



UPLIFT – Urban PoLicy Innovation to address inequality with and for Future generaTions

Deliverable 2.3

Inventory of post-crisis policies against inequality

Innovative local policies against urban inequality

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1 Executive Summary

This report aims to provide an overview of Social Innovations in the post-crisis era at the 16 locations where the UPLIFT project has been carrying out research activities. Whilst the identification and analysis of (youth related) Social Innovations is not at the centre of the UPLIFT project, this work provides an important addition to the Reflexive Policy Agenda, a key objective of the project. The aim is the introduction of a new, sustainable, participatory policy co-creation process, where young people - who are in the focus of the UPLIFT project - are actively contributing to policies that directly influence their life chances. The contribution of this report is a deeper look into the dynamics of existing Social Innovations; it is not meant to provide a complete or representative overview of the innovation processes in the 16 locations - as only one innovative case was selected in each location - but instead focuses on the mechanisms of particular innovations and the way they interact with the particular context in which they take place.

Based on the growing literature, we define Social Innovation as the introduction of a social practice, project, arrangement, institution involving and affecting social relations that is new in a given social context by certain actors with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices.

In the analysis of the case studies, we focused firstly on the role of the context in driving and sustaining innovations, and in particular on the impact of the financial crisis and different governance arrangements. We find significant differences across contexts in the way multi-scalar governance processes interact with Social Innovations. Key examples to this are the differing significance of the role of the EU or localities' different level of independence. We also distinguish between contexts where youth matters are treated as a separate policy field and others where they are addressed through various sectoral policies. Contexts characterised by the former approach seem to be ahead in fostering coordinated cross-sectoral policies in line with EU guidelines.

Secondly, we attempted to break down our cases to pinpoint the ultimate 'units of innovation'; identifying seven features which were shared across multiple innovations. These highlight the way Social Innovations often respond to perceived failures of traditional welfare states by moving beyond rigid sectoral boundaries and top-down, closed processes of policy making. These features are: 1) New service provision: introduction of new type of service(s), 2) Financing innovation: innovative sustainable financing solutions, 3) Open government arrangements: strong responsibility of locations, 4) Public, private, people partnership: partnerships between different public and non-state organizations, 5) Integration of services: cross-sectorial cooperation, reacting to the complex needs of the target group, 6) Evolution and self-reflexivity: strong in-built monitoring systems and possibilities for adjustment, and 7) Participation: involvement of the target group.

2 Introduction

The main objective of this report is to provide an overview of Social Innovations in the post-crisis era at the 16 locations where the UPLIFT project has been carrying out research activities. This report is based on a thorough literature review on the main theories and practices of Social Innovation across the EU and the analysis of those selected innovation cases that have been included in the Urban Reports¹. Whilst the identification and analysis of (youth related) Social Innovations is not at the centre of the UPLIFT project, this work provides an important addition to the Reflexive Policy Agenda, the new method of policy making which UPLIFT aims to develop. As such, the UPLIFT project itself aims to create Social Innovations in four locations (Amsterdam, Barakaldo, Sfântu Gheorghe and Tallinn) through the introduction of a new, sustainable, participatory policy co-creation process, where young people - who are in the focus of the UPLIFT project - are actively contributing to policies that directly influence their life chances.

In order to generate a comprehensive understanding of the term and specific characteristics of innovations in the 16 functional urban areas, we had regular biweekly meetings throughout 2021 in the framework of the UPLIFT Community of Knowledge, where the authors of the Urban Reports had multiple iterative discussions about their findings.

The contribution of this report is a deeper look into the dynamics, potential and limitations of existing Social Innovations. This report is not meant to provide a complete or representative overview of the innovation processes in the 16 locations – the mode of case selection or the quantity of the cases was not designed to fulfil such goals. Instead, we are focusing on the mechanisms of particular innovations and the way they interact with the particular context in which they take place. The insights generated through this analysis will be used in practice in the course of developing the local reflexive policy agendas.

The report begins with an overview of the main definitions of Social Innovation introduced in the literature in the last decade or so in order to arrive at a tentative working definition. The discussion then turns to the role of the financial crisis, and the reasons why certain locations and contexts appear to have higher innovatory potential. The theoretical overview concludes with a discussion on innovative policies and policies attempting to foster innovation. After the introduction of the UPLIFT Social Innovation cases, the next section discusses the context in which these innovations take place with special emphasis on the role of the financial crisis and particular governance arrangements. Based on a thorough deconstruction of the cases, the following section identifies the main innovative features shared across multiple innovations. In the concluding chapter we describe the main insights derived from the literature and the

¹ Urban Reports are individual deliverables of the UPLIFT project (D2.2). Each report provides an overview of the main national and local policy approaches with regard to the specific problems of vulnerable young people in the domains of education, employment and housing. A section of the report introduces a local social innovation.

analysis of the innovation cases, which might contribute to the development of the Reflexive Policy Agenda.

3 Social Innovation – approaches and definitions

3.1 Definition

Social Innovation has become an increasingly ubiquitous concept both in scientific and policy discourse over the last decade. The proliferation of literature overviews (e.g. Ayob et al. 2016, Moolaert et al. 2017) attests to the intensification of academic interest in Social Innovation. In Europe, Social Innovation has appeared in policy documents as a potentially important instrument in responding to the multiple challenges faced in the decade after the 2008 financial crash (Sabato & Verschraegen 2016, von Jacobi et al. 2017, Avelino et al. 2019). Yet, despite its increasingly high profile, Social Innovation remains ambiguous. As a concept, it is rooted in a number of different social science disciplines, such as economics, business studies, sociology and politics, all with their distinct approaches and definitions. At the same time, as a fundamentally practical endeavour, the term Social Innovation is also used in different ways by practitioners themselves – and as such the notion or the label Social Innovation can take a life of its own. Settling on a working definition of Social Innovation for the purposes of this report necessitates a brief overview of the dilemmas and debates surrounding the concept.

The difficulty of defining Social Innovation stems from a number of issues inherent to the concept. Firstly, the wide range of phenomena covered make it difficult to draw precise boundaries. The fundamental 'unit of innovation' can be a new service, a new regulation, a new process, a mode of working or way of organising deliberation processes. Similarly, Social Innovations can be macro or micro in their scope, they can be structural or local, and can involve various actors at multiple scales. Although certain strands of literature emphasize the role of certain actors over others as the key agents of Social Innovations – for example social enterprises/entrepreneurs – it is widely argued that Social Innovation can occur in different institutional locations and can be driven by various actors – such as activists, policy makers, local communities etc. (Moolaert et al. 2017). Thirdly, as multiple authors emphasize, Social Innovation is highly context-specific: what may be considered an innovation in one particular context may be routine or commonplace in another (Evers & Ewert 2015). For this reason, identifying and analysing innovation can only be done with reference to the social, institutional or cultural context in which it takes place. Arguably, the way Social Innovation as a concept can connect wide-ranging phenomena across different contexts is precisely what makes it compelling.

Maintaining the breadth of the concept of Social Innovation while providing a robust and workable definition then is a fundamental dilemma running through the literature. Common elements of different definitions of Social Innovation are generally²:

- (1) novelty or reconfiguration – novelty can take many forms, indeed it can be the reorganization or reconfiguration of existing elements of a system and the relationships between them;
- (2) the better satisfaction of needs – what makes innovation *social* that it is oriented towards human needs (rather than say an increase in productivity or profitability) at least in its intentions;
- (3) social relations – another aspect of the *social* in Social Innovation is that it involves a transformation of social relations in the pursuit of better social outcomes;
- (4) intentionality or some kind of conceptual grounding.

The most striking difference in how these elements are combined in various definitions is the level of normativity that the various conceptions imply: that is, whether Social Innovation is conceived of as inherently emancipatory and empowering, and, as a necessary condition, improves the satisfaction of human needs (as indicated above, most definitions mention the better satisfaction of human needs, but in certain cases the focus is specifically on the intention and not the outcome).

Proponents of a more normative definition argue that without an ethical/value-based grounding, Social Innovation is too fluid a concept (Moulaert et al. 2013, von Jacobi et al. 2017, Ziegler et al. 2017). Firstly, without a normative scrutiny of both its ends and means, the concept remains vulnerable to capture by particular actors using the language of Social Innovation merely as a tool to legitimate interventions which further their own interests. Secondly, as proponents argue, the lack of implicit evaluative framework makes the term analytically weaker, and can conceal underlying conflicts of interest and differences in value. The CrESSI project (funded by the Seventh Framework) attempts to develop such an evaluative framework based on the capability approach (von Jacobi et al. 2017). As von Jacobi and colleagues argue, the capability approach – as a systemic ethical perspective – enables a careful evaluation of the impact and process of Social Innovation with reference to the agency and freedom of human beings to achieve opportunities.

By contrast, critics of the normative approach argue that such definitions are analytically weakened and/or practically unworkable precisely because of their normative assumptions. As Evers and Ewert (2015) and Haxeltine and colleagues (2017a) argue, Social Innovations take place in complex fields, their operation and effects unfold over time. Thus, an evaluation of whom they empower, or whom they benefit is often not straightforward, and can only be

² See potential annex material at the end – A survey of relevant definitions of EU policy documents and EU funded projects focused on Social Innovation.

discerned retrospectively with reference to the context in which they operate, their unintended consequences, ambiguities and contestations. This does not mean that such evaluation is not important, or indeed, an essential part of the analysis of any Social Innovation. Rather that the inclusion of conditions with regard to the emancipatory, empowering or need-fulfilling qualities of Social Innovations make definitions unworkable and/or necessitate making unsubstantiated assumptions when identifying Social Innovations in the field.

For the purposes of this report we will rely on a definition which does not include inherent assumptions about the emancipatory qualities of Social Innovation or its success in improving the satisfaction of needs. In our view, the evaluation of a Social Innovation's effects and operations must come after its identification. Based on the common elements of the literature, our working definition is built on the elements listed above: (1) novelty, or a reconfiguration of existing elements; (2) the *intended* better satisfaction of human needs; (3) the transformation of social relations. Building on the definition developed in the SI-DRIVE project (Domanski et al. 2019) we define Social Innovation as the introduction of a social practice, project, arrangement, institution involving and affecting social relations that is new in a given social context by certain actors with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices.

