in the search for new service relationships that reduce the dependency of users and strengthen their capabilities by opening up new opportunities or enhancing their skills. The theoretical debates on co-production (Verschuere et al. 2012) find a good illustrative counterpart in many of the case studies presented in this chapter. The orientation towards users and citizens featured in these cases implies a desire to avoid stigmatisation. Most of the occupational and social integration programmes provided as part of workfare policies (Handler 2004) employ strict targeting that clearly indicates who is “in” and who is “out”, along with detailed rules and requirements governing the process of admission and integration. For instance, being entitled or forced to take part in a special programme for the long-term unemployed is linked with various forms of categorisation, classification and control. By contrast, many of the innovations addressing issues such as occupational and social integration take a more loose and open approach that does not impose admission requirements on (potential) users and does not prescribe in detail how reintegration should proceed and which stages it should include.

While public administration and welfare bureaucracies are separating between different tasks, needs and groups, it has become increasingly difficult to adequately meet the complex and often unique needs of customers in a highly segmented system. Bundling existing support measures tends to be complicated and discouraging. However, among the selection of innovations studied, there were a number of organisations that developed personalised support packages that allow access to otherwise separate forms of support.

Cultural and ethnic diversity and the problems of poverty and social exclusion have increased in the age of large-scale migration, unemployment and growing inequality. This makes it increasingly difficult for services and professionals to reach groups that need their help most, often because the services offered are simply not known, are too difficult to understand or are not taken up due to a lack of trust. Finding innovative ways of bridging the gap between professional services and real people’s lives has been a recurrent challenge met by innovations we studied.

The various features of a different approach to users just mentioned is nicely illustrated in one of the case studies in this chapter about an innovative network providing new forms of support for children and single mothers, often vulnerable and living under stressful socioeconomic conditions. It was set up by a Swedish association operating mainly in the Stockholm area (see: Nordfeldt et al. in this chapter). The services that address children encourage group formation and shared activities while simultaneously organising individualised support in the form of fairs where mothers receive personal counselling by invited experts from different fields.

Message Two—About Innovations in Regulations and Rights

These days, working and living patterns are changing and less continuous; zones of transition between life situations and life stages are becoming more complicated (Bovenberg 2008). Traditional services cannot always cope with these complexities. This may mean being out of school but not yet in a job, on the track back to employment but without access to a place to live. Often this coincides with other acute problems that may require immediate help. What some have called “new social risks” (Bonoli 2005) cannot be dealt with using the manual of standard risks. Innovative ways of offering a quick fix, often provisionally, may well be the critical missing link when it comes to providing living and working arrangements that keep people “in the game”. Quite a number of social innovations studied in the WILCO project involve establishing flexible forms of ad hoc support that meet newly emerging risks short-term. One telling example is the Welfare Foundation Ambrosiano in Milan, Italy (see Sabatinelli and Costa in this chapter), that supported individuals and families who were temporarily in need for various reasons (redundancy, illness and so on) through quick micro-credits, regardless of their previous or current type of employment contract and country of origin.

Traditionally, most public welfare services have the status of rights that are unconditional, insofar as they simply require a set of material preconditions to be fulfilled. A new tendency in welfare arrangements (see Evers and Guillemard 2013), particularly in the field of “workfare”, is for clients to enter a form of contractual relationship in which the preconditions for support concern their future behaviour. This requires clients to take exclusive responsibility for themselves. Among the set of innovations studied, there were also other types of moves from rights to contracts, defining the notion of “giving something back for what one gets from society” more broadly. People received access to goods and services once they committed to doing something for others in the form of volunteer work or providing clearly defined personal support for vulnerable people in the community. One example of this is Time for a Roof, an intergenerational home-sharing service in Nantes, France (see Coqblin and Fraisse 2014 in: Evers a. o. 93). It offered cheap accommodation to students who entered into an intergenerational cohabitation arrangement.

Message Three—About Innovations in Governance

The social innovations under study all represented a combination of new social “products” and new social “processes”, the latter term referring to the internal organisation of decision-making and interaction with the environment, the public, various stakeholders, social partners and political and administrative authorities. Many social innovations that seek to develop new kinds of services also have a governance dimension. However, for some innovations, influencing and changing the system of governance was their main goal (see Moore and Hartley 2009; Lévesque 2013). This is the case, for instance, in the Citizen’s Agreement for an inclusive Barcelona. More than 500 participating entities in spheres such as the economy, culture, education, health and housing worked on a new participative governance structure (see Montagut et al. in this book). Likewise in Bern (see Felder in this chapter) where new integration guidelines that became mandatory for public stakeholders

were developed through a cooperative process in a working group of administrators, experts and representatives of local NGOs.

Traditional service organisations and systems tend to focus almost exclusively on their respective special tasks, effectively functioning in silos (Boyle et al. 2010). Social innovations, by contrast, are characterised by bringing together what is separate—ideas, concerns or practices—fostering units and types of organisations that operate in a more embedded and networked way. A good example are the Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research and Talent Development (BOOT) in Amsterdam (see Broersma et al. in this chapter), where teachers and students from universities cooperated with activists in a community development programme linking governmental, not-for-profit and business organisations.

Innovation also means addressing issues, concerns and related forms of self-organisation in a way that is more in tune with changing challenges and pressures. When it comes to women's concerns, networks such as the MaMa Foundation in Warsaw (see Siemieńska et al. in this chapter) or the association Parents in Action (RODA; see Bezovan et al. in this chapter) overcame the traditionally restricted focus on achieving the same role as men in a labour market designed for men. They gave certain groups a voice in the public domain, highlighting new concerns that were previously seen simply as private issues, exposing local systems that under both socialist and post-socialist regimes displayed little interest in the manifold challenges of care. In doing so, these initiatives raised awareness of new ways of working and family life and brought them onto the public policy agenda. These and other innovative projects were eager to discover new ways of organising debates, deliberation processes and types of publicity, in order to set agendas and establish a new consensus on priorities.

Building issue-based coalitions and partnerships can be seen as denser forms of networking, often concerned with raising awareness of a particular issue. Establishing these kinds of partnerships, which are both unified and plural, is an important and innovative aspect of policymaking and fostering participation in governance. In addition to examples from urban housing and neighbourhood regeneration, the already mentioned *Foundation Ambrosiano* in Milan in this chapter provides a good example of bringing together stakeholders from diverse social and political arenas: the municipality, the province, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the three main trade unions, binding them into a pluralistic yet coherent alliance.

Message Four—About Innovative Methods of Working and Financing

When innovation means dealing differently with a given challenge or pressure, this often involves ways of accepting and living with worsening material conditions. Innovative projects and organisations with precarious funding are affected all the more by trends to be observed in today's labour markets: limited contracts that offer no security. Of course one could speculate that this is partly compensated by an atmosphere of creativity and cooperation, more positive stress than the one produced by hierarchies. Trust-based relationships may allow many of the various contributors to participate for a while and accept short-term contracts, secure in the knowledge that a new contract is possible once circumstances allow. Still, trust

building, cooperation and unwritten rules of respect can hardly be regarded as a reliable antidote to missing job security.

Furthermore, models for taking part in social innovation projects are typically much more diverse than in the public or business sector since they include not only various forms of (casually) paid employment but also many forms of voluntary and civic contributions. The latter range from short-term activism to regular long-term unpaid volunteering, from hands-on volunteer work to regular contributions in the form of civic engagement on a board of management. Hendrickson and Estany's contribution on Neighbourhood Children Services in Pamplona in this chapter is an illustrative example. This innovation provides leisure activities for children and young people such as activity groups, playgrounds, summer camps and neighbourhood festivals. In the working structure, one can find volunteers and paid practitioners from neighbourhood associations, cooperating with directors both of local social services and the associations themselves. For its network and activities, this combination of professional and lay contributions is indispensable.

People working in innovative projects must typically manage tasks that fall outside the limits of traditional professions and the divisions of labour that they imply (Brandsen and Honingh 2013). They might have to learn to converse with various kinds of users, clients, co-citizens and volunteers; sometimes they are specialists, entrepreneurs and managers simultaneously. Many of them need a combination of both technical and social knowledge. This kind of "re-professionalisation" process may, for example, involve collaborators who are architects by training but work simultaneously as community organisers and mediators. The social innovation based in a neighbourhood called *Ilot Stephenson* near Lille (see Fraisse in this chapter) features a group of architects supporting inhabitants in renovating their own houses under the slogan "Faire ensemble, le grand ensemble" (roughly translated: "working together to build the whole urban area"). This is a good example of a new kind of professionalism that combines previously fragmented knowledge.

Many, if not the majority of the social innovations we studied, are based on combining multiple sources of funding. The mix varies, and often state financing remains the most important component. But usually there is some degree of (financial) co-responsibility on the part of other organisations from civil society and/or the business sector. Furthermore, funding arrangements are usually precarious and limited in time. Examples of the possibilities and limitations of innovative projects that work with short-term funding, combining resources from different stakeholders, can be found in many innovations presented in this book (see, for instance, the contribution on work corporations in Nijmegen and their resource mix).

Message Five—About the Need to Question How (Local) Welfare Systems are Framed

The WILCO project sought to examine the possible contributions of social innovations to changes and developments in local welfare *systems*. It was understood that this label meant more than just local welfare-*state* institutions. Referring to a welfare system usually means including—in addition to the local welfare state and municipal welfare—welfare-related activities and responsibilities from the third sector, the market sector, communities and the family (Evers and Laville 2004).

The cases of social innovations we examined demonstrate the mutual relationships that exist between all four components of (local) welfare systems—(local) state, business, third sector and informal networks of community and family life. There was considerable variation in the level and impact of state funding and support for social innovations. The organisations involved often took on a hybrid character (see, e.g. Fledderus et al. in this chapter). Social innovations can therefore best be captured by concepts of welfare based on deliberate mixing and pluralism among actors, resources and responsibilities.

Innovation becomes difficult, if not impossible, wherever the right to act, organise or provide differently is denied. This can be the case in both large private-sector business organisations, which are managed centrally, and in certain market sectors that are controlled by private sector oligopolies. Hence, giving room for social innovations often implies aiming for more diversity and more localisation in welfare arrangements. What is more, supporting innovation means opting for arrangements that allow a new balance between guaranteed equal standards and diversity.

It is no coincidence that the social innovations considered in this chapter are largely located at the intersection of welfare and urban development. Traditionally, local and urban politics have been less prominent in the system of public policy-making. This is likely to change, as Barber (2013) recently argued. Policy fields that are usually excluded from the welfare system, such as environmental policy or cultural activities, play an important role in socially innovative developments. As Brookes et al. show in this chapter, Birmingham operates with a locality approach to worklessness, where the packages of employment, skill-development and social integration measures are developed and tailored on “ward” levels (neighbourhoods of about 30.00 inhabitants), turning work integration programs into community-led, neighbourhood-specific approaches. The program “Kreuzberg acts” (see Ewert and Evers in this chapter) and the Ilot Stephenson project from Lille are also focusing on neighbourhoods, bringing together issues of individual consultancy and concerns with community revitalisation by networking and trust building among local stakeholders.

All these examples illustrate another major aspect of many social innovations: the upgrading of the community component in mixed welfare systems and of the development of innovative forms operating at the interface of public and community spheres, sharing responsibility between the two.

In contrast to most of the previous points, the integration of social and economic logics is much better established as a concern in debates on future welfare systems. The economisation of all spheres and an increasing focus on productivity are one side of the coin. On the other, there is the debate on the welfare state as a “social investment state” (Morel et al. 2012). This advocates modernising public welfare through an approach that stresses the positive economic effects of social policy intervention in education, family support, and in occupational and social integration. In urban regeneration, social innovations seeking to combine the active participation of people as co-producers and co-decision-makers with public and private investment can be seen as part of this perspective on social investment as a means of societal development.

Summing up, the local innovations we observed—besides specific tools and aims mentioned before—represent an important way of reconfiguring mixed welfare systems, an observation likewise made by Jenson (2013) who even argues that this might be their main role.

9.2 Sending and Receiving—the Diffusion of Social Innovations

The following part discusses our analysis of diffusion processes. The sample of social innovations studied in the project is not quantitatively representative of diffusion potential, which makes firm statements on how much diffusion occurs impossible (which is, in any case, very difficult methodologically). Furthermore, the focus was on relations within the local context. However, the broad variety of types of innovations, the nature of which has been sketched in the first part of this chapter, allows us to draw some analytically generalizable conclusions concerning the nature of the process. We will focus on aspects of the process that are most distinctive of social innovation and on those specifically relevant to the third sector. We will continue to use the metaphor of sending and receiving messages.

Basically this metaphor, with its strengths and shortcomings, can be used for all kinds of innovation: market- or non-market-based, those technical in nature, others that are more about organisational devices and those concerning social relations and lifestyles. One should however recognise the special nature of this final type of *social* innovations (non-market-based and non-technical), which mostly develop at the local level in specific places (Zapf 1989). They have some distinctive features compared to innovations more generally. Specifically, three characteristics can be noted, which will be referred back later:

1. Social innovations usually relate to services, not products. As Osborne and Strosch (2013) emphasised, this makes them different from other types of innovation in that they relate to ongoing relationships rather than discrete transactions and to outcomes rather than outputs.
2. As a consequence, this type of innovations is usually embedded in specific social relations. This, in turn, means that they are more contextually bound than their technological counterparts. An iPad will continue to function in the same way whether it is used in Stockholm, Dover or Belgrade. The same cannot be said of approaches or schemes that work with people and rely on specific regulations and cultures to be effective. This is very relevant to the issue of diffusion, as it becomes much more complicated both in terms of objectives and process. Innovations invented in specific locations and setting cannot simply be “scaled up” as they require various ways of partial adoption and special readings.
3. Local social innovations address a specific type of need, a social need not yet sufficiently addressed by government programmes and markets. By implication, the majority are non-marketable. While many innovations originate from busi-

nesses, most innovations in local welfare originate in non-market contexts and respective social milieus, like the voluntary sector or social movements (according to some definitions of social innovations, exclusively so). Their social character is specific. This again has consequences for processes of diffusion, scaling-up, popularising or mainstreaming.

Taking these specificities into account, we can sum up the problems with transferring messages from social innovations that surfaced during the research in six paragraphs.

Risky Journeys: The Diffusion of Non-technical and Non-market-based Innovations

The literature on the diffusion of innovations primarily concentrates on the business sector and therefore principally on diffusion in a market context. As we noted before, this is not the realm of all innovations, including most social innovations in the welfare domain, and we will see that it has consequences for the ultimate analysis of the process. Therefore it is useful to consider insights from literature outside market contexts.

There is by now a substantial body of literature on innovations in the public sector, under the label of “policy transfer”. This work on policy diffusion examines how policies spread across different administrations, adapting (or not) to different institutional conditions (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). For instance, it has been used to explain the diffusion of monetary policy across member states of the European Union with their own different formal structures and administrative cultures (Radaelli 2000) or the spread of public management practices across different countries, in which the same instrument or policy can have very different meanings depending on where they are implemented (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2004; Brandsen and Kim 2010).

Actual diffusion processes differ strongly in terms of what is diffused (e.g. objectives, contents, concepts, structures, instruments) and the degree to which something is diffused (ranging from straight copying to light inspiration, with various hybrid variations in between). Furthermore, it has to be kept in mind that journeys from “senders” to “receivers/adopters” are mostly risky and sometimes intricate (Nowotny 1997). There are many reasons why innovations may not diffuse from their place of origin. Others may get lost on the journey, damaged, changed in content or taken up and used by adopters other than innovators had thought of. While research on diffusion tends to focus on the process of adoption, especially of successful cases of adoption, one should ideally also examine failed cases or those cases where an innovation could have been relevant, but was never considered.

What also becomes more complex in a public context is the issue of motives for diffusion, which is straightforward (or at least presumed to be so) among commercial businesses. The incentives for policymakers and civil servants are more complex. While they can be driven by the desire for problem solving, they can also be motivated by political gain and/or complex political strategies. Hence, the question of motivation (or lack of it) is important in the analysis of the diffusion of social innovations.

The literature also pays much attention to obstacles to diffusion that result from the nature of the innovation itself. In line with Rogers' work (1962), it suggests that the more complex innovations are (in terms of goals, assumed causalities, effects) the harder it gets to take them from one place to another. The more resilient the destination context (e.g. due to the strength of a dominant discourse or top-heavy regulation), the less likely it is to succeed. Transfer success also depends on capacity and resources available. The empirical results of the WILCO project show that the same applies to social innovations.

Even though there is an already burgeoning literature on innovation transfer, questions about what is specific about the diffusion of *social* innovations remain. Non-technical and non-market-based innovations are generally more diverse in terms of organisational properties or lifestyles compared to technical innovations designed for mass markets. Yet, to be fair, the difference is not always as drastic as the one between a cell phone and a new mode of participation in urban planning. Many new mass products are sold with varieties that allow marketing geared to the different tastes of consumers in different cultures and regions. Still, the differential impact of "local" as compared to "global" features remains an important topic for research to investigate what is specific for social innovations.

Spreading Rather Than Being Sent: The Opaque Nature of Diffusion Processes

When the process of diffusion is studied across a wider range of cases, the sender-receiver metaphor quickly becomes unsatisfactory as, however bad the connection, however confusing the conference call, one usually knows who is at the other end of the line. Not so for diffusion because the process is so hard to trace.

Johnson dealt with the difference between areas such as the business sector, where innovations can be formalised, sold or withheld by license, and the often taken-for-granted fact that most social innovations develop in the public realm where they are basically free for use (2010, p. 240 f.). However, one of our case studies (Ewert and Evers in this chapter) shows that in the social realm there is also a tension between diffusion by innovation as an "open source" and diffusion channelled by competition. Projects and organisations such as Lok.aMotion, dealing with innovative concepts for community development and community-based business in Berlin-Kreuzberg, must act under conditions of "co-ompetition" where cooperation and competition merge. They often feel that their concepts are not simply taken up, but "stolen".

This dilemma is hard to overcome because cases where a clear origin and "author" of a social innovation can be identified are hard to find. Many of the case studies presented in this book are innovative in the local place where they crystallise but resemble concepts and ideas elsewhere. This holds true for quite a number of innovations presented in this book: the essentials of work integration enterprises and the variant discussed with examples from Nijmegen, the prevention visits for improving local child protection in Münster (Walter and Gluns) or the housing revitalisation schemes from the outskirts of Lille (Fraisie). These are varieties within a national or international innovative stream and orientations. The fact that respon-

dents attribute an innovation to a particular project or locality does not mean that it was necessarily the only or even the original source of an idea. Several similar schemes often pioneer in different places during the same period. While certain projects can be hailed as emblematic of a trend, it does not necessarily mean that they are the sole source of it.

Local social innovations that are not exclusive to one place show at least four different constellations:

- (a) They may have a predominantly bottom-up character, promoted by third sector organisations and the cultural orientations of the specific environment they emerge from (see, e.g. the cases from Sweden and France in this chapter).
- (b) They may develop through joint action in a cross-sectorial local network, where the initiative may come from “policy entrepreneurs” as local parties, policymakers and administrators, as in the cases from Bern and Barcelona.
- (c) They may take shape as local varieties within a national programme or framework which experiments with new ideas and scales them up, as can be observed in Birmingham or Münster.
- (d) Finally there are cases of social innovation in which the centre of gravity is located neither centrally nor locally but in nationwide civil society networks, as in initiatives such as the MaMa Foundation or the RODA network which started through Internet contacts (see Siemieńska et al. and Bežovan et al. in this chapter).

The (Un)Willing Sender

It is often taken for granted that the person who sends a message does so on purpose. In other words, we assume that the innovator has an interest in getting a message across. This makes perfect sense in a market context, where diffusion often results in profits. The social innovation literature stressing the entrepreneurial and leadership side of the phenomenon (e.g. Goldsmith 2010) and research on innovations in social movements (Moulaert et al. 2005) also assumes a strong will to “spread the message” and change the world.

However, the findings from the WILCO project show that many social innovations are generated by actors, often from the voluntary sector who have no direct interest beyond their local contexts. They concentrate on their immediate milieu, where they feel understood, encouraged and supported. A detailed look at cases in this chapter that concentrate on surviving and solidifying on the place where they operate such as the Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano in Milano or the Neighbourhood Children Services in Pamplona shows that these are often groups of people or organisations that took action in the face of a pressing local need: Children went hungry, women were abused, young men wandered the streets aimlessly. They devoted great energy to get their initiative off the ground, scraping together resources and building on local knowledge (Scott 1998). “Selling” their innovation in another city, let alone another country, seems out of their reach and potential, therefore out of sight and thought.

This again points to the essential difference with other types of innovations. A company like Apple did not design its iPads for the local Californian market, but in the hope of selling them around the world. In fact, they would not have invested

in the idea, had they not been confident that they could sell these devices in a great many places. By contrast, social innovations tend to have no market value, and there is no financial incentive to spread them. This does not mean that there are no incentives at all: Idealism and the search for a better social status can go a long way. Nevertheless, in Rogers' terms, many local innovations may be weak in the "knowledge" and "persuasion" phases of the adoption process. Both the active entrepreneurs, civic activists and leaders in social movements highlighted in much of the literature are just one group, and perhaps only a minor one, of social innovators in local welfare. Due to their concern with wider support and publicity, their importance tends to be overrated.

Intermediaries

However, that does not mean that there is necessarily a hard distinction between innovations designed only for use locally and those designed to be part of an (inter)national movement for social change and innovation. An important and related finding concerns the role of intermediaries (in Rogers' terms, the opinion leaders and change agents). More than other types of innovation, social innovations require intermediary agents for successful diffusion. They can be important for both: bringing ideas from the realms of politics and academia "down to earth", into realms accessible to local associations and projects and endorsing and passing over concepts and ideas from the "grassroots" to a larger public.

Among the cases of local social innovations presented in this book, a good example of such an intermediary organisation is *Fryhuset*, which has general competence in social action and advocacy, taking up and linking the special project on children and single mothers to other initiatives. Some of the innovations studied and presented in the following chapters, such as the MaMa foundation or the RODA network, focus foremost on this intermediary level. In both cases, there is no strict separation between nationwide concerns with innovative measures and steps towards legislation, on the one hand, and giving support to local groups and initiatives on the other. Intermediary action can also come from the side of governments, businesses, social enterprises and professional groups. In Poland, for instance, it was interesting to see the important role of lawyers. Dealing with a legalistic administrative culture, they were the right people to make the translation between bottom-up initiatives and government officials (see the resp. contributions on Polish social innovations such as "The foundation for the development beyond Borders" in Evers et al. 2014, p. 250).

Writing Messages: The Process Prior to Transmission and Adoption

A process of reconstruction and translation requires new ways of collaboration between governments and citizens, for example, as well as new ways of thinking. The empirical material in this book shows that in local welfare this process does not start with the adoption of an innovation adopted, but usually well before that. A good idea is not convincing in itself—only when people are open to it. What this means is that adopting an innovation from elsewhere is, from the perspective of the adopting parties, not fundamentally different from inventing one. After all, it requires similar breakthroughs in institutional routines, whether of content, collaboration or other

aspects of working. Theoretically, it means that the analysis of diffusion must start *before* the actual adoption of an innovation.

The underlying question is to what extent the innovative capacity is reflected in what is adopted (a specific approach to solving a problem) or rather in the groundwork that is done before adoption (getting the right people together, getting minds ready for new options, and so forth). This is highly relevant to public administration reform because it means that simply finding the right kinds of policy approaches or instruments in itself is not enough.

However, instead of going into a chicken and egg controversy about the impact of “winds of change” and of innovations that both build on and promote them, the focus should be on the links between both phenomena. All case studies in this book illustrate such links one way or the other, which may to different degrees be mutually enforcing.

Different Readings Merging: The Adoption of Innovations as Bricolage

Sending a message the author usually hopes for it to find its destination with its content intact. It would be intolerable if someone took it and rephrased it in her or his own words. Yet this is exactly what must happen in a successful process of diffusion. It is rare for a certain project or approach to be copied from one place to another unchanged. If so, it usually concerns simple schemes that can be implemented more or less independently from regulation or policy and which require only limited collaboration between local actors. An example are the Neighbourhood Mothers, a Dutch scheme in which migrant women are used as intermediaries to counsel other migrant women (a notoriously difficult group for authorities to reach) on issues such as social security, healthy lifestyles and parenting (see for the case from Berlin: Evers et al. 2014, p. 124). Dealing with similar constituencies and relying on little regulatory support, it was a concept easy to spread.

This no longer works with more complex innovations in welfare, however, as they tend to deal with difficult social problems and difficult constituencies. Approaches or projects need to be adapted to new contexts, they call for changes in institutional routines and the values that guide them. The literature on diffusion in terms of “transfer” and “franchising” of special organisational concepts is missing many potential ways for “mainstreaming”. Quite often processes of diffusion and mainstreaming entail mutual adjustment. The shape of a collaborative arrangement may have to be altered, for example, because responsibilities for a certain policy area are distributed differently in governments at different levels or because services are provided privately in one country and publicly in the other. The innovation will be reshaped, whether due to a different socio-economic and regulatory environment or for reasons of a different dominant policy discourse.

In many cases, the development of social innovations can be conceived of as a back and forth process between the characteristics of a social innovation and the specific environment of markets, state institutions and civil society into which they spread. The respective discourses (Schmidt 2010) through which the innovation is read, justified or rejected take a key role in this process. They influence the receptiveness of actors and contexts as well as the reading of and role given to innovations in local welfare systems.

This process can be decoded with the set of basic “messages” we discussed earlier in this chapter: services that lead towards co-production rather than merely supplying; rules and regulations that upgrade the impact of a “quick fix”, by referring to social rights that take a long time to take real shape; forms of governance that give a new role to stakeholders from civil society; patterns of governance that imply lower thresholds for the contributions of not only paid experts and politicians but also of civic activists, social entrepreneurs and volunteers; a different division of responsibilities between business sector, state institutions, citizens and their communities. Each of these messages points towards a different “culture” of welfare and social inclusion and can be read and interpreted quite differently, depending on the ideological and political discourses they are incorporated in.

In their seminal study on “The New Spirit of Capitalism”, Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) have shown how “autonomy” and “flexibility”, topics that emerged from the social movements of the early 1970s, were turned into centrepieces of justification for the restructuring of labour markets and conditions by businesses. This is a superb example of how aspirations and messages from social innovators can be read in different ways. They acquire different meanings, depending on the position given to them in the discursive context. This is testament to the open and risky nature of innovations. From such a process of mainstreaming, concepts such as “activation” and “empowerment” can emerge with different purposes and different meanings. They can relate to strengthening a sense of duty and commitment to goals set by the administration; alternatively, they can refer to strengthening capacities for individual and joint action, activating not only individual competence but also sources of support and solidarity. The study on prevention visits in families in the city of Münster in this book describes the controversy at the outset of this innovation whether to develop it as a special measure for troubled families only or as an open offer to families more widely. In the case of Neighbourhood Children Services in Pamplona, innovative association-based approaches received widespread support from opposing parties partly because each political camp could read it in its own particular way—as a means for community-based self-help against more state welfare or as a means for building a more cooperative welfare system.

There is an inevitable ambivalence about innovations and their introduction to local welfare systems. On the one hand, they represent real new elements of support. On the other hand, their ultimate meaning only becomes apparent when taking account of the discursive framework in which they operate. Processes of popularising and mainstreaming innovations through negotiations will therefore mostly create hybrids of different ideas and inspirations. They are formed through a process of *bricolage*, a term from the famous anthropologist Lévi-Strauss (1966), which means to construct a new entity out of (mostly) old pieces. The nature of this bricolage can differ quite strongly. At one end of the spectrum, there are innovations copied in a straightforward manner, for example, through a franchising method. At the other end are innovations that are not scaled or diffused directly, but which have an indirect effect, by suffusing the values they build upon to other places. In between stand various innovations of which only parts are transferred, which are fused with local elements and possibly even imbued with different sets of values. It is no wonder that research on diffusion is methodologically so difficult.

9.3 Conclusions

Using the metaphor of social innovations as messages allows integrating two aspects of social innovations that often get separated: (a) the content of innovative solutions—in this case in the field of welfare policies and services—and (b) social innovation as a process in which systems and politics—here, local welfare systems—deal with such solutions.

With respect to both content and policies, we systematically analysed evidence collected as part of WILCO to identify recurrent approaches and instruments used in local social innovations. The central aim was to draw messages on a more abstract level from our sample and to make them more overtly relevant both to academic debates and to practitioners working in other settings and countries. We classified them as five challenges: finding new ways to address users, innovating regulations and rights, ways of governance, modes of working and financing and the transformation of established local welfare mixes.

A significant message resulting from our work is that, if taken seriously, many new approaches are not the quick-fix solutions they were often intended to be. They are not available simply at the push of a button. There seem to be wide gaps between prevailing modes of policies, politics and organisation on the one hand and social innovations on the other. Bringing both sides together can demand a long learning process.

Despite their differences, the social policy community of theorists, experts and practitioners tends to operate within a shared paradigm that makes it difficult to incorporate innovations into the social policy vocabulary. To break through this, at least three prevailing perspectives must be questioned.

The first perspective to question is one that implies an exclusive link between social change and (national) state reform. If one revisits the history of the welfare state, it is to a large extent one of social innovations taken up or rejected, marginalised or mainstreamed. Social movements and organisations have always played an important role in inventing and creating welfare arrangements of their own—mutuals in the field of social security, cooperatives as early “social enterprises”, voluntary associations establishing and running all kinds of services. Although much work in the third sector research community has examined this legacy of contributions from the third sector and civil society to welfare state development (see, e.g. the contributions in Evers and Laville 2004), the social policy research community has largely ignored it, treating welfare state reform almost exclusively as a set of top-down reforms.

Secondly, one should question interpretations of justice and stratification that lead to an emphasis on standardisation and uniform institutional arrangements, so characteristic of the basic belief system the modern welfare state was built upon (see Wagner 1994). It is crucial to reconsider how reliability and equality can be combined with room for social innovation and diversity. In order to achieve both, a balance must be struck between a guaranteed level of protection by regulations and the preservation of open spaces for change through innovation.