3.2 Social Innovation and crisis management

As a number of authors have pointed out, the explicit turn towards Social Innovation in European policy making with the Europe 2020 strategy (launched in 2010) has coincided with the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis (Sabato & Verschraegen 2016, Avelino et al. 2019). Often times, the turn towards Social Innovation has been explicitly connected to the effects of the financial crisis, such as unemployment and rising poverty coupled with increasing budgetary constraints. A characteristic example of this new policy discourse is cited by Avelino et al. (2019); the policy paper by the Bureau of European Policy Advisors (2010) on Social Innovation argues explicitly that 'at a time of major budgetary constraints, Social Innovation is an effective way of responding to social challenges, by mobilising people's creativity to develop solutions and make better use of scarce resources' (p. 6.).

Thus, Social Innovation appears as an alternative to more traditional government responses, which are perceived as either insufficient given new social pressures and complex challenges or untenable in the face of financial cuts to social services. On the one hand, studies have shown that major shocks (such as financial crises) can indeed play a role in the development of Social Innovations – and there is a great number of accumulated case studies of examples of local innovations in response to crisis and marginalization (Moulaert et al. 2013, Brandsen et al. 2016b). On the other hand, researchers have criticised this policy discourse from two main perspectives; firstly, arguing that such endorsements of Social Innovation can be used to justify the retrenchment of welfare provisions. And secondly, such policy documents risk overstating the potentials of SI to address systematic social challenges. We will discuss these points in turn.

Attempts to develop a systematic framework to analyse Social Innovations – such as the ALMOLIN model developed in the SINGOCOM project (González et al. 2013) or the multi-level perspective approach of the TRANSIT project (Avelino et al. 2019) – consider macro structural changes as key elements in understanding the development and subsequent trajectories of Social Innovation. González et al. (2013) argue that ‘turning moments’ – such as economic crises, or changes in government – are crucial in driving Social Innovation, and, identifying the effects of such events is one of the basic elements of understanding why Social Innovations emerge. Indeed, the cases surveyed in the SINGOCOM project seek to address processes of marginalization exacerbated by the financial crisis. In the view of González et al. (2013) the intensification of social exclusion dynamics and the deprivation of human needs drive local Social Innovation as actors mobilise previously untapped resources to overcome them.

While the framework developed in the SINGOCOM project is specifically oriented towards particular kinds of Social Innovations (addressing issues of social exclusion at a local level), the less normatively oriented approach of the TRANSIT project also underlines the need to account for macro-structural events when analysing the trajectories of Social Innovations (Avelino et al. 2019). In their view, Social Innovation can lead to transformative change (that is ‘a persistent adjustment in societal values, outlooks and behaviours’ [p. 3. Haxeltine et al. 2017b]) through the interplay of transition dynamics in three different levels as proposed by the multi-level perspective (cf. Geels, 2005, 2010); landscape, regimes and niches. As Avolino et al. (2019) argue, the exogenous macro trends and developments which occur on the landscape level are a key factor in explanations of (transformative) Social Innovation.

At the same time critics have problematised the way policy discourses draw an explicit connection between the importance of Social Innovation and challenges arising from the financial crisis. One line of argument centres on the way such discourses can serve as a justification for the withdrawal of the state from welfare provision and cuts to social services. As Fougère et al. (2017) have pointed out, positioning Social Innovation as mainly an instrument to fill in the loopholes in the welfare state implants the idea that further budgetary constraints are inevitable and present the necessity of welfare cuts as natural facts. A similar argument has been developed by Swyngedouw (2005), who – even before the financial crisis – have argued that the development of a governance model based on multiple actors can sometimes mean the withdrawal of the state’s commitment to, and accountability for the provision of welfare. Furthermore, Moolaert et al. (2017) identify a preoccupation with efficiency and effectiveness together with an over-emphasis on social enterprises as the primary loci of innovation which point to an instrumentalised conception of Social Innovation in certain policy discourses.

Another line of criticism with regard to the potential of Social Innovation as ‘an effective way of responding to social challenges’ is its real limitations in addressing wider, *systematic* issues. As Avolino et al. (2019) argue, the most pressing social problems are interlinked and systemic in nature, while a lot of Social Innovation tends to be piecemeal, partial and localised, and as such, their ‘empowering and transforming potentials [...] are not self-evident’ (p. 196.).

Segnestam Larsson et al. (2016) also identify a similar tendency of inflated expectations towards the diffusion of Social Innovations. As they argue, most social innovators – for one reason or another – are not interested in scaling up their innovations. Even when diffusion does occur, it necessarily involves a complicated process of adaptation, whereby the innovation is ‘translated’ in new contexts or scales. In both these senses, the dynamics of Social Innovation differ markedly from other kinds of innovation, and thus should be confronted with different sets of expectations and criteria for failure. Despite its limitations, Brandsen et al. (2016) make the case that Social Innovation can still serve as an alternative to prevailing forms of welfare provision offered by the state or the operations of the market, and that through a groundswell of change, even small-scale or short-term Social Innovations can play a role in long term transformations.

3.3 Cities and Social Innovation

In a lot of Social Innovation research, cities appear as privileged sites. As researchers (Moulaert 2013, Brandsen et al. 2016b, Domanski et al. 2019) emphasize, the urban is a prime location for innovation because of the concentration and visibility of social problems as well as the density of social connections and the diversity of residents. Moulaert (2017) identifies a specific strand of Social Innovation that emerged from the neighbourhood development movement of the 1980s, which focus on small-scale emancipatory activities challenging social exclusion. The neighbourhood appears as the ideal spatial scale to galvanise people through grass-root organising. Less focused on grassroots innovation, Cattacin et al. (2016) make the point that as cities (and European cities in particular) are the primary loci where social problems appear, they are also the site where solutions have to be found. As they argue, since the financial crisis cities had to react pragmatically to the retrenchment of national welfare systems through their own social policies. The relative autonomy of cities (which is however dependent on the level of subsidiarity in a given context as well as the financial and political standing of the city) enable them to pursue alternative policies and successfully foster Social Innovations. In such formulations, Social Innovations appear as locally constructed responses to social problems (Domanski et al. 2019).

Researchers have attempted to identify patterns in the differences between cities’ – and states’ – innovative potential. In the WILCO project, Cattacin et al. (2013) develop a typology of urban governance, based on different relationships between social and economic policies. Following the general focus of the WILCO project, their investigation concerns specifically the extent cities are able to develop or incorporate innovative solutions in their welfare delivery. The characterization of the different categories is framed in the context of increasing economic competition between cities. Based on their case studies, they show that subsidiarity in the organisation of social services enhances the possibilities for Social Innovation. For this reason, urban governance embedded in a federal (rather than unitary) states are generally better able to facilitate the emergence and sustainability of Social Innovations, because typically the local level has more independence to address social challenges. At the same time, the financial position of a given city plays a fundamental role in determining its room for manoeuvre – and

in their view, wealthier cities are more open to Social Innovations. The WILCO project also demonstrated that in cities in New Member States the EU plays a primary role in the production of concrete social policies.

Kazepov et al. (2013) also argue that different welfare regimes lead to different conditions for Social Innovations. Focusing on different national welfare regimes, they propose four 'ideal types' of Social Innovation processes. Universalistic welfare regimes are characterized as having "supported Social Innovation", with relatively high potential for developing and upscaling Social Innovations facilitated by the strong role of the state. This however might limit the scope for experimentation. By contrast, in liberal welfare regimes market dynamics play a more important role in what the authors call "self-sustained Social Innovation" processes. In such contexts innovations often intend to replace provisions of the welfare state. "Negotiated Social Innovation" processes are the characteristics of corporatist-conservative welfare regimes where relatively high capacities for developing and scaling up Social Innovations are coupled with the necessity for compromise. Familialist welfare regimes show patterns of "fragmented Social Innovation". In such contexts, autonomous actors and informal groups may display a high capacity for the development of innovations but mostly in the gaps left by institutions and powerful actors, with low potential for upscaling.

3.4 Policies of innovation

The typologies outlined above attempt to identify the 'right conditions' for Social Innovation. As Social Innovation became more mainstream, there has also been more of an emphasis on developing innovative policies and creating the ideal environment for Social Innovation. On the one hand this includes efforts which provide financial and other support for initiatives from various non-state actors. On the other hand, there have been efforts to alter the processes and structures of policy-making and welfare provision. Arguably, such attempts to foster Social Innovation through the introduction of new forms of co-production and inclusive decision making in itself constitutes Social Innovation. However, researchers emphasize the fundamentally political nature of Social Innovation (Edminston 2016), which go against the tendency of policy makers advocating for Social Innovation to treat it as a mere technocratic instrument to 'solve problems better'.

The idea of a Social Innovation ecosystem emerged to describe the ideal environment for Social Innovation, which includes procedures, supporting mechanisms, laws and regulations which enable and facilitate the development and uptake of innovation processes. Such approaches emphasize the importance of collaborations between business, state, civil society and academia – parts of what is called the "quadruple helix" (Domanski et al. 2019). Social Innovation laboratories have been set up in a number of cities as a way to provide interfaces between different actors and institutions and to facilitate research. Other pro-innovation policies include innovative financing arrangements (such as Social Impact Bonds) as well as a variety of recognition tools, for example incubators, forums or prizes. A key challenge of such

innovation policies has been impact measurement, as it is recognized that traditional economic or efficiency indicators are insufficient in valuating social impact (BEPA 2014).