Finally, many governance concepts still imply a central role for decision-making by powerful elites. Yet, if top-down and bottom-up initiatives are to be reconciled, public policies should be less about imposing change and more about preparing it through experiments and pilots. These should be designed to learn from social competences, accumulated through the change makers that have invented and carried them through (Then and Mildenerger 2014). In the debates on the persistence of hierarchy (Lynn 2011) and new forms of governance that are sensible for this challenge, some have labelled such an approach “democratic experimentalism” (Sabel 2012). Nudging change and preparing reform in this manner should be higher on the policy agenda.

These critical remarks point towards the conclusions of the second part of this chapter, which discussed how social innovations change once they become part of a local welfare system and spread from one place to another. Specifically, it focused on how diffusion of social innovations in local welfare is qualitatively distinct from the diffusion of other types of innovations. Typical of social innovations is their strong link to specific contexts. Exactly because they evolve within social relationships and rely upon the collaboration of various different actors, they are relatively hard to transplant from one context to another.

Furthermore, those who invented a new local social innovation are often not primarily interested in diffusion since they were originally motivated to solve a local problem. This is a fundamental difference with innovations in a business context because there the objective is to spread products as far and wide as possible.

The process of winning importance also appears to be different from the marketing of innovative products and purposeful mainstreaming by policymakers and administrators. Theoretically, one would expect the bottleneck in social innovation in a complex field such as welfare to be flaws in adaptation processes, but this does not appear to be the case in practice (as compared, for instance, to the diffusion of governmental innovations). One possible explanation is that social innovations tend to have a strong bottom-up element that allows them to evolve organically, with large contributions from local people and voluntary organisations. This is part of a transformative process *prior to* the adoption of an innovation that changes local social relations, for instance, by giving the voluntary sector a greater role in shaping local services. The actual innovation is just the final stage of this process and not necessarily the most important part of it.

The findings point towards a bias in the research on diffusion. It tends to emphasise the adoption of an innovation, failing to cover the process of transformation in social relations that occur ahead of adoption. By implication, it overstates the role of organisations involved in the direct transfer of innovations (particularly professional networks) and underestimates the role of actors involved in the wider process of local transformation, including citizens and voluntary organisations.

Arguably, the cumulative effect of small initiatives is of far greater importance to society than the few examples that achieve wider and more visible impact. In any case, research on social innovation should not restrict its focus on success (in the sense of being taken up and mainstreamed). Where social innovations survive in more difficult environments, their impact on mainstream welfare is more indirect—as one element in a cultural turn that may be quietly successful in the long run, even if many innovations fail at the first attempt.

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Chapter 10

Warsaw: Paving New Ways for Participation of Mothers, Fathers, and Children in Local Public and Social Life—The MaMa Foundation

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10.1 Introduction

Typically, activities falling into the category of civil activism arise from everyday problems and needs of individuals as well as groups. Those civic activities are therefore not profit oriented, but change oriented and often reflect existing gaps in social support system (Young 1999). One of the clear examples of this type of social initiative is MaMa Foundation, which emerged as an answer to unmet needs of mothers with small children. It is also one of the best examples of possible positive impact of local civil society organization (CSO) on public administration as well as local welfare policies.

MaMa Foundation's success story is even more telling in context of Polish low rates of CSOs' participation and declining belief in organizations such as trade unions, professional associations, and special interest associations now widespread in many European Union countries. As Eurobarometer data collected in 2013 shows, the share of respondents who reported that they did not need such organizations ranged between 23% in Estonia and 55% in Romania, with 43% in Poland (Flash Eurobarometer 373 2013, p. 7). Generally, this opinion is stronger in the newer democracies.

However, it should be said that the participation in organizations is, in fact, only one of many forms of possible civic involvement. As Polish data shows, activities undertaken by individuals and informal groups have a significant role in this respect

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(CBOS 2011a). Also, both recent financial crisis and experiences gained through the implementation of different projects by CSOs and informal groups, strengthened the awareness of Polish society that working together with other people facilitates solving problems of their communities (neighbourhoods, villages, towns). Between 2002 and 2012, belief in the value of working together increased considerably, from 50 to 72% (CBOS 2011b). Prevalence of this opinion can be considered as an important step forward in building social and cultural capital in Poland.

Frequently, joint activities start as an (informal) initiative on the part of individuals or groups, which are later transformed into formal CSOs for various reasons, for example, to be entitled to get financial support from public authorities or to have the formal status required to cooperate with public agencies. In Poland, people are more likely to participate in organizations having grassroots origins, initiated by individuals they know through their social network. This is due to the low level of citizens' trust in all kinds of public institutions and authorities (WVS 2012, unpublished), suspected of protecting only their own interests and not those of the citizens. MaMa Foundation, which was established by the group of young, highly educated mothers, is a good example of this trajectory. Stemming from an informal group of women experiencing similar life situation—having a small child and struggling to remain publicly active—this initiative transformed into highly innovative and influential CSO, giving voice to needs of both mothers and parents. Moreover, some of their projects become institutionalized, after local authorities decided to include them in their formal policies.

10.2 Warsaw As a Context of Innovation

The city of Warsaw is both the largest and most diverse in Poland, in terms of dynamic labour market, social problems as well as needs of its residents. In recent years, parents of young children become one of the most visible interests groups in the city, lobbying for new solutions in childcare or protesting against city regulations restricting the access to kindergartens and daycares.

Up to now, some chaos in implementation of the local social policy led to a situation when childcare needs were not sufficiently met by public system. For example, in 2012, in many districts in Warsaw, public daycares lacked over 6000 places (PAP 2012). This created the situation in which the residents “took the matter into their own hands” and came up with their own solutions to existing problems, often becoming animators of social innovation. For instance, problems with the institutional infrastructure related to childcare in Warsaw, particularly in the dynamically growing parts of the city, encouraged the inhabitants to develop civic initiatives in order to make the authorities engaged in new investments accountable for satisfactorily solving those issues. Also, civil society bodies were organizing new types of care facilities, to fill the existing gap in public services.

MaMa Foundation is a very successful example of this type of initiative, already serving as a role model to several similar grassroots' organizations in the city. The

Foundation has an integrative and innovative approach to tackling many problems connected with parenting in the big city, constantly developing new projects and ideas. The issues MaMa works with include city mobility of parents with small children, economic reactivation and social inclusion of women as well as problems connected with modern parenting.

The importance and visibility of those issues is growing in Warsaw, where, due to high in-migration levels and demographic change, the number of children at kindergarten age steadily increases. Predictions indicate that subsequent years will be those of a baby boom, which makes childcare policy of interest to politicians and parents. Also, the cultural shift expressed in higher life aspirations is changing parents' expectations and puts a new pressure on policymakers. It is especially visible in Warsaw, where number of young and highly educated professional men and women settle down, taking advantage of the good employment possibilities. This may explain the received publicity of MaMa Foundation since its first awareness campaigns. Media visibility was one of the important factors translating the Foundation postulates into political pressure that influenced decisions of the local authorities and administration in Warsaw.

10.3 The Foundation

MaMa Foundation is a non-profit organization established in Warsaw in June 2006 by a group of young, highly educated women, mothers of small children. Its activities are based on the idea that mothers and fathers with small children should be able to increase their participation in the local public and social life through elimination of social, cultural and architectonic barriers. The Foundation's ideas and projects are rooted in social economy, ideas of social solidarity and feminism. Currently, the MaMa Foundation not only addresses the needs of parents with small children living in Warsaw, but also supports refugees and disabled people. It lobbies on national and local level, working with public authorities and institutions, business, as well as media.

10.3.1 Types of Services and Ways of Addressing Users

Main types of MaMa Foundation's activities include social campaigns, free workshops and trainings, legal, psychological and civil advice, cultural, artistic and educational projects, as well as publishing and research initiatives focused on empowerment of women. Many of the listed activities take place in MaMa Café—a parents-friendly cafeteria located in the centre of Warsaw, rented on preferential terms from the local authorities.

One of the best-known Foundation's projects is "O Mamma Mia! I cannot drive my pram in here!". It is a social campaign for adapting public space for prams

and wheelchairs. It has been running since 2006 and includes systematic monitoring, taking into account specific needs of parents with small children and people with disabilities. Public places such as railway and metro stations, public offices, and transportation hubs are regularly evaluated. The results of the project include the publication of *Warsaw Friendly for Parents*—a handbook directed to local authorities and formulating standards, which should be met by parents- and children-friendly architecture and infrastructure. Other examples of similar awareness-raising projects are “Horror stories”—a campaign about mothers’ rights as employees; “Boys don’t pay”—a campaign emphasizing problems with fathers, who avoid paying alimony; a campaign focused on problems of pregnant women and lone mothers in urban space (including photo contests “Mum speaks now!” or “Bellybutton—hub of the universe”).

Also, MaMa Foundation voices concerns about the rights of women who do not work professionally but are stay-at-home mothers and wives. In recent years, two projects regarding this issue were implemented: “List of domestic tasks” and “Warsaw Housewives’ Club”. As for the first project, in cooperation with a group of experts, the organization has formulated recommendations for the Polish Parliament emphasizing the economic value of work performed by women at home: “We show and calculate it precisely that housework performed by women (...) is quantifiable and it is possible to calculate its precise value in money. (...) It is not all about paying women for doing housework, but about actually seeing this work, being able to notice it” (MaMa Foundation representative).

The project “Warsaw Housewives’ Club” included workshops aimed at increasing awareness of women in terms of partnership-based division of tasks at home and providing the participants with specific tools that could help them in negotiations with their husbands or partners.

The workshops, trainings and legal advice offered by MaMa Foundation address women getting back to work after maternal leave, mothers, who organize initiatives supporting other mothers, as well as female refugees and victims of domestic violence. Apart from that, since 2007, the Foundation inspired the establishment of local moms’ clubs in different Warsaw districts. They all provide free workshops for mothers, local leaders and representatives of local authorities and create friendly space for meetings and exchanging experiences. One such local moms’ club is located in one of the most deprived areas in Warsaw—Targówek district. When the club was closed due to the end of the project, the group of its former participants decided to set up their own independent organization called Mom’s Power Foundation, which, to some extent, continues the activities of the club by offering free services for parents from the district. This case shows how MaMa Foundation triggers other local initiatives and inspires similar projects all over Warsaw.

Another example of MaMa’s initiatives was the “Moms’ Cooperative” innovative training project, which was aimed at creating a new, independent social cooperative, giving employment to unemployed mothers. Its main goal was to support women who are threatened with social exclusion, in terms of their education, integration into the society and their future chances on the labour market. It included both vocational and psychological trainings in order to strengthen the overall

potential of unemployed women. The project included 10 young, lone mothers from Warsaw, who gave birth to their children before being 18 years old and were long-term unemployed (more than 2 years, usually because of childcare duties) (MaMa Cooperative 2011).

The specific activities within the project included educational workshops on social economy, social cooperatives, self-employment, marketing and promotion, folk art, and psychological motivations. In consequence, the participants set up Moms' Cooperative, which creates, promotes, and distributes regional and local handmade products inspired by Polish folk art (toys, jewellery, bags, cell-phones' accessories, souvenirs for tourists, and office supplies). Now, Moms' Cooperative operates independently from MaMa Foundation, trying to find place for its products on the local and national market. The idea of this project emerged from the cooperation between MaMa Foundation with two partners from the private sector: The Orbis Hotel Group and the Accor Foundation. The social cooperative of young and lone unemployed mothers from Warsaw is claimed to be the first initiative of this kind in Poland and serves as an example for other similar initiatives all over the country.

Other, cultural, artistic and educational projects run by MaMa Foundation include: "Baby at the cinema," organized in cooperation with cinemas in Warsaw, which enables parents to watch films while their children play with babysitters; "Mothers' Art"—the exhibition of modern art created by mothers; "MaMa Perform"—performative workshops for mothers; publishing books for adults (such as anthology "What does it mean to be a mother in Poland") and stories for children; workshops for children in the Warsaw Museum of Modern Art; as well as "Scientific Café"—meetings and discussions for parents with children.

10.3.2 Internal Organization and Modes of Working

All the people who currently manage MaMa Foundation (chair, members of the board and employees) are mothers and Warsaw residents, who personally experienced various problems related to being a mother in the capital. Foundation's chairwoman is Sylwia Chutnik, a known feminist, successful writer and certified guide to Warsaw. MaMa Foundation currently employs two people (temporarily, within the budgets of particular projects) and cooperates with about ten volunteers on a regular basis. The organization is also supported by a group of lawyers, psychologists, trainers, scientists and artists, who take part in its activities when needed. As a main rule of all MaMa programs, even when an initiative is directed only to adults, the Foundation allows the participation of children or provides free childcare during workshops, trainings or meetings.

The Foundation cooperates regularly with Warsaw authorities in order to develop mother- and child-friendly public spaces and policies. The members of Foundation's board, employees and experts participate in public debates and express in media their opinions on mothers' situation in private and professional life. Usually, the Foundation tries to spread its message among different social groups at the same

time: “The initiative is, in fact, aimed at several social groups. The women—this is the workshop part, the society as a whole—some of the social campaigns and the recommendations, aimed at politicians representing all options in the Parliament and the local authorities, not only politicians, but also officers of specific departments or offices” (MaMa Foundation representative).

MaMa Foundation cooperates with great variety of local and national entities, such as Association for Legal Intervention, various women’s organizations, Institute of Public Affairs (think-tank research organization), Warsaw Municipal Office, local authorities in several Warsaw’s districts, local politicians and public institutions such as Warsaw Labour Office. It also participates in several third sector coalitions, including women’s organizations as well as associations for the disabled.

Up to now, MaMa Foundation’s crucial projects were financed by: the Accor Foundation (private sector), Warsaw Labour Office (public sector), Trust for Civil Society for Central and Eastern Europe (public charity incorporated under the laws of the USA), and European Social Fund. Apart from that, the Foundation has the status of a Public Benefit Organization, which means that, according to Polish law, it is allowed to receive 1% of income tax from individuals. To receive such status, an organization has to be a foundation or association (political parties and trade unions do not qualify), involved in specific activities related to public benefit as described by the law, and being sufficiently transparent in its activities, governance and finances.

10.3.3 Embeddedness in the Local Welfare System

MaMa Foundation’s initiatives strongly affected local public discourse on mothers and fathers with small children, defining them as a group with particular needs and problems, especially regarding the participation in public life and city space mobility. The Foundation contributed significantly to a growing awareness of public officials on the importance of mother and child-friendly architecture and infrastructure. None of those issues were seriously addressed in Warsaw before.

MaMa Foundation stresses also the important issue of reconciliation of work and care by emphasizing that motherhood does not have to be an obstacle to personal and professional development of women. Apart from that, the Foundation offers solutions in terms of employment and childcare, which are innovative and alternative to those provided by public institutions. For example, Moms’ Cooperative concerns such specific subgroup as long-term unemployed mothers by using innovative means based on the concepts of social economy.

Through its lobbying activities, MaMa Foundation challenges the common belief that women on maternal leave are satisfied to spend time with their children at home, in local shops and on playgrounds. They argue that this type of social and spatial isolation of young mothers often results in their sense of loneliness and depression. Regarding these problems, MaMa Foundation established several “Local Moms’ Clubs” in different parts of Warsaw, where mothers can come with their children, meet with other people, exchange experiences and take part in free workshops

and trainings. Apart from that, the Foundation provides great variety of cultural and educational activities, which are directed to women or parents with children.

The activities of MaMa Foundation are followed with interest by organizations and institutions in other Polish cities as well as abroad. The project “Warsaw Housewives’ Club” is being implemented in Berlin, and a female representative of the Ukrainian Parliament has also displayed some interest in establishing similar projects in her country. Last but not least, the projects of MaMa Foundation trigger, intentionally or spontaneously, multiplication of local initiatives, which are often implemented by MaMa’s actions beneficiaries, strengthening potential of local communities to solve their own problems.

10.4 Conclusions

MaMa Foundation is an innovative initiative established by a group of highly educated young women, who continue identifying new problems important for women and families living in the city. The organization fits perfectly the Dalton’s broader description of reactions of societies living in contemporary democratic systems. As Dalton wrote: “People today are also more conscious of their political rights and more demanding in their individualism. The new style of citizens’ politics encourages a diversity of political interests (issue publics), instrumental and flexible voting choices, and more direct styles of political action (...) This interest groups signify a new way of organizing interests and mobilizing opinion.” (2002, pp. 253–254)

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Chapter 11

Zagreb: Parents in Action—Innovative Ways of Support and Policies for Children, Women and Families

Gojko Bežovan, Jelena Matančević and Danijel Baturina

11.1 Introduction

Unlike the social policies in the majority of other Croatian cities, the social policy in Zagreb is often referred to as comprehensive and generous. The core of social policy of the city is a set of diverse social assistance measures (benefits), covering a wide range of beneficiary groups, whereas social services can be regarded as less developed. However, those fields neither seem to build up a coherent system nor do they have a strategic policy orientation. Nevertheless, over the past decade, there has been a noticeable development of local (public) services and recognition of new vulnerable social groups. The examples are services for the homeless, public kitchens, shelters for victims of domestic violence, disabled people, etc. The problem of insufficient coordination between different city departments and the lack of professionals' comprehension of a wider social system is very visible. Developmental challenge of social care system identified as coordination of government and city social programmes has not been properly addressed in policy papers yet (Bežovan 2009; Bežovan and Zrinščak 2001). Bearing in mind population coverage and the levels of social rights, it can be said that Zagreb serves almost as a "local welfare state" due to its stable budget, which provides generous and comprehensive social programmes. Owing to that, even civil society can get more funds from the city budget.

The concept of social innovation, its meaning and understanding in the general public and even within the academic community, is rather new and vague. There is a scarcity of policy and academic papers that deal with social innovations. Civil

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society organisations seem to be more receptive to the concept, which has slowly started to permeate the civic discourse. Also, recent research (Bežovan 2009, 2010) on the roles and contribution of local stakeholders to development of welfare mix has shown that civil society organisations (CSOs) are more familiar with the social innovations concept than state organisations.

Identified social innovations in Croatia reveal some particular characteristics of development and diffusion. Firstly, there is the importance of social and cultural capital. Mutual trust and engagement of the better-off and better-educated citizens are an important prerequisite for the success of innovation. It was also shown that personal capacity and entrepreneurial orientation of the initiators, who are often inspired by ideas or movements from abroad, play an important role. Such civic entrepreneurs, as Goldsmith explains, can act as catalysts for transformative change (Goldsmith et al. 2010). Secondly, particular innovations are seen as a part of Europeanisation process, which creates new programmatic and financial frameworks for development of innovations. Thirdly, since social innovations in Croatia predominantly occur within civil society, their success and sustainability largely depend on the sensibility and professional capacities of policymakers and public officials, as well as their support.

This chapter presents the case of the CSO *Roditelji u akciji*—Parents in Action (RODA), which is perceived as innovative in the field of childcare. The innovative dimension of RODA is twofold. On the one hand, it has developed over time into a prominent stakeholder of family policy in Croatia, which has shifted the family matters from the realm of “private” and put them on the public agenda. Secondly, in terms of service production, RODA has evolved from the advocacy to production, and they are now recognised as a good example of social entrepreneurship as an emerging practice in Croatia.

The case study is conducted on the basis of desk research, interviews with the key stakeholders from RODA and a focus group on social innovations in Zagreb.

The Context of Family Policy As for the family policy in Croatia, it is manifested mostly through material benefits, such as children’s allowances, tax reliefs and maternity leaves, rather than through provision of services for children. To some extent, this is related to the structure of traditional family: Women used to work less, while relatives and members of extended families used to be on hand. The lack of childcare services is particularly evident in large cities, where nurseries and kindergartens often cannot accommodate the children of working parents (Zrinščak 2008; Dobrotić et al. 2010). The coverage of children aged 3+ in kindergartens is 55% on average in Croatia, which is below the coverage of most EU member states, while the coverage of children under 3 with nurseries programme is 19% (Matković and Dobrotić 2013). Due to insufficient institutional capacities, informal and unpaid family support is still a widespread strategy of ensuring childcare.

At the same time, the research suggests that Zagreb might have a more developed infrastructure of (formal) support to parents, since the survey of the quality of life has shown that respondents from Zagreb reported problems of reconciling work and family lives to a lesser degree. It should be stressed, however, that the coverage

of children in kindergartens (aged 3–4) in Zagreb and the Zagreb County is above 68%, which is at the same time the greatest share among all counties in Croatia (Dobrotić 2007; Dobrotić et al. 2010).

According to the National Family Policy Strategy (2003), an increase in the number of childcare institutions and increase in the number of children covered with organised preschool care and education was one of the priority areas for family policy development. This strategy also proposed measures related to education and training of parents, incentives for implementation of programmes of civil organisations, educational programmes that include education on family, partnership, parenthood, etc. It was pointed out that family policy should therefore contribute to creating a friendly, social environment, which would help families solve a variety of problems, first and foremost the ones related to children's development. The problem of accommodation of children in preschool institutions becomes a part of national public debates only occasionally, as this is the service that is under the responsibility of local authorities. Rarely have there been cases of protests or highlighting problems in ways that would capture wide public attention. The practice of parent associations and their organised efforts to improve the provision of childcare services as beneficiaries were almost non-existent before. RODA was one of the first CSOs in that still generally underdeveloped area and became the most prominent one. The issue of placing children in nurseries and kindergartens in Zagreb would usually appear on the agenda in early autumn only, when some children would be left without a place in a kindergarten. Due to the pressure of extensive numbers of children not enrolled, the number of private kindergartens and different forms of informal playrooms has increased significantly.

The childcare policy in Zagreb has been one of the high political interests in recent years, with frequent changes regarding financial aspects, as well as the field of value-loaded discussions. It is also a policy field that has mobilised different stakeholders, and it is one of the rather exceptional examples of the mobilisation of service users (parents) for advocacy regarding local welfare policies.

11.2 RODA

The association RODA—Parents in Action—was founded in mid-2001, as a spontaneous reaction of parents, women with children, who raised their voices against reduction in maternity allowance and protested in front of the government office. The women connected through the Internet. The association continued to advocate the rights of parents persistently until the maternity allowance was increased and the maternity leave became longer and more flexible.

With its innovative programme of activities, the association was formed in the social space that was previously considered private, and in traditional societies perceived as the responsibility of parents and their extended families. The need for such an initiative came with the increase in number of young families with children, with better education, in a big city (Zagreb), who do not have the support of parents

and close relatives and still face the challenge of reconciling professional and family commitments. Initially, the efforts of the association centred on the protection of vested social rights, but owing to a lot of volunteer work and enthusiasm, the initiative resulted in multidimensional social change and social innovation.

11.2.1 Internal Organisation and Modes of Working

The activities of the association are mainly financed through the state and city programmes which support civil society. Citizens have been participating with small-scale donations, while a company donated 100,000.00 HRK (about 13,150.00 €) to RODA instead of giving out the money for Christmas cards and gifts. RODA also receives various kinds of nonmonetary assistance, and they are allowed to use a storage space free of charge. Initially, they decided not to accept donations from companies that violate the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, tobacco and pharmaceutical industries and the companies using unethical marketing targeting children. Despite the various sources of support, the activities of RODA rely mostly on voluntary engagement of members.

The deep involvement of RODA in active parenting initiatives has resulted in a social entrepreneurship project of sewing and selling cloth diapers and connected products. Since 2004, RODA has been promoting the use of cloth diapers as a healthier, more environmental friendly and cheaper solution, and they launched the whole venture in 2006. With the production of cloth diapers, RODA has set an example of social entrepreneurship among associations. A high-quality product made from natural materials, healthy and safe for children, is manufactured, while disabled and difficult-to-employ persons are involved in the production. The production facilities are established within Vocational High School in Varaždin, and there are 56 women working there. Social entrepreneurship is sustainable, it brings profit to the association, develops and expands and creates new jobs. The profits generated are reinvested in the business and core activities of the organisation. The association has recently established a limited liability company for further production of cloth diapers.

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

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

RODA is known to the wider public through the RODA forum, which has over 40,000 monthly visits. This is the platform where new members with new ideas appear, and they contribute to strengthening the community spirit of the association

and its constant renewal. This usually refers to the first experience of membership in an organisation and first experience of volunteering. New members always have the time and passion to volunteer and help the others, and they also develop their own character in that way: It is not only about giving, but also receiving to a great extent. Advising other people is a completely new experience for them—to have a feeling that they help the others and that others believe them. These are solid foundations of a sustainable social network ready to take on the new challenges.

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

The fact is that these are the middle-class persons who are quite well off, and none of them receives income-tested children's allowance, so the association is not concerned with this topic. Their members are a specific group with similar background, which directs their interests and values to a certain extent. This is why they often cannot perceive the position and priorities of low-income mothers. In this case, civic initiative produced in the CSO belongs to well-off families from young generation exclusively.

The dynamics of social innovation remains visible here through the provision of services: There are tangible and recognisable results. However, advocacy activities are harder to see and they provide long-term results. These two processes and priorities in the association are intertwined. As an association, RODA keeps changing as the children grow up, and this is something that will be interesting to follow in the future. It is simply the dynamics that is difficult to predict. We are talking about a sense of membership in the network in which women share the same or similar values. This is the support that many people need in their lives. The strength and substance of the women is felt in the association. Interestingly enough, none of the politicians has approached the association or expressed direct interest in their work.¹ It might be seen as a critical issue in terms of governance and perception of this group among politicians as the “opposition”. Although they are regularly financed by the state due the quality of their projects, they are not sufficiently recognised by politicians for their actions, and the politicians do not perceive them as strategic partners in policy making. This witnesses to weak capacity of politicians and fragmentation of society.

However, RODA operates in a society where too many people remain silent about things that bother or disturb them; they do not protest, they were raised to obey. If they seek changes, they have to speak publicly about it. The service providers will hear them in one way or the other. What is announced publicly always has a certain resonance. Through such public speech and statements, RODA has become

¹ However, in the case of discussion on the increase in prices for children daycare, some stakeholders felt that civil society organizations were happy to come under the umbrella of political parties, this association included, as it meets their interest.

a recognisable stakeholder in the family policy, which improves the quality of programmes for children, their accommodation and diet.

Adequate levels of trust and promoted norms and values are shared by all members of the association, especially the ones practicing volunteer work. In that way, the contribution to social capital multiplication has been made, as a basis for social innovation in the association and beyond. “Mobilisation and organising around a shared vision of change” (Moulaert and Mehmood 2013, p. 448) is an added value of this innovation. In this case, social change is visible in an area that used to be the area of privacy and the space of few government services. It was a framework for social innovation that strengthened the social cohesion in general public.

RODA has passed their knowledge and skills to the organisations in South East Europe, in Sarajevo, Belgrade and other cities. However, it has been impossible to implement such a programme in these countries, as there is neither willingness nor need for volunteer work. So in this case, it can be clearly stated that social innovation emerged from civil engagement and volunteer work of citizens, as a kind of collective action (Habisch and Loza Aduai 2013), making effort to protect and promote their interests.

11.2.2 Concepts and Ways of Addressing Users

By promoting and advocating the rights of children, RODA has impacted changes in public policies for children, women and families. Through their consistent cooperation with the media, they have made a recognisable influence on public opinion and lobbied for changes in childcare. For the first time in public policy, being involved in a copayment scheme, they come up with the image of the services co-producer, having vested in the quality of service for which they are paying. RODA encourages active and responsible parenting through direct support and assistance to parents, equipping them with skills and knowledge, empowering them and making them better advocates of the rights of their children. They are joined and networked, which makes them strong and decisive in their public statements.

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

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

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

RODA is familiar with the problems of many parents barely surviving, seeking their help: They state the cases of families of five who live in apartments of 26 m². The housing situation is a limiting factor in the expansion of families and the decision to have two or more children. Temporary, 1-year employment contracts also present certain constraints. The association has helped some families to cover delayed rent payments.

For 8 years, RODA has been providing support and advice on breastfeeding through their breastfeeding hotline. They have also organised a school of breastfeeding, a conference and printed and distributed relevant materials. These activities become a strong lever for the social integration of young mothers. This innovation can be studied also as gender and parenthood relations about social arrangement and capacity to organise daily life (André 2013, pp. 414–415).

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

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

As the children of parents belonging to this association grow up, RODA might develop programmes for teenagers in the scope of its future activities.

11.2.3 Interaction with the Local Welfare System

As a well-known stakeholder and advocate of social services for children, RODA had an impact on the practice of making and implementing childcare policy in Zagreb. In partnership with other organisations, they have exerted pressure on the city administration to organise a special session of the Committee for Education and Sports, the body of the City Council, the topic being the prices of childcare services in Zagreb. Instead of paying for the cost of services on the income-test basis, they insisted parents should be means-tested (income, property, etc.). Raising the issue of the means test as a prerequisite for eligibility to social rights is a big and important thing in the national social welfare system. With such impact, the proposal of increasing the cost for such services on an income-test basis has not been accepted.²

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

² At that time, there was strong opposition to the Mayor in the City Council.

After RODA's actions, CSOs of parents have become a visible part of the governance structure of the local welfare system, which made the local welfare system more vibrant and responsive to the public and, specifically, to beneficiaries of social services. As the media were covering all debates and events, the general public got a sense of importance of CSOs and, in this case, of self-organised mothers.

For the first time, this case opened a debate on public issues where citizens have vested interests and showed strengths of a civil organisation addressing public issues and influencing policy process. With this experience, a new culture of communication and relationship of the city with CSOs might be seen.

11.3 Conclusions

In transitional countries, civil society is a space for the self-organisation and mobilisation of citizens to protect and to promote their interests. Civic norms, values and networks produce a necessary level of social capital to build trust among local stakeholders and to strengthen social cohesion.

In this case, there existed a fertile soil for social innovations and, after a certain period of time, social entrepreneurship. RODA was established as a successful social innovation because it was in possession of certain social capital mostly from middle class citizens that were its key actors. Also, they were among the first organisations that actively worked in family policy area counting on engagement of families. They became recognised and branded themselves so they are now the organisation that almost every mother has heard about, which contributes to their success as social innovation. It is obvious that developmental capacity of this innovation, being owned by a civic organisation, increases on a steady basis.

Empirical evidence says that civil society is a space for self-organisation and self-promotion of the middle class, which is the core of "urban citizenship". It brings the issue of fragmentation of the space of civil society as a relevant topic for further research. Important question is the one of capacities and inequalities. What are the differences in possibilities of organisations with developed social connections and social capital derived from their middle class status as opposed to the organisations founded by lower class citizens? Also, what are the differences between urban and rural based organisation?

The case made impact on the local and national welfare systems in terms of policy making process and governance producing new welfare culture in this field. Besides such promising development of the analysed social innovation in the space of civil society, the social welfare system, which is in the hands of government and the city, has still not become the space of viable social innovations. Overregulation and paternalistic style of government, where the authorities own public policy, remains the major obstacle for developing social innovations (Bežovan et al. 2013). Some earlier research (Bežovan 2010) identifies the problems of a lack of coordination and poor cooperation between different local stakeholders. Mobilisation of local stakeholders and facilitation of social change appears to be a demanding and

difficult process that capacitive organisations such as RODA need to overcome to develop social innovations.

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Chapter 12

Amsterdam: Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development—The BOOT Project

Francesca Broersma, Taco Brandsen and Joost Fledderus

12.1 Introduction

Amsterdam is increasingly torn—between wanting to be a “social” city on the one hand, and a “competitive” city on the other. The fact that the Labour Party (*Partij van de Arbeid*, or PvdA) was the largest party in the municipal council from the end of the Second World War until 2014 and that the mayor has always been a member of this party during this period indicates that Amsterdam is, to this day, a city that treasures a secure safety net for the more vulnerable segments of society. Yet, the fact that during the last two decades the municipal coalition has included representatives from the left to the right side of the political spectrum shows that the stronger leftist tendencies once there in the past have made way for a more moderated ideology. Whilst equality and solidarity are undoubtedly still defining values in the social and political mentality of Amsterdam, the city has progressively become more and more open to the ideas of differentiation and efficiency.

An important recent occurrence that marked the way in which Amsterdam currently approaches the provision of local welfare services was the introduction of the national Community Development Programme (*wijkaanpak*) in 2007, an integrated, more holistic approach towards neighbourhood regeneration; besides improving the physical environment, the *wijkaanpak* aims to enhance the broader liveability (*leefbaarheid*) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods—that is, to improve the social and the economic environment too. Moreover, in the *wijkaanpak*, citizen participation is

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key. At the same time, the *wijkaanpak* encourages various actors that are involved in the provision of welfare services at the local level to engage in new partnerships with other actors that are operating within their same neighbourhoods. In practice, the *wijkaanpak* has been pushing for all of the various actors involved in the provision of welfare services in Amsterdam to join forces and tackle societal problems in a more coordinated and more efficient manner. Existing (welfare) organizations are thus increasingly forced to reconsider not only their approach towards the provision of welfare services but also their (traditional) organizational culture.

Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development (*Buurtwinkels voor Onderzoek, Onderwijs en Talentontwikkeling*, or BOOT) can be seen as a confluence of these developments, a national drive towards more collaboration and a local evolution towards pragmatic, tailored solutions to the problems of specific areas.

12.2 Neighbourhood Stores for Education, Research, and Talent Development (*Buurtwinkels voor Onderzoek, Onderwijs en Talentontwikkeling*)

The nationally implemented Community Development Programme (*wijkaanpak*) that started in 2007 raised the question about how the Hogeschool van Amsterdam (HvA)—the largest institute for higher professional education in Amsterdam—could connect the knowledge and the competences of its students, teachers, researchers, and network to the so-called problem areas (*aandachtswijken*) in Amsterdam, in such a way as to contribute to the socioeconomic development of these neighbourhoods. In the meanwhile, the HvA aspired to be the university of Amsterdam, *for* Amsterdam. Hence, in consultation with the municipality, the HvA came up with the BOOT concept.

The first BOOT was opened in 2008, and by now there are four BOOTs in four different city districts (West, Oost, Zuid-Oost, and Nieuw-West). Various programmes of different domains of the university give their students the opportunity to do an internship for a minimum of 5 months and a maximum of 10 months, 4–5 days a week, at one of the BOOTs. These domains include the Domain of Economics and Management (*Domein Economie en Management*, or DEM), the Domain Technique (*Domein Techniek*), and the Domain Society and Law (*Domein Maatschappij en Recht*, or DMR). Accordingly, various services are offered at BOOTs. The standard set of services that are provided in all BOOTs comprises financial, legal, social, and nutritional consultation hours, homework support for 6–10-year-olds, and an atelier for urban renewal. In addition, depending on the specific needs of the neighbourhood/residents/organizations, BOOTs may also engage in other activities.

12.2.1 Conceptions and Ways of Addressing Users

In reality, there are different kinds of users of BOOTs. From the perspective of the university, the main users are the students—BOOTs are set up and supported by the HvA so that their students can gain practical experience and their teachers are more in contact with their work field. Ultimately, for the university, what matters the most is that through the BOOTs, they are able to educate better social workers for the future. At the same time, BOOTs are also used by city districts and local (welfare) organizations to conduct research projects and/or to help them in their provision of (welfare) services. Last but certainly not the least, BOOTs are used by residents of deprived neighbourhoods, who resort to the students for personal advice as well as for help to organize activities in their neighbourhood.

For the residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods to which students in the BOOTs are offering their services, BOOTs appear to be an easily accessible point of information and assistance. Whilst some residents, for one reason or another, may be more hesitant to approach formal services that are provided by more traditional (municipal) welfare organizations, they seem to be less hesitant to approach the (students in the) BOOTs for help. Moreover, residents that resort to BOOTs seem to value the fact that students take their time to figure things out for them and that they try to offer more personalized assistance than they do in other existing welfare organizations/associations. That on average 350–500 residents visit the various BOOT locations every week indicates that residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods appreciate the existence of a BOOT in their vicinity.

12.2.2 Internal Organization and Modes of Working

The way in which BOOTs are internally organized is mainly decided by the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. The HvA delivers most of the staff for the BOOTs (be they students, teachers, or mentors), it supplies the bulk of the funding (most of the participating “domains” at the university contribute a certain amount of money to be able to pay for the staff and the necessary equipment), and its academic schedule decides the timeframe of the activities that are carried out in the BOOTs. However, in most cases, housing corporations provide the location, and the city districts pay the fixed costs such as gas, electricity, water, and Internet. In some cases, BOOTs have set up a so-called Neighbourhood Partner Agreement (*wijkpartnerovereenkomst*), which is an agreement between the BOOT and partnering organizations in which BOOT promises to provide certain services in return for a location/compensation of the fixed costs. In other cases, it is the city district itself that asked for a BOOT to be set up and thus also provides a location for them. By now, all BOOTs have not only a standard set of services that they provide but they also carry out additional services/activities depending on the specific needs and desires of residents and organizations in the neighbourhood, like the manager of

BOOT explains: “It’s a bit like a menu, where you can choose: I want a BOOT with the standard set of services. But if you want BOOT to carry out extra projects on top of those [...] then that is also financed separately” (Manager BOOT).

The modes of working, though—in terms of the services that a BOOT offers—are very much based on the needs of the neighbourhood in which a BOOT is located. In fact, BOOTs seek to fill the gaps in welfare provision that are left by other (municipal) welfare organizations that are already active in the neighbourhood—either by offering specific types of services or by targeting specific groups of residents. To be able to fill this gap and to adjust the services that are offered by BOOTs to those that are provided by other organizations, close collaboration with existing (welfare) organizations in the neighbourhood is crucial.

12.2.3 Interaction with the Local Welfare System

As BOOTs focus on providing welfare services that are not yet being offered (enough) in a particular neighbourhood, there is a strong interaction with the local welfare system in the different neighbourhoods in which they are located, and they maintain a closely cooperating network of partners. In fact, the most innovative aspect of BOOTs is the binding role that an educational facility like the HvA—as a fresh and more neutral actor in the field of welfare provision—plays between different (welfare) organizations that are operating within the same territorial boundaries, yet not necessarily cooperating much. When BOOTs first started, for many welfare organizations that were already in those neighbourhoods, this was a difficult transition to make, as they had been used to providing a particular service in a certain way and were generally very much focused towards the inside—on their own activities/organization. BOOTs bring many of these different, so far disconnected, actors together, which not only provides a clearer overview of the services that are present in a certain neighbourhood and of those that are lacking but it also stimulates all partnering organizations to have a more outward look. As the manager of BOOT noted:

(...) You have to give it a lot of time to build up a trusting relationship. And, the most important—and in that you can educate other organizations a bit too—is that you put the residents at the centre of it all. Because it’s actually a bit weird that you would see this as competition ... You have been put there with money from the government to carry out services for the residents. If you can do that better with someone else’s help, it is a bit weird if you wouldn’t want to do that. But that is something that with the Community Development Program (‘wijkenpak’) was a cultural process also. Organizations were very much turned towards themselves, and well, they had to start working more result-driven. [...] While, the point of the ‘wijkenpak’ was that you would bring your forces together to solve societal problems. [...] And I think that we... because we were independent—so we were not part of the municipality, or of housing corporations, or welfare organizations—we tried to get everybody to turn a bit more towards the outside (Manager BOOT).

12.2.4 *Future Developments*

The entire BOOT concept is based on nonprofit-making growth model, which may be difficult to maintain in a future where all partners are facing budget cuts. BOOTs too are thus constantly looking for ways to innovate themselves, so they can somehow continue to offer their services in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The BOOT manager stressed the importance of mobilising and pooling different resources:

At some point the city district is going to pull itself back more, simply because they are not getting any money for this anymore. And then you have to look at (...) how you can keep this going, without costing more money, but that you still grow. [...] So you have to look how you can create an exchange system with existing partners, so they can keep their costs low by using students. [...] We are especially busy with looking at how residents—because there is of course a lot of knowledge also with residents, and time, unfortunately these days also with people who are highly qualified, but that are unemployed—to look at how they can guide the students for a part. [...] That would be great, matching the trend that residents themselves are looking for themselves how to organize things.

BOOT—for which the motivation and the driving force comes from more “common” educational facilities—is perhaps a type of innovation that is more likely to be diffused in an international context, and, as a matter of fact, already is:

We talk a lot with other educational facilities—like ROC, in Holland, the University of Applied Sciences in Nijmegen—to see how they could do that within their own context. And that gives us a lot of interesting information. So there are also other BOOT concepts in other parts of the Netherlands, who do it in their own way. That fits with their university; that fits with the needs of the residents that live in those neighbourhoods. And that is a movement that I think has been very good, to see how higher educational facilities can do more than just education in the traditional way. But how can you really use that exchange with the city? And that’s a trend that you see in the whole of the Netherlands, even in Europe (Manager BOOT).

What certainly helps diffusion is the existence of an extensive network of third sector (welfare) organizations and the presence of local governments that take on a leading and steering role. In the case of Amsterdam, the fact that there are already many local welfare provisions in place means that knowledge and personnel are often there, but it is a matter of coordinating efforts more efficiently. While local governments may not be able to provide financial support the way they used to in the past, it is all the more important that they remain active in bringing scattered and disjointed (welfare) organizations closer together. In Amsterdam, although the public administration surrounding welfare provisions is bulky and fragmented, the fact that it is a capital city that wants to set an example in the Netherlands also puts pressure on the administration to be innovative and dynamic. In other words, politically, a change of (organizational) culture must be supported and encouraged.

12.3 Conclusion

Due to its particular (political) history and (administrative) structure, Amsterdam has an extensive and intricate system of separate and rather compartmentalized actors involved in the provision of local welfare services. Every city district has its own (welfare) programme and organizations, and due to the availability of sufficient funding/subsidies, all of these actors have long had the possibility of working fairly independently from one another. Instead, at the moment, the political discourse in Amsterdam calls for social innovations that target social cohesion at the local level in an efficient manner. Hence, the political discourse favours social innovations that promote closer collaboration between the many (disjointed) actors that are involved in the provision of welfare services at the local level and that encourage new actors—including for example universities—to step up to the plate. In particular, the innovations that seem to enjoy most (political/financial) support are those that seek to combine both the social and the competitive side of the city and try to bridge the gap between those two (so far rather disconnected) worlds. BOOTs are a prime example of this.

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Chapter 13

Lille Metropolis: Co-production of Housing in a Major Urban Renewal District

Laurent Fraisse

13.1 Introduction

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

This innovation-driven urban process has to be understood in the context of a long de-industrialisation process within the Lille Metropolitan area and the Nord-Pas-de Calais region. This process has strongly affected the historical working class and inclusion in the labour market of new generations, who face high degrees of unemployment and a rise in social vulnerabilities. The area's industrial background has also impacted on the nature of housing, with a large stock of working-class houses, former blue-collar dormitories that have become de facto social housing. A lot of them have been left unused for many years and tend not to comply with health and safety regulations, with tenants living in very poor, even insalubrious conditions (inadequate heating system, substandard water supply, etc.). In this context, metropolitan urban policies have aimed at investing in urban renewal and housing construction to improve urban living conditions but also to promote economic regeneration. This urban renewal operation has been politically one of the significant

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projects launched and managed by the Lille Metropolis Urban Community (LMCU) which gathered 85 municipalities, large cities (Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing) and their independent suburbs, and was governed by a left wing coalition between 2008 and 2014.

On a wider scale, the background to this innovation is a period of urban policies in the 2000s characterised by a vast national programme of urban renewal targeting deprived districts. Several hundred demolition-reconstruction operations covering large social housing complexes built during the 1960s and 1970s have taken place in the suburbs of France's big cities. Focusing mainly on the architectural and construction aspects, the role and participation of inhabitants in such urban renewal projects has often been the subject of controversy (Donzelot and Epstein 2006; Hall and Hickman 2011). The Ilot Stephenson initiative could be considered as a pilot project to test an alternative approach to urban renewal (Fraisse 2013). Architect Patrick Bouchain and his colleagues launched the concept *Construisons ensemble, Le Grand ensemble* [Working together to build the whole urban area], which was tested between 2009 and 2012 (Bouchain and David 2010).

13.2 The Ilot Stephenson Rehabilitation

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

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

After a contentious atmosphere between inhabitants and local authorities, new ways of addressing inhabitants of the Stephenson neighbourhood emerged and opened up a new period of collaboration. An innovative architectural intervention based on participative and local co-production has led to the rehabilitation of 30 historical houses and the improvement of 24 inhabited houses. Of this, 12 have been purchased by a social landlord. Several have taken on a self-rehabilitation dimension and were sold at a lower price. In addition, architecture skills and urban project management were available for any owners or tenants making housing improvements (thermal and energetic diagnosis, insulation, etc.).

13.3 Approaches and Ways of Addressing Users

The Ilot Stephenson project is a new architectural and urban planning experiment conceptualised by Patrick Bouchain and his architects' firm, Construire. They are part of the architectural movement that considers that building cities should not only be a matter for specialists (architects, urban planners, property developers, social landlords, etc.) and that inhabitants should not be passive subjects who are generally excluded from most social housing, construction and urban renewal projects. Inhabitants' participation in the production of social housing or rehabilitation of urban areas is one of the key principles for improving cohabitation in the city. In this context, the recent and systematic demolition-reconstruction incentives in France do not sufficiently take into account people's lives and the neighbourhood's history.

"Building is living" is one of the principles of a new interaction with residents. It means that the building phase is no longer regarded as a parenthesis in inhabitants' lives, but as an important opportunity for public expression and civic participation seen as a condition for sustainable and efficient housing rehabilitation. Conceptually, the building site is no longer seen as a no man's land and a temporary phase in the life of the neighbourhood but as a dynamic episode in the lives of the inhabitants.

Concretely, the architects immersed themselves in the Stephenson neighbourhood by locating part of their office in an old electronics workshop. This daily presence changed relationships with inhabitants and other stakeholders as well as the architects' perception of the initial architectural scheme, by setting it against the habits and needs of everyday life. They knew whom to contact for any daily issues on the building site. The electronics workshop was also transformed into a public space where a large model of the urban project was reconstructed for the inhabitants. Several meetings with residents, elected representatives, technicians from local authorities and representatives of local organisations were organised for presenting and discussing adaptation of the initial plan. Regular workshops and conferences were organised in the electronics workshop bringing together the current and future inhabitants and exploring topics such as making compost or recovering wastewater. Educational activities were also planned with children.

The new approach to the urban renewal project led to concrete and substantive changes for the community. Beyond the concrete rehabilitation or improvement of about 60 houses that should initially have been pulled down, the public exhibition and discussion of the large-scale model led to a change in the initial architectural proposal. Initially located just in front of some tall buildings planned for the eco-neighbourhood, the rehabilitation of small traditional houses presented the problem of a disproportionate scale and of perspective. A consensual agreement between all stakeholders has been reached based on the revision of the urban plan involving the progressive transition of the height of the buildings adjacent to the Stephenson neighbourhood. Moreover, the architects mediated discussions about the future of the cul-de-sac that the urban planners wanted to open to traffic, whereas families wanted to keep it as a secured space where children could run

around and play safely. The compromise was to partially open the cul-de-sac, making it accessible to pedestrians and bikes but not cars. The construction of the first model of renewed housing that the residents agreed on was visited by present and future inhabitants. The idea was to meet and involve future residents in the district before they moved in.

The Ilot Stephenson project has also inspired and strengthened the governance of the whole urban renewal planning process. The semi-public company SEM Ville Renouvelée has adopted a participatory approach by implementing the eco-neighbourhood. Factors include the co-production of a sustainable development framework. Its formulation has not only involved the different local authorities and housing developers but also groups of local non-profit organisations called Collectif de l'Union. This group of local organisations and citizens demanded, from the beginning of the Union urban renewal plan, integration of employment, social and ecological aspects alongside the initial business and construction dimensions. Some collective proposals coming from local residents associations were formulated in 2010 to include grassroots projects and participation by inhabitants within the urban planning scheme. These claims, by degrees, took into account and partially impacted urban governance planning. Thus, the framework for the eco-neighbourhood adopted in 2007 was revised 4 years later in order to adjust to new needs expressed by local actors, local institutions' strategies and national legislation. Moreover, a charter of participation was drawn up with the different Union stakeholders. The active involvement of the group of local organisations led to the creation of a specific fund for resident participation by the local authorities in order to support local initiatives connected to the renewal urban project. Finally, the creation of a "House of the Union" has been inspired by the internal organisation and working methods used by the electronics workshop experiment. The Union group of local organisations has been put in charge of running the space.

13.4 Internal Organisation and Working Methods

As the Stephenson project has demonstrated, opening a building site can involve several innovative aspects in the architectural working methods. The most important aspect is the temporary establishment of at least one architect in the neighbourhood during the building or rehabilitation phase. This new architectural position means a form of commitment in the community beyond a simple technical role. Concretely, part of the architects' firm is established in the district, which is considered as a place of work. This sort of architect's immersion has been pushed beyond working in the neighbourhood, like in the Stephenson operation, to actually living with the inhabitants, as has been the case in a similar rehabilitation of old working-class houses in Boulogne-sur-Mer on the west coast of the Nord-Pas de Calais region.

The presence of the architects' office implies the mobilisation of new professional practices and skills due to the fact that the architect and the development project are embedded in neighbourhood life. One of the results is the trend for tailor-made

approaches to housing rehabilitation that take into account domestic situations. Far from the sort of standardised urban construction that requires the same building materials throughout, a normalisation of inhabited rooms as well as heating and insulation systems, the architect tries to adapt interior and exterior construction through a compromise between urban requirements and inhabitants' concrete needs. This can lead, for example, to the installation of a new wood stove that most of the families use rather than the heat pump initially planned by the social landlords. The idea is that new housing standards are not always more sustainable and efficient if they are too far removed from tenants' habits. The architects also play the role of political regulator and social mediator in relationships between the local authorities, social landlords and inhabitants. Gaining the trust of inhabitants and getting them to agree to interventions at their homes, especially in a contentious context, means avoiding inappropriate decisions that risk halting the operation. For instance, architects may have to negotiate a lower and more progressive rent increase with social landlords than originally planned for the renovated houses.

New working methods also mean interactions with professionals (social workers, social entrepreneurs, artists, volunteers, etc.) who are involved in the neighbourhood in order to organise activities for and with the inhabitants during the building period. To a certain extent, the architect becomes a kind of community developer by facilitating the creation of public spaces and open meetings, by organising visits and animations with children, by being in contact with social services or work integration enterprises to obtain better access to rights or work opportunities for residents, by encouraging the intervention of artists in cultural events on the building site, etc. An initiative mentioned as unusual for local urban planners has been the contribution of students from Tourcoing Beaux Arts School who created a temporary art performance within the houses under renovation. One example in Boulogne-sur-Mer has been the participation of a number of inhabitants involved in self-renovation of their homes in building skills training sessions that potentially open up new job perspectives to them.

In the case of Ilot Stephenson, the architects' presence also led to the involvement of local building artisans. This was facilitated by public procurement contracts divided into small batches, and the fact that the location of the architect's office at the building venue also changed the rhythm of professional interactions with construction workers who did not have to wait for the architect's traditional weekly visit to the building site for solving practical issues.

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

13.5 Embeddedness in the Local Welfare System

From a local political issue to an emblematic and publicised project, the Ilot Stephenson story has profoundly influenced the Tourcoing mayor, urban planners from SEM Ville Renouvelée and Lille Metropolis and other stakeholders in the project. It has definitely led to the integration of a human and participatory dimension in urban planning and urban renewal projects. According to the architects, calling into question, even if partially, the plan for a large and emblematic urban renewal project already voted in by the local authorities remains quite rare.

Although such innovations are quite sensitive to the local context, several factors can be identified for explaining why it has worked. Firstly, Ilot Stephenson, like the housing rehabilitation in Boulogne-sur-Mer, was considered a problematic zone within the initial urban renewal plan. Faced with deadlock situations such as residents' protests or the retrenchment of welfare services, local policymakers opened their minds to new ideas and agreed to explore new urban solutions. Consequently, the political will of the mayor was fundamental for long-term support for the architects in the face of scepticism expressed at the beginning by a number of social landlords, local urban planners and social workers. Secondly, the national reputation of the architect and his connections with the political network are another important factor, not only for launching such a specific experiment, but also for integrating and legitimizing it with networks, processes and resources from other scales. Thirdly, it is worth noting that the contract mechanism used for this experiment is also unusual for this kind of urban operation. Whereas local authorities usually turn to public procurement for urban planning projects, this was a partnership agreement (*convention de partenariat*), which provided the contractual frame between the architects' firm and SEM Ville Renouvelée. An adapted contracting mechanism is favourable to this sort of tailor-made urban project.

Finally, the Ilot Stephenson case is interesting because conceptualisation is an ongoing process, expressed by the slogan *Faire ensemble, Le Grand ensemble* ["Working together to build the whole urban area"], which has been tested successfully in other places, such as the rehabilitation of all the precarious housing on a street in Boulogne-sur-Mer. This ability of the Construire architects to transform local experiments within a specific context into a more or less mainstream concept is crucial for being able to influence collective representations of what is or is not innovative, and to become relevant to people and institutions from outside. Architects regularly conceptualise and communicate on a new urban approach to social housing construction and urban rehabilitation through publications, conferences and videos.

In addition, one of the architects who worked in the Stephenson neighbourhood throughout the entire project won a prize for young urban planners in 2012. The Ilot Stephenson project has been subject to local publicity and media coverage with a special website and numerous articles in the regional press. The inhabitants' organisation was often solicited by journalists. Stephenson has gradually become a kind of showcase project, with all the risks of overexposure in terms of expectations created. Whereas the Ilot Stephenson was a local political problem at the beginning of

the 2000s, 10 years on, it has become an emblematic success promoted by the local authorities. Attention for the project goes far beyond the local community. Many professors and students of architectural schools, delegations of technicians from other cities and even international visitors have visited the building site and met the architects and urban planning team.

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Chapter 14

Pamplona: Neighbourhood Children Services—A Grassroots and Local Council Initiative

Manuel Aguilar Hendrickson and Marta Llobet Estany

14.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we analyse a programme that was born of a grassroots initiative of several neighbourhood associations and was taken up by the local council of Pamplona. During the early 1990s, several neighbourhood associations set up educational activities for children that the local authorities integrated into their children services structure as “community children teams” aimed at providing “community preventive action services”. This has developed into a specific model of local public service provision by community organisations where many of the complexities and ambivalences of the co-production of services and of social innovations may be seen.

14.2 The Context

Pamplona is the capital of Navarra, a small region in Northern Spain. Its urban area of 353,000 inhabitants makes up for slightly over half of the region’s population.

The regional and local governments have frequently boasted of having a level of social service provision clearly above the Spanish average, and of “pioneering” the development of social services. Financially and politically strong regional and local governments in a small, comparatively wealthy and less unequal region has allowed for a stronger development of social services. In some cases, especially during the

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1980s and early 1990s, this meant the introduction of services previously unknown in the region.

Civil society organisations have a long tradition in Navarra. This stems from a strong conservative tradition of local self-government, going back to the “Carlist” traditionalism of the nineteenth century, from the strength of the Catholic Church and its organisations, and from the complex political development of these traditions since the 1960s. The radical changes undergone in Navarra since the 1960s transformed a rural agrarian region into an industrial and service-based one, concentrated most of its population in the capital, Pamplona, and opened up dramatic political cleavages between left and right, and between Basque nationalism and Navarrese regionalism.

Third sector organisations emerging of these processes are generally very much respected by most of the political and social spectrum, as they represent the solidaristic “soul” of Navarra and its concern for the weakest. Although social innovation does not seem to be an explicit political priority, new initiatives coming from these organisations are usually seen with sympathy, even when they challenge the dominant views in the political sphere. In many cases, the orientations and values of these initiatives openly depart from dominant orientations, as for example when flexibility and “informality” in the way of addressing users are opposed to formalised “managerial” approaches, or when the social value of workplace relations is opposed to dominant “work-first” activation approaches (Aguilar Hendrickson 2013).

These innovative initiatives may be integrated in several ways. In some cases, they may be seen as limited actions for some special cases that fall out of the mainstream programs, and require a careful personalised treatment, for which TSOs seem to be the perfect solution. This may be widely accepted by the left (as a way of expanding social action when it is not possible to do it directly by means of public programs) and the right that feels quite comfortable when expanding the role of TSOs and limiting direct public provision. In other cases, a widespread political consensus may not translate into actual priorities. The possibility of integrating the initiatives into two different (and sometimes opposed) narratives helps to establish consensus in many cases.

Aside from TSO initiatives and government predisposition towards allowing TSOs to develop their initiatives, pressure from the European Union (EU) and the central government have played a role. The pressure to establish action plans for social inclusion (Navarra set up its own plan long before it became compulsory) has eased the development of some initiatives (something has to be done in a specific field). On the other hand, the widespread discourse on “best practices” has encouraged the development of innovative initiatives, although they do not always make their way into the mainstream.

14.3 The Development of Neighbourhood Children's Services in Pamplona

The group of associations we are analysing in Pamplona carry out social activities aimed at the prevention of social problems amongst children. It is the result of a movement of community associations that developed leisure activities for children and of their integration into the local government structure of social services, while retaining a peculiar way of working.

The first of these associations, Umetxea Sanduzelai, was created in 1990. They tried to keep a balance between their traditional "political" role of claiming for more and better services in their neighbourhood and a new role as service providers. They tried to create social and cultural projects, mostly aimed at children, pooling the resources of several neighbourhood groups. These projects became quite successful. By 1994, some people in the local social services begin to see that these associations are being more successful in this field than their own public prevention programs, which many people in the neighbourhoods thought quite useless.

The neighbourhood associations have been suspect for possible sympathies with radical left wing parties and radical Basque nationalism, which in the context of political violence and of a serious political cleavage between Basque nationalism and Navarrese regionalism certainly did not make relationships easy. Somewhat surprisingly, it was a centre-right regionalist councillor who decided to establish a long-term agreement between the municipality and the associations. Although there was a strong and politicised debate, in the end the councillor said that "they work fine and they are much less expensive than other providers".

Since 1995 in one neighbourhood and since 1997 in the other three, these associations are responsible for the so-called Community Preventive Action Service, a part of the local Family and Children Welfare Program. The typical activities of these programmes are leisure activities for different groups of children, including activity groups and playgrounds for the youngest, summer camps, neighbourhood festivals and networking amongst teenagers (2011). In some cases, it has meant not encouraging but supporting and accompanying actions like the squatting of an abandoned factory.

The future of the program has been uncertain in several occasions. The agreements established in 1995–1997 ended in 2013. The local council has favoured since the late 1990s private providers that fit better into an entrepreneurial model, with whom they agree specific outcomes and targets in a much more managerial way. The existing TSOs are much more flexible, they are able to mobilise much more local resources, but they do so by being less hierarchic and formal in their relation with the local government. After a complex process, the agreements have been renewed for several years.

14.3.1 Conceptions and Ways of Addressing Users

The traditional boundaries between practitioners and service users are somewhat blurred in these projects. There are certainly practitioners, who get paid for their job and are bound by a contract with the local council, but they are neighbours as well, and a local neighbourhood association hires them. Since they organise activities for the young and children, volunteer neighbours who take part in the activities carry out a large part of the actual implementation of the project (thus, they are service users and producers at the same time). And although some specific work is done to integrate children with special difficulties in the activities, there is no visible difference between them and other participants. “In our projects volunteers are as important as professional practitioners. Volunteers are not of the kind that shows up for an hour, but people who live here. (...) We promote the rights of the kids, so the kids are our bosses. They [the local government managers] don’t think in terms of rights, they told us don’t talk about rights, talk about problems and needs”.

The concept of neighbourhood is central to the work of these projects. Even if neighbourhoods may be relatively small, the feeling of belonging may be very strong, and it is very significant for newcomers (migrants) as well.

In Pamplona the question of locality is very important. Whoever hasn’t experienced it and doesn’t know a neighbourhood has a citywide outlook. That’s what happens to local councillors, (...) who don’t know about it and don’t understand it. If you take away the idea of neighbourhood from these kids you’ll kill them. For migrants, their only identity here is that of the neighbourhood. They’re neither from Pamplona nor from Spain, but they’re certainly from San Jorge [the name of one of the neighbourhoods].