The ambiguous nature of such innovation policies is well illustrated by analyses of EU innovation policies. Sabato and Verschraegen (2016) demonstrate that the EU has a number of instruments supporting SI; from financial resources (such as direct funds to implement or scale up socially innovative practices) to visibility and reputational resources (such as conferences and prizes) and networking and cognitive resources (for example tool-kits, seminars etc.). As they argue, such resources have allowed domestic actors on the ground to introduce and experiment with new approaches and policy instruments. They point out the importance of EU funds in the field of Roma inclusion and labour integration in particular. Ziegler et al. (2017) make a similar point in relation to Roma inclusion policies, arguing that the availability of EU funds have allowed actors challenging the domestic status quo to 'jump scales'; that is gain support for initiatives that might have met outright opposition within local contexts. As such, the EU appears as a key player in a multi-scalar innovation system, able to bypass the national level in sustaining local projects – as authors have pointed out, this role is especially significant in the New Member States.

At the same time, von Jacobi et al. (2017) argue that the EU's framing of Social Innovation is highly limiting. As they point out, the main instruments of Social Innovation are the European Social Fund (ESF) and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). They argue that the ESF has a very strong emphasis on work integration through re-training and re-skilling, which pre-empts any wider challenge to existing socio-economic dynamics. In this framework, Social Innovation is only recognised as a means to achieving specific ends – not as ways to introduce or deliberate on different possible ends to challenge and alter the fundamental functioning of society. Similarly, in the case of the EaSI, the focus is on innovations that are 'more social in their means rather than in their ends' (ibid. p. 10): whereby innovation is supported in a way that reflects existing institutional interests and cognitive ends.

A strand of literature focuses on public sector innovation; that is new modes of policy production and implementation which challenge and alter existing organizational structures and functional demarcations of the state. Some researchers consider these initiatives potentially key elements in reconfiguring state-society relations as an answer to the failures of current welfare provision and the legitimation crisis observable in many polities (Totterdill et al. 2015, Brandsen et al. 2016b). Such arguments are generally framed with reference to the perceived failures of the public welfare model which emerged as part of the post-war settlement as well as the inadequacy of reforms based on New Public Management approaches. The main problems of the traditional welfare model include the lack of flexibility, inefficiency, its overly bureaucratic nature, and the rigid demarcation of departments. As part of the SIMPACT project, Totterdill et al. (2015) propose a New Public Governance model; an alternative vision of governance directed at improving processes and outcomes in public policy making and service delivery. As they argue, key elements of such a model would include

different processes of co-production and participation in policy making, reflexivity and the joining up of public services.

Ewert & Evers (2014) of the WILCO project have identified recurring instruments and approaches in local Social Innovation which they consider positive developments in fostering social cohesion. They organise their examples around three main concerns: (1) user relations in social services, (2) new forms of risks, rights and responsibilities and (3) new modes of governance. Common tendencies they have identified include investing in capabilities, bundling services, the provision of temporary and flexible aid in response of new types of risks and the development of networked organisations and coalitions of action. However, the authors note elsewhere that in certain cases attempts to 'de-bureaucratize' welfare systems can come with more ambiguous consequences, such as the increasing flexibilization of labour or an over-reliance on voluntary, unpaid work on the part of NGOs (Evers & Ewert 2015).

4 Discussion of the UPLIFT innovation cases

The following chapters are based on the cases of innovation that were identified in the framework of the UPLIFT project. Each Urban Report of UPLIFT³ contains a short description of a project, policy or programme that either the local stakeholders or the researchers considered innovative based on the three main attributes of innovation highlighted in the previous section⁴. (The detailed descriptions of cases can be found in the Annex of this report.) It is important to emphasize that the 15⁵ cases are too few to draw general conclusions about the nature and context of youth policy innovations in the urban areas of the European Union. However, these cases provide in depth information about the local context and the general features of important Social Innovations. Considering the possibilities and limitations the selection of UPLIFT innovation cases provide, the following chapter has two major goals:

- to explore and illustrate the differences of the policy contexts in which the 15 Social Innovation cases take place, and
- to identify their innovative features and deconstruct the innovative logic of urban social policies that have the potential to reduce the inequalities affecting youth.

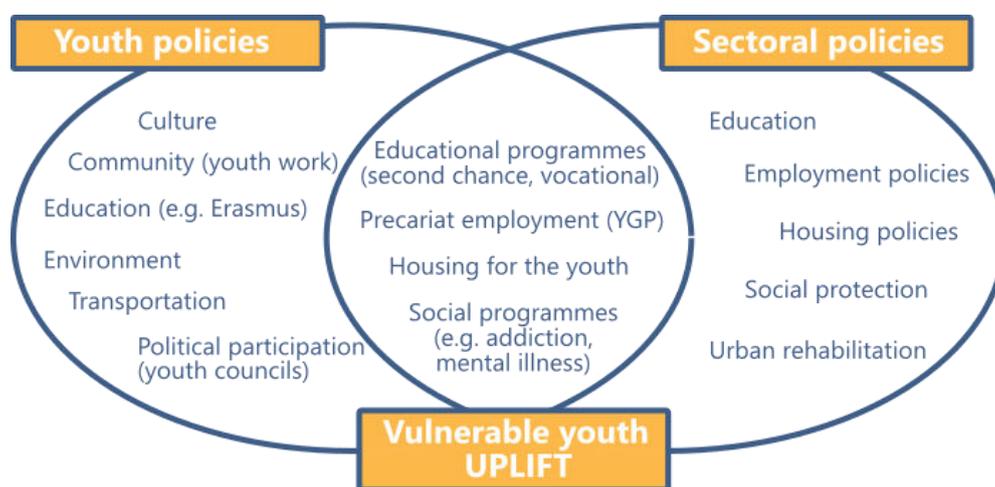
³ Urban Reports are individual deliverables of UPLIFT project (D2.2). Each report presents shortly the main national and local policy approaches with regard to the specific problems of vulnerable young people in the domains of education, employment and housing. In addition to these generic policy descriptions an additional chapter can be found in each report that contains a description of one specific innovative youth policy piece.

⁴ Innovation attributes: (1) novelty, or a reconfiguration of existing elements; (2) *intended* better satisfaction of human needs; (3) the transformation of social relations.

⁵ In Lom, neither the interviewees nor the researchers could identify any policy as innovative for the following reason: *'The new EU funding mechanisms that became available after the accession and the new strategic documents developed in this period overlapped with the negative effects of the crisis and blurred concrete post-crisis measures.'*

Researchers have met different level of difficulties in the identification and selection of innovation cases; while in some locations the problem was about which innovative youth policy to choose from the several potential ones, in other locations identifying even one case proved to be a struggle. The reasons behind this phenomenon have multiple dimensions. Firstly, in many New Member States clearly defined youth policies are practically non-existent. Elsewhere youth policies are not directly linked to vulnerability, but address age specific challenges and needs. In these countries (e.g. Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Poland) youth strategies have a strong cultural and community aspect but have weak institutional frameworks and they lack the recognition as a youth specific interventions. Consequently, local stakeholders could not identify specific youth policies, only sectoral policies that have strong relevance for this age cohort (like education, employment, urban rehabilitation).

Figure 1. The space for innovation in youth related social interventions



The other difficulty for identifying innovative policies or programmes for youth is rooted in the different considerations of what is new or innovative and what is mainstream. This is a disputed in the literature. Although we recognise innovations in the local context even if the same phenomena can be considered mainstream in other locations, it is important to consider the local stakeholders' judgement on this matter as well. Many of them do not consider policies that are widely used in other locations of the same country innovative even if locally they have not been introduced before. We, as researchers, did not have the intention to 'overrule' the judgement of the local stakeholders in this regard.

The time scale and life cycle of innovation is also a crucial issue. Innovations by definition contain novel elements but they may become mainstream over time. For example all EU financed youth guarantee programmes are considered new by some of the stakeholders in New Member States as young people were not in the centre of employment policies before the financial crisis, while for others these youth guarantee programmes already appear as mainstream as they have been centrally implemented for a decade.

And finally, there were some technical difficulties in the identification of innovative due to the lack of available information on their details or effects. Researchers chose those cases where sufficient amount of information was accessible.

For all of these reasons the following inventory of 15 cases of Social Innovation is very colourful; it contains examples from strictly youth targeted, new and experimental solutions that have a high potential to fill in a policy gap to urban policies that have limited relevance to the youth cohort but highlight inspiring policy design or implementation. The selection of cases also reflects our aim to not only choose examples with the highest innovation potential but about those ones that besides having innovative features may have strong policy implications and transferability potential for other urban areas.

Table 1. Short summary of the Social Innovation cases from the Urban Reports

Location	Project/programme	Policy field	Short description
Amadora, PT	National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment (PNPSE)	education	The PNPSE is a new strategy for preventing school dropouts based on local schools developing solutions in cooperation with the local municipality and community institutions. The Ministry of Education ensures training, technical advice and impact assessment, while each school or school cluster creates their Plan of Strategic Action. These plans include measures such as teachers' training centred on the needs of the school, discussions among professionals, recruitment of additional professionals, use of new teaching methods, the creation of new curricula and forms of evaluation and research-action projects.
Amsterdam, NL	Studiezalen	education	Studiezalen is a network of study halls – quiet places across different vulnerable neighbourhoods in Amsterdam – where students can go to concentrate on their homework. Today they also provide homework support, life coaching, expert pedagogical guidance, initiatives against bullying and talent development for primary and secondary school pupils and students - all completely free of charge. In addition, support for parents is also available with language and financial literacy courses, and parenting advice.
Barakaldo, ES	Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood	integrated services	Run by the local public centre, the accompaniment program works with young people aged 18-35. It starts with a multidimensional diagnosis of the youngster's situation and aptitudes to create a context-based and personalized social strategy to accomplish emancipation: including employability, level of training or education, social relationships and emotional wellbeing, among many others.
Belfast, UK	Youth Council embedded within the Belfast Agenda	policy making	The creation of the Belfast Youth Council aimed to get young people involved in policy creation, as well as having a say in how the city is run. The Youth Council is made up of 40 young people from communities across Belfast. All the members are aged between 13-21 and they remain in their roles for two years. The Youth Council get involved in issues that matter to young people in the city and members can actively lead projects in the city.