The project works specifically with children with special needs both integrating them into activities and offering personal support and accompaniment. This role is different from the one played by ordinary child support services, which should be seen as different and separated. “[Control and support] should be separated, not only conceptually but in practice as well. Our space should be a space to look ahead and theirs as a space of protection if the children’s rights are being violated”.

14.3.2 Organisation and Modes of Working

The concept of working to promote the rights of children appears to be connected to the concept of autonomy of the projects, even if they belong to the local government. The projects consider themselves accountable first to the children and the neighbours.

[In our case] either the project is based on the concept of rights or we don’t do it. The question of our autonomy is basic, because without it we can’t carry them out, and our autonomy has practical effects, for it allows us a margin of flexibility and of method innovation that other projects don’t have. In our team sometimes each [of the three formally hired educators/social workers] takes responsibility for an area, but sometimes a few youngsters join us and its 5 or 6 of us managing the project. We can do that, but public employees can’t, and private providers can only do it at the expense of their workers.

14.3.3 Governance

The triangle made up of the local council (responsible for the service as a whole), the associations (who have a legal agreement with the local council to carry it out) and the practitioners (who are employees of the association but are, in practice, integrated in the local social services organisation) allows for the aforementioned autonomy of the projects. Practitioners tend to speak the same language (with some nuances) as the local social services staff, but the leaders of the associations are local neighbours with a strong commitment to their neighbours and tend to be much more “straight to the point”.

The kind of associations we work in is special, and our bosses are our fellows in all its complexity. (...) There was one of those meetings with the local council after a cutback of 50 per cent of our activity budget. We were very angry, and we as a team wrote down a document against the cutback, and the director of social services said she had nothing to talk with us and that she'd only talk to the leaders of the association, to our bosses. OK, go ahead! Now she prefers to talk to us.

The relationship between the associations and the local council is quite conflictive, in spite of, or maybe because of, a close relationship as direct providers of services commissioned by the local council.

14.4 Conclusions

The experience of the Neighbourhood Children's Services raises some interesting questions on the political and social conditions of innovative practices. One might tend to believe that innovations are more likely to appear and develop in contexts where there is a strong political commitment to promote innovation and where such commitment is more consistent, less affected by partisan quarrelling, and where actors such as governing bodies and innovation developers are open to cooperate in good terms. One might as well associate innovation with developed and knowledge-oriented environments. This case seems to support a rather different view. Some successful innovations (having lasted almost 20 years and a positive record of results is arguably success) may be possible in a context where innovation was not a priority and where political rivalries and mistrust (specifically between innovation developers and governing bodies) were, and still are, quite strong. This suggests that in some cases “disorganised” and conflictual environments may leave more gaps open to innovative initiatives than consistent ones. It certainly does not make the life and work of innovators easier, but it may give them more leeway. Innovations may be “easier” in such contexts when it is possible to integrate them into different, sometimes opposite, narratives. In our case, proximity to users, flexibility and user participation and coproduction could be put into a left wing innovative and participatory narrative, but also into a right wing traditional conservative narrative on community involvement.

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Chapter 15

Berlin: Kreuzberg Acts—Entrepreneurship in the District

Benjamin Ewert and Adalbert Evers

15.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at *Lok.a.Motion*, a social enterprise in the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in Berlin, and specifically one of its projects: *Kreuzberg Acts*.¹ The project stimulates entrepreneurship among job-seeking residents and supports local entrepreneurs. The intellectual framework in which Lok.a.Motion is embedded is made up of three discourses: on social entrepreneurship, urban and community development and the local economy. In practical terms, the *Kreuzberg Acts* project pursues a twofold approach towards social inclusion: on the one hand, jobseekers and local entrepreneurs receive comprehensive consultancy. For instance, participants are coached in how to apply for public subsidies for entrepreneurial activities or how to launch an effective marketing campaign. On the other hand, the project is striving for street credibility by building bridges to the local economy. From a funding perspective, the project bridges European, federal and local labour market programmes and thus breaks the usual patterns of vocational training. In order to illustrate and contextualize Lok.a.Motion and *Kreuzberg Acts*,² we will describe five dimensions: (1) the innovative aspects of the project, (2) the types of services and

¹ The project ran from 2009 to 2012. Nevertheless, the chapter is written in present tense to allow for easy reading.

² Besides the analysis of grey literature (conceptional guidelines, internal documents, press releases) and newspaper articles, this chapter is based on two expert interviews with the managers of Lok.a.Motion and *Kreuzberg Acts* and one interview with a female entrepreneur—an experienced user of the project. The interviews were carried out in August 2012 and transcribed by the author.

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the way of addressing users, (3) Lok.a.Motion's internal organization and modes of working, (4) the embeddedness of the project in the local welfare system and (5) to conclude, the general lessons to be learnt from the innovation.

15.2 *Kreuzberg Acts: The Innovation*

Innovation results in the intertwining of economic and social concerns by linking two issues that are usually separated: on the one hand, individual consultancy and guidance for entrepreneurs seeking to strengthen their businesses; on the other hand, a concern with community revitalization by restoring confidence among local stakeholders. *Kreuzberg Acts* thus combines approaches that have so far been pursued in parallel, that is, in the sectors of employment and urban development.

Originally founded as a nonprofit organization for youth welfare and the local economy, the provider of the project, Lok.a.Motion, recast its organizational form by itself becoming a social enterprise (see for an overview Nyssens 2006; Ridley-Duff and Bull 2011) that generated a culture of mutual trust among relevant stakeholders in the district. In practice, as stated by Ms. Kiczka-Halit, the manager of Lok.a.Motion, "wrap-around activities" such as networking, lobbying and public relations work help to foster sustainable cooperation and partnerships between local authorities, businesses and civil society actors (see for an overview Blokland and Savage 2008). As an intersection between European and federal (vertical) programmes for promoting self-employment and local (horizontal) approaches that promote urban development, Lok.a.Motion opens up new opportunities for supporting jobseekers and struggling entrepreneurs by devising small-scale business ideas that are compatible with the local social ecology. Hence, the social enterprise's work is characterized by the tailor-made bundling of resources, a commitment to urban renewal and a unique understanding of the nature of local governance. Dedicated to people's *economic* and *social* inclusion, Lok.a.Motion wants to make a difference in a district that is characterized by a challenging degree of diversity and inequality. Respective needs are met through networked, continually refined, schemes that are carefully adopted to the specific character of the local economy.

15.2.1 *Types of Services and Ways of Addressing Users*

According to the conceptual guideline of *Kreuzberg Acts*, social inclusion is thought of as something that is present in a local environment and depends strongly on the range of people's opportunities to realize their entrepreneurial potential. As such, service offers are twofold: On the one hand, people are encouraged in their decision to become self-employed by the provision of support to improve their skills as entrepreneurs before applying for a start-up financing grant. On the other hand, individual consultancy and coaching is accompanied by collective support for the

local community of existing entrepreneurs who are struggling to stabilize their businesses. The collective dimension of the project includes developing common marketing campaigns, facilitating networking and boosting joint ventures between local businesses. “We not only help individual local entrepreneurs to make the best of their potential, but we also feel responsible for the long-term development of the district’s local economy”, explained the project manager.

The project has reinforced local social inclusion in various ways. First of all, stabilizing and building up local business helps people to keep in the world of work and to get them *off the dole*. However, project leaders apply a broader notion of social inclusion, meaning more than just being independent of social assistance. Social inclusion is understood as an open process that is not divided into single stages consisting merely of on-the-job training. Instead, two aspects are intertwined: qualifying and strengthening of people as local entrepreneurs and helping to bring about a vivid local community that people belong to and can participate in easily (Blokland and Nast 2014). Perceiving project users as social beings embedded within a local context calls for an approach that is sensitive to people’s multiple ties and requires complex ways of addressing users. For instance, one entrepreneur, a 25-year-old owner of an American diner restaurant, reported that she had been visited continuously by a consultant of *Kreuzberg Acts* who addressed her from the beginning as a member of the local community of entrepreneurs—a dimension of belonging she had not been aware of previously. After strengthening the “we-feeling” through, for example, regular get-togethers of local entrepreneurs and/or joint ventures (e.g. exhibitions from local artists in shops and bistro cafés), project users have been addressed in other identities too. First of all, as local entrepreneurs, they have been challenged to adapt their businesses to the local environment in a sustainable way. This requires not only a solid entrepreneurial spirit—namely, “being fully convinced of their own business idea and ready to work on it seven days a week for at least 14 hours”, as one entrepreneur user put it—but also a sense of the neighbourhood where the start-up should succeed. In order to develop the latter, project leaders organized several workshops where participants mapped the diversity of the local economy, identified vacancies, analyzed needs and consumer preferences and were trained as experts for the respective location.

Moreover, *Kreuzberg Acts* addresses project users both as citizens with social and economic rights, who are entitled to subsidies or start-up grants from the federal state or the European Union, and as active citizens, who can co-shape the development of the urban space in which they live and work. On the one hand, this means consulting entrepreneurs about existing financial support schemes, legal rights and duties. On the other hand, project leaders activate their clientele as active community members, focusing on the social and political processes that may affect their economic success as (future) entrepreneurs. In short, due to strong local references, *Kreuzberg Acts* addresses entrepreneurs as citizens and community members within the local economy. In all these roles, project participants learn not only that their entrepreneurial success depends on their individual competences and on sufficient incubation time for their business idea but also that it is inseparably linked to the overall development of the local area.

15.2.2 *Internal Organization and Modes of Working*

Kreuzberg Acts operates in three neighbourhoods that have special development needs. All of them belong to the *neighbourhood management* programme that combines spatial and urban planning with sectorial policy interventions. The project is funded by a federal programme of the European Social Fund (ESF) called *Education, Economy and Labour in the Neighbourhood*, which aims at innovative interventions in managed neighbourhoods. *Kreuzberg Acts* is one of several projects organized by Lok.a.Motion, an organization that operates at the crossroads between the European and federal labour market programmes and the local level. In recent years, Lok.a.Motion has run four major projects and has initiated several forms of cooperation with local stakeholders. Pursuing an increasingly entrepreneurial approach, Lok.a.Motion now has the legal status of a nonprofit limited liability company. Its managers apply their conviction that labour market policies have to combine social and economic aspects to the development of their own organization. Gradually, a project-orientated consultancy has emerged that now comprises a core of eight to ten permanent employees and a wider pool of contract-based freelancers, who are engaged when their services are required.

With respect to internal working relations, Lok.a.Motion represents a sharp contrast to the traditional public administration, in which the number of staff is stable and jobs are socially protected. The enterprise thus promotes a working culture that can withstand financial uncertainties and changing situations concerning project tenders in an unstable environment. Having few permanent staff enables Lok.a.Motion to decide whether a certain project actually suits its key professional principle: that any engagement must pursue the development of the social environment where it takes place. The flip side of this high degree of flexibility is that Lok.a.Motion is not a good employer in traditional terms. The social enterprise relies on insecure, precarious jobs. “Everybody who works for us knows that her/his job is limited but could be extended through the approval of future projects”, states Ms. Kiczka-Halit, the manager of Lok.a.Motion.

15.2.3 *Embeddedness of the Project in the Local Welfare System*

Kreuzberg Acts is a hybrid in the local welfare system, being both embedded and disembedded at once. This ambiguity is mirrored in the project’s relations to the job centre and local authorities, the two most important welfare providers at local level. Although both institutions acknowledge the work of the project, *Kreuzberg Acts* is perceived mainly as an *ad-hoc consultant* for vocational training while lacking the status as an *ordinary* service provider with regular funding. As a result, *Kreuzberg Acts* fills a rather uncertain intermediate position that requires a cooperative manner and a trust-generating relationship with local stakeholders.

However, this approach has its limits due to the constant need for “co-competition”—a term coined by Ray Noorda, founder of a software company, for the business sector (Brandenburger and Nalebuff 1996, pp. 4–5)—which refers to both a *co-operative* and *competitive* relationship with other projects. On the one hand, social enterprises such as Lok.a.Motion have to defend their project designs and modes of working against the theft of innovative ideas (a danger that calls for a patent law for innovative concepts). On the other hand, close cooperation and regular knowledge exchange with similar projects is a precondition to having a stake in the local welfare system. Nonetheless, fruitful cooperation with competitors *and* partners is still possible, as demonstrated by common workshops for developing integrated approaches to socio-spatial challenges, for example.

In comparison to the working culture of established welfare institutions, the way of addressing users is what differentiates *Kreuzberg Acts* the most. This is a world away from the job centre approach of integrating people. Here, the project’s process-orientated approach, which involves encouraging people to realize their entrepreneurial potential in a gentle way, coincides with the job centre’s perspective based on the verdict of employability. “There is no lobby for the unemployed founding a start-up as an aspect of social reintegration”, says the manager of Lok.a.Motion, who misses sufficient opportunities and time for people to develop their own ideas. Instead, the job centre, in its rush to get people into employment, fears that the self-employed, especially when starting up, will become still more dependent on transfer payments and therefore will not disappear from the unemployment statistics.

Measured in terms of cooperation with local and state authorities, Lok.a.Motion is a fairly well-embedded partner. Within the past ten years, Lok.a.Motion took part continuously in a range of local programmes that dealt with the support of entrepreneurship and raised hopes for regular financing. However, the fundamental federal law for *start-up financing*, which applies to all the relevant programmes, has been reformed several times. As a result, the route to self-employment became more complicated. Instead of being “pushed” into self-employment schemes, applicants must nowadays be “pulled”, receiving grants after a complex procedure to prove that they cannot find a “normal job” as an employee and that they have sufficient entrepreneurial skills to risk self-employment. Based on these changes, the Berlin Senate and district authorities reduced their financial commitment to imposing programmes for future entrepreneurs. “We are noticing a backwards development”, says Ms. Kiczka-Halit, adding that especially at the Senate level, the term *entrepreneur* is used exclusively for high potentials that should build up the city’s much-vaunted creative economy. This kind of risk-averse attitude is typical of the Berlin authorities, which allow innovators on the ground very little leeway for experimentation but are only prepared to commit if social investments are absolutely *sure* to pay off. For instance, Lok.a.Motion’s proposal for providing start-ups with a so-called “experimental budget” that may help them to build up operating business structures was rejected by district authorities.

Despite these shortcomings in terms of institutional support, Lok.a.Motion has developed strategies for using the local welfare system for its own goals. In this respect, gaining *change agents* for certain endeavours has proved a promising ap-

proach. Convincing the district mayor or the manager of the job centre of a specific project, for example, has turned out to be more successful than attempting to break down routine patterns of vocational training all at once. Thus, as Ms. Kiczka-Halit puts it, “building up networks of open-minded supporters” is a precondition for transforming an inventive approach into an innovation.

15.3 Conclusion

Is the innovative approach of *Kreuzberg Acts* transferrable to or replicable in other welfare systems? Basically, the project is dedicated to improving labour market perspectives for local citizens facing socio-economic change in their neighbourhoods. However, the way that the project responds to this challenge is not bound to a particular location. Three general lessons can be learnt from the project:

First, social and economic concerns need to be bridged by an integrated approach that is adapted carefully to a manageable area. Hence, a tight bundling of local key issues, such as urban development, unemployment and citizen participation, is necessary in order to arrive at coherent solutions.

Second, innovators have to cross the divide between enabling individual project participants on the one hand and a collective commitment to community work on the other hand. As such, investments in wrap-around-activities beyond the core of the project and efforts to gain strategic partners (who may further disseminate the innovation) will pay off in the long term.

Third, people’s overall benefit from an innovative project seems more sustainable if they are addressed as full persons with multiple identities and numerous ties within a social environment. Thus, entrepreneurs should also be strengthened as embedded citizens (*civic entrepreneurs*) and community members by locally appropriate support measures.

Finally, a critical reflection is needed on the overall status of *social* innovations. In contrast to socio-technological innovations (e.g. car-sharing) or creative start-ups (e.g. in the fields of design and lifestyle), piecemeal innovations such as *Kreuzberg Acts* seem to have less sex appeal. Aiming at social cohesion and community renewal in the first place, social projects have difficulty garnering sufficient support—especially at a time when public policy is focusing on stimulating all kinds of entrepreneurialism, purely and simply.

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Chapter 16

Milan: “We Help You to Help Yourself”—The Project of the Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano

Stefania Sabatinelli and Giuliana Costa

16.1 Milan and the Context of Innovation in Welfare Policies

Milan is the economic and financial capital of Italy, as well as one of the most dynamic cities in the country. A shift to tertiary and advanced tertiary sectors has been the main characteristic of the city’s economy in recent decades. Nevertheless, the financial and economic crisis that first erupted in 2008 and is still on-going in Italy hit the city rather hard, with an increase in unemployment, the use of short-time work schedules, as well as the use of atypical freelance and fixed-term contracts instead of permanent ones. From the political point of view, the city underwent a radical change in 2011: after 20 years of right-wing local governments, the municipal elections were won by Giuliano Pisapia and his centre-leftist coalition, thanks to a campaign focused on the ideas of change, transparency and citizens’ participation. Since then, the new administration’s action has been somewhat restricted by severe budget constraints due to the concurrence of the following factors: the increase in social demands related to the economic crisis; the introduction of austerity measures, with cuts in transfers from the national government to local authorities; and the negative consequences of risky financial investments made by the previous administration (Costa and Sabatinelli 2012).

Nevertheless, the administration, along with other local stakeholders, has sought to cope with emerging needs by pledging that “nobody will be left behind” and devolving resources to innovate its welfare system. It should be borne in mind that, thanks to ample opportunities for social inclusion through employment, Milan has long had a reputation for social solidarity. A deep-rooted legacy with mediaeval

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(religious) origins defines “Milanese citizenship” as a status that anybody coming to the city may obtain by contributing to its welfare through work. This distinctive feature has been reinterpreted in the economic crisis. In 2010, during the previous administration, an anti-crisis fund was put in place for a wide variety of support actions, but due to very stringent access criteria, it was practically never used. Since 2012–2013, the new administration has changed the access criteria and pluralised its destination. Moreover, given the insufficiency of public resources with which to tackle the increase in economic needs, nonpublic actors have created solidarity funds that distribute forms of support, monetary and in kind, to individuals and families hit by the recession. These funds are managed rather independently from the municipal administration. For example, The Catholic Archbishop and Curia have created a solidarity fund that pays modest benefits to individuals and families signalled by municipal social services which cannot help them because they are ineligible for municipal income support, which is severely limited by budgetary constraints.

The case of social innovation presented here refers to the recently instituted *Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano* (Milan Welfare Foundation, FWA). Created on an anti-crisis logic and perspective, the FWA’s action combines traditional elements of Welfare Ambrosiano¹ with new ones in order to help people overcome their economic and social difficulties or alleviate them. Thanks to a complex alliance among diverse stakeholders, the Foundation addresses uncoped needs by promoting guarantee funds to facilitate access to credit via the micro-credit instrument (Yunus 1998). This is its core activity at present, and it constitutes a new kind of support in the local welfare system.

16.2 Fondazione Welfare Ambrosiano: Basic Features

The Fondazione² Welfare Ambrosiano is a quite new agency in Milan’s welfare system. It was created through the efforts of Milanese trade unions, which had accumulated 6 million € during the 1970s from collective bargaining and allocated this capital to the city for the implementation of social development programmes. The FWA was set up by a heterogeneous group of stakeholders: the Municipality of Milan; the Province of Milan; the Milan Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Crafts and Agriculture and the three main trade unions (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, CGIL, Camera del Lavoro Metropolitana; Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori, CISL, Unione Sindacale Territoriale di Milano and Unione Italiana del Lavoro, UIL Milano e Lombardia). After being announced in 2007 by the former mayor of Milan and created in 2009, the foundation began its activities only in 2011 under the new municipal administration. The long gestation was due

¹ The expression refers to the distinctive welfare system of Milan. “Ambrosiano” is synonymous for “Milanese”, which stems from the name of the city’s patron saint, Ambrogio.

² A foundation is a body made up of capital used to pursue a specific goal, either directly, through its organisation, or indirectly, by financing other subjects that pursue the same goal.

to “technical difficulties” related to the possibility of issuing loans to citizens, for which it was necessary to reach agreements with banks that decided to join the project (Percorsi di secondo welfare 2011). The FWA pursued an agreement with the National Association of Banks, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

Two thirds of the available budget is allocated to innovative local welfare initiatives designed and developed jointly by the members of the Foundation and other third-sector bodies, such as Caritas Ambrosiana and Fondazione Cariplo, a large bank foundation. The FWA’s mission is to support individuals and families that either live or work in Milan or want to start a business within the city’s administrative boundaries, regardless of their place of origin and their previous or current type of work contract, and that are in temporary need for various reasons (job loss, illness, etc.). They may be either persons who are not protected by existing, category-based social protection measures, and are therefore exposed to new forms of social exclusion, or persons or families that are not in disadvantaged conditions but are at risk—due to temporary and unexpected difficulties—of falling into real poverty. The aim, therefore, is not to substitute for the existing institutions assisting long-term situations of need (such as long-term unemployment); rather, the aim is to intercept the short-term risks of workers or jobless people with exceptional economic problems that often have serious long-lasting negative effects for the entire household. For instance, families with budget problems may make decisions, such as interruption of the children’s university education, which they would not make in other circumstances and which may affect the future of family members in the long run, since they are hard to catch up later.

The targets of the foundation’s measures are therefore all persons living or working in Milan with economic problems that make it difficult for them to make ends meet. The definition of the household is flexible: for instance, it disregards whether the applicants are married, separated or cohabitating. This reflects the secular orientation of the foundation and its members, which distinguishes it from other bodies, especially confessional ones, acting in the area. Two fundamental features of the foundation’s action are an *active approach* and *rotation in the use of funds*. The *active approach* is reflected in its slogan: “We help you to help yourself”, which underlines that recipients must commit themselves to projecting their own pathway in solving their problems. *Rotation in use of the funds* is obtained—as we shall see—by privileging financing tools such as micro-credit, as opposed to nonrepayable loans; this policy is specifically due to the intent of the trade unions involved to create economic capital for the city that will last in time.

16.3 The Core Activity: Micro-credit Guarantees, a New Welfare Instrument

The first goal of the foundation is to build instruments to counter one of the main negative effects of the present financial and economic crisis, that is, the credit crunch, which prevents—more than ever before—many individuals with few re-

sources from accessing bank loans however deserving their need and/or feasible their projects may be. The FWA favours access to micro-credit by so-called non-bankable persons, that is, ones with little or no chance of accessing bank credit because of a lack of guarantees and/or past records as “bad payers”.

Two basic types of micro-credit are foreseen:

- “Social credit”, reserved for persons who—especially, but not only because of the crisis—cannot afford expenses such as the payment of university fees for their children or unexpected healthcare costs
- Credit for self-employment, in order to overcome unemployment or underemployment or severe job precariousness

The micro-credit is accessed through a network of selected local bodies operating as “front desks”, which intercept needs. The idea is not to create new structures or offices besides the existing ones, but rather to work with organisations already dealing with poverty and vulnerability in the city so that they become the “operational branches” of the FWA. These bodies are asked to stand “moral surety” for the families that they introduce to the foundation. They carry out a first screening of applicants and may direct them to other welfare agencies (managed by public or third-sector bodies) that may be more appropriate for their case. If the case appears to have a profile that fulfils the requirements for access to micro-credit, a second interview is organised with an expert of the Association of Bank Volunteers for Social Initiatives (Volontari Bancari per le Iniziative nel Sociale, Vo.b.i.s.). During this interview, an analysis of needs and/or the project is carried out, a feasibility study is formulated, and a business plan is outlined in the case of enterprise development. If the person is accepted into the microcredit scheme, moral and bureaucratic support is provided throughout the project’s development.

The sums loaned range between 2,000 and 20,000 € per applicant. On the basis of the preliminary inquiry, the front desk submits the application to a commission of the FWA, which may or may not approve the project. If the project is approved, the FWA issues a guarantee of 80% of the capital. With this guarantee, applicants can apply for credit at one of the banks that have signed the agreement with the foundation,³ which in principle should process the application within 30 days and—if it is approved—allocate the money. The aim of FWA at this stage is to ensure that the banks have no reason to refuse the credit request.

The loan is granted essentially on the basis of a trust relationship. The interest rates are much lower than the average bank rates, and they are differentiated by type of credit: 4% for social credit (against an average rate for credit to persons of 11.2% set by *Banca d’Italia*) and 6.5% for self-employment credit (against an average rate of 10.2% for credit to firms). The repayment terms are such that they should be sustainable by all borrowers: during the first year, only interest is repaid; capital repayment begins after the first 12 months and can be spread over up to 6 years. In the case of insolvency, the foundation covers up to 80% of the capital. This level

³ Banca Intesa Sanpaolo, Banca Popolare di Milano, Banca Popolare Commercio Industria and Permico (an operator specialised in micro-credit and a partner of the FWA).

will soon be changed to 75% because new laws have imposed a maximum level on guarantee percentages.

According to the analysis of the applications received in the first 2 years of the programme, between October 2011 and December 2013, a total of 881 applications were officially registered, 71% of them for social credit and 29% for self-employment (Bramanti and Spina 2013). About 347 credits were issued, representing 40% of total applications (85% for social credit and 15% for self-employment ones) for a total of 2,271,900 €. More than 50% received a negative evaluation by the FWA’s technical committee, because of unfulfilled requirements or excessive indebtedness (Mallone 2012).

Three quarters of applicants were resident in the municipality of Milan; they were rather balanced by gender (56% men and 44% women in the overall period), but diversified by age: 33% were aged 41–50; 26% 31–40; 22% 51–60; while those aged over 60 represented only 6% of applicants in 2012 (Bramanti and Spina 2012). Applications by young unemployed persons living with their parents were generally refused because such applicants did not match the profile of beneficiaries that could overcome a temporary difficulty with the FWA’s help.

Among social credit applications, the main reasons for them were housing expenses, debt discharge or reduction, and family needs, followed by training expenses, healthcare expenses and mortgage loans. Indebtedness of the household was responsible for most of the applicants’ situations, together with job loss by one of the family members, or the presence of atypical contracts (Mallone 2012). Social credit was granted to migrants in 47% of cases, and to Italians in the remaining 53%. The amounts awarded were rather modest: 60% of applications for social credit were in the lowest amount range, between 2000 and 5000 €, even if the average sum was 5625.93 € (Bramanti and Spina 2013).

Applications for self-employment credit concerned start-up projects in half of the cases; in the other half, they were made because of economic difficulties or the need of already-existing businesses to purchase goods or services. The amounts paid were higher than in the case of social credit: 43% of self-employment applications were for between 17,100 and 20,000 €, but the average sum paid was 15,768.52 €. Most beneficiaries of this kind of credit were Italians (69%). The selection for self-employment micro-credit is rather strict: around 30% of applications were accepted in 2011–2012 (Mallone 2012), and less than this percentage thereafter. Most start-ups are in the personal services sector.

According to the most recent information on repayments, the vast majority of beneficiaries of micro-credit loans are repaying their debts without problems after the first 12 months. Only a few of them are in arrears or already in litigation. An interesting fact is that 60% of recipients are employees, which shows the extent to which the FWA is working to fill the gaps in the existing welfare system. In 2013, the number of micro-credit recipients decreased markedly, partly because the programme had no longer been advertised since its launch.

16.4 New Frontiers: FWA as an Innovator in the Local Welfare System

The FWA case shows that social innovation can stem from the need to use available resources differently, and that in times of hardship, it is all the more important to continue the commitment to welfare issues and not abdicate it because of the lack of resources. The crucial factor has been the endeavour to implement the circular use of available capital to enhance the recipients' participation and empowerment as they are helped to overcome a transitory difficult moment by also mobilising their own resources and being responsible for their personal project.

Created as an anti-crisis initiative, the FWA is currently envisaging its role also beyond the end of the recession. New projects are in progress. A programme that aims to anticipate the payment of unemployment benefits and short-time work schemes to concerned workers has recently been started because the bureaucratic procedures generally last several months before the benefits are effectively paid.⁴ The FWA and the partner banks will then be repaid by the National Social Security Institute (Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale, INPS), thus maintaining the rotation of resources approach. The FWA has instituted a separate guarantee fund (2 million €) for this purpose, and between September and January 2013, it received more than 450 applications for cash advances.

Another recent project involves support by means of long-term “honour loans” to specific students and their families. At present, the beneficiaries are students at the “Accademia Teatro la Scala” of Milan, who must study for many years before being able to work and earn a living. Other projects in progress aim at revising and updating—after a proposal by the trade unions—the nineteenth-century tradition of the *società di mutuo soccorso* (friendly societies),⁵ the purpose being to fill the gaps in category-based social protection as it has evolved in Italy. The intention is to develop the first open (not category-based) health fund to cover targets and needs not addressed by the existing National Health System.⁶ Based on a prevention philosophy, the programme will furnish dental assessment for children, cancer screening for women and/or different forms of home care for older adults. The newest project run by FWA (since 2015) is “Abitare Sociale”, an agency whose aim is to find affordable housing solutions in the private market for those who are not eligible for public housing, supporting both tenants and homeowners with guarantees for arrears and advice in the application of a specific contract called “canone concordato” (Lodi Rizzini 2015).

In 2013, a new microcredit scheme was launched by the FWA jointly with the Milan municipality, which decided to dedicate a specific guarantee fund (800,000 €)

⁴ http://www.fwamilano.org/index.phtml?Id_VMMenu=1010. Accessed 13 April 2015.

⁵ A famous case based in Milan was the Friendly Society of Railway Workers of Northern Italy, now named “Cesare Pozzo”, after one of the first and most influential presidents of the association.

⁶ In Italy, health protection has been universalistic since 1978, when the National Health System was created. Some corporatist funds continued to exist in parallel, granting a wider coverage only to their members.

to potential young entrepreneurs (aged under 35) who are not fully bankable. The maximum loan will be higher than that of the micro-credit scheme illustrated above: 25,000 €. Given that the selection for this kind of credit has been quite hard these 2 years, a special focus on the youngest applicants has been considered a strategic goal for local actors. The FWA and its network are involved because of their experience and skills in managing micro-credit projects. Those selected will benefit from professional consultancy and monitoring from FWA.