Bologna, IT	Together for Work	employment	A network of collaborating organizations belonging to the municipality and the metropolitan area was created, in which companies, workers' unions, various institutions, and even the church participate, to facilitate the creation of new jobs, taking into account the basic needs of both the target group and companies. In the last three years, a thousand new jobs have been generated, being a unique experiment in Italy.
Borlänge, SE	Delmos	policy making	The municipality established new cross-sectorial teams which bring different competencies together to facilitate the development of new anti-segregation strategy. Interviews with physical planners confirm their active participation in such collaborative planning discussions although in practical terms work has so far not resulted in many concrete plans.
Bratislava, SK	New Cvernovka	cultural centre and housing	The New Cvernovka programme is, among others, a unique partnership between regional municipality and a civil society initiative. Today, the New Cvernovka brings together 132 artistic and creative studios, a community garden, a public park, a playground, a multifunctional space, an outdoor terrace with a stage, a public library and a shop offering the works and products of the participating studios. The premises are fully owned by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. In 2018, the social program "Housing Cverna" was launched, which in its pilot version implements three housing units that are designed for homeless people.
Chemnitz, DE	DELPHIN	integrated services	DELPHIN is an inclusive socio-educational care service. The focus is on providing support for different types of socially disadvantaged children and young people. DELPHIN steps in on the basis public contracts, when more conventional types of social assistance have failed or are overtaxed. DELPHIN starts with a diagnosis to ensure a 'holistic and personal approach to life structuring and social therapy'. In individual care strategies, young people are helped to build a foundation to independent life-careers. Besides providing individualized services, a new urban-farming method provides an opportunity for working while also fostering new connections among young people and youth workers. DELPHIN also provides limited emergency housing.
Corby, UK	Big Local	policy making	As a funding mechanism, Big Local provides long-term, resident-led funding with almost no strings attached. Delivered by Local Trust, it is the largest single endowment ever made by the National

			Lottery Community Fund, a non-departmental public body which distributes National Lottery funding for the benefit of communities across the UK. In Corby the community has decided to use the fund specifically targeted to young people.
Leuven, BL	Community Land Trust	personalized services in urban rehabilitation	A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a member-based legal entity that owns land and creates permanently affordable housing. Although they are recognized entities in certain countries, the Leuven example is only the third such initiative in Belgium. Community Land Trusts offer an alternative to both public housing and classical ownership, and the private market. They are democratic organizations, managed by the community and with no profit motive.
Łódź, PL	Mia100 Tenement House - Kamienic	renovation	The renovation process in the inner part of Łódź has an important element devoted to the handling local social issues; both pre-existing and the ones emerging throughout the renovation works. To help solve these problems, new employees were hired at the city hall, called: 'area managers' (8 people) and 'personal managers' (8 people). They are officials who work in the field, directly with the residents. Their task is to support residents in solving various types of problems from housing to family issues. Community lighthouse keepers form a support network composed of various institutions, organizations and associations - such as a social welfare centre, the police and the employment office - that are able to respond to various problems and needs of residents.
Mulhouse, FR	Coopération Active et Potentiel (CAP)	employment/ entrepreneurship	The project aims to develop the entrepreneurial spirit of young Mulhouse people who are poorly integrated into society (notably those living in target areas of the urban renewal programme Politique de la Ville). Through a collaborative strategy, a support system for new initiatives have been created. This also meant the re-training and re-orientation of the professionals working in the youth sector to ensure that there is more emphasis on the personal goals and existing capacities of young people.
Pécs, HU	Arany János Talent Support Programme	education	The aim of the national programme is to assist students coming from small villages in remote areas to reach tertiary education. First the programme operated as a talent management programme that provided a one-year preparation before entering secondary school (e.g. language courses, mathematics, IT, communication, learning methodology) with lodgings included. From 2004, a new

			sub-programme was launched that concentrated on the dormitories themselves. From 2007 another sub-programme was added targeting students in vocational education. A unique aspect of the programme is local actors' wide room for manoeuvre in implementation, and the strong emphasis on monitoring.
Sfântu Gheorge, RO	Prospera Sepsi	integrated services in urban rehabilitation	The complex rehabilitation program includes a team of 36 professionals who will work with the target groups – three marginalized neighbourhoods inhabited by mostly Roma population - supporting participants in their daily lives and activities, and in the long run, helping them to get out of their disadvantaged situation. The project addresses several aspects of the lives of people facing extreme poverty focusing especially on children and young adults. The most important activities of the project are: facilitating access to social and educational services, fostering improvements in general health, and the promotion of integrated interventions to reduce the risk of poverty and combat discrimination and segregation., not only finding a job, but also other actions to help them find their way to a decent life.
Tallinn, EE	'Nudge theory'	policy making	New approach that applies softer social work methods based on nudge theory to research and test different types of new social policies or modification of policies. This methodology is at the moment being tested in the Ministry of Social Affairs. The project, presented by the case, tests the modification of the conditions of parental leave.

After providing a general description of the 15 cases, the following table demonstrates the ways in which these cases fulfil the definition of Social Innovation provided above, focusing on the three main elements of the definition: 1) novelty, or a reconfiguration of existing elements 2) the intended better satisfaction of human needs 3) transformation of social relations.

Table 2. Main attributes of innovation of the selected cases

Programmes/projects	Novelty or reconfiguration in the policy context	Intended better satisfaction of needs	Social relationships
National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment (Amadora, PT)	A new national initiative based on local solutions, set and implemented by local actors. It was newly implemented in four school clusters in Amadora.	Combatting the high level of school failure and early dropouts in a tailored way.	Involves the reconfiguration of the role of local professionals vis-à-vis national policy makers alongside the enhancement of their capabilities.
Studieuzalen (Amsterdam, NL)	Fills a gap in the official policy through the introduction of a new kind of service supported by a new financing mechanism.	Increasing the educational attainment of students with low-income and migration backgrounds through the creation of a new space and later other new services.	The creation of new supportive institutions and social ties around students and their families.
Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood (Barakaldo, ES)	A new approach to helping vulnerable young people with complex problems, that is holistic, flexibly-paced and inclusive.	Targeting youth in an integrative way to achieve a stable improvement. The initiative was a complementary response to the long-term youth unemployment caused by the financial crisis.	The programme is based on a context-based personalized strategy to emancipation which also takes into account the youngster's existing aptitudes and goals and aims to also develop social ties.
Youth Council embedded within the Belfast Agenda (Belfast, UK)	A new way of involving young people in policy making.	The post-conflict identity of the city underlines the importance of inclusion and dialogue.	The Youth Council creates a new opening for bottom-up action, and fosters new connections between young people.
Together for Work (Bologna, IT)	A new type of service provided through the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including private businesses and the church.	The project supports those people between age of 50 and 60 who are chronically unemployed but still far away from being able to retire.	The project involved the formation of a network of organizations.

Delmos (Borlänge, SE)	The creation of new cross-sectorial teams within the public sector to foster more holistic approaches.	The aim of the cooperation is to counter segregation more effectively.	Fostering better internal coordination and strategic cooperation across different sectors of public administration.
New Cvernovka (Bratislava, SK)	New form of cooperation for reusing a publicly owned building, based on a long-term lease agreement, new combinations of services and activities.	The goal was to satisfy both the need to reuse a public building but also to provide a cultural, social and creative place for locals.	The combination of multiple activities and services (e.g. social housing and cultural facilities) also has strong integrative elements.
DELPHIN (Chemnitz, DE)	New, integrative service provision, and a unique combination of social services and an urban farming project.	This project came out of perceived necessities for change in young people's lives. Providing integrated services aims to better address the complex needs of young people especially when official policies fail to provide efficient help.	The initiative is an inclusive socio-educational centre which targets socially disadvantaged children and young people and young people in difficult life situation. It is located in vulnerable neighbourhoods, creating new places to connect and form social ties.
Big Local (Corby, UK)	A national programme towards the funding of the design and implementation of new, resident led, long-term, evaluative and flexible projects.	Better solutions to tackle spatial inequality and struggling communities through strong resident involvement.	Participatory, bottom-up decision-making fosters new capabilities and social ties in local communities.
Community Land Trust (Leuven, BE)	The introduction of a new, member-based legal entity with an innovative financial scheme in Leuven, which is also fairly new within the national context.	Providing affordable housing for lower-middle income households in a country where homeownership is strongly embedded into the socio-cultural environment.	CLTs introduce a new framework for housing based on democratic collective decision making and shared equity, that is distinct from classical homeownership as well as public housing.

<p>Mia100 Tenement House – Kamienic (Łódź, PL)</p>	<p>Creating new teams of staff who support residents in the course of urban rehabilitation in an integrated fashion.</p>	<p>As the urban rehabilitation involves the relocation of several residents a complex team was needed to responds to multifaceted needs.</p>	<p>The project involved the formation of a new support network composed of various institutions, fostering new connections and cooperative problems solving.</p>
<p>Coopération Active et Potentiel (CAP) (Mulhouse, FR)</p>	<p>Introduction of a new service to support entrepreneurship among young people and the re-orientation of local youth professionals to facilitate more integrative and capacity-based approaches in their work.</p>	<p>Increasing the social and labour market integration of disadvantaged young people.</p>	<p>The program is based on a new approach the aid troubled young people, that is based on building on their own ideas and existing capabilities, thus reshaping the relationship between youth professionals and the young people they aim to help.</p>
<p>Arany János Talent Support Programme (Pécs, HU)</p>	<p>Providing complex and tailor-made assistance in a loose top-down framework.</p>	<p>Supporting disadvantaged students through secondary education to reach university.</p>	<p>The main elements of the program consist of creating a strong support network behind students to facilitate reaching their potential.</p>
<p>Prospera Sepsi (Sfântu Gheorghe, RO)</p>	<p>This programme was the first to apply to and receive state fund to tackle segregation and discrimination through a cross-sectorial cooperation to provide holistic services for those who are in need.</p>	<p>Better addressing the complexity of needs among the inhabitants of segregated areas.</p>	<p>Poverty, social inequality and segregation has been an ongoing challenge for the city. This project specifically aims to reduce poverty by combating multiple aspects of social exclusion of disadvantaged communities.</p>
<p>'Nudge theory' (Tallinn, EE)</p>	<p>A new approach to policy making (especially the evaluation and reform of existing policies) based on scientific research and nudge theory in particular.</p>	<p>Scientific approaches can enhance the effectiveness of policies; in this case increasing the take-up of paternity leave.</p>	<p>Nudge theory attempts to reshape decision-making through small interventions, without coercion – this in turn can reshape the inequalities of child care – among others.</p>

4.1 Policy context

As was mentioned before, our sample of innovative cases from the Urban Reports is not large enough to make generalisations or to verify any of the hypotheses laid down in previous research about the role of the policy context in shaping Social Innovation. However, our case studies still raise interesting points and in many ways illustrate the dynamic interactions between innovative solutions and their context (specifically, different urban policy frameworks) discussed in the literature.