To conclude, it should be stressed that supporting access to micro-credit can prove to be a good solution only for some applicants, and it is not appropriate for all of them (Moiso 2012). Applicants should demonstrate that they are committed to their projects and not being too vulnerable to assume relatively high indebtedness risks. The FWA is working to increase life chances of some groups and even if the numbers are still rather low, it is innovating the local welfare system in order to enlarge its scope and capacity to intercept grey areas of needs. The strength of the FWA’s activity is that it does not substitute for existing forms of protection but instead attempts to fill the gaps in the existing welfare system for specific targets with well-timed interventions.

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Chapter 17

Stockholm: Innovative Ways of Supporting Children of Single (Lone) Mothers

Marie Nordfeldt, Ola Segnestam Larsson and Anna Carrigan

17.1 Introduction

Innovation within the field of social welfare is a recently awoken interest in the Swedish context. Innovations have been, and are still, very much related to the launching of new products, inventions and technical development. Welfare development has, by tradition, not been considered as innovative (Rønning et al. 2013). Innovation has also mainly been related to the private—for-profit—sector and, since the development of the welfare state in the mid-1900s, the field of welfare in Sweden has been dominated by services produced by the public sector. However, there is awakening political interest in social innovations and social investments, both at national and local levels. This development is taking place in a changing welfare context with structural changes in terms of deregulation and privatisation. These changes have opened up opportunities for alternative producers of welfare services (see e.g. Svedberg and Olsson 2010). Moreover, with strained budgets and unsolved social problems, local and central governments are looking to the for-profit and the non-profit sectors for innovations and entrepreneurial initiatives (Carrigan and Nordfeldt 2013, WP5).

In this chapter, we describe an innovative project developed within a civil society organisation named *Fryshuset*. The local context for this innovation is the city of Stockholm in Sweden. Stockholm can be described as a growing city with a strong labour market of, for example, advanced businesses and information and communications technology (ICT). (OECD 2006). Compared with the rest of the country,

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Stockholm stands out as having the highest rates of employment and highest activity rate and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (Hermelin 2011).

On the other hand, Stockholm is struggling with many problems similar to other large cities in Europe, for example, housing shortage, homelessness, segregation and social exclusion. A fast growing population puts enormous pressure on the housing market, and the construction of new housing has not kept pace with this demand, which has led to a severe housing shortage in the whole Stockholm region (Länsstyrelsen 2012; Boverket 2012).

The high employment rate does not apply to the whole population. Unemployment rates for young people are substantially higher than for the older groups, and young adults are increasingly employed on temporary contracts. This is also the case for inhabitants born abroad and especially for migrants from countries outside the European Union/European Free Trade Association (EU/EFTA; Nordfeldt 2012, WP3). Among the young unemployed, there is a group at risk of long-term exclusion from the labour market and consequently at risk of deprivation and problematic living conditions (Angelin 2010). This is the group of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET). The NEET group is, in comparison to many other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, relatively small in Sweden. However, the group is still significant and over-represented in certain areas in the city of Stockholm (Arbetsförmedlingen 2013). These young people, at the risk of social exclusion, are a main target group for the organisation *Fryshuset* that will be further described below.

Diversity and Choice—Catchwords in the Local Political Debate

Deregulation and legislation on competitive procurement (LOU), ideas of “user choice” and a new legislation—the Law on Freedom of Choice (Lagen om valfrihet, LOV)—have made it possible for municipalities to engage alternative service providers in social welfare. In Stockholm, the governing right-wing majority, which was in power between 2006 and 2014, pursued a strong policy of marketisation and privatisation.

This development could serve as a window of opportunities for innovation (cf. Ahrne and Papakostas 2002). Still, there does not seem to be any outspoken interest in ideas of social innovation among politicians and other local stakeholders in Stockholm. This lack of interest may appear somewhat contradictory considering the strong emphasis on diversity and consumer choice described above. So far, this has primarily been implemented by private businesses (and, to a more limited degree, civil society organisations), being involved within the field of health care, social services (primarily within elderly care) and the housing market (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013, WP4).

In the local political debate, there seems to be agreement across the political scale regarding the role of civil society in local welfare, that is, as long as the discussion does not comprise civil society actors in relation to privatisation of social welfare. The issue of alternative actors producing welfare services is subject to political disagreements that follow the traditional political lines with, for example, political parties on the right side of the spectrum for alternative organisations, such as private

and civil society organisations, while the political parties on the left prefer publically funded and publically produced welfare services (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013, WP4). Between the local government and civil society organisations (CSOs) working in the field of social welfare, a “compact” has been formulated and agreed upon. The aim of the compact is to serve as a platform for dialogue and cooperation between the local authorities and CSOs. There are pronounced expectations on the civil society to play an active part in the renewal of social welfare (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013). There seems thus to be some ambivalence inherent in this interest when, at the same time, the procurement of services from CSOs are very limited compared to private businesses.

17.2 Children of Single (Lone) Mothers (Barn till Ensamma Mammor)

The project, Children of Single (Lone) Mothers, was developed as an activity within in the frame of the foundation Fryshuset, headed by the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). When Fryshuset started in Stockholm in 1984, it was located in a former cold storage building (hence the name Fryshuset, meaning “cold storage” in Swedish). The creation of the organisation can be seen as a response to young people’s needs.

During its lifetime, Fryshuset has become a well-known and entrepreneurial organisation with a wide range of different activities. Today, Fryshuset runs schools and social programs as well as vocational training and seminars and conferences. Further, it also runs courses in theatre, music, sport, hosting events, concerts, parties and discotheques. Public funding covers around 5% of the activities, and the rest is financed by a mixture of grants, endowments and fees for services such as educational and social programs (fees that are not paid by young people or individual clients but by cooperational partners and government agencies). Fryshuset also runs activities in Malmö and Gothenburg. Throughout its lifetime, Fryshuset has worked to find new and innovative solutions to social youth issues and problems. Within the organisation, new projects have constantly been started. Fryshuset also cooperates with a range of public and private actors (Engel et al. [forthcoming](#)).

Since 2007, Fryshuset has run a project addressed at children of single mothers in Stockholm. Since then, this project has also been started in Malmö and in Gothenburg. The focus for this activity is the children, but indirectly the activity also affects the mothers. And, as a part of this activity, Fryshuset offers parent education and different kinds of lectures for the mothers. The aim is to support and strengthen children that are living with a single mother in economically vulnerable circumstances. Fryshuset describes the support as being provided from a health perspective with focus on the children’s and the mothers’ everyday situation and especially wellbeing. This concept is based on Aaron Antonovsky’s thinking of *saluto genesis* and the importance for the individual of a *sense of coherence* (see Antonovsky 1987).

It can be argued that this activity has been developed in a clearing (see Segnestam Larsson et al., Chap. 6) identified by Fryshuset in the social landscape, including support for single mothers and their children. The approach on health and empowerment offers a complementary activity to social services based on legislation and more acute problem-solving. The focus on both children and their mothers is also unique to this project.

17.2.1 *Internal Characteristics*

The goal of the project is to provide positive childhood memories to children living in vulnerable situations of different kinds—economically, socially or being victims of abuse. This is based on a belief in all children’s right to play, laugh and to be seen. A ground for this work is the Children’s Convention (UN 1989). Ultimately, the objective is to enhance the children’s sense of self-esteem and confidence.

In practice, three types of activities are offered to single mothers and their children. The first is the *monthly meetings*. On normal occasions, the participation number in a meeting is around 100 persons. At the monthly meetings, mothers and children form separate groups. The group of mothers can, for example, participate in lectures concerning aspects of health, during which they will also have time to network and support one another. Meanwhile, the group of children is divided according to age and take part in sports, arts or music workshops together with volunteers—so called “amigos”—in the project (interview).

The fundamental idea behind these monthly meetings is that children living in situations of vulnerability need to have somewhere where they can enjoy themselves and laugh without thinking about, and taking responsibility for, the family, which is not uncommon that they do. In the project, the children can try out different activities, for example, different kinds of sports. The project provides suggestions on creative activities that are not costly. The ultimate idea of the project is joy, says the project leader, “we are good at joy” (interview). She continues explaining that the project wants to give these children positive childhood memories. “The children can come here and know that they don’t have to look after their mothers while they’re here, which is something that the staff experience a lot”. According to her, children behave according to their mothers’ state of mind and do not allow themselves to feel happy. At the project, it works the other way around as well; single mothers with total responsibility for their children can take a “break” or time to just sit and relax for a while, knowing that the child is having a great time in the other room (interview).

The second activity offered by the project is called “activities”. The idea with these activities is to take the whole group, mothers and children together, to do something out of the ordinary. This can be visits to museums, a public swimming pool, a fun park or a zoo. An example in Stockholm is a visit in the summertime to a large zoo about 3 h away from the city. Six filled buses went from Fryshuset to the zoo at the same time. The visit took some effort to organise: “We have become

experts at arranging events” the project leader states. The main idea behind these activities is to build up and support the relationship between mother and child. The project leader argues that in the child’s view these activities are things their mothers take them to do, without having to think about the cost, and this is a way to build up the role of the mother in the eyes of the child. In these activities also, the children can see their mothers laugh and have a good time. This part of the project is costly and the three people employed in the project have worked out a special way of fundraising. The staff offer lectures to companies and invite them to co-organise these events with them. In that way, the companies will experience how the funds have been used and it can create some added value for the companies (interview).

The third activity at Children of Single (Lone) Mothers is called the “boomerang meetings”. This is a part of the project that has been going through many changes and had, by the time of the study, reached a form that the project staff was very pleased with. At the beginning of the project, the staff received many calls from mothers having all kinds of problems. These could be related to legal issues of custody matters, or health, or questions about how the social services function and act, and often these were questions that the three project leaders did not have the competence to answer. This resulted in an idea to arrange a fair twice a year where they invited experts from different fields and institutions to come and give personal counselling to the mothers. For many of the mothers, this meeting can be a first step to establishing a relationship with the appropriate institution. During these and all meetings, the project invites volunteers. The project leader explains that she and her two colleagues could not possibly meet all the needs and answer all the questions of the participants. The volunteers are called “fellow human beings” in the project and they are there to support the mothers during meetings (interview). Different kinds of advice are also given on the Internet. Persons can pose questions on the project’s webpage.

Beside these activities, the staff does a lot of work “behind the scenes”. They give lectures and try to represent and make visible the group of children of single mothers. “There is much to be done to make people recognize the problems of these children”, the project leader states (interview). The special method of fundraising, mentioned above is also a way to make more actors recognise this group. The project has also recently initiated cooperation with a university college in the Stockholm area, where they give lectures to university students who are studying to become teachers. Here, the project leader sees a good opportunity for influencing the general view of this group of children (interview).

The mothers that participate in the activities become members (free of charge) of the activity. At the time of the case study, there were just over 1000 members in Stockholm. Only single mothers can attend. The reason for this is that there are mothers among the participants who live with a protected identity and risk feeling threatened if men participate in the activities.

At the time of the study, three persons were working in the project. This staff had developed skills as “event experts” and they organise most of the target group’s activities. Beside a grant from the local government, the staff needs to raise funds and apply for allowances, from, for example, different kinds of foundations. Volunteers

were engaged in the project as so-called “amigos”, who attend to the children, and “fellow humans”, who support the mothers. Fundraising and advocacy are important responsibilities taken on by the project staff, and both responsibilities seem to fertilise the other.

17.2.2 Dealing with Local Context

There are elements of advocacy in this project. There is an ambition to raise attention to the issue of child poverty and the situation for unemployed or low-income single mothers. The staff at Fryshuset implements this in different ways, for example, by cooperation with a university college and by giving lectures and seminars to different stakeholders, including private companies and politicians.

When talking about these issues with politicians, the project staff is experiencing a lack of knowledge of these families’ situations and, sometimes, prejudices, considering situations to be self-induced. By making this group visible, there is an ambition in the project to contribute to long-term changes for the target group, concerning both the children and the mothers.

The project also concerns the question of more flexible opening hours within the childcare, which is an issue on the local political agenda in Stockholm. The possibility of working “uncomfortable hours” is stressed by several political parties and pointed out as important for single parents. This means childcare should be open in the evenings, at nights and even weekends (Segnestam Larsson and Carrigan 2013, WP4). Childcare in the evenings and at nights could be an important basis for single mothers to get a job, though many jobs in occupations that are still female dominated, within health and social care, for example, have uncomfortable working hours.

Another field of advocacy for the target group is the discussion about the national norm of social welfare benefits, which today includes neither leisure time activities for children (for example, fees for sport or music lessons) nor monthly internet costs. This latter could mean that some children cannot receive information sent out from their schools or from other organisations that communicate mostly through the Internet.

17.3 Concluding Remarks

Children of Single (Lone) Mothers is an example of an innovation initiated within the civil society by an organisation acknowledged for its entrepreneurial ways of working. Fryshuset is a Stockholm-based organisation but with networks and contacts in municipalities in different parts of Sweden. As described above, the Swedish welfare system has been opened up to alternative producers of welfare services. A parallel development is that during the last few decades civil society organisations have attracted growing interest and have been granted greater legitimacy from both

state and local governments. However, this has only to a limited degree resulted in a growing rate of social services produced by CSOs. But there are political expectations on CSOs to deliver new solutions for unsolved social problems and help to strengthen the welfare system by filling gaps.

One might argue, though, that the project *Children of Single (Lone) Mothers* is in line with traditional roles and expectations of a CSO, which also have been strengthened during the latest decades, namely to focus on new needs and new groups with needs that are not covered in other ways. The foundation Fryshuset has taken on this role in relation to vulnerable youth since the mid-1980s. They have served as pioneers and offered services that are not covered by the public sector (Engel et al. *forthcoming*).

The working in the project is based on the methods developed in Fryshuset—advocacy for their target group, direct services and also with the aim of empowerment, which in this project is implemented by the advice given in boomerang meetings. The mix of funding for the project and the cooperation with different stakeholders are also in line with the overall ways in which Fryshuset works.

The project has been subject to some diffusion, which is also in line with the ambitions of Fryshuset. During the organisation's nearly 30-year lifetime, the organisation has had the motivation to spread its know-how and methods to other municipalities. This has partly succeeded, but there have also been many obstacles to spreading locally initiated activities to other places and stakeholders. Fryshuset's answer to the problem of diffusion has been to build networks with local entrepreneurial actors and initiatives (Engel *forthcoming*).

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Chapter 18

Nijmegen: Work Corporations—for the Unemployed, by the Unemployed

Joost Fledderus, Taco Brandsen and Francesca Broersma

18.1 Introduction

In 2011, the municipality of Nijmegen, located in the southeast of the Netherlands with approximately 165,000 inhabitants, decided to adjust its re-employment policy. This reform was necessary because national retrenchments severely cut the municipal budget for re-employment services—from 30.3 million € in 2011 to 11.5 million € in 2014 (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011). A large proportion (68%) of this budget was being spent on created, subsidised jobs. Given that these jobs were proven to be expensive and unsuccessful instruments to get beneficiaries back to the regular labour market, these were put to an end (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011). The belief of most local political parties was that the resources must be spread more equally among all recipients of social assistance (i.e. benefit for long-term unemployed). Instead, the concept of work corporations (*werkcorporaties*) was introduced to modernise their current policy in an “innovative fashion” in order to “realise the ambitions” with respect to re-employment (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011).

Work corporations resemble social enterprises (Defourny and Nyssens 2012), which are run primarily by beneficiaries themselves, though with professional guidance and possibilities of education, and which aim towards the re-employment of the participants within 2 years. This chapter describes how work corporations are organised, how users are addressed, the position of work corporations within the local welfare of Nijmegen, and ends with observing current developments. It is

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primarily based on interviews with the Alderman of Work and Income, two policy advisors of the municipality of Nijmegen, and 17 participants, held during October 2012 and July 2013.

It should be noted that Dutch municipalities have a fairly large degree of discretionary space to determine their policies when it comes to providing services to social assistance beneficiaries. Social assistance benefits are distributed according to the Work and Social Assistance Act, which applies to those who receive little to no income from work. All municipalities receive a budget for granting benefits, which may complement one's income up to 70% of the minimum wage as well as a budget for re-employing beneficiaries. Because this latter budget was shrinking fast, the municipality had to think of new ways of organising their re-employment policy.

18.2 Work Corporations

The concept of work corporations was introduced to the city by the local Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid, PvdA) in their party programme of 2010. In no more than two sentences, the party expressed the need for the development of work corporations in order to preserve subsidised jobs. When the Labour Party formed a coalition with the Green Party (GroenLinks, GL) and the social-liberal party Democrats '66 (Democraten '66, D66) in 2010, work corporations were included in their common manifesto. The municipality then involved existing organisations operating in the field of subsidised labour or re-employment services to develop a concrete plan for work corporations.

18.2.1 Internal Organisation

Work corporations intend to re-employ recipients of social assistance (i.e. income support which is regulated by the Work and Social Assistance Act, WWB) with a considerable distance from the labour market by offering a combination of work and education. Basically every entrepreneur can initiate a work corporation, as long as it complies with a few conditions: People should be offered an opportunity for personal development (mainly through education), the service or product delivered should have societal relevance (which may be interpreted very broadly), and a work corporation should be able to be self-sufficient by selling these services or products (though it should remain non-profit). After a maximum of 2 years, people should leave the organisation and are supposed to find a regular job or continue with an educational programme.

Although most of the first work corporations were part of non-profit welfare organisations or concepts, for-profit companies have also started up work corporations (for instance, to educate potential future employees). A key factor of these corporations is that participants are responsible for generating revenues through unpaid work and that these revenues are invested in running the organisation.

Work corporations in Nijmegen include a restaurant, a sewing workshop with its own fashion brand, maintenance companies for public spaces and public housing, and a bike service shop. By 2012, over 400 people had participated within more than 40 work corporations.

When needed, a starting grant will be given to a new work corporation. Instruments that are used for the re-employment of participants (such as coaching and education) are also financed by the municipality. Structural overhead costs and non-structural development costs must, however, be compensated by the income the organisation earns by selling the services or products it offers. In the first year and a half, this will be partially funded by the municipality, but after 2 years, this should all be covered by the work corporations.

Both the municipality and the work corporations have distinct responsibilities. The work corporation selects participants, creates a personal re-employment programme/development plan for the participant, guides the participant during the development process, and provides education/training, often in collaboration with an educational institute. The municipality has the primary role in the recruitment of participants, if possible in cooperation with the work corporation; provides required facilities for the re-employment programme; and monitors the output target. The municipality sets up a contractual arrangement with the work corporations, the content of which is adapted to the corporation. Some work corporations have to comply with a performance target in terms of outflow of participants towards work or other educational programmes. Others do not have to fulfil any targets at all, although it is unclear why. The municipality does expect higher rates of outflow for work corporations with good labour market prospects.

18.2.2 Ways of Addressing Users

For the municipality, the most important aspect of the work corporations is that, after a year or two, users will gain sufficient skills to be able to find a job on the regular labour market. They attain these skills partly because they are required to work from the very start and partly because they are supervised and educated throughout the programme. Hence, the policy combines elements of “Work First” (Bruttel and Sol 2006) and more capability enhancing or empowering approaches (Bonvin 2008). Work corporations teach not only technical but also social skills. Participants learn the basic elements of being an employee, such as getting in on time, asking for a day off or planning holidays, calling in sick, etc. But it also means learning to work with other participants, taking responsibility, and being an active employee.

The municipality states that for every individual it must be assessed whether working in a work corporation is the most suitable re-employment strategy and, moreover, whether the available work suits the client since work corporations also differ from each other (Gemeente Nijmegen 2011). Thus, there is some level of personalisation involved: Not every person that receives social assistance benefits automatically qualifies to join a work corporation.

Almost all users of the work corporations must have an intake interview or sometimes even a formal job application. For two important reasons, intrinsic motivation is a key criterion for selection: (1) It is almost impossible to complete the programme successfully without a certain passion or preference for the profession and (2) the performance target set for outflow to work cannot be reached with unmotivated workers. Nevertheless, after a relatively successful start, the municipality found that it became more difficult to find voluntary applicants for the work corporations. Therefore, they began to organise compulsory job markets where eligible individuals were obliged to take a look at the work corporations and are very much stimulated to declare their interest in one of them.

People enter work corporations for different reasons. For some, this includes obtaining a diploma; for others, it is the first step towards a higher level of education. Still others value the social contacts at work and the rhythm of a working life. There are also those who mention that a change in home life—for instance, arranging child care—already ensures that their world broadens. However, participants might also lack any form of motivation, especially when they feel that participation is mandatory. In this case, sanctions might be imposed. Users sign a contract with the municipality where basic rights and obligations are described. A sanction may include a (temporary) reduction of the received benefit—for example, if a user has repeatedly not shown up. Until now, this measure has been rarely used.

In general, the concept of work corporations stems from the idea that people who are in need of guidance in their search for a job are still able to be active and thus able to generate income. In this sense, the municipality looks at what recipients of social assistance are capable of doing rather than at what they cannot do.

18.2.3 Interaction with the Local Welfare System

In the beginning, the abolishment of subsidised labour and the introduction of work corporations were accompanied by some opposition, especially from the Socialist Party (SP) and obviously from those who occupied subsidised jobs. Subsidised jobs were related to values typical to the left-wing municipality such as solidarity and equality (because vulnerable individuals are appreciated for their valuable work). Some argued that work corporations did not incorporate such important values. However, in 2010, the Alderman of Work and Income¹ (from the PvdA) stated that “participation remains the starting point”. Yet, work corporations do seem to break with traditional beliefs in the city of Nijmegen. All stakeholders are now given an active role in re-employment: civil society, the private sector, local government, and the beneficiaries. Hence, work corporations can be both regarded as a co-production between participants and professionals and as a co-management structure between the municipality and the private and third sector (Brandsen and Pestoff 2006).

¹ Aldermen are part of the local Council of Mayor and Aldermen, which is responsible for implementing and executing municipal policies.

According to the Alderman, the ideal situation would be plenty of successful, self-sufficient work corporations for clients to choose from. This way, the municipality will still be able to give everybody the chance to participate in society when resources are limited. Shifting the responsibility of the municipality of re-employing beneficiaries towards organisations in the field has probably been the largest implication of the innovative reform. In particular, organisations that were used to working with subsidised employees are now required to think differently about the future of the participants. Re-employment was never something these organisations had to worry about.

An important topic within the field of social enterprises is the concern for unfair competition with the private sector (Brandsen and Karré 2011). However, even though they do not have to pay the participants, the work corporations are unable to sell their products and services for a below-market value. This is because the revenues should cover all overhead and development costs. Actually, many work corporations recognise the importance of close collaboration, rather than competition, with the specific economic sector to be able to assure outflow to regular work. For example, a bike repair shop cooperates with a big bicycle company because they are in need of employees. This increases the chances of participants to find a job there.

18.3 Future Developments

The municipality of Nijmegen clearly states that it does not work on the basis of a blueprint. Rather, it has been trying to develop a flexible model, which suits the local welfare system of Nijmegen. The municipal coalition as well as the administration would like to take enough time to see whether the concept can develop into a successful instrument. A first evaluation at the end of 2012 showed that 18% of all participants (88 out of 484) have successfully found a new job or higher educational programme (Gemeente Nijmegen 2013). This is less than the desired target of 25%. The most important point for improvement was to give more responsibility to the municipality during the final phase of activities, in realising the outflow to regular employment. Work corporations often do not have sufficient expertise to guide participants towards the labour market. Therefore, the evaluation suggests that the municipality will have to put more effort in finding a good match between the job seeker and the work corporation and make more use of its network. In short, there should be a more intensive relationship between the municipality and the work corporations than anticipated.

Also, as mentioned, it appeared to be more difficult to get people enthusiastic to join a corporation. The coercion used by the municipality to assure participation has led to the involvement of less motivated beneficiaries. Because the managers of the work corporation are dependent upon the cooperation with and between its participants, a lack of motivation can seriously obstruct the work process. A better understanding of the motives of participants to join such programmes might help to avoid such a tension.

Meanwhile, opposition towards the new policy seems to remain relatively mild. This might be due to the fact that the policy has been developed together with the third sector (i.e. the non-profit organisations which started the first work corporations), that there remains space for work corporations to adapt to specific conditions, and that the core ideas of the innovation are in accordance with the dominant values of the local welfare system.

Until now, Nijmegen appears to have been the only municipality that has implemented work corporations as a core element of their re-employment policy. Yet the core idea behind this initiative can be relatively easily disseminated across other European cities. That is, trying to involve all parties that potentially contribute to the inclusion of disadvantaged jobseekers, such as welfare organisations and private businesses. Also, it points at the possibility of investing in the unemployed on the one hand and to require some contribution from citizens (in the form of work without pay) on the other. Keeping in mind some of the difficult aspects of the policy, work corporations—or similar initiatives—may prove to be a fruitful co-production between citizens, local government, business, and the third sector.

18.4 Conclusion

Due to financial constraints, the municipality of Nijmegen has had to revise its re-employment policy. The result—work corporations—represents a sharp break with local traditions and therefore amounts to a social innovation. Moreover, as the work corporations all have freedom to determine their internal organisations, the policy also encourages innovative structures at the sub-organisational level. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen whether work corporations will prove to be resistant to (local) political changes or whether they are merely a transitional structure in the shift towards another type of policy.

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Chapter 19

Birmingham: The Youth Employment and Enterprise Rehearsal Project

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton

19.1 Introduction

The Youth Employment and Enterprise Rehearsal (YEER) project provided business support to black and minority ethnic individuals who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) in Birmingham, UK. The YEER project was designed to provide business-specific training and assist young people from developing an idea to starting their own business. The project was run by a social enterprise, The Future Melting Pot (TFMP). This chapter briefly describes the city context, how the YEER project was organised, how it interacted with beneficiaries of the project and some key context factors that influenced the innovation.

Birmingham is located in the West Midlands region of England and is the largest city in the UK outside London with a population of just over 1 million inhabitants. Local government for the city is the metropolitan authority of Birmingham City Council, the largest local authority in the UK made up of 40 wards (administrative/electoral districts within council boundaries). It has the youngest population of any major European city; over half the population is under 35 years old. Birmingham's population is significantly diverse in terms of ethnic composition. The city has unemployment rates twice the national average, and in some areas over 50% of the working-age population is not in employment.

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Labour market policy is largely a function of central government who are responsible for activation strategies in local areas. However, due to Birmingham containing some of the most deprived areas with the highest levels of unemployment in England, various central government initiatives have been implemented locally through the city council since 2000. These initiatives have had addressing unemployment as their sole objective or as part of wider neighbourhood or regeneration strategies. The Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF), which came from the national Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Work and Pensions of the previous Labour government, was a key programme for Birmingham. The city was allocated £118 million over 3 years from 2008, and almost half of the WNF resources specifically targeted worklessness (worklessness is a wider term than unemployment as it includes everyone of working age who does not work no matter what their circumstances). The funds were allocated as part of a general grant given directly to local authorities. This was not ring-fenced, and so local authorities were able to use it as they saw fit to support the delivery of local, regional and national priorities. Therefore, the remainder of the WNF was allocated to strategic partners to address barriers to worklessness and other key priorities such as supporting business, improving educational attainment and skills, addressing health inequalities, encouraging active involvement in sport and culture, improving energy efficiency, reducing the number of people living in temporary accommodation and making the city a safer place.

Significantly, the WNF enabled the development of a targeted approach at a local ward level to select and commission organisations to help people find work (described in the following chapter). It also led to the Worklessness Innovations Fund which provided small grants of up to £25,000 for feasibility studies, research and demonstration projects. In 2010, 44 organisations were awarded resources to try new and interesting ways of helping people gain employment, of which TFMP was one.

The organisation responsible for YEER, TFMP, is a social enterprise set up in 2009 after identifying a gap in the market for an organisation to support the aims and aspirations of disadvantaged young people in the West Midlands. The organisation works primarily with women and young people, particularly those classed as NEET and from ethnic minority backgrounds. The philosophy of TFMP is to “enable and empower young people to achieve their potential through enterprise”. The concept is very much about developing individual ideas and talents, to “open new gateways to disadvantaged groups who find it hard to engage meaningfully with traditional business networks”. TFMP focuses on self-employment and enterprise creation and encourages the individuals they work with to develop new social enterprises to benefit local economies.

Underpinning their work is that services and opportunities should be those that young people have determined they want themselves, not just with them in mind.

19.2 YEER Project

In 2010, TFMP successfully obtained funding from the Worklessness Innovations Fund to set up the flagship YEER pilot project. The aim of the project was to provide business support to black and minority ethnic individuals who were NEET with the main aim of participants being able to set up their own businesses or social enterprises. The project included training, support and access to accredited advisers. The approach could be characterised as intensive, personalised support to stimulate entrepreneurialism. Creating young entrepreneurs was seen as helping to address the breakdown of the traditional route usually taken where young people progressed to employment after school (or university). There were already various agencies in existence to support businesses but only once the business was developed to a certain point; no support, however, was provided to explore options or with the set-up phase.

The project provided a structured yet flexible programme of support in a “safe and welcoming atmosphere”. Young people had to be over 18 years old and on welfare benefits for at least 3 months. There were a limited number of places, and young people had to complete an application form and take part in an interview. Participation therefore required a certain amount of motivation and commitment from the outset. The usual timeframe for young people to be engaged with the project was 6 months or less.

Participants were offered the chance to improve personal development; nurture their entrepreneurial “mind”; start the business they had always wanted to start; create their own work and become their own boss; and make a difference for themselves, their family and their community. An action plan was drawn up with a mentor and participants received support in developing business ideas from initial design through to completion. Training covered confidence building, time management, personal goal planning, ideas generation, market research, business planning and the practical aspects of setting up a business. It provided the opportunity to explore the option of self-employment through a personalised approach led by the needs of the individual and where feedback was incorporated into the project. The project responded to the different learning paces of individuals, and more advanced learners could benefit from a “fast-track” approach to courses and additional sessions.

The project’s approach was innovative in that it offered excluded young people an alternative to unemployment or ad hoc paid employment. This differed from conventional employment support and the focus on “getting a job”. It used innovative approaches to communication and retention using the preferred method of communication identified by participants, for example through Facebook and other social media.

The YEER project was delivered by TFMP staff and volunteers, along with expert mentors and advisers. The mentors were recruited specifically for the project so that they had existing networks that participants could tap into. Partnership development was seen as a large part of the success of the YEER project giving participants the opportunity to network effectively from the start, both between the agencies involved and by giving the young people access to these networks and individu-

als. The city council, Business Link (government advice and guidance service until 2011), Advantage West Midlands (government regional development agency until 2012), local entrepreneurs, the Creative Community Coalition, the Business Development Service (group of professional business advisers), I-Social Entrepreneurs (social enterprise development organisation) and Young Enterprise (enterprise education charity) were all counted as partners.

The project supported 20 young people in its pilot phase, of those some set up their own businesses, some gained employment, and some started volunteering or education and training courses. All developed business skills, improved their careers prospects and gained an awareness of the business world even if they did not take their ideas forward at this point. One young person, for example, received assistance with developing a business plan, researching their idea and mentoring from a local social entrepreneur. They subsequently set up a business running drama courses for children that they continued whilst taking up a teaching course to further develop their skills. Participants reported that as well as practical skills the project had given them confidence and a greater understanding of what they wanted to do.

The services TFMP provides are the product of a series of consultations and focus groups in which over 300 young people participated to give their views on what support they would like to see available for young entrepreneurs. The main request was for more personalised, innovative support particularly for people who have an idea for business but are unsure how to take it forward and turn it into a reality. YEER was an attempt to meet that identified need. TFMP see their positive, practical approach and individual focus, coupled with the promotion of innovation and creative thinking as allowing the delivery of a personalised service to all of those they help.

19.2.1 Context

There were a number of key contextual factors that enabled the existence of the YEER project in Birmingham. Birmingham has a much higher percentage of NEETs than other areas of the West Midlands, and this project directly addressed local authority concerns about this group and their future employment prospects. In addition, the target group focus on those from ethnic minority backgrounds tied in with local political discourse about community cohesion and social inclusion. The project also connected with the national and local neighbourhood and worklessness agendas by supporting young people into self-employment based in their local communities. As part of gaining WNF funding, projects had to demonstrate how they added value to the citywide employment and skills strategy. The funding opportunity combined with Birmingham's willingness to use the resources to try some different and interesting things also provided the environment for the innovation to be supported. It also linked with the move to working in partnership and a desire to increase involvement of the third sector.

However, the YEER project was intended to be a time-limited, small-scale, pilot project; it received only £24,977 of funding and during the pilot supported 20 young

people. With the end of the WNF as a source of funding in 2011, the city council and the local strategic partnership did not make resources available to continue with the project, despite early successes. Be Birmingham (the local strategic partnership) who administered the Worklessness Innovations Fund focused on the provider's strategy for sustainability rather than providing them with continued support when giving out grants and many projects closed. Funders and providers were all aware that the main feature of the fund was to accrue learning for future strategies and projects rather than sustaining and replicating the innovations supported; for example, a best practice guide for setting up projects in the future was produced.

This kind of pilot funding will always result in limited impact on the local welfare system as a whole and a struggle with issues of scaling up. TFMP as an organisation is in a position where, should funding become available, they could run the project again in this format. TFMP still has an extensive volunteering programme aimed at providing work opportunities and improving the employability of young people in Birmingham, particularly for those from their target groups, and continues to work in partnership with existing business support providers as well as other organisations sharing a similar purpose in order to complement service delivery. This multi-agency approach of public sector partnerships, private sector alliances and community networks is seen as a way of ensuring clients receive the maximum benefit in achieving their goals and sustainability for the organisation.

19.3 Conclusion

The YEER project could be adapted for different age and client groups, and there is no reason to assume this could not be replicated in other cities and countries. It was a small-scale project and so low risk for the local authority and local strategic partnership to support, but therefore also the potential for impact on the local welfare system was limited. The project did shift the focus away from getting people into work to supporting entrepreneurial activities, which had not often been central in policy discussion and even less so for this particular group considered difficult to engage with. It was an example of the increased involvement of the third sector in delivering services and the application of business practices to areas of social concern, integrating economic and social development through stimulating entrepreneurialism, social enterprise and start-ups.

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Chapter 20

Birmingham: A “Locality Approach” to Combating Worklessness

Nadia Brookes, Jeremy Kendall and Lavinia Mitton

20.1 Introduction

The locality approach to worklessness in Birmingham, UK provided a framework for an area and individual-level focus for commissioning employment and skills services. Worklessness is usually defined as the unemployed and the economically inactive combined (ONS 2009). The approach involved a range of local welfare partners. This chapter briefly describes the city context, how the locality approach was organised, how it interacted with beneficiaries and some key context factors that influenced the innovative approach.

Birmingham is located within the West Midlands region of England and is the regional centre for business, retail and leisure. The city is disproportionately affected by worklessness, having many areas with high unemployment and deprivation which has persisted for many years. Birmingham has unemployment rates twice the national average, and in some areas over 50% of the working age population are not employed. The city has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the UK. These entrenched problems of unemployment, a shortage of appropriate jobs and fragmentation of support had all been identified as issues locally.

Birmingham has had a wide range of regeneration and renewal programmes and initiatives over the years targeting both the city centre and neighbourhood areas. When the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) was allocated to Birmingham by

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central government for 2008–2011 to help tackle worklessness and low levels of skills and enterprise, it was recognised that a more strategic approach was needed to the use of resources in tackling long-term unemployment, barriers to employment and other elements of deprivation in the city.

20.2 A Locality Approach to Unemployment

20.2.1 Internal Organisation

Birmingham developed an innovative approach to tackling unemployment for those living in the most deprived areas and with high levels of unemployment (25% or more). The two key innovative features were a model to integrate employment and skills provision at an individual level and contracting of services at a local or ward level (these were electoral districts with an average of around 27,000 residents), the integrated employment and skills (IES) model and the Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans.

Integrated Employment and Skills (IES)

The IES was the primary means by which activity to tackle worklessness was delivered in the city. Figure 20.1 illustrates the IES model.

Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans

The decision to use this approach was driven not only by a desire to include local priorities in the programme but also to use lessons from previous initiatives about involving local people in decision-making whilst ensuring that services remained strategically commissioned. As a result, Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans were drawn up in the first year of the WNF programme. The neighbourhood plans covered seven Birmingham wards that had more than 11

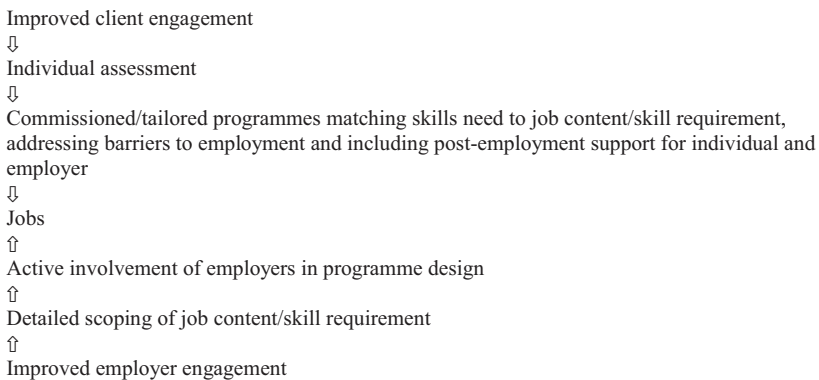


Fig. 20.1 Integrated employment and skills model. (Source: Birmingham City Council)

priority areas for deprivation within them, and 9 constituencies were the subject of constituency plans (which also captured the needs of smaller clusters of priority areas lying outside key wards). These were put together by local welfare partners, local providers, community groups and local councillors.

The purpose of these plans was to set out key actions and targets for activities to support residents where worklessness was high to access sustainable employment opportunities. The goal was to create a framework to ensure that service delivery was more effective and better focused on the needs of residents. The aim was to achieve the following: analyse the need in local areas and calculate local targets to be achieved; gauge and record the impact of existing provision; identify service gaps and propose additional activity to be commissioned to address service gaps.

The employment and skills provision eventually contracted tended to provide a relatively standard set of options for support, but the local and IES-driven approach to delivery on a city-wide scale, the development of the employment and skills plans approach and the contracting process were innovative. This was a move away from the usual arrangement of a single contract for the whole city to one with tailored contracts to meet the needs of local people. The deliberate targeting of local areas, groups and individuals was a key innovative feature of the approach.

The IES model and the employment and skills plans provided a foundation for a focus at the client level and the provision of targeted action and support that each individual required (whether this was education, skills or employment) no matter what provider they accessed. The approach was designed to ensure that local needs were taken into account and overall contract values set at a level to allow third sector providers to tender for contracts. It also facilitated the development of a number of innovative projects to address unemployment such as the Youth Enterprise and Employment Rehearsal project supporting young people to explore setting up their own businesses (described in Chap. 19) and the job bus run by a third sector organisation, a mobile jobs bus equipped with employment and training experts and technology to provide information on jobs and services.

In terms of responsibilities for the management of the approach, Be Birmingham was responsible for the effective delivery of the WNF and as the Local Strategic Partnership played a key role in bringing partners together to coordinate action on unemployment through focusing on the most deprived neighbourhoods. The Birmingham Economic Development Partnership was the thematic partnership responsible for the management of elements of the fund. Responsibility for the development and approval of projects was delegated to an Employment Sub Group of the partnership, which included the local authority, Jobcentre Plus and Skills Funding Agency representatives. The local authority was the accountable body for the funding, and so processes and governance needed to comply with both Be Birmingham and local authority requirements.

The approach was largely bottom-up in that priorities were identified through the employment and skills plan process, which were then fed into a delivery plan. The Employment Sub Group management team agreed upon the priorities and commissioned projects and activities. An appraisal panel made recommendations on which projects should go ahead for approval and the group approved projects (except for

those over £ 300,000, which went to Be Birmingham for approval). The thematic partnership made programme-level decisions and received project information. Be Birmingham received updates on performance and a local authority. Cabinet Member approved projects in line with financial regulations.

Forty-three contracts were let to a variety of provider types at ward level through the Neighbourhood and Constituency Employment and Skills Plans process: private sector; third sector organisations and consortium; and social enterprises. Individual projects specifically targeted a range of groups: the disabled, lone parents, the over 50s and those who are not in education employment or training, carers, women and vulnerable clients (alcohol users, offenders). The employment and skills support provided included making contact with clients, skills-assisted planning, mentoring, subsidised work placements, support into business start-ups and social enterprise, and English language and basic skills. There was also support to local businesses to provide job vacancies for local residents. In one constituency, the Skills and Job Match contract provided a range of services to assist people into employment. Clients were provided with support to develop curriculum vitae, get interview experience, to conduct job searches and access voluntary work. In another local area, the Intermediate Labour Market contract enabled good links to be established with local employers including a local medical practice, training centres, local shops and social enterprises (DC Research and Focus 2011).

20.2.2 Interaction with Users

The areas with the highest levels of unemployment are also usually the most deprived, and the aim was that by supporting people into sustained employment in those areas there would be benefits to the localities as a whole. This was a proactive drive to pursue the development of community-led, neighbourhood-specific approaches, actively engaging those individuals most at risk of unemployment and furthest away from the labour market, including the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.

The IES model underpinned the delivery of the unemployment approach and focused on making changes to the way the infrastructure works, including improved partnership working and more joined-up services. The support process included employability skills to overcome personal barriers; skills support linked to existing vacancies; and support to and through sustained employment. The key features of the IES model included:

- Improved local information to effectively target resources to the needs of a particular group or individual
- A wide range of outreach and contact strategies to effectively engage with groups or individuals
- A strong client-focused approach that addressed the needs of specific individuals
- A range of interventions to address the needs of individuals
- Client tracking to support individuals to access employment and post-employment support

- Engaging with employers and providing bespoke training to match priority clients to vacancies
- Continuity to ensure a joined-up approach, assurance to clients and opportunities to build on learning
- Local unemployment champions

The service providers commissioned indicated that having provision available at a local level was essential for engaging with service users. Many people did not want to travel outside of their neighbourhood, and so it was important to have a visible presence in the community and to use organisations that potential users of the service would be familiar with.

20.2.3 Context

IES is a policy that predates the current national Coalition government in the UK, and various models were developed trialled and delivered on a national, regional and local level. The thinking behind it came from the Leitch Review of Skills (Leitch 2006) which emphasised the need to improve the national skills base to facilitate growth in productivity, improve national economic competitiveness and increase individual social mobility. After participating in one of the IES trials, Birmingham decided to continue with and develop the model. There was also an impetus from the previous national Labour administration to build responsive services at a local level to tackle unemployment and improve skills through initiatives such as the WNF.

There were a number of key contextual factors which enabled the development of the locality approach to worklessness in Birmingham. The approach linked into the local political agenda around localism or devolved decision-making which was seen as key to dealing with social problems. As a city, Birmingham was and is highly committed to tackling unemployment, and social inclusion is high on the political agenda. Commissioning at a city level was not seen as suitable for a city as diverse as Birmingham. The IES model was the principal means by which activity to tackle unemployment was informed and sat at the heart of the city strategy (the core strategy to provide a 20-year framework for sustainable growth in Birmingham, with proposals to provide 50,600 new homes and deliver 100,000 new jobs by 2026) and the local area agreement (steps to deliver the city strategy).

The major players in the local welfare system all agreed and signed up to the IES model, including the local authority, Jobcentre Plus and the Skills Funding Agency. It provided a well-understood model against which to commission activity and assess performance. There was a significant amount of political scrutiny mostly related to the wards wanting to have greater independence over spending and to be able to hold providers to account. Political involvement in the process led to some delays (and the slow start resulted in criticism from national government within the local authority and local press) but having the engagement of local councillors also helped to embed and raise the profile of the delivery contracts of the employment and skills plans in their areas (DC Research and Focus 2011).

Stakeholders and service delivery organisations believed that this approach provided local support and got many people into work, training and volunteering opportunities. The approach also supported partnership working which was a characteristic of the local welfare system emphasised by local government. A number of organisational partnerships came together for the first time to deliver contracts, including those of different sizes and different sectors with a range of geographical and target group focus (DC Research and Focus 2011). For example, Prospects (an organisation providing education, employment and training services across the UK), the Jericho Foundation (a Birmingham charity providing support into employment) and Birmingham Enterprise (a local enterprise and employment support organisation) formed a partnership to support people into business start-ups, social enterprises or work and into further education or development of skills in one area of the city.

Many third sector providers came together solely for the purpose of delivering WNF contracts. Private sector providers also felt that their relationships with many community and third sector groups had improved during the delivery phase of the employment and skills plans. It also enabled projects to develop new relationships with employers, which increased opportunities for clients to access available jobs.

The locality approach has had issues of sustainability and currently does not operate in some of the original areas where it was implemented or not in the way originally intended. This was seen primarily as a knock-on effect of the loss of resources for neighbourhood management which supported the process. The contracts with service providers set up through the locality approach were also linked to the Working Neighbourhoods funding which came to an end in 2011. The withdrawal of funding was as a result of cuts in budgets through the Coalition's Spending Review in 2010 as a response to the financial crisis. This innovative approach did have the potential for significant impact on the local welfare system with its approach to commissioning and delivering services, and there is still support for the approach. There are plans to refresh this strategy under the current council's localism agenda.

20.3 Conclusion

The IES model and local delivery approach arose out of a particular set of circumstances in Birmingham and a willingness to undertake major change; however, elements of this approach could be replicated elsewhere. It enabled an in-depth understanding of issues for local residents where unemployment was high, which provided the opportunity for different provider organisations to work together for the first time and to develop small-scale innovative projects (such as the Youth Employment and Enterprise Rehearsal project described in Chap. 19) and capture learning, useful not only locally but also for the setting up of projects more widely.

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Chapter 21

Münster: How Prevention Visits Improve Local Child Protection

Andrea Walter and Danielle Gluns

21.1 Münster—City Context and the Field of Local Childcare Policy

Münster has around 300,000 inhabitants and is located in the biggest German state. It is a relatively wealthy city (compared to other cities in North Rhine-Westphalia) and can be characterised by a rather young (with around 50,000 students) and well-educated population with low unemployment rates. Its economy is dominated by a strong tertiary sector with a large spectrum of both public and church administrations, university and other higher education, science, healthcare, communication, insurances and financial institutions. Therefore, Münster has not been hit as hard by economic crises as other cities.

Social policy in Münster is influenced by a strong Catholic tradition, which leads to an emphasis on solidarity and subsidiarity and a connection to the concept of communitarianism (Vorländer 2001). Consequently, society has the duty to care for those who are not able to do so for themselves, whereas the smallest possible entity (the individual, the community etc.) should be responsible in order to avoid unnecessary collectivisation (Leuninger 2002, pp. 21–26). The foundation for this claim lies in the high value of personal autonomy in the Catholic tradition (Focke 1978, p. 192; Leuninger 2002, pp. 20f). Thus, the state should enable everyone to contribute actively to the society which stresses the social political focus on prevention and investments in human capital as a basis for competitiveness and participation (Leuninger 2002, pp. 113–116, 121).

These traditions are mirrored in local childcare policy, of which the prevention visits (see below) form a part. In this field, German municipalities have been a

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driving force for a long time. Making the reconciliation of work and family life possible for well-educated women has been the main objective in Münster. This aim is in line with the national legal requirement to increase the number of places in childcare for the under 3-year-olds. To sum it up, adequate supply of childcare facilities and more flexibility as well as increasing quality standards are seen as important for the individual wellbeing of families as well as for improving the attractiveness of the whole city. All in all, a broad consensus among the relevant actors from local politics and public administration as well as from organised civil society about promoting childcare policy can be identified. Concretely, the welfare associations and other stakeholders such as parents' initiatives are strongly involved. The main cleavage in this field regards promoters of affordability and accessibility on the one hand and promoters of high-quality care on the other, while there is agreement on the overall need for a high amount of institutional childcare.

21.2 Internal Characteristics of the Prevention Visits¹

21.2.1 *Improving Local Child Protection by Assisting Every Family—Goals and Ways of Addressing Users*

The prevention visits are a new kind of service in the field of childcare policy and were initiated by the Youth Office in 2008. The Youth Office in Germany is responsible for child protection (§ 1 Abs. 3 S.3 SGB VIII). For this aim, the office can intervene in families where the wellbeing of the children is threatened and can, as a last resort, decide to take children out of their families. Due to this, the Youth Office has a negative reputation in Germany, which is aggravated by the role of the Youth Office during the Third Reich and in the German Democratic Republic. With its staff of around 1,400 employees, the Youth Office in Münster is the largest administrative unit within the municipality (Youth Office Münster 2012, p. 163).

The general proceeding of the innovation is that all parents in Münster with a newborn child receive a visit from Youth Office employees.² From a practical point of view, these prevention visits aim to assist parents with their children's upbringing. From a political point of view, these visits serve as an operative instrument to improve local child protection based on intensive and early family contact. Concretely, the responsible local authorities hope to improve the relationship between families and the Youth Office (improving the office's image) as well as to prevent worst-case scenarios like abuse or neglect of children or even infanticide. The local media coverage in June 2008 especially focused on the cases of 5-year-old Lea Sophie from Schwerin and 2-year-old Kevin from Bremen. Both died a horrible death

¹ Methodically, this chapter is mainly based on two expert interviews with representatives from the youth office, annual reports of the office as well as local newspaper articles.

² All facts about the family visits in the following subchapters without any designated sources are based on the newspaper article "Jugendamt will jedes Baby besuchen" (05/06/2008) as well as the website of the Youth Office.

caused by child neglect (WN 05/06/2008). The implementation of the prevention visits was an initiative by the Youth Office itself. The concept of these visits is oriented at the so-called *Dormagener Modell*³ of prevention visits that was developed in the city of Dormagen in 2006. The actors of the Youth Office adapted the concept to the situation in Münster. A specific aspect of this Münster model is that the prevention team who is responsible for coordinating and realising these visits aims to visit every family in Münster, not only socially disadvantaged ones from poorer areas as it is done in other cities. The participation in the family visits is voluntary for the parents.

The innovation works in the following way: First of all, each family with a newborn child (these are about 2,400 per year in Münster) gets a letter of inquiry by the Youth Office. If they do not object, they receive a second letter in which the prevention team suggests an appointment. The concept offers different services: First of all, the prevention team informs the parents in an individual way about different issues relevant to parents: parental benefits, childcare facilities and preventive healthcare offers. In this context, the families get information leaflets, which are in line with the respective nationality of their child and the district of the parents' home. If desired by parents, a midwife accompanies the visits. Furthermore, the first parents' letter (*Elternbriefe*) is handed over to the families personally. These letters present, in total, 46 educational assistances (i.e. advice on breastfeeding or protective vaccination) and their dispatch to the families is staggered over the period from the first month of life up to the eighth birthday of the child.⁴ The parents' letters are conceptualised by the working group *Neue Erziehung e.V.* which is a nationally organised non-governmental organisation (NGO).⁵ They are available in many other municipalities, but not every Youth Office sends them to the families for such an extended period. As mentioned above, one of the main goals of these prevention visits is to ameliorate the negative image of the Youth Office which is amplified by the supra-regional media.⁶ To underline this aim, every child gets a welcome gift from the Youth Office. This toy symbolises that the prevention team does not want to take the children away from their parents, rather it wants to bring all families real benefit. The parents should get the impression that the Youth Office might be useful for every family member and in every (difficult) situation. The families should realise that they can rely on the Youth Office as a service provider. Ergo, these prevention visits are seen as a sort of door-opener⁷ by the employees of the Youth Office.

³ The so-called *Dormagener Modell* is the title of a local programme, which aimed to develop instruments for preventing child abuse and intra-family violence. This pilot project was developed in the German municipality Dormagen in 2006. Many other municipalities were convinced of this new concept and adapted this model. See source "Dormagener Modell".

⁴ The description of the parents' letters is based on the website of the Youth Office.

⁵ The working group *Neue Erziehung e.V.* was founded in 1946 by teachers in Berlin. After the period of inhuman National Socialist and fascist tyranny, the members of this NGO aim to develop a new conversational understanding of education. Source: Website of Arbeitskreis Neue Erziehung.

⁶ Interview with a representative of the Family Office.

⁷ Interview with a representative of the Family Office.

21.2.2 *Internal Organisation and Modes of Working*

The prevention team is composed of six qualified employees working part-time who coordinate and implement the appointments and visits. Every member is an employee of the Youth Office. This underlines the main purpose of the prevention team that its members should serve as ambassadors for the office. Volunteers, as in other German municipalities, would not have direct access to the services of the Youth Office.⁸ That is one of the reasons why the Youth Office decided to integrate the visits into the office itself. Each of the six employees should care for about 400 newborn children per year. Actually in the year 2009, 2069 families were visited. The visits are financially sustainable since they are funded as part of the annual budget.

21.2.3 *Context of the Innovation—Interaction with the Local Welfare System*

The prevention visits were initiated by the head of the Youth Office itself, who is one of the key players within the elite network of the city. As head of the office, she is a member of different administrative and local political networks (round tables, working groups etc.). Despite her network position, at the beginning, she had difficulties in finding political majorities for this program. Many politicians did not want the prevention team to visit families living in wealthy social environments as well. But the head of the Youth Office refused to accept any compromise and underlined that child protection is a universal issue concerning every family.⁹ The office aimed to achieve public consensus by arguing to prevent worst-case scenarios which are built up by media, politics and society. At the same time, they emphasized the supportive function of the visits as opposed to controlling families. Finally, this strategy succeeded. The political factions agreed. Today, the Youth Office is very satisfied with this innovation. The head of the Youth Office highlights its success and importance for the strategy of the Youth Office.¹⁰ This is also acknowledged by the local media.¹¹

The high number of prevention visits which have been carried out over the last years (2009: 2,069, 2010: 2,314, 2011: 2,080) shows the high demand as regards the prevention visits by families. In a quarter of those prevention visits in 2010 (497), the Youth Office identified a high need for advice, information as well as support. In more than 1000 cases, the prevention team informed parents about the offers of local services focusing on childcare (Youth Office Münster 2012, p. 87). In this way, the prevention visits have contributed to the intended image change of the Youth Office: from a control instance to a kind of service provider.

⁸ Interview with the head of the Youth Office.

⁹ Interview with the head of the Youth Office.

¹⁰ Interview with the head of the Youth Office.

¹¹ "Reicht ein Besuch?" a comment of the local journalist Karin Völker in WN 05/06/08.

For evaluation, Münster takes part in an empirical study about German municipalities, which have introduced the instrument of prevention visits. With reference to the first results of the participating municipalities as well as the high demand of this instrument by municipalities in North-Rhine Westphalia, the empirical study evaluates the instrument of prevention visits positively and sees it on the path towards a regular offer (*Regelangebot*) (Frese and Günther 2012, p. 251). In addition to this, the evaluation of prevention visits in different cities underlines the positive effects of the specific Münster model: Parents participating in the study emphasise the positive effects of both working with employees of the Youth Office as well as visiting all parents in the city (Frese and Günther 2012).

21.3 Conclusion

The prevention visits can be seen as an important instrument in the process of image changing and improving child protection in Münster. The deep impact of this social innovation for the local welfare system can be explained by the following three context factors:

Being Part of the Prevention Approach as well as of the Local City Strategy This innovation supports the core value of prevention and especially the prevention program of the Youth Office. Furthermore, with their customer focus, these prevention visits help to improve the Youth Office's image as well as to strengthen the field of local childcare policy identified by the local elites as an important factor for the city to become more attractive for young families. Thus, this social innovation became an important pillar for the urban local welfare policy strategy.

Being an Integrated Part of the Local Welfare System Since its implementation five years ago, the instrument of the prevention visits has become firmly institutionalised within the field of local welfare politics in Münster. This is apparent in the merger of the prenatal advice and the prevention team in 2010. In June 2011, the unit "Prenatal advice, prevention services and family visits" was founded. This enables better networking between early services and the expansion of existing cooperative governance structures (Youth Office Münster 2012, p. 85). Furthermore, the visits are institutionalised in a financially sustainable way.

The Impact of the Local Network Governance for This Innovation A change in the welfare governance architecture can be identified. Local welfare policy in Münster seems to work more and more in networks as opposed to operating in a hierarchical process. This is underlined by the implementation process of the prevention visits, which was led by the highly embedded and active head of the Youth Office. Because of its new understanding as a customer-oriented institution, the Youth Office increasingly acts as a partner for civil society (families), not as a hierarchical instance. The negative reactions in the beginning have shown that local politics and civil society still perceived the Youth Office as an intervention authority

(*Ordnungs-/Eingriffsinstanz*). The new governance forms offer some advantages for the success of this innovation: Problems and challenges (like financial issues) can be directly discussed between the involved actors. Solutions can be developed together before disagreement results in unbridgeable differences.

The analysis of the prevention visits in Münster demonstrates the necessity of innovators to connect to locally prevalent norms and values. The local welfare system not only structurally, but also “culturally” determines opportunities and obstacles for social innovations. Furthermore, the successful implementation of prevention visits in a given local context will depend on an active “policy entrepreneur” who can mobilize supporters and resources.¹²

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Chapter 22

Barcelona: A Citizen's Agreement for an Inclusive City

Teresa Montagut, Gemma Vilà and Sebastià Riutort

22.1 Barcelona's Sociopolitical Structure

The administrative decentralisation of the political structure in Spain grants regional and local councils a set of legislative and executive competencies which, in the case of social welfare services, are very far-reaching. The social innovations that we find in Barcelona today are related to two basic factors: the continuity in city government and the dynamics of civil society.

From the first local elections (after the re-establishment of democracy) and until 2011, a period of over 30 years, the city council of Barcelona was in the hands of the left (the Socialist Party won the elections and governed in coalition with two other left wing parties). The main characteristics of the social welfare system of the city, therefore, are (1) continuity in the government team over a long period of time, (2) starting from zero, that is, they had to build the system from scratch, and (3) citizens who—after the long period of dictatorship—wanted to be involved in political action, to participate. Municipal policymakers made the most of this potential when it came to setting up the local welfare system, as did other political actors (the opposition parties and civil society) to some extent. The civil society in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia has traditionally been participative and enterprising, as demonstrated by the large number of cooperatives that existed in Barcelona at the end of the nineteenth century.

Another element that helps to understand the context is the fact that in Barcelona we find an objective that cuts across all areas of political action: the “modernisation” of the city. This is a manifestation of the desire to recover the spirit of enterprise that

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the city once had, to recover its own brand of economic and cultural dynamism that was forbidden during the years of dictatorship. It finds its expression in the construction of the “Barcelona model”, a model that can be seen clearly in the changes in urban development as a result of the 1992 Olympic Games, the success of which was to a large extent due to the involvement of civil society, although it also affected other areas of society. In this way, policymakers in the Social Welfare Department set themselves a basic goal of building a social services model that was participative. As no welfare services system yet existed, there was no widespread culture of commitment to, or participation in, the city’s social welfare. The structures used to encourage and enable people to commit themselves to collective responsibilities would also have to be created.

The search for a “Barcelona model” has meanwhile continued ever more seriously in various political arenas, and collaboration with civil society in social welfare matters has also increased significantly, representing a force for social innovation in the city.

22.2 The Programme “Citizen’s Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona”

22.2.1 The Programme

The programme Citizen’s Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona (CA) is an example of social innovation that fits in with a new form of governance. It establishes both a new form of participation and policy-making. The CA is not only based on new practices but also introduces changes in social responsibilities (public and private) in the local welfare system. By bringing about a new culture in the management of the welfare system, it also affects attitudes and values within local government. It is an example of social innovation resulting from a two-way process: (1) A top-down process, in the sense that it was proposed by the municipal government, which (2) intersects with a bottom-up process based on the effort and interests of different organisations and social networks that work within the city’s social welfare system. We consider that this is a programme with great potential, and it could be implemented in other cities with similar conditions.

The programme was established in April 2005. The ultimate goal of the programme is to redistribute responsibilities in the social welfare sector in Barcelona through a broad agreement among representatives of the main social agents in the sector. The intention is to create a strategic framework shared by all participating entities. This is a new philosophy, which integrates the diversity of activities that are carried out in the local social welfare system into a single framework or joint strategy. It is based on a policy decision to coordinate the diverse activities of different social actors. No one loses their space for action; rather, it is possible to improve results by combining efforts.