4.1.1 Engines of innovation

The analysis of the policy context of the innovative cases in UPLIFT helps us understand the 'engines' of innovation; the motivations of the stakeholders to start experimenting with a new policy solution in the hope of solving a problem more efficiently.

Role of the financial crisis

The financial crisis is identified in the scientific literature as an important contributor to innovation, and it seems to be that case in many of the UPLIFT examples of Social Innovation as well. In many places the vulnerable situation of young people became more evident in the aftermath of the crisis, and the following austerity period and thus required new policy solutions. Perhaps the most striking example of this has been the persistence of unemployment and housing affordability problems among young people in the South of the EU. Whilst traditional policies are highly sectoral (treating housing, employment and education as separate spheres of intervention), their apparent failure, and the fact that the problems of young people remained structural after the crisis period, caused some policy contexts to turn towards more holistic and cross-sectoral approaches. In Barakaldo, Spain as local experts realised in 2015 that the recovery from high unemployment was much less successful among youngsters as in the older cohorts, they introduced new targeted policies to help this vulnerable group through complex, tailor made solutions.

The literature also calls attention to the dangers of emphasizing the role of the financial crisis and the following period of austerity as an engine of innovation, as it may lead to the legitimisation of the 'downsizing' of welfare measures and transferring part of the responsibility to local, private or non-profit actors. This was the case in Amadora, where the increased independence and responsibility of schools in tackling the problem of early school leaving, did not go hand in hand with the increase in resources finance extra activities and new qualified staff.

It makes intuitive sense to suppose that periods right after a crisis, when financial pressures ease a bit, are the best for creating new long-term innovations as a crisis makes problems visible for both citizens and decision makers. A number of our cases appear to confirm this assumption as many of them were not born right in the financial crisis period, but some years afterwards, when it became apparent that certain problems were not solved by the post-crisis recovery – e.g. the high levels of unemployment and the precarious employment of young

people or housing affordability crisis lingered in some member states even when other parts of the economy and society showed signs of recovery.

Role of the European Union

In many of the local interviews in the framework of UPLIFT the role of the European Union in introducing and systemizing the debate around the problem of the young generation received a strong emphasis. The interviewees pointed out that this phenomenon have become stronger after the financial crisis as it had devastating effect on young people in particular.

'Youth policy' as formulated by the European Union encompasses a range of co-ordinated politics and policies that seek to support young people in the transition to become an active member of society⁶. Although current policies and interventions to support the young generation vary widely, a common set of values and principles has been established across the European Union and codified in various documents dealing with youth and youth policy⁷. In addition, the year of 2022 is labelled as the European Year of Youth⁸ with several events that aim to amplify the voice of youth (although not vulnerable young people specifically).

During the German EU presidency in 2020, a youth policy framework was introduced with the long-term aim to synchronise youth policy principles. European youth policy allows a diversity of approaches and respects national and regional traditions while aiming to ensure the opening up of new pathways towards fruitful lives for young people. The principles of this framework were accepted by all European Union countries. Youth policy should cover various policy fields like:

- youth policy governance,
- social inclusion,
- education and training,
- employment and entrepreneurship,
- voluntary activities,
- communities of practice.

In spite of the youth policy synchronisation efforts of the European Union we have seen a huge amount of diversity in how the principles are implemented in different contexts; in many member states youth policy is not conceptualised properly either on national or on a local level, while in others youth policy is strongly articulated and institutionalised.

Besides being the frontrunner of articulating a well-defined youth policy, the European Union was identified by the local stakeholders and researchers as a major actor in fostering and mainstreaming innovation in two major ways:

⁶ <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/glossary>

⁷ Amongst many others: <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/eu-cooperation-in-youth-policy>; <https://www.eywc2020.eu/en/agenda/community/>

⁸ <https://europa.eu/youth/year-of-youth>

1. The ESF (European Social Fund) plays a major role in financing mainstream social services in Southern and Eastern member states, and consequently there have been larger scale policy innovations (e.g. in the case of Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and Portugal educational, employment and urban rehabilitation programmes are primarily financed from EU sources). It is important to emphasize, that in cities of the New Member States social programmes financed by the European funds were the first ones to be considered as candidates for an innovative case by local stakeholders, such as projects from the Youth Guarantee Programmes.

Some of the European policies are filling national or local policy gaps, or 'push forward' agendas that have met strong political resistance on a national level. Through these efforts the EU encourages innovation in sensitive issues (e.g. funding urban rehabilitation programmes with the intention to integrate the Roma population in Sfântu Gheorghe, or providing complex educational and social services for students with disadvantaged social background in Pécs.)

2. The EU acts as an intermediary in spreading innovation through conferences and events, innovation and information networks (like EURO CITIES), and specific programmes like EaSI (EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation), or UIA (Urban Innovative Actions). From our selected cases the one, which is in implementation in Mulhouse, illustrates how a new social service to reduce the employment problems of young people can be born based on an international cooperation in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

In general, stakeholders had a positive view on the role of the European Union in fostering innovation, however concerns were also formulated with regard to the rigidity and overly bureaucratic nature of European programmes. Social programmes targeting vulnerable young people need to have flexibility in delivery and financing in order to develop tailor made solutions. Most of the EU programmes however – depending also on national programming - have strong and rigid requirements in order to avoid the misuse of funds, which is also real danger. But these requirements can act to standardize local programmes and make it difficult to create individual solutions. Looking at the urban cases from UPLIFT we may come to the hypothesis that EU level policies can lead to macro-level innovations and policy changes (changing complete systems), while national/regional/donor funds are more able to foster micro-level innovation.

Role of the multi-level governance

As noted in the conceptual overview above, the urban is a prime scale for designing Social Innovations because of the severity of social problems, the density of networks and the diversity of inhabitants. Researchers emphasize that the innovative potential of different localities heavily depends of two major factors; 1) subsidiarity in the organisation of social services and the room for manoeuvre localities have in designing and implementing services, and 2) the financial position of a given city to finance the organisation of services.

Examples of Social Innovations in the UPLIFT cases provide illustration on how unitary states encourage innovation by creating frameworks for action which provide freedom for the local level to innovate. Our examples highlight the themes of educational and spatial segregation where such new approaches were developed. In each case it was strongly emphasized that the local implementation and the room for manoeuvre localities have inside the framework contribute greatly to the expected efficiency of the policy. For example, in case of Amadora, each school had the choice to develop its own Plan of Strategic Action to compensate for the disadvantages of vulnerable students. Financing, training, technical advice and impact assessment was provided by the Ministry of Education. Similarly, the combination of a solid framework and the relative independence and freedom of the local level was the key to success in case of Sfântu Gheorghe. In Romania, the principles of integrated development to combat spatial segregation were already set on national level as a response for the European aspirations to combat the severe problems of marginalised communities and the creation of multi-stakeholder alliances (LAG) was also compulsory. However, the specificities of the implementation of this national framework and creation of multidisciplinary teams were defined on the local level. The national framework as a guiding and funding instrument was also an important aspect in two other urban rehabilitation cases (Łódź and Borlänge). It seems from the cases that strong national frameworks which allow freedom and independence in their implementation at a local level is a major theme in cost intensive large-scale policies like education or urban rehabilitation.

The cities' level of independence in delivering social services may not go hand in hand with their financial means. Also, the economic strength of a city does not necessary correspond to the amount of public funds available for social services. In the case of Bratislava, Slovakia, social services nationwide are financed from EU resources but the region of Bratislava is not eligible due to its relatively high average GDP/capita. Consequently, the city is not able to provide a similar level of social services compared to more remote regions and most Social Innovations are born through a combination of different actors (public, private, non-profit) and different funds (public, donor, personal), as is also reflected in the case of '*New Cvernovka*', a new cultural and social centre mainly for young artists, which is run by the Cvernovka Foundation.

As opposed to government initiatives, innovation may also be born completely by bottom-up actors – although such initiatives may need support from the public sector to survive or expand longer term. In Amsterdam, the '*StudieZalen*' initiative was established by a private person who himself had a migration background. From the original idea (the creation of a network of protected, quiet study places) that was mainly financed by private donor funds a complete set of services was created.

According to the literature, different welfare systems tends to have different attitudes towards innovation (see section 3.4); 1) universalistic systems tend to have a stronger top-down approach to implement systemic innovation, 2) liberal welfare models encourage self-sustaining innovations which often aim to replace public provisions, 3) corporatist-conservative regimes have a high potential to scale-up local innovations while 4) familialist

welfare systems result in rather fragmented Social Innovations. Our UPLIFT innovation cases confirm this assumption up to a certain extent, but certainly not as a rule. Well integrated bottom-up solutions were born in countries with universalistic welfare state (Amsterdam), while strongly top-down initiatives were implemented in a Mediterranean city (Amadora).

Both the scientific literature and some of our cases demonstrate that not only welfare systems, but also the culture of subsidiarity in the design and provision of services may be a key to encourage bottom-up innovations. E.g. in the Chemnitz case the innovation was initiated by a social work carrier but soon became linked to public social service providers by multiple contract agreements. In Germany, being a federal state, the principle of subsidiarity is very strong, fostering the creation of policies and programmes on the level where the problem is manifested. This fact gives a bigger role for local public and non-state actors. In contrast, there are less possibilities for grassroots initiatives to survive longer term in countries where local authorities and NGOs are strongly dependent on rigidly determined central funds. In these countries and cities central level innovation has a more substantial role (e.g. Amadora, Pécs, Borlänge and Tallinn).