At the moment of its creation, a total of 235 entities of diverse nature (organisations, businesses and universities) signed the agreement. Since its public presentation, the number of institutions and organisations involved and attached to the agreement has grown each year. In December 2011, there were a total of 467 participating organisations, institutions and businesses (doubling the number of participants in 5 years), and in 2013 there were more than 500.

The agreement has been promoted and is coordinated by the municipal government. Currently, the more than 500 participating entities work in such distinct spheres as the economy, culture, education, social action, housing, health and labour. The values that the CA promotes are identified in the strategic framework that defines the programme: coexistence, cooperation, social cohesion, creativity and community. From the perspective of the internal administration of the agreement, the aim is to encourage values like democratic governance, networking and quality of work.

To sign the agreement means joining a network that provides opportunities for access to and exchange of information, resources and knowledge. It also promotes projects in which cooperation between diverse entities and organisations in the city is key.

The CA is organised on different levels: (a) there is an annual meeting of all the signatories to the agreement, in which participants provide an account of the work they have carried out during the year and agree on the direction of the work for the following year; (b) there is a governing council, which is a deliberative and decision-making body that shapes the development of the agreement and its actions; (c) there are work commissions, formed by organisations that temporarily work on concrete issues, and (d) there are action networks formed by organisations, institutions and other bodies that work in specific sectors, which establish common objectives to improve the work they do.

The Action Networks

Direct action depends on the networks. The organisations and city institutions in these networks share concrete methodologies and goals; they cooperate and direct their shared work toward common strategic and operational objectives. The networks begin with a desire to work together on a particular issue or matter and to achieve improvements in the respective fields of the participants. Each network is independent and has, based on its objectives, its own dynamics and working plan. At the time of this study (2013), ten networks had been formed:

- Network for the Reception and Support of Migrants in Barcelona
- Network for Assistance to the Homeless
- Network of Businesses with Social Responsibility Projects
- Network for Social and Labour Market Integration (now: for “Social Economy”)
- Network of Centres for Children and Teens
- Support Network for Family Caregivers
- Inclusion Housing Network
- Cultural Network for Social Inclusion
- Network for Children's Rights
- Network for Coexistence and Prevention

Some of the networks have progressed more than others, and some have managed to agree on common citywide projects or programmes. In terms of the CA's direct impact on social welfare policies, there have been two networks in particular that have achieved significant results: the first one is the Network of Centres for Children and Teens, which has agreed on one model for all the city's centres, both public and private, providing assistance for children and teens at risk. The other one is the Network for Assistance to the Homeless, which has created a solid network for the exchange of resources and information.

Network of Centres for Children and Teens

This network is formed by 17 organisations and was established in April 2006. Its aim is to improve the city's responsiveness to children and adolescents in situations of social risk. It was an initiative of the organisations that manage or run centres for children and teens (outside school hours), the aim of which was to gain greater recognition for the work they were doing. Through the network, the member organisations would work on developing a common model of care for young people for all the centres in the city, even though managed by different entities.

Today there is one model for the centres agreed upon by all. During the work carried out, new centres have been established, and today there are centres that depend on the city and centres that depend on the social organisations, all of them with the same programme for teens and children.

Network for Assistance to the Homeless

This network was created in November 2005 and consists of 26 organisations and federations. The social organisations participating in the network are committed to working together to help homeless persons regain autonomy and social relations. Various working groups were established and together they have carried out diverse actions, such as the following: a count of the number of homeless persons in Barcelona; preparation of a document with proposals on how to improve healthcare for the mentally ill; coming to agreement on proposals for action; sharing information and data and creating an open online catalogue of all the resources and services available through government and other entities.

The network has representation and dialogue with officials of local and regional government. The administration, politicians and professionals with responsibility in this area have embraced this new way of working horizontally with third sector organisations. This network has made it possible to create a new form of governance in this area.

22.2.2 Impact of the Programme

The CA has had an interesting impact on social welfare policy in the city. Not only has it made it possible to share resources and information but it has also changed forms of governance. The groups involved see themselves as actors who can have an impact on social welfare. It has led to the participation of citizens and social

organisations in welfare policies through different forms of deliberation and action. The programme has changed the social welfare system in the city in various ways. For example, the structures of the CA represent a new form of governance, in particular the dynamic in the Executive Commission, which allows and promotes proactiveness with a very high level of reflection and production of documents (I-6)¹. There is participation in the overall welfare system, which also improves or facilitates the activities carried out by each of the participating entities.

The importance of the CA in the city's social welfare system can also be measured with the change in the municipal government. The municipal elections in May 2011 led to the election of a *Convergència i Unió* (CiU) centre-right nationalist coalition government. After 30 years of left-wing hegemony in the municipal government, a centre-right party came into power. This change concerned the participating groups in the CA: "When the new council member entered, we all had concerns about what would happen with the CA because, of course, the CA is an uncomfortable space.... but at that time, we discovered that not only was the CA not cancelled, but it seems to have been strengthened" (I-12)². Clearly, the new government in power has given its support to the programme. In the words of the member entities: "the new government has made it theirs".

22.3 Conclusions

The balance of the work carried out and the challenges and difficulties involved—or that had to be overcome in the framework of the CA—are different if we take as a reference the CA programme in its entirety, or if we consider the action networks. It is necessary to separate these levels analytically to better understand the CA.

22.3.1 *The CA Programme*

The CA is an increasingly consolidated programme. The new administrative and governing structure of the municipal government considers it a flagship programme. It is not considered a programme designed and developed by its political rivals but rather as one the current government has chosen and wants to strengthen. The member entities say that "come what may, and whoever is in the municipal government, it will continue and has to continue" (I-8)³. In fact, it can even be stated that in this period in which we have a centre-right municipal government, recognition of the CA on the part of the administrative structure (civil service) of the government has

¹ I-6 Interview Third Sector entity

² I-12 Interview Technical Secretary of CA

³ I-8 Interview Third Sector entity

advanced. In the process of the creation and subsequent development of participatory programmes, it was difficult for part of the government structure to understand that the CA was a space for sharing equal responsibility between the government and civil society; “it was the professionals and not the administrative structure that understood it and implemented it” (I-12). This was the greatest obstacle to be overcome; for example, there were difficulties ensuring that in the actions of the CA, the government and entities had the same visibility. However, it seems that relations with the administration are more fluid today and the consolidation of the CA is such (there are more than 500 entities involved in the programme) that it can be assumed that any attempt to eliminate or reduce its role would be too costly.

At this time (2013), a further step has been taken in the framework of the CA. This is the “shared strategy”. As the entities say: “... the CA was not formed and left as it was but is constantly being revised...” (I-8). The “shared strategy” proposal emerged when the municipal government presented its *Plan for Inclusion 2012–2015* in the CA plenary. The entities understood that although the Plan for Inclusion was a government plan, it was necessary that a distinct and complementary proposal emerge from the CA to establish a strategy for shared actions and policies between the government and the entities. The “shared strategy” covers a total of 936 projects and actions, channelling a total of around 500 million €.

22.3.2 The Action Networks

Regarding the balance of the work of the action networks, the results cannot be generalised, as each network functions independently and depends on the efforts of the entities comprising it. Each network depends on the dynamic that its component entities contribute. Thus, there are large and small entities, proactive and more passive entities, some which want—and have—greater roles and others that have less of a role. These characteristics, among others, such as the very goal of the work of the network, have an impact on the dynamic of each network. Although the two networks briefly discussed above seem to have found a dynamic of cooperative work and joint reflection that has allowed solid relations to develop to the satisfaction of their participants, we have also found that the political changes appear to have affected certain other networks significantly.

This is the case of the Social Economy Network (earlier, the Network for Social and Labour Market Integration), which is headed by the municipal institution *Barcelona Activa*. It seems that the change in government, combined with the effects of the economic crisis (government budget cuts as well as a decrease in money from the European Union for insertion programmes), led to a shift in the focus of the network that seems to have slowed the dynamic with which it had begun. Specifically, today there is more talk about self-employment than there is about social and labour market integration. The goal of the network is to “promote the social economy of the city”. The network has opened up to include companies (those with *corporate social responsibility policies*) which are more interested in self-employment than in

developing a programme with the city to create jobs or for the social and economic insertion of those groups with difficulties. In the very dynamic of how it operates, there is a lack of proactivity and its dynamism is much more dependent on Barcelona Activa. It does not meet as often, and it needs to find a common stimulus, which can—in these times of serious economic crisis—stimulate its work. It is necessary to monitor the work of the various networks in order to make a comprehensive evaluation of their functioning. This is one of the issues that the entities leading the CA have on the table for upcoming discussion.

Finally, and by way of conclusion, we can say that the “Citizen’s Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona” programme has had a strong impact, which is continuing to grow. It is proving to have a broad consensus, which is attracting other entities that have not yet become part of the agreement.

To a great extent, the programme’s success is a result of the relationships that are formed between the participants, who are essentially working in a network. But the participants also appreciate the fact that being focused on action, their impact is multiplied. They also value the influence the CA has at times had on municipal authorities.

It is possible to spread this innovation. In fact, it is a project that has been sparking a lot of interest in other municipalities in Spain and in other countries as well. However, this is a project that requires a two-way social process. It would not have been possible without the interaction between clear leadership in charge of the project and a dynamic civil society.

For an innovation in governance to become established, a broad consensus is required on the part of all the actors involved. And perhaps, not only a consensus on the idea but also regarding capacity, in other words: on the one hand, a clear idea and the real possibility of designing a new model by the government leaders responsible and on the other hand, the existence of a network of entities that want to be involved and participate in designing and managing the social services of the city.

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Chapter 23

Bern: Integration Guidelines

Maxime Felder

23.1 Introduction

The innovation we seek to address in this chapter is one that consists mainly of a ten-page document defining the migrant integration policy of the Swiss capital, Bern. Our aim in this short chapter will be to outline how a document may be considered a social innovation, and how it might function as a tool for guiding local policy.

Since the 1970s, the integration of migrants has sparked heated political debates within Switzerland¹. In 2008, a new Foreign Nationals Act introduced “integration” as a legal notion. As article 4 states: “the aim of integration is the coexistence of the resident Swiss and foreign population on the basis of the values of the Federal Constitution and mutual respect and tolerance.” Furthermore, it is established that “integration should enable foreign nationals who are lawfully resident in Switzerland for the longer term to participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the society”. It should be noted that integration is further defined as a bidirectional process, requiring “willingness on the part of the foreign nationals and openness on the part of the Swiss population”.

As often happens within a federal system, implementation has been left open to the interpretation of the various cantons. Yet, compared to rural and peri-urban populations, urban populations regularly show more openness towards migrants².

¹ For a summary on the concept of integration in Switzerland, see Cattacin and Chimienti (2006), and the report *La notion d'intégration dans la loi*, Commission fédérale pour les questions de migration, 2008.

² The results of the vote on the federal popular initiative to prevent the construction of Mosque minarets (2009), or the more recent vote on the initiative “against mass immigration” (2014) are meaningful examples.

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In the canton of Bern, the composition of the parliaments on the communal and cantonal levels reflects this political cleavage. The left wing coalition has held a majority in the city parliament since 1996, while on the cantonal level, the conservative party *Schweizerische Volkspartei*, Swiss Popular Party (SVP) is the most represented party, with right wing politicians representing two thirds of the parliament. Accordingly, as with other Swiss cities, Bern felt the need to develop its own integration policy.

A political majority does not prevent divergences, however. Civil servants who were interviewed reported a lack of coordination between the numerous actors involved in the field of migrant integration. The idea of working on “integration guidelines” was adopted, and the process of its development is at least as important as the result. We will first outline the context of Bern as a Swiss city before focusing on the integration guidelines as social innovation. This will commence with a short history of its development, before an analysis of its mode of working, the ways of addressing users and the interaction with the governance system.

23.2 The Context

Bern is the Swiss capital and home to the federal administration, government and parliament. It is the fourth largest city (130,000 inhabitants in 2014) and urban area (406,000) in Switzerland. Foreigners represent 24% of the city’s population, which is slightly less than most other cities in Switzerland. The unemployment rate³ reached 3.3% of the active population in 2010 in Bern while the mean average for all Swiss cities was 4.4%. Bern is the chef-lieu of the second largest canton, both in area and population.

Since Switzerland is a federal state, responsibility for welfare is shared across the national, cantonal (26 cantons) and communal levels (2495 communes). Following the two guiding principles of subsidiarity and federalism, a large part of the welfare system is steered by the commune. The commune of the city of Bern has a wide and supportive welfare system and is seen as constantly growing, since the left holds a majority in the city government. Nevertheless, it should be noted that representatives from both the left and right agree with this vision. Even if there is some doubt regarding long-term viability, expansion of the city’s welfare system is not contested on a fundamental level. However, the two main coalitions regularly disagree on the extent of the state’s role regarding societal issues: a left wing coalition, commonly called *Rot-Grün-Mitte*, red-green-centre (RGM), is opposed to a right wing coalition, named by interviewees “die Bürgerlichen” (“bourgeois”, in the “conservative” sense). Since the early 1990s, the former have been the most prominent actors in the development of a kind of municipal socialism in the city. They are a good fit for Häußermann’s notion of an integration coalition (Häußermann 2006). The second coalition advocates a more liberal state and could be seen as a

³ It should be stated that this only counts people registered with regional unemployment offices.

growth coalition. However, a convincing consensus can be found when it comes to the welfare system's *raison d'être*. Along these lines, the dual coalitions function as what we might call an innovation regime⁴.

This consensus rests in a desire to enhance the location's desirability for people and business. Although it is the capital, as previously mentioned, Bern is only the fourth largest city in Switzerland. The head trio is Zurich, often identified as the financial capital, Geneva known for its banks and its numerous international organisations, and Basel, with its dynamic pharmaceutical industry. Each of these three has an international airport as well as close links with neighbouring countries. For its part, Bern is trying to identify itself as a social, open-minded and innovative city. Interviewees proudly recall how, in the 1990s, Bern was a pioneering city in the field of drug policy⁵. "Bern is a social city" or "Diversity is richness" are slogans promoted by the city government, so it comes as no surprise that Bern wants to be a city where no one is left behind.

Bern also invests in the promotion of a positive discourse concerning the issue of migrants, with voters' support showing that this orientation is more than simple city branding⁶. Due to the system of direct democracy at the communal level, orientation of the welfare system can be attributed in part to voting citizens. A significant number of Bern's citizens could be described as belonging to a "creative class" (Florida 2013). Despite the critiques that can be levelled at this analytical category, a number of interviewees spoke of an "urban mind", or an "urban minded population". This state of mind is considered to include values like global mindedness, solidarity, creativity, ecology and growth. Referendums on migration issues regularly show how urbanites distinguish themselves from the rest of the population. For example, 72.3% of Bern city dwellers rejected the recent vote against "mass migration"⁷. Meanwhile, on the cantonal level, 51.1% of the voters accepted restrictions on immigration. The values of openness and tolerance demonstrated by urban voters are consequently embraced by the city's government, becoming a framework for their policies.

23.3 Integration Guidelines

We will now outline the history of integration guidelines. In the second half of the 1990s, Swiss cities started to take control of the challenges surrounding the integration of migrants. Until then, right wing populist parties were alone in tackling the subject. Schönenberger and D'Amato (2009) attribute this change to the increasing

⁴ Concept inspired by Häußermann, see Cattacin (2011).

⁵ Interview with a third sector worker in the field of addictions.

⁶ See for example the high scores of the government re-election of 2012 (almost 70% for the city president).

⁷ Swiss popular initiative "Against mass immigration", February 9th 2014. Accepted by a slight majority of 50.34%. Detailed results for Bern available on the Chancery website: <http://www.sta.be.ch/sta/de/index/wahlen-abstimmungen/wahlen-abstimmungen.html>.

heterogenization and fragmentation of the social and urban structure and to the arrival of new lifestyles (of nationals and migrants). The specific urban context allowed cities to take a lead in negotiating this theme that, up until this point, had been largely ignored by the Confederation and the cantons. Consequently, several debates arose, with one of the purported problems being the implementation of the ageing foreigners law (1931). It had become necessary to adapt the policies to the present context and more current concerns. However, authorities on various levels offered minimal cooperation due to their differing understandings of procedures.

For these reasons, in 1995, the executive council of the city of Bern decided to establish official guidelines. The idea was to develop and possess a better knowledge regarding the integration of “people from foreign origin” and the fundamentals regarding potential alternative practices. A year later, the anthropologist Hans-Rudolf Wicker (University of Bern) delivered a report that highlighted the necessity of a coordinated and needs-related integration policy. Many actors within the fields of administration and civil society transmitted their feedback and, in 1997, a working group dedicated to the redaction of the guidelines was established. It included representatives from the Foreigners Police of Bern, from diverse departments like welfare, education, equality between men and women, from the federal foreigner’s commission, together with an anthropologist. Some nongovernmental organisations were represented, among other Caritas (charities), the information service for foreigners and the Forum for Migrants. It is noteworthy that representatives of migrant populations themselves were not invited. In 1998, the executive council received a first draft, which underwent revision until 1999, when it was finally voted on and accepted by the council.

The guidelines are composed of ten principles, intended to pave the way for a renewed understanding of integration, specifically within the realm of political discourse. Furthermore, they were meant to “open the way” to the implementation of lasting integration measures⁸. As an introduction to the newly established guidelines, the executive councillor at the time⁹ underlined the importance of contributions made by migrants to Switzerland. Indeed, some migrants are amongst the most professionally successful people in Switzerland; however, it is the case that a disproportionately high number work in the low-pay sector or are unemployed. This could be interpreted as a sign of an economic, social and cultural disintegration that threatens Bern’s prosperity. Schönenberger and D’Amato (2009) state that while there has never been an active integration policy in Switzerland, the “declining” economic situation has intensified the challenges faced by migrants.

Ten years later, the need for an adaptation of the guidelines was felt. It had to encompass the emerging consensus on the principle of encouraging and demanding¹⁰

⁸ Claudia Omar-Amberg, preface to *Leitbild zur Integrationspolitik der Stadt Bern*, Stadt Bern, 1999.

⁹ The social-democrat Claudia Omar-Amberg, in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Welfare.

¹⁰ *Fordern und fördern* in German. Encouraging refers to the welfare benefits whilst demanding refers to the conditions attached to the provision of these benefits.

(impacting the whole urban welfare system) and the approach of integration as a bilateral process. The scene had changed with a new law regarding foreigners coming into force in 2008. The Confederation had taken over the debate about integration, which had started at a city level, and for the first time integration became a legal notion. Since 2001, the Confederation has offered a budget for integration measures; measures which migrants may be forced to follow (e.g. language classes). However, divergences remained when it came to the balance between encouraging and demanding and on the understandings of the respective roles of the migrant population and the “host” population. Meanwhile, a newly created “Competence Centre for Integration” was tasked with leading the update of the 1999 guidelines, supported by an expert group (internal and external of administration). A new study was ordered by the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies. In 2009, the Competence Centre for Integration organised a “guidelines day” in which 60 participants took part. As a civil servant explained: “we invited a lot of people for a day of discussion. They could make proposals, ask questions. It would have been unimaginable to come up with these guidelines and say ‘here, now you have to implement them’”¹¹. This time round, representatives of migrant populations were not forgotten.

Ratified by the city council in 2010, the most significant aspect of the new version was a list of 37 concrete measures planned for implementation in 2011 and 2012. The intention was that the Competence Centre would help to coordinate and inform, whilst the city would draw from the global city budget in order to finance them. Some measures address the migrant population directly (e.g. financial support for German courses) while others address workers in contact with migrants (e.g. diversity management training).

23.3.1 Internal Organization and Mode of Working

We will now describe the 2010 version of the guidelines. The document starts with an introduction to the integration policy of Bern, first highlighting the diversity of the city’s population: foreigners represent one fifth of the population and exist in a heterogeneous population. Following that, the document defines integration as a way of reaching equality of opportunity and participation for everyone, understood as the basis for social cohesion. Integration is meant as a dynamic process that requires, besides financial means and time, the commitment of both migrants and national citizens. The importance of the many actors involved (e.g. welfare institutions, sport clubs, religious communities, associations, etc.) is also acknowledged.

The document details four guiding principles: “1. The city of Bern recognises diversity and difference as strengths of our society; 2. The city of Bern supports the potential of migrants; 3. The city of Bern commits itself to the fight against discrimination; 4. The city of Bern supports equality of opportunities and participation of migrants”. These principles are detailed in three or four sub-points. Then, the

¹¹ Interview with a public administrator in the field of integration.

specific aims are detailed in several fields of action such as training, language and education; labour market; hobbies, culture and sport; health; civic and social participation; housing and environment; information and communication. Finally, the document names the actors involved and their specific roles in the implementation of the guidelines, namely the Competence Centre for Integration, the administrative services, external partners (associations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), etc.), the board for integration (group of experts) and the Forum for Migrants. The Competence Centre for Integration is meant to coordinate the work of a wide network of public, private and third sector actors.

Integration policy is thus a “cross-cutting” policy involving all sectors of a mixed welfare system. The Competence Centre is also the link between the different territorial levels: the Confederation, the cantons and the other communes.

Widely publicised by the Swiss administration, the document is available on paper as well as on the Internet, foremost addressing the administration and the civil servants of the city of Bern. The principles and aims presented in the document should lead their everyday work and orientate the action of their services. However, it cannot be assimilated to a work duty since no enforcement is planned to ensure the implementation of the guiding principles. Moreover, the document also addresses private and third sector actors, highlighting their potential impact on integration and suggesting ways of considering and dealing with people of foreign origin. Finally, it is meant to inform the population about the integration policy of their city. In 2010, the updated version of the guidelines became more concretised, encompassing a catalogue of measures. In this respect, the guidelines function as a basis for the proposal to existing structures of how they could participate, in real terms, in the city’s integration policy.

23.3.2 Conception and Ways of Addressing Users

The guidelines have many goals and thus address different categories of users. We could identify three user-oriented roles and two governance-related roles. First, through the development of the guidelines and the consultation process, experts and stakeholders (that were sometimes not considered or did not consider themselves as stakeholders before) are involved and encouraged to take part in the city’s integration policy. The purpose is thus to redefine the extent of the policy field. Second, the guidelines have a coordination role. Users here are agencies and units providing services in the redefined field of migrant integration. At the street level, users are the workers providing these services, for whom the guidelines are a code of conduct. Third, the guidelines have an information role, with users here being the city’s inhabitants and even potential inhabitants the city wants to attract with its migrant-friendly image.

The first governance-related role is practice oriented since the guidelines serve as a basis for concrete measures. The idea is that action needs, first of all, a consensus on the aims and definition of concepts. It states in black and white that the city

of Bern wants to promote integration and specifies what exactly is meant by integration, why it is important and who is responsible for it. Since reaching the aims relies on the coordinated work of many actors, clarifying all these aspects is crucial. By pointing out where integration is at stake, it opens the way for new measures and most importantly, new fields of action. The second governance role is political and strategic. As a civil servant said, “The guidelines were a political project. The idea was to show that they [the city government] handled it [integration]”¹². The guidelines are used as a political tool, to legitimise measures of integration. Indeed, integration is a hot topic for debate. As Vogel stated for another Swiss city, establishing guidelines on this topic puts an end to countless discussions in the city council (Vogel 2006). Thus, it can be seen as a way of imposing a political program. As everybody agreed on the principle of promoting integration, the left managed to establish a model that bound the principle to measures in order to make them harder to contest.

23.3.3 *Interaction with the Governance System*

Integration guidelines can be considered as an innovative change within the governance of Bern’s local welfare system. Starting with a formulation of the principles, it contributes to the reification of the city of Bern, establishing it as an important actor regarding urban social life. Every principle and its sub-points start with “The city of Bern [dedicates itself to/supports/acknowledges/etc.]”. Repeated 18 times in a row, this anaphora suggests that dedication to the integration of migrants is a special feature of the city of Bern. It also insists on the communal stranglehold on integration issues facing the cantonal and federal authorities.

The guidelines are also an innovative feature of governance in the way they go beyond the usual decision-making process, usually involving elected magistrates and occurring behind closed doors. The development of the guidelines is in this sense as important as the result. First, by involving many actors, the competence centre acknowledged the fact that integration cannot rely solely on the state and its administrative agencies. Neither can it be reached through big projects or campaigns or on quotas and compulsory measures aimed towards civil society. Examples of inclusion, equality of opportunities and non-discrimination can be seen everywhere and everyday. As a civil servant explained: “People often think that there is no will to implement these guidelines. What we see is a lot of motivation yet perhaps a lack of know-how. People expect big projects. But integration is also a matter of details we do not necessarily see”¹³.

Second, this manner of discussing, negotiating and finally writing down guidelines is an innovative way of building social policies. It supports participation and acceptance through the consultation and involvement of stakeholders. It acknowl-

¹² Interview with a civil servant in the field of integration.

¹³ Ibid.

edges the limits of enforceable rules in a field like integration. Definitions and responsibilities first have to be collectively defined and endorsed. The coordinating and informing role of the Competence Centre for Integration illustrates the innovative (in this context) role of the state as an encouraging and enabling actor. However, herein lie the limits of this way of governing. The city can somehow enforce its guidelines within its own administration and institutions; however, there is no legal basis for doing so in associations and private companies. Since there is no intention to make them mandatory, their implementation remains highly dependent on cooperation from third parties.

Another limit is related to the competences attributed to the Confederation. As an example, a journalist put forward the case of a migrant with an academic degree that is not recognised by Swiss authorities (Einhaus 2011). In such a case, the city has no leeway to offer him better job opportunities. The same problem weighs upon the naturalisation process and requirements. If Bern—its government and its population—predominantly think that naturalisation can be a tool to support integration, the city has no authority to lighten the requirements of the procedure. Those are defined by the canton and Confederation. At these upper levels, naturalisation is mostly seen as the reward for “completed” integration.

23.4 Conclusion

Two opposing interpretations can be made from this innovative feature of governance. On the one hand, this way of defining a policy and an agenda by consulting experts and stakeholders can be seen as a technocratic turn in Bern’s governance. Indeed, the clarity and univocality of the guidelines can mask the controversial aspects of the debate on what is integration and how we want to achieve it. Like Schönenberger and D’Amato (2009) argued, the guidelines managed to simplify a complex and controversial debate. This simplification and clarification allowed the city government to launch concrete measures on the basis of the collectively defined guidelines and thus, partly avoid the endless debates on integration. As MacLeod (2011:2632) argues, “This process of polic(y)ing and governing through a stage-managed consensus is serving to depoliticise 21st-century capitalism’s deeply antagonistic social relations”.

On the other hand, the guidelines can be seen as an acknowledgement of the eminently political character of integration policy. Instead of pretending the concept of integration is technical and unequivocal, this policy building process is based on a political debate. Integration policy has first been disputed among stakeholders from civil society and has then been voted on by the city council. This process requires consensus and reaching a consensus requires a deliberation process. The consensus has to be renewed, as it has been done with an update of the guidelines after 10 years. However, in the medium term, it allows for the building of coherent policy, where all stakeholders involved potentially work towards collectively defined aims. The guidelines could be a sign of an upcoming form of governance where the local state aims at facilitating and coordinating the implementation of policies (refer Øverbye et al. 2010 for more on this topic).

In either interpretation, such guidelines contribute to addressing the growing challenge of coordination. The multiplication of actors involved in the welfare system (see Kazepov 2010) increases the need for coordination measures. Integration guidelines have proven to be effective as a horizontal coordination measure addressing actors of the same (urban) level. However, it is less helpful with regard to the challenges of multilevel governance and the need for vertical coordination. These challenges are accentuated by the difference in the political majorities between the city (left wing majority) and the cantonal level (right wing majority). Nevertheless, the innovative features of the integration guidelines are strongly related to their development and their implementation on a local level. It allows a significant consultation process since the lower scale permits involving any interested actor. In that case, developing guidelines at the city level can increase inhabitants' identification with the city. The integration policy is not only a welfare policy. In the case of Bern, it is an intrinsic part of the city's image and attractiveness.

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Part IV

Conclusions

Chapter 24

The Implicit Normative Assumptions of Social Innovation Research: Embracing the Dark Side

Ola Segnestam Larsson and Taco Brandsen

24.1 Introduction

Social innovation as a concept has moved into the political limelight of many welfare societies in Europe. It has become one of the key buzzwords, beloved by policymakers and practitioners across the world (Borins 2001; Eshima et al. 2001) to a degree where the concept could even be labelled as “policy chic”. There are many reasons why social innovation is heralded as a solution, particularly in relation to societal changes in Europe related to welfare programmes that can no longer deal with an increase in social problems. The positive features attributed to the concept are supposed to counterbalance the further slimming down of welfare benefits and services (Evers et al. 2014). Indeed, normative features combined with underlying societal changes provide social innovation with an appeal that seems hard to resist. It combines a determination to reform and improve welfare services in the social arena with a sense of state-of-the-art entrepreneurial and organisational practice. Who could object to such a compelling approach?

Yet, the normative assumptions tend to obscure the dark sides of the phenomenon such as failure, political conflict and oppression. Rather than accepting social innovation at face value, this chapter explores its less palatable side. We believe that the generally optimistic tone in social innovation debates mask a set of problems, both in the concept and in practice, which we will illustrate with the research results from the Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO) project. One of the aims of this project was to identify lessons for social policies and ultimately improve social cohesion. Such an optimistic approach should not, how-

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ever, prevent us from discussing the more disturbing elements of social innovation that researchers have identified throughout the project.

As argued in the opening chapter of this publication, as well as in other publications emanating from the WILCO research project (e.g. Evers et al. 2014), the vast majority of the literature on innovation does not use the term *social* innovation. The small stream of research that does is largely unconnected to the rest. In other words, when we refer to *social innovation research*, it must always be kept in mind that we are referring to a specific subset and not necessarily the one that is academically best known or most influential.