4.1.2 Spreading and mainstreaming innovation

Policy context is important also with regard to the sustainability and the mainstreaming of innovations. As was already described in chapter 3.1, Social Innovation by definition intends to ensure the better satisfaction of needs, by higher quality or more efficient social services. This does not necessary mean that the result is *in fact* a better service. The policy context has an important role in creating the possibilities for success and for the mainstreaming of innovations. Social services are following a life-cycle which is similar to that of the production of goods: 1) introduction, 2) growth, 3) maturity, 4) decline. Innovation represents the first stage of a life cycle of a social service, which is introduction. In this phase, the costs usually exceed the benefits but in the coming phases this investment should produce sufficient returns. Transferring this concept into Social Innovation practice means that most of the social policies tend to be cost intensive in their innovation phase as a new policy has to be designed, requiring extra effort. The high cost may also be related to the assumption that social services are more efficient when they are holistic and provide tailor made solutions to the needs of vulnerable young people. But such an approach requires more labour force and higher work intensity, both of which increases the costs at least initially.

In order to mainstream a social service, it is crucial to create a balance of costs and benefits in the long run. However, as benefits in this case are long-term social outcomes, they might prove difficult to measure. When the social outcomes are not obvious, the cost factor can 'choke' innovation. So the policy contexts that seem to be more successful in mainstreaming Social Innovations are those that 1) have protocols for policy evaluation and monitoring and thus are more able to better estimate the long-term social benefits of policies and 2) have a flexible institutional framework to make necessary adjustments. We can point out the example of Bologna, where a frequent evaluation forms part of the programme, realised by a complex set

of actors implementing the programme, in which the local municipality is only one of the stakeholders.

The literature emphasizes that certain Social Innovations may be extremely complicated to mainstream as they are highly contextual, partial and piecemeal. In addition, certain innovators are not eager to mainstream their solutions as the innovative nature of the programme/project may be threatened by the non-flexible and highly bureaucratic nature of mainstream social policies. This is a realistic danger, as some of our cases and many of our interviews highlighted that solutions that have a certain level of independence from mainstream services are the ones that can reach the most marginalised social groups. These services tend to be managed by NGOs instead of official social service providers exactly because of the flexibility and adaptability these initiatives require. The '*DELPHIN*' project from Chemnitz displays one such solution, implemented by an independent provider targeting young people with multiple disadvantages, providing socio-educational, housing and employment opportunities. While there is cooperation with the public welfare services, this independence from administrative intervention is seen as the basis and precondition for the success of the intervention.

4.2 Innovative features

In this section we analyse the 15 innovations that partners and local experts have identified in the 16 Functional Urban Areas. The goal is to find and understand the main socially innovative features that have the potential to create social change in the 16 locations. Hence, here we provide an overview of the most common innovative characteristics of the Social Innovation cases provided in the Urban Reports.

As it was emphasized in the literature, most innovations do not only endeavour to contribute to the well-being of the marginalized, but as a by-product, can act to achieve societal change on a wider level. Taking this into consideration, we have identified the following seven main innovative features through the deconstruction of our case studies:

1. New service provision: introduction of new type of service(s),
2. Financing innovation: new, innovative combination of financial resources,
3. Open government arrangements: interrelation between top-down and bottom-up planning and implementation,
4. Public, private, people partnership: wide partnership between public and non-state organizations,
5. Integration of services: cross sectorial cooperation, reacting to the complexity of the needs of the target group,
6. Evolution and self-reflexivity: the policy contains a strong monitoring system and is flexible to better adjust different needs over time
7. Participatory approach: involvement of the target group.

Table 3. Evaluation of the cases based on their main innovative features

Location	New service provision	Financing innovation	Open government arrangements	Public, private, people partnership	Integration of services	Evolution and self-reflexivity	Participatory approach
Amadora	X		X	X			
Amsterdam	X	X				X	
Barakaldo	X			X	X		
Belfast	X		X			X	X
Bologna	X	X		X		X	
Borlänge			X	X	X		
Bratislava		X		X	X	X	
Chemnitz	X		X	X	X		
Corby		X	X				X
Leuven		X		X			X
Łódź	X				X		
Mulhouse	X						X
Pécs	X		X		X	X	
Sfântu Gheorge			X	X	X		
Tallinn						X	

4.2.1 New service provision

New service provision, by definition, contains the intention to respond to unmet needs through the creation of a new programme, project or policy that specifically aims to fill this gap. This also indicates that the newly introduced service has not yet been implemented in the given policy context (defined in a narrow or wider sense). Service innovations do not only foster actual and practical change for those groups who are not targeted efficiently with the existing services but also react to needs that were not adequately recognised by existing programmes and policies.

In the case of the *'Studiezalen'* project implemented in Amsterdam, a local person – himself originating from a disadvantaged background – has realized that there were certain groups of young people who were not targeted by mainstream policies that aim to provide support equal opportunities in education. His initiative intended to fill this gap in official policy, providing help for students living in deprived neighbourhood in low-income families.

'Despite the efforts from the Municipality of Amsterdam in improving access to equal opportunities in education for all its young people, our research and our interviews with NGOs highlight how some groups are still left out and are not reached by the policies that are meant to help them get out of their disadvantaged position.'

The '*DELPHIN*' project's novelty in Chemnitz as an inclusive socio-educational initiative lies in its individualized service provision (combining social services, life advice, help with housing and urban-farming jobs), which efficiently reacts to those needs which were not successfully addressed by official policies.

'DELPHIN steps in, on the basis public contracts, when more conventional types of social assistance have failed or are overtaxed.'

The '*National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment*' (PNPSE) program in Amadora was introduced in the post-crisis context of 2015-2016, following a change in national political leadership which increased the priority of social issues. Among others, experts have observed the high level of school dropout rate among students of low-income families, which needed a localized policy answer. This initiated the PNPSE programme, which introduced new measures to improve trainings for teachers that takes the needs of their schools into account, develop flexible teaching methods and so on.

'The National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment [...] was born out of a decision of the national government in 2016 to reinforce the role and capabilities of local education communities in tackling school failure and early dropout'

The '*Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood*' in Barakaldo was specifically conceived as a complementary policy response to the increased unemployment rate among young people (a consequence of the financial crisis). This new policy targets young people between the age of 18 and 35 years and provides a new service based on personalized strategies to improve employability, level of training or education, social relationships, emotional well-being and so on. Similarly, the '*Coopération Active et Potentiel*' in Mulhouse introduced a new type of service aimed to foster entrepreneurship among disadvantaged young people, in hope of better addressing their social marginalisation.

4.2.2 Financing innovation

Novelty can also appear in financial arrangements of programmes, projects, and policies. Among the projects that were chosen to illustrate Social Innovations in the 16 functional urban areas, we have identified several financial mechanisms that could be considered innovative: 1) corporate financing arrangements: e.g., '*Studiezalen*' in Amsterdam, 2) the combination of state and private funds e.g. '*Nová Cvernovka*' in Bratislava, 3) resident-led long-term funding e.g. '*Big Local*' in Corby, 4) the creation of a Community Land Trust in Leuven.

The '*Studiezalen*' initiative in Amsterdam relies both on public subsidies and the support of large corporations. The foundation that runs the '*Studiezalen*' project, has been experimenting with a sponsorship scheme which draws in donations from private individuals, large companies such as the Shell, Rabobank, McKinsey or the Orange Capital Partners as well as municipal and regional institutions. The financial contributions of private companies have enabled the expansion and the increase in capacities, although there are still long waiting lists to get access to the services provided by the study halls.

The 'Nová Cvernovka' project in Bratislava was realized through the cooperation of Bratislava Self-Governing Region who still fully owns the premises where the cultural and artistic space has been created, the partners of the Cvernovka Foundation and several other organizations together with the help of volunteers. The place is leased to the Foundation for 25-year period by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, which in itself constitutes an innovation. The ownership of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region also provides the municipality access to all internal documents of the Foundation and ensures an influence on decisions regarding the Foundation.

The 'Big Local' programme in Corby demonstrates a great example of designing an innovative, community-led project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund which distributes the money (£217 was invested, which means £1.1 million was dedicated for one community) among 150 communities in the UK. Entrusting local communities with the responsibility to prioritize issues enhancing local change is the major innovative feature of this particular programme. The community in Corby has decided to initiate programmes that specifically target its young population.

'The programme demonstrates an innovative approach to funding provision for local change. It is distinct from conventional funding programmes in five key ways: i) resident-led, rather than top-down, decision-making; ii) long-term, rather than time-limited, funding cycles; iii) non-prescriptive, rather than project-led, agendas; iv) patient, rather than judgemental, evaluation; and v) accompanied by flexible and responsive support (Local Trust, 2019).'

The example of the 'Community Land Trust' in Leuven also constitutes a financial innovation, as affordability is ensured in CLTs through the ownership of the land, and mechanisms which forestall the capitalisation of subsidies and the possible increase in land values.

'They have long-term responsibility for these facilities, including ensuring long-term affordability. To do this, they use mechanisms that ensure that the added value stays within the Trust.'

4.2.3 Open government arrangements

The UPLIFT project aims to discover, besides many other scientific and practical goals, the role of locations in initiating or implementing tailor-made Social Innovations. It is particularly interesting to see what role certain actors in different governance levels play in a programme, policy or project that has been identified as an innovation. This aspect of innovation provides an insight into the question of which institutional level is the optimal location for the development of the Reflexive Policy Agenda.

Both top-down and bottom-up initiatives are both represented in our case studies. In the case of programmes initiated from the top down that nevertheless have a strong local role it is particularly interesting to observe the way responsibilities are shared across multiple levels of governance.

The *'Big Local'* programme in Corby was a top-down programme, initiated by the National Lottery Community Fund, which is a non-departmental public body responsible for the distribution of funds that are targeting communities across the UK. When KHL (a part of Corby) has become part of the programme, the local community was entrusted with the responsibility of implementing projects. The community has decided among others to focus on young people.

'Reframing the role of communities, particularly in shaping the central government funds granted to local areas, will be increasingly relevant given the recent focus on 'levelling up'. As the majority of 'macro funds' and economic interventions over the last two decades have not involved communities in a meaningful nor sustainable way, interventions have consistently failed to address the most deprived communities,'

The outcomes of the *'Big Local'* programme in Corby and elsewhere point towards a new community paradigm in policy making and the distribution of funds not only on a local but also on a national level.

Another example of vertical cooperation between national and local actors is the *'National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment'* program in Amadora, which was born based on the decision of the national government in 2016 to encourage localities to create local Plans of Strategic Action.

'The major innovative feature of this strategy has been an integrated approach to the improvement of educational attainment based on local decision-making and bottom-up policy design and implementation, with an explicit concern with inequalities and support from the European Social Fund' ... 'They pointed out gaps in the articulation between national and local actors, which is precisely why the PNPSE involves distinct levels of governance and seeks to consolidate their interconnection with the constitution of a national network and the availability of European funds.'

4.2.4 Public, private, people partnership (4P approach)

Both in the literature and in the innovative examples of the 16 functional urban areas the collaboration of public and private local institutions and organizations, sometimes also from different policy fields, seems to be a common innovative feature which in some cases also involves the targeted local community or participating individuals. We describe the participation of citizens in a separate section due to its specific importance both as an innovative feature and to the UPLIFT project (See Section 4.2.7).

The *'Together for Work'* programme in Bologna is a city-wide collaboration between workers, companies, the church, and the public administration to provide help for those chronically unemployed middle-aged people (between the age of 50 and 60) who are not yet eligible for retirement. The network of local organizations reflects the complexity of the needs of the target group and proved to be a unique experiment, contributing to the creation of a thousand new jobs in the last 3 years in Bologna.

In Chemnitz, the *'DELPHIN'* project is an integrated youth welfare project that runs on an independent basis while still cooperating with public welfare services. This collaboration is claimed to be a precondition to alleviate inequalities among young people.

'Delphin is an example of an integrated youth welfare project run by a private youth and social work carrier under multiple contracts by various public youth welfare services, foundations and in steady contact with professional further education'

One of the main innovative elements of the *'PROSPERA SEPSI'* project in Sfântu Gheorghe is also the partnership between state institutions, locally important NGOs, and private companies (possible employers) and trainers in the field of work. This magnitude of cooperation of different stakeholders is a country wide new experiment.

4.2.5 Integration of services

The integration of services refers to horizontal, cross-sectorial cooperation which aims to place the individual at the centre of service provision. This is often a response to the way that traditional welfare provision, which is rigidly siloed across different fields (such as education, social assistance, and work-related services) is often unable to respond to complex and closely interconnected problems. Recognizing the complexity of the needs of the targeted marginalized groups, necessitated the development of integrated services, that do not exclusively focus for instance on improving the labour market position, but also on general well-being with the assistance of social workers/psychologists. Such initiatives emerged as one of the most common features across our 16 examples. A holistic approach often goes hand in hand with the involvement of a wide range of organizations (as discussed in section 4.2.4) to make the provision of integrated services as efficient as possible.

The *'Prospera Sepsi'* programme in Sfântu Gheorghe provides integrated interventions to combat discrimination, segregation and to reduce the risk of falling into poverty. The integrated interventions are provided by a team of 36 professionals with different fields of expertise, thus there is a wide collaboration between different state institutions and NGOs that operating in different policy fields. Although there were previous attempts to establish integrated service provision, individual actors could not achieve it. This collaboration allows to the interdisciplinary team to identify local problems, thus making a tailor-made integrated service provision possible within the framework of a national programme.

'The innovative element of the project consists in its multi-disciplinarily and the mobilization of such a complex team consisting of state institutions and important NGOs, operating in different fields.'

The *'Arany János Talent Support Programme'* in Pécs aims to give personalized and tailor-made assistance for the participating young people to obtain a satisfactory qualifications and skills that increase their chances to succeed in the labour market. This is an essential aspect of the programme, as students originating from disadvantaged settlements and coming from low-

income families tend to have complex needs, thus a holistic view of their problems is required to achieve real change.

Similarly, to the programme implemented in Pécs, the *'Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood'* programme in Barakaldo is also based on a holistic approach. It is also manifested in the structure of the program: the first step is always the creation of a multidimensional analysis of the young person's situation, which then allows professionals to see the complex structure of their needs. This enables youth workers to set a context-based and personalized strategy to efficiently help participants in the transition to adulthood.

The *'Delmos'* project launched by the Swedish government is implemented in 32 municipalities including Borlänge, to help socially deprived neighbourhoods through the collaboration of different local institutions and NGOs providing a wide range of services (including: 'heads of sustainability unit, crime prevention, public health and youth health, pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, adult education, labour market, refugee reception, neighbourhoods project leaders, strategic units working for the welfare of children' and the young people themselves).

'Establishing cross-sectorial teams and bringing different competencies together are seen as necessary for accomplishing real development.'

It is important to mention that a critique towards this range of collaboration was raised in the interviews with physical planners, who claim that while collaboration is active, ideas has not yet led to many concrete plans and actions.

In Łódź, the revitalization of the city centre has brought many actors together to ensure the best possible outcomes for inhabitants. The constant discussions with the inhabitants who live in the soon-to-be renovated areas, create the basis for understanding the actions needed to make the revitalization process as human as possible. To ensure the most efficient support, a large network of local actors has come together:

'Community lighthouse keepers form a support network composed of various institutions, organizations and associations - such as a social welfare centre, police, employment office - that are able to respond to numerous problems and needs of residents.'

4.2.6 Evolution and self-reflexivity

Among the cases that have been operating for a while, a noticeable feature was an emphasis on reflexivity, achieved by thorough and systematic evaluations. This enabled projects to be flexible and adjust better to the complex nature of the problem that they intend to combat. Reflexivity usually manifests in strong monitoring systems that aim to gauge the effects of the programmes.

The evolution of the *'Studiezalen'* project in Amsterdam serves as a good example of a flexible and self-reflective programme made possible by the financial scheme described above. At the very beginning, the programme 'only' intended to provide a space to study for those children

who live in an overcrowded home or in a noisy environment and also lack the necessary tools for studying. The initiative expanded dynamically not only territorially but also with regard to the provided services: it now includes help with homework, life coaching, expert pedagogical guidance, initiatives against bullying and talent development for primary and secondary school students. It also provides counselling and services for the parents as well, such as help with language, financial literacy courses and parenting advice. Although the programme was initiated bottom-up, it later became a part of the Gelijke Kansen Alliantie (Equal Opportunities Alliance) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Ministerie van OCW) and the founder of the project is now also a member of a national body that tries reduce inequalities countrywide.

The *'Arany János Talent Support Programme'* in Pécs also has a strong, built-in monitoring system that not only evaluates the success of the programmes but also compels policy makers to make necessary changes or add further elements. The initiative originally operated as a talent management programme for students coming from disadvantaged areas and families. Realizing the potential for further supporting participating students living in dormitories (since students usually had to move to a different location to study in secondary school) a new subproject was included, which aims to compensate learning difficulties by providing further support in the dormitory setting. Later, another subprogramme was included, specifically focusing on vocational education.

Tallinn's *'nudge approach'* does not pursue change through the creation of a supplementary services, organizational or financial arrangement. Rather, it aims to influence citizen behaviour in both individually and socially beneficial ways through the reconfiguration of the already existing policies. As an example, the underused paternity leave policy was adjusted (to last longer and provide additional benefits) to encourage fathers to use this opportunity. The changes based on the *'nudge approach'* were initiated by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and it is part of a wider attempt to create science-based policies.

'The one-time project aimed to study why fathers do not make full use of the opportunity for supplementary parental benefit, and to develop and test interventions that would make as many fathers as possible use the father's supplementary parental leave'

4.2.7 Participatory approach

As the examples described in the *Section 4.2.4* showed, the collaboration of different actors usually also involves direct and personal cooperation with the target group(s) but we still consider it as a separate feature. The importance of involving beneficiaries into policy making and the empowerment of local groups has been on the table for a while now, as demonstrated also by the Social Innovation literature. Local communities and specific target groups can be involved in many different ways and in many different phases of the policy making and implementation process. Our case studies of Social Innovation display a variety of instruments ranging from forums to active and established ways of citizen inclusion. There are programmes, in which the community-led approach constitutes the main innovation of the

initiative such as the case of Corby, Leuven and Belfast. In Corby, the community-led approach of the 'Big Local' programme has shown how participation increases the effectiveness of policies:

'As the intergenerational social contract breaks down, Mason (2019) argues that the Big Local model demonstrates how grassroots action and neighbourhood-level localism can fill the gaps left by funding cuts and short-term localism; whilst youth provision must remain the responsibility of local and national government, it highlights how community-led approaches can increase the effectiveness of policies.'

Similarly to Corby, the 'CLT' programme in Leuven is also built upon a strong community approach which manifests in regular meetings between local stakeholders and both current and possible future inhabitants in spite of the top-down origin of the initiative.

'Despite this top-down nature, the process has been set up as highly participatory, and numerous public meetings took place between institutional stakeholders, prospective residents, current residents of the neighbourhood where the project will take place, housing experts and the Leuven community at large.'

In the case of Belfast, a Youth Council is embedded into the Belfast Agenda, itself an example of an innovative policy introduced after the city has taken the identity of being a 'post conflict' city. The Youth Council is made up of 40 young people from the whole city between the age of 13 and 21, who are elected for two years and are actively responsible for running projects in the city. This was reported as an innovative way of getting young people involved not only to policy making processes but also in the running of the city.