Literature and policies that do conceptualize, define and use the term social innovation, however, usually frame the concept in a highly positive fashion (e.g. Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) 2010; Mulgan 2006). Social innovations stand for “improvement” (Phillis 2008) and are linked to a better answer to basic needs as well as more satisfying social relations (Moulaert 2010). There is even talk of a “social innovation movement”, though there is no convincing evidence to suggest that there is more social innovation now than 50 or a 100 years ago, nor that it is part of a coherent movement. It appears to be ideology more than a serious assessment. Moreover, this optimistic strand of literature tends to ignore a number of existing and more critical conceptions of social innovations.

This chapter will discuss general criticism of this optimistic approach, highlighting the dark side of social innovation concept and practice, referring to the implicit influence of market and government models, the denial of politics and inflated expectations of diffusion.

Although we will use material from the WILCO project to underpin the argument, we will maintain self-criticism (up to a point). As a project working within specific debates and within specific funding conditions, it too was influenced by some of the more rosy assumptions in the debate. The role of the constructively critical insider is necessarily an ambiguous one. We will try to indicate to what extent we too have been influenced by normative assumptions, to what extent we have managed to avoid them and why.

24.2 The Influence of Market and Government Models

Social innovation—though presented as an alternative to markets—is often infused with conceptual baggage from markets and government.

This is most evident in the emphasis on scaling and systemic change. According to this perspective, innovations must grow and be “rolled out”. Adaptations of the innovation cycle of social innovations show this as the logical final step for a mature innovation. As we already argued in the earlier chapter, evidence from the WILCO project challenges the idea of scaling in various ways. An overall conclusion is that the life cycles of social innovations, including processes of emergence, stabilization and scaling up, were very conditional and not available at the press of a button.

Furthermore, most social innovations studied in the WILCO project were not scaled. In addition, it seemed as if most social innovators were far from interested in scaling up their social innovations. One case study of employment social innovation in Zagreb can serve as a first example, as difficulties for scaling up of the project were explicitly discussed (Bezovan et al. 2014a). Main challenges included difficult working conditions of overburdened social workers, lack of financial resources to support clients and too high expectations regarding employment. Similar conclusions were found in the case of employment-based projects in Birmingham as they were intended to be time-limited pilot projects and were small in scale, which meant the opportunity for scaling up was always going to be limited (see Chap. 21 in this book). In fact, our research revealed that many innovations died when their funding ended.

A cyclical perspective implies that innovations that are not scaled are failed innovations, or at best unrealised potential—they get stuck somewhere down the cycle. But this cyclical perspective is adopted from a business context, and as such it carries implicit normative assumptions. It is, paradoxically, a perspective that is similar to one of government: Solutions to problems are to be expanded through bureaucratic, standardised procedures, with an emphasis on equal access and treatment. This underlines that the major distinction in society must not always be between market and state but could also be between universal and contextualised perspectives (Scott 1998). The universal perspectives of market and state deny alternative conceptions of systemic change that rely less on big breakthroughs and more on incremental groundswell delivery (Osborne 1998; Garcia and Calantone 2002). The former perspectives also consistently undervalue the role of alternative providers, such as voluntary organisations and informal initiatives, as they tend to produce the types of locally embedded social innovations that remain under the radar.

Also, the conceptual lens implicit in such perspectives tends to be based on products rather than service processes. Various researchers identified how innovations in services are not only profoundly different from products in terms of the degree of tangibility, separability, perishability and co-production (Sundbo 1997; Drejer 2004; Pestoff and Brandsen 2006; Normann 2007; Osborne 2013). Between market and government, they need an open system orientation that acknowledges the importance, for example, of organisational and institutional environments (Tether 2003). Yet, these perspectives are notable by their absence in the discussion of social innovations in welfare services.

24.3 The Denial of Politics

Mainstream literature and policies are strongly in favour of social innovation (or any type of innovation, for that matter), preferably so-called “disruptive” ones. Contained within this conceptualization of social innovation seems to be the normative assumption that any particular innovation must be a good thing, not the least as a result of the emphasis of social in social innovations (Membretti 2007; Meeuwisse

2008; Miller and Rose 2008). Opposition—often described in terms of barriers—is often regarded as reactionary and somehow in conflict with public interest (compare with Phillis 2008; Murray et al. 2010).

Of course, social innovation as a process may encourage the improvement of welfare services and society more generally, but that does not mean that any specific innovation is necessarily positive. For a start, it downplays the risks involved in any innovative process and the challenges this poses for support and management (Jørges and Nowotny 2003). Risks are an essential part of innovation, but that implies that social innovations often fail (like start-up businesses), which may have all sorts of negative effects. In one Dutch case we examined, the failure of a neighbourhood watch initiative soured relations within the community (Fledderus et al. 2014). Although policy experiments are applauded, these are generally seen as chances for success rather than as opportunities for learning from failure (Borins 2001).

More fundamentally, the normative endorsement of innovation ignores the fact that those who resist it may have a point. Social innovations concern changes in social relations, which means that there are also people who lose by it. Are they simply reactionary forces that need to be overcome? It is not that easy. The interpretation of social innovations is not inherent to the nature of the innovation, and there are often different ways to “read” them. As noted in Chap. 9, “they acquire different senses, depending on the position given to them in the discursive context. This is testament to the open and risky nature of innovations”. Indeed, in diffusing innovations, a certain level of ambiguity is often essential to success, because they may have to be reinterpreted and contextualised within a different political discourse. Whether one is for or against them is essentially a question of how one relates to the different discourses.

This points to a disturbing element in discussions on social innovation, which is the tendency to downplay the political context and conflicts of social innovations in welfare services (Pettigrew 1973; Hill and Hupe 2009). As discussed in the introduction to this volume and this chapter, the mainstream literature argues that social innovations to a large degree are not the property of specific social and political orientations. Thus, social innovations stem from the necessity to improve existing welfare services and to devise better solutions (Harris and Aldbury 2009). In other words, social innovations could be considered a normative good (Membretti 2007; Meeuwisse 2008). However, social innovations’ values, actions and outcomes will always be contested issues, as discussed earlier. Not only are they prone to the inherent party political nature of welfare policy processes, they are also subject to internal political processes of welfare service organisations and the need of managers to demonstrate their effectiveness in a field of allegedly contested outcomes (Feller 1981).

Social innovations can also be linked with a diversity of political goals. They might take different meanings over time, depending on the wider political concept and institutional system wherein they become embedded (see e.g. Osborne and Brown 2011). In fact, the concept of social innovation was kept in high esteem when linked to the political context in some of the cities included in the project. This was especially the case in dispersed as compared to unified policy environments. One example was Pamplona in Spain (Hendrickson 2014). Although the concept of

social innovation was not an explicit priority in this city, it was met with sympathy even when it challenged dominant views in the political sphere. The concept was linked to actions of limited scope as offshoots of mainstream programmes, as a way to expand social action without expanding or containing direct public provision. Another example was the city of Malmö in Sweden (Carrigan and Nordfeldt 2014). Innovation was made a key discursive concept in the policy arena around local welfare in Malmö. Political actors considered the concept a cross-political one and used it in the hope of attracting people and organisations from various ideological backgrounds. In both these cities, the concept of social innovation was supported by varied political coalitions, albeit for different reasons.

At the same time, other social innovations among the case studies in the WILCO project were limited in their development because others downplayed the contested nature of their work or because they were bogged down by local political conflicts. It was sometimes impossible to distinguish successful from failed cases because there was no consensus on what their goals should have been. In the case of neighbourhood revitalization innovation in Zagreb, for example, a lack of coordination between local government offices and local city companies affected the visibility of the innovation in a negative manner (Bezovan et al. 2014b). Public strategies or social marketing were consequently not on the agenda due to political conflicts, including an unstable political situation, resignation of a mayor and local elections. Another example of political conflicts disabling social innovations was found in the city of Varaždin (Bezovan et al. 2013).

The role and recognition of civil society in the development of social innovation has strengthened over time. However, as argued in the research, political turbulence and changes to power structures hindered the development of more systematic co-operation from being established. There are examples of cities and local contexts, such as Lille, in which the local political arena for social innovation remains weakened by attention paid to a limited number of other priorities due to economic crisis and budget cuts (Fraisie and Bia Zafinikamia 2013). There are also cities, such as Malmö, in which local political disagreements hindered the implementation of particular innovations (see Chap. 6 in this book). Even though there was political consensus about the need for new solutions in local welfare in general and the promotion of social innovation as a concept in particular, different stakeholders and coalitions disagreed regarding the methods and instruments to be implemented, affecting the emergence and development of social innovations.

If the practice of social innovations has more to do with changes in social relations than products or processes, they are necessarily also conflict-ridden and political by nature. Those who claim to study the phenomenon with any seriousness must at least incorporate this much. Resistance and opposition, risks and dangers, as well as negative effects and misuse need to be taken seriously, regardless of the normative good of social innovations (Borins 2001).

Such conflicts are rarely discussed in the current mainstream of social innovation literature. Ironically, in its denial of politics, social innovation literature is profoundly political. Being aware of the local context and by implication of the local politics was one of the hallmarks of the WILCO project's approach.

24.4 Inflated Expectations of Diffusion

One of the main objectives of the WILCO project was expressed as identifying the “key factors for diffusion and upgrading of (social) innovations” (Evers et al. 2014, p. 9). At least three different positions on the possibility and desirability of diffusion can be identified (see Lewis 2007; Segnestam Larsson 2013), two of which explicitly challenge the assumption that social innovations easily can be diffused to other cities and local contexts. The first is the view that suggests that the transfer of best practices among different kinds of local contexts and organisations is easy and desirable (Herman and Renz 1999; Roberts et al. 2005; Shoham et al. 2006).

This view has been disproven already (see the previous chapter), and the WILCO evidence only serves to underline this. Diffusion did not always occur where it was sensible, sometimes simply because of economic reasons. One example was the case of economic circumstances in relation to nonprofit housing in Varaždin (Bezovan et al. 2014b). Even though one of the analytical results of the case study revealed that this innovation showed the capacity to become a model for other cities with sufficient diffusion capacity, the economic crisis that influenced the fiscal capacities of cities across Croatia at the time of research hindered diffusion even within the city of Varaždin. Economic circumstances like too much dependence on public funding for stability were also mentioned as a limiting factor, for example, in the case study of neighbourhood revitalization in Geneva (Kapko and Cattacin 2014).

In other cases, diffusion did not take place because innovations could not match the relevant bureaucratic criteria to be considered worthy of partnership (cf. Borins 2001). Since its creation, a housing association in Nantes had regularly been invited by public actors to participate in activities aiming to create strategic priorities regarding care for elderly people (Coqblin and Fraisse 2014). However, public actors regarded the association as an experimental project still in the making, not as a regular partner in the development of social policies. Moreover, the case of housing revitalization in Geneva shows that what other parties considered a lack of relevant assessment also prevented diffusion (Kapko and Cattacin 2014).

Such limitations to the diffusion of social innovations are acknowledged in the more critical strand of social innovation research (Rogers and Shoemaker 1971; Loch and Huberman 1999; Damanpour and Gopalakrishnan 2001), in which two more critical views can be distinguished. One of these could be labelled the “adaptive” view. Researchers and practitioners who support this view argue that although social innovations from one context may have relevance for another context, they cannot be applied in a simple or straightforward manner (Åberg 2008; Maier and Meyer 2011; Sahlin and Wedlin 2008). Instead, the desired social innovation has to be adapted or translated into the local context.

Indeed, we found that—given this process of adaptation—a number of innovations went through a process of translation and localization. Some of these innovations represented approaches that, even though they were new in the context where they appeared, represented international trends, having emerged in many sites and cities across Europe. This concerned three types of innovations in particu-

lar. The first type of social innovations was social enterprises working in the field of occupational and social integration as so-called “work integration enterprises”, such as the employment social innovation of Filur in Stockholm (Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2014a). Additional examples of this type of social innovations that appeared in many sites and cities across Europe were found in Barcelona, Plock and Varaždin (Montagut et al. 2014; Siemieńska et al. 2014; Bezovan et al. 2014c). The second type of social innovations representing international trends was participative and community-oriented forms of revitalising housing estates and urban neighbourhoods (e.g. Bezovan et al. 2014b; Nordfeldt and Carrigan 2014b; Kapko and Cattacin 2014). Finally, the third type of social innovations to be mentioned here was family support services and centres of various kinds. Despite differences, their common innovative core was to direct offers of support to the whole family system instead of focusing solely on childcare services. This type of social innovations was common in contexts as different as Italy, England or Germany (Costa and Sabatinelli 2014; Brookes et al. 2014; Ewert and Evers 2014). The combination of the three types of social innovation, including similarities and differences across sites and cities, suggests that diffusion did take place but with local translations and adaptations.

Yet, there is a third and more critical position towards the import of social innovations, suggesting that the process of mainstreaming leads to a standardization of solutions and the trimming of more critical elements of the original innovation (Boyd 2004; Galston 2005; Jensen and Miszlivetz 2006). This is not something the WILCO project examined systematically, and it is up to future research to apply this more critical position to the possibility and desirability of diffusion.

On the basis of the existing evidence, we can conclude that there is no direct relationship between the potential value of an innovation and its opportunities to be diffused. The picture of a swift and easy transfer is therefore misleading.

24.5 Conclusion

In order to provide some counterweight against the inevitable parade of successful innovations that comes out of such a project as WILCO, we adopted a more critical perspective on social innovation research. As this chapter has shown, many perspectives on social innovations have explicit or hidden normative assumptions that obscure the dark side of the phenomenon: the failures, the conflicts and the oppression of universalistic approaches.

As argued in the previous sections, attention for detail and a diverse group can go some way in preventing such assumptions from stifling the debate. In the end, one should always have a few critical questions at hand. Who benefits from the introduction of social innovations? Who loses? Did anything get worse? Common sense also helps. In the context of welfare, many of the problems are what policy science calls *wicked problems*, such as poverty, addictions and homelessness. These do not have easy or ultimate solutions. Eldorado is not around the corner.

Academically, the added value of social innovation is less in its conceptual contribution—this is very limited—than in its potential ability to bind several disciplinary traditions together. It is a pity, then, that much of the social innovation research has been relatively weak in incorporating the more mature conceptual and theoretical insights from these traditions. In another function, as a concept bridging theory and practice (in the words of Jenson and Harrison, a “quasi-concept”), it has been more effective (European Commission 2013, p. 16). However, on both scores, its potential can only be fully realised when there is more honesty about covert assumptions and the dark side of social innovations.

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Chapter 25

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly in Social Innovation

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Social innovation is in several respects an ambiguous term. On the one hand, it purports to be a new development; on the other hand, it is as old as mankind. Arguably, today's innovations are less dramatic than those 100 or 200 years ago. It is a force potentially capable of changing social policy and society more generally. The hope of understanding social change as human progress, once focussing on technological and market-based innovations, is now pinned on social innovations that take shape in the realm of civil society. There is, however, no guarantee at all that innovations from the texture of civil society will have a happy end in the form of state powers adapting and strengthening them, since they rely on human relations and are therefore also prone to conflicts, failures and politics. Social innovation is at the same time a useful catch-all phrase for bridging theory and practice and a concept often despised as academically weak and politically ephemeral.

Researchers in the Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favour of Cohesion (WILCO) project have tried to balance the various demands on social innovation research, to be academically sound, while at the same time demonstrably relevant to practice. A key objective of the project was to contextualise social innovation: to

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understand them in relation to the social, political and spatial context from where they originate and within the wider contexts that are so influential for their further development.

On the basis of the overall evidence, this concluding chapter discusses the implications of our findings and identifies key issues for discussion. To recognise the often overtly or implicitly normative nature of social innovation literature and to do homage to one of the most famous “Spaghetti Westerns”, we have ordered our argument in terms of the “Good”, the “Bad” and the “Ugly”. “Good” signifies what innovations can contribute to a society’s ability to cope with change and, more precisely, to do it in a way that change can be thought of as progress in civility. “Bad” signifies the shortcomings of social innovations—especially their limited impacts in an overall averse social and policy context. “Ugly” stands for discourses that regard social innovations as something else—usually as market-based products and technologies.

25.1 The Good

The first reason why we think that social innovations stand for something “good” has to do with the fact that *social innovations and much of the related debates underline the impact of democratic politics and active civil society—with implications on what innovation means and on what makes up the innovative capacity of societies.*

Traditionally, innovation discourse was guided by a strong focus on market-based developments, new ideas that get taken up by entrepreneurial capitalists who know how to turn a good idea into an innovative marketable product. In this perspective, societies based on market systems were considered dynamic societies, in contrast to traditional societies without market systems and to autocratic systems with centrally planned economies that failed to develop such dynamism.

However, markets have their own structural logic and so have political and societal systems. It was argued that the development and installation of guiding values, institutions and firm regulations need democratic politics and a guaranteed free space for society, with a double impact:

- The societal sphere, civil society in a more narrow sense and democratic institutions with their modern political administrations, became a field of and for innovations, creating forms of living and organisation such as urban lifestyles, new organisational forms like associations, which co-shaped ideas about progress as human progress.
- Welfare states and civil societies created a framework of orientations and rules, which influence the types of innovative market-based products that could be successfully sold to consumers that were also citizens. The culture of modern democratic and welfare societies, their proceedings and regulations, had both selective and civilising impacts on market-based innovations, strengthening their social use values and restricting their negative side effects.

The discourse on *social* innovations is different, since it expresses a different view of human progress. While acknowledging the importance of market systems in the generation of innovations, it also underlines the innovative potential of the civil sphere in society and of democratic state institutions. They have an impact by creating social innovations within their own domains and through their ability to civilise the social dimension of market-based innovations, products and technologies.

In our conceptualisation of social innovations, we expressed our sympathy with concepts of the social innovations that stem from neither the research and development (R&D) centres of big business nor technocracies of central state administrations. The social innovations we focussed on express the vitality of open and pluralist systems, representing hopes and aspirations that escape or even confront dominating concepts of progress and innovation. They show that not one economic (often called neoliberal) or political concept and logic (often labelled as *governmentality*) shape all spheres of society. They also show that market and state logics are not as per definition at odds with civil society initiatives, but that they are capable of producing links between agents and spheres in urban society.

The second aspect of the “good” in social innovations has to do with the fact that *local social innovations can foster debates about new instruments, approaches and coping strategies dealing with challenges to inclusive social and urban development.*

They do so because they show that there are alternatives to prevailing orientations the path-dependent welfare states offer and to making public management similar to business management. The cases studied and presented in this book result in a kind of mosaic. They direct attention to a cultural turn in public services, regulations and governance, something illustrated by our case studies both of cities and of local innovations. The summary of major policy trends in the 20 cities in the introductory chapter of Part II, and the analysis of recurrent patterns found among the local social innovations in the introductory chapter of Part III point to the same key-issues:

1. Service innovations invest in capabilities; pave ways from mere protection to co-production; open approaches avoiding stigmatizing effects; bridge gaps, reconciling professional services and people’s life worlds; create bundles of personalised support in order to meet users’ complex needs.
2. Innovations in regulations upgrade forms of ad hoc support by offering time-limited loans; offer individually tailored combinations of services and benefits to curb new social risks; and work with “social” contracts that relate access to welfare support to people’s commitment—to work for themselves and the community.
3. Innovations in governance offer co-production and partnership by fostering units and types of organisation that operate in more socially embedded ways; promoting recognition of new groups and themes; building issue-related inter-sectorial partnerships and platforms that work on “hot” items; favouring democratic decentralisation through participatory mechanisms in neighbourhoods.

4. Innovations in modes of working and financing consolidate forms of multi-professional teamwork including volunteers and civic commitment of supporters; produce new professionalism, combining formerly fragmented knowledge through dialogue with and involvement of users; operate on mixed funding, merging resources from stakeholders across sectors.
5. Innovations in how to conceive of (local) welfare systems focus on welfare mixes, reaching out to all sectors of local welfare systems and upgrading its community component; less standardised, more diverse and localised welfare arrangements; a welfare beyond established demarcation lines, that opens up to environmental and lifestyle politics, bridging economic and social policy concerns, welfare and urban politics, focusing less on groups and more on situations and territories.

The key words and issues as they are recollected here can be viewed and taken up both as promising solutions to local problems and as messages to all those who are interested in changing the cultural orientations and policy frameworks of local welfare, services and urban governance.

This leads to a third argument: *social innovations offer good chances for promoting change since they can be quite easily spilled over to similar milieus and settings in other spots and localities.*

As argued above, it takes specific constellations of factors for local social innovations to emerge—not only pressures and needs but also aspirations and openness of actors in the local context (see Chap. 2). In the academic debate on enabling conditions for social innovations, it is common to point out factors that seem to be specifically local, such as social and cultural movements, traditions of solidarity within the local community, an urban texture where unconventional attitudes merge with entrepreneurial readiness and local elites that open up to new ideas and attempts.

This is however slightly misleading, as discussed in Chap. 3 of this book. None of these factors are exclusively local. Movements and projects in a city are usually related to social trends and strands of thinking, values and assumptions present at different points of society. Local experts taking part in innovative processes are usually members of networks that operate on (inter)national levels. Programmes with funding possibilities and their local nudges are often the result of initiatives by state experts at national level that encourage new approaches. Social innovation is multilevelled by nature.

Altogether, this points towards a process of social innovation that relies on interplay and contagion across domains, logics and multiple levels.

25.2 The Bad

What is the “bad” side of social innovations in the sense of short-lived and limited impact? In local welfare, we identified several negative aspects, of which we stress three: the short lifespan of most social innovations, the limited interest in transfer-

ring them and the aspects of social innovation where the social dimensions appear more threatening than promising.

To begin with, *most local social innovations are precarious*. Like butterflies, they are pretty, but they lead a short life. There is a tendency in publicity on social innovation to discuss successful cases that become part of standard practice. Based on our evidence, we conclude that the reality of local social innovations is a different one. The majority remain local and last only a limited number of years. The emphasis on success stories and scaling up is an important one, with implications for the direction of future funding; but it is equally important to realise that the majority of local innovations (especially those not originating in professional organisations) do not fit such a pattern of growth and one should not disregard the cumulative effect of the many small, temporary initiatives that are of high value within their local context.

Of the innovations we studied, many were either discontinued after a few years or faced an uncertain future in the short term. Cutbacks in public sector funding no doubt play a part in this, but the underlying structural dynamics (such as project-based funding, dependence on charismatic initiators, high mobility in cities that disengages people and shifting political fashions) suggest that the underlying conditions are of a structural nature.

A second “bad” aspect of social innovations is that *the innovators themselves often give little attention for diffusing them*. In a market context, diffusion comes with profits and is the point of the initiative. The social innovation literature stresses the entrepreneurial and leadership side of the phenomena, and it goes without saying that innovators aim at popularizing widely what they are doing. This perspective suggests that social innovation comes with the inherent desire to spread the message and change the world. Looking at the usual examples of scaled social innovations, one could almost believe it. Our findings show, however, that this assumption cannot be maintained for a considerable part of social innovations in local welfare. Many tend to be generated by projects, initiatives and actors from the third sector, who have no direct interest beyond their local context.

A detailed look at the cases shows that often groups of people or organisation took action in the face of a pressing local need: children went hungry, women were abused and young men wandered the streets aimlessly. They devoted great energy to get their initiative off the ground, scraping together resources and building on local knowledge. Their original interest was not selling their innovation in another city, let alone another country. This can be interpreted both as admirable commitment to local needs or as a lack of interest in problems beyond the borders of the community. Either way, it limits the impact of social innovation to a far greater degree than its advocates usually admit.

A third element that we consider as “bad” is related to the fact that *a significant part of social innovations represent cultural, economic and social aims and practices that are highly controversial or even seen by many as threatening rather than promising*. For instance, there are consumer goods such as new technological devices that generate personal information through apps and social media. They allow more (self-)control of health and performance, progress going hand in hand with the

risk that businesses or the state abuse data for their own purposes. Yet, such risks have not stopped such devices from spreading like wildfire. Likewise, businesses in the sharing economy like *Uber* are very ambivalent in their effects. Furthermore, new innovative instruments for the diagnosis of genetics, aiming at new forms of preventing health risks (including for the unborn), raise complicated ethical and social questions.

Socially threatening innovations like the ones mentioned tend to be ignored by the mainstream academic debate on “social” innovation, which prefers to focus on innovations with social dimensions largely considered as “good”. However, they have both a technical and a social dimension. Their social impact is high and their implicit aim is to encourage a certain style of living, working and consuming. Due to their controversial social impacts and aims, they neither fit in the pool of social innovations seen as basically good nor do they count as clearly unsocial innovations.

Working with a broad notion of social innovations calls for research that systematically studies how to deal with controversies on social innovations with varying balance sheets of possibly good and bad social goals and impacts, depending on context and nature, and how this influences their development.

25.3 The Ugly

The “ugliness” in social innovation is to misrepresent them as something they are not. Probably *the most common misrepresentation of social innovation is to implicitly treat them as similar to business innovation* and, as a result, ignore many of the special conditions needed to make them flourish. Sure enough, many social innovations originate from businesses, yet those in local welfare mostly originate in nonmarket contexts like the third sector or social movements (according to some definitions of social innovations, exclusively so). More importantly, there are fundamental differences compared to other types of innovations. For a start, they usually relate to services not products. This makes a difference in that it relates to ongoing relationships rather than discrete transactions and to outcomes rather than outputs. Furthermore, they are usually embedded in specific social relations. This, in turn, means that they are more contextually bound than their technological counterparts. An iPad will continue to function in the same way whether it is used in Stockholm, Dover or Belgrade. This is not the case for approaches or schemes working with people that rely on specific regulations and cultures to be effective. Finally, they tend to address social needs not sufficiently addressed by government programmes and markets. Indeed, local governments can even use such initiatives to justify their own inactivity or, through a symbolic financial gesture, construct political legitimacy by appearing to respond to social challenges.

As discussed in Chap. 3, all these have consequences for the emergence and development of social innovations. The implicit use of business models as a benchmark strengthens the already strong tendency to emphasise successful and scaled

examples. Though scaling is important, it concerns only a relatively small proportion of social innovations and one that appears to be based primarily on a selective use of case studies. It also strongly underplays the significance of the vast majority of social innovations that are not or only partially diffused, remain restricted to a local area and last only for a relatively short period of time. Arguably, the cumulative effect of such small initiatives is of far greater importance to society than the few star examples that achieve a wider impact. The emphasis on widely dispersed social innovations also tends to highlight the role of professional organisations and networks, given the importance of intermediaries for diffusing social innovations. By implication, it downplays the role of third sector organisations and citizens' initiatives, whose roles are often confined to a local setting.

A second misrepresentation concerns the relationship between economic and social innovation. *The underlying assumption of several studies and public statements is that prevailing politics of economic and urban growth and social innovation in cities go easily together* and that they are complementary and part of a single strategy to make cities more attractive, competitive and liveable. Even supporting this perspective, one would concede that the diffusion of innovations that challenge routines is problematic due to procedural and managerial difficulties, calling for effective strategies that strengthen acceptance. However, disregarding innovative attempts or picking up only certain parts and aspects points to a kind of selectivity of contexts related to controversial interests, priorities and strategies. Generally, local authorities tend to favour innovations complementary to their urban growth strategy, aimed at making the city more dynamic and attractive according to their terms. The fact that the most sustainable innovations in our sample were those either fully integrated into the local welfare administration or even initiated by the local authorities deserves closer examination. The case studies on Milan and Münster offer good examples of the selective nature of such strategies, favouring innovations that were complementary to their growth strategy. Local social innovations fit to different degrees with the strategies of cities to become globally competitive places, attractive for urban elites. Urban gardening is one such example. However, innovations focussing on people at the fringes of urban society are of minor relevance for such strategies. Such types of innovations have proven especially vulnerable to cut-backs and shifts in political mood. The British examples of local social innovations are good illustrations of this.

The third "ugly" trait that makes it difficult to find appropriate ways of dealing with social innovations in public policies is *the one-sided presentation of welfare state reform as a primarily top-down process, giving priority to regulating and standardising over securing open spaces for social innovation*. This state-centred concept of change and reform is historically untrue, as many social innovations *avant la lettre* were incorporated into state-sponsored schemes and reality is more hybrid than often acknowledged. The focus on welfare regimes in academic debate has all but written bottom-up innovation out of a welfare state and presents the history of social reform history as top-down process of large-scale institutions and regulations. It ignores the basic role of experimentation and bottom-up innovation in nudging and realising successful reforms.

25.4 Finally

Research on social innovation has progressed slowly in recent years, caught between many imperatives. In particular, it has hovered unsteadily between highly abstract (meta-)theories and conceptualisations, a flood of interesting illustrative examples and a barrage of practical guidelines with a largely intuitive basis. There are few signs that the social innovation literature has already got a firm place in academic debates in established disciplines. As a matter of fact, there is not much debate, the points of contention have not crystallised clearly. This, however, is a necessary precondition for the state of the art to move forward. We need scepticism and disagreement.

It would certainly help if research on social innovation more wholeheartedly embraced failure and thwarted ambition. The road to realising social innovations is a rocky one, and many are left behind. One reason is that they get embroiled in “legitimate controversies”. Social innovations are political in nature and not all political initiatives survive. But our evidence shows that the failure of social innovations is also due to widespread risk-averse attitudes when it comes to social experimentation. Despite paying lip service to innovation, authorities tend to prefer what is known and tested—be it in the tradition of state regulation and standard setting or through a swing towards approaches working well in the business sector. Innovations guided by other social values and assumptions than those prevailing traditionally in administrations and business have a harder job. They need supporters that show some readiness to take a risk and help to realise at least some kind of open space, some clearings within the otherwise rather dense jungle of regulations and standards.

In the face of innovations with the potential to revolutionise the economy and areas like labour market relations, it would be silly to argue that new common rules and large-scale regulations are not needed. The social innovations covered in this book, however, need another kind of state intervention. They are local, often dispersed and precarious. They call for enabling welfare policies that give room for experimentation, listen to the messages of innovators and find ways for using their expertise. For decades, welfare has been linked to universality, but it should be linked to diversity as well. Welfare policies must practise experimentation and think in terms of dilemmas to get the best of both worlds. May this book encourage researchers, policymakers and professionals to take steps in that direction.

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