It is interesting to mention that there were some projects that emphasized the lack of participatory element as a negative aspect of the project, such as the 'Delmos' programme in Borlänge:

'What can also be more questioned is the apparent lack of involvement of local residents in the efforts to change the trajectory of poor neighbourhoods.' and the 'PNPSE' in Amadora *'While the approach is innovative, the environment of reception is not so innovative, the participation of young persons in the intervention is scarce and implementation depends largely on particular professors and practitioners that take action.'*

5 Conclusion

This report aimed to provide an overview of the contested terrain of Social Innovation and discuss Social Innovations happening on the ground in the UPLIFT functional urban areas. Based on the growing literature, we defined Social Innovation as the introduction of a social practice, project, arrangement, institution involving and affecting social relations that is new in a given social context by certain actors with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs

and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices. In the analysis of the case studies, we focused firstly, on the role of the context in driving and sustaining innovations, focusing in particular on the impact of the financial crisis and different multi-scalar governance arrangements. Secondly, we attempted to break down our cases to pinpoint the ultimate 'units of innovation', identifying seven features which were shared across multiple innovations.

Based on the discussion of the literature and the UPLIFT innovation cases, we have derived the following insights:

- Since the financial crisis, there has been an intensification of policy (and academic) discourses on Social Innovation.
- However, the identification of Social Innovations, mainly with a youth policy focus posed various levels of difficulty in different contexts – this highlights the uneven spread of both the concept and the practice of developing individual youth policies across Europe. The struggle to find innovative initiatives was especially marked in New Member States of Eastern and Central Europe.
- Similar spatial patterns were noted with regard to the role of the European Union in fostering innovation. Researchers in Eastern and Southern Europe have emphasized that many innovative initiatives depend on European funds. Beyond financial support, the EU can also provide crucial political leverage for actors in the ground to introduce new approaches.
- Beyond the role of the EU, different governance arrangements within states – and especially the extent to which localities have the ability to develop their own policies – can also influence innovation dynamics. Subsidiarity, coupled with local financial resources can enhance the potential for innovation. While the state can play significant role in mainstreaming innovations.
- Certain macro events can play crucial roles in the development of innovation. The financial crisis or a large political shift such as a change in government can radically reconfigure the field which can necessitate or enable the introduction of new solutions.
- With regard to youth policy, we can distinguish between two types of loci: firstly, where youth matters are not treated as a separate policy field. Policies targeting young people are developed separately in the sphere of social provision, housing and, primarily, education. Secondly, in certain contexts, youth policy appears as an independent field in its own right. These contexts seem to be ahead in fostering coordinated cross-sectoral policies in line with EU guidelines.
- We could identify several innovative policy approaches which appeared in multiple different contexts. These developments aim to address the perceived failures of traditional welfare states – such as the top down, overly bureaucratic, and closed decision-making processes and the rigid separation of sectoral policies.
 - Firstly, the process of policy development as well as service delivery involves increasingly diversified actors – public actors on multiple levels, businesses, NGOs, church organisation and inhabitants. The move towards more

participatory decision-making and implementation can be seen as both an innovation in its own right, but also as a tool to foster further innovation.

- Secondly, there appears to be a marked trend towards the integration of services and the tailor made and flexible delivery, which appears necessary in face of complex and interconnected factors of disadvantage.
- Finally, in-built mechanisms of reflexivity, which allow a strategic evaluation and planned experimentation appear as key in the evolution of innovations.

The analysis of both the scientific literature on innovation and the cases identified as innovative by local stakeholders provided us the opportunity to identify the most promising entry points for introducing the Reflexive Policy Agenda as a Social Innovation that align with the recent trends of participatory policy making and integrated service design. Reflexive policy making – the process in which vulnerable young people are part of the policy creation, implementation and evaluation process – can be a useful tool to reveal the complex nature of vulnerability that may lead to the creation of cross-sectoral and multi-level social policies.

- Reflexive policy making may have the highest potential in the case of policies on which the local actors have the biggest influence. These policies may be exclusively local or they can also be top-down policies which provide room for independent local decision-making (e.g. in the field of urban rehabilitation and education).
- There is potential in designing small scale services through reflexive policy making, which can accommodate vulnerable young people in a co-creation process easier, but at the same time has the potential the be scaled up or become more complex in the longer run. This needs the inclusion of reflexivity and constant feedback as an integral part of the policy design.
- Vulnerable people are seldom the sources of innovation. Even bottom-up initiatives are generally founded by more educated, empowered people. Participatory planning can be an efficient tool to involve wider stakeholder groups into the policy design but structures and incentives are needed to include the more vulnerable and secure their balanced participation.

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7 Annex

7.1 Surveyed definitions of Social Innovation

Surveyed definitions of Social Innovation	
Evers & Ewert 2015. (WILCO), p. 4.	'ideas, turned into practical approaches, that are new in the context where they appear, they attract hopes for better coping strategies and solutions and the are marked by a high degree of risk and uncertainty due to the specific context they meet whether they are "better' (more effective/social/democratic) can only be answered in retrospective'
Domanski et al. 2019. (SI-DRIVE), p. 459.	'a new combination and/or new configuration of social practices in certain areas of action or social contexts prompted by certain actors or constellations of actors in an intentional targeted manner with the goal of better satisfying or answering needs and problems than is possible on the basis of established practices.'
Moulaert 2013. (SINGOCOM), p. 10.	'[SI] is about the satisfaction of basic need and changes in social relations within empowering social processes, it is about people and organisations who are affected by deprivation or lack of quality in daily life and services, who are disempowered by lack of rights or authoritative decision-making, who are involved in agencies and movements favouring Social Innovation'
Moulaert et al. 2017. p. 10.	'a combination of at least 3 dimensions: collective satisfaction of unmet human needs, building more cohesive social relations, socio-political bottom-linked empowerment towards more democratic communities'

<p>Haxeltine et al. 2017a. (TRANSIT), p. 3.</p>	<p>'the process of changing, altering, replacing the dominance of existing institutions in a specific social and material context' "the creation of new social relations, both between the members of an initiative and between members and any aspect of society with which they interact'</p>
<p>BEPA 2010., p. 7.</p>	<p>'Social Innovations as new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other word they are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance society's capacity to act'</p>
<p>Totterdill et al. 2015. (SIMPACT), p. 3.</p>	<p>'empowers the marginalised and poor in order to realise their potential as strategic assets who make an active contribution to social and economic value'</p>
<p>Chiappero-Martinetti et al. 2015. (CrESSI), p. 141.</p>	<p>'the development and delivery of new ideas and solutions (products, services, models, modes of provision, processes) at different socio-structural levels that intentionally seek to change power relations and improve human capabilities, as well as the processes via which these solutions are carried out'</p>

7.2 Examples of social innovations in the UPLIFT urban reports

7.2.1 Amadora

Bridging the gaps in the articulation between national and local intervention: school-level implementation of the National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment

The National Programme to Promote Educational Attainment (*Programa Nacional de Promoção do Sucesso Escolar*, henceforth PNPSE) was born out of a decision of the national government in 2016 to reinforce the role and capabilities of local education communities in tackling school failure and early dropout.⁹ The major innovative feature of this strategy has been an integrated approach to the improvement of educational attainment based on local decision-making and bottom-up policy design and implementation, with an explicit concern with inequalities and support from the European Social Fund. Under this programme, four public school clusters in the FUA of Amadora have elaborated and implemented their own Plans of Strategic Action, addressing local needs and engaging in formal and informal cooperation with stakeholders. A positive decrease in failure rates has been observed since then, albeit not in a uniform manner across schools, reflecting the variety of challenges and experiences on the ground.

The origin of this programme goes back to the post-crisis context of 2015-2016, when a new government took office in Portugal with the unprecedented support of all left-wing parties in the parliament. The reduction of social inequalities was a political priority, in particular by addressing the high levels of school failure and early dropout in the country, which affect especially young persons from low-income households and contribute to their high risk of poverty and social exclusion. The PNPSE consisted in a new strategy based on local solutions drawn by each school in cooperation with the municipality and community institutions. The Ministry of Education ensures training, technical advice and impact assessment (a commission was set up for this purpose, including experts and representatives of schools, municipalities and parents), while each school or school cluster creates their Plan of Strategic Action. These plans include measures such as teachers' training centred on the needs of the school, discussion and reflection activities among professionals, recruitment of additional professionals, use of autonomy and flexibility in teaching methods, curricula and evaluation, and research-action projects. The assessments of the programme at the national level show a substantial decrease of retention and early dropout rates, an increase of educational equity (across different schools) and efficiency benefits (Verdasca et al., 2019, 2020).

Considering the four school clusters in Amadora that adopted the programme (Alfornelos, Fernando Namora, Almeida Garrett and Pioneiros da Aviação), failure rates have so far decreased in all grades up to the 9th grade except in the 6th. The schools cluster of Alfornelos registers the fastest decrease in failure rates, with considerable improvements at all levels of education from 2014-2016 to 2016-2018. Outcomes in the other school clusters are not so

⁹ Resolution of the Council of Ministers 23/2016, 23 March, available here.

clear-cut; for instance, the secondary school Fernando Namora experienced a reduction of the failure rate in the 12th grade but not in the 10th and 11th.

As to limitations, despite overall positive outcomes, the effectiveness of the programme so far has been more apparent in basic education than in secondary education. While the approach is innovative, the environment of reception is not so innovative, the participation of young persons in the design of the Plan of Strategic Action is scarce and implementation depends largely on particular professors and practitioners that take action.

It is significant that our interviewees had difficulties in reporting innovative policies, especially considering that some of them have been working on the ground for many years. Asked about innovation, they were only able to indicate initiatives or projects created before the economic crisis with some innovative features. These included the national programmes TEIP - Educational Zones for Priority Action (1996) and Escolhas (2001), the international project Generation Orchestra (2007) and the expansion of vocational courses (gradually since 2008). They pointed out gaps in the articulation between national and local actors, which is precisely why the PNPSE involves distinct levels of governance and seeks to consolidate their interconnection with the constitution of a national network and the availability of European funds. In addition, one of our interviewees remarks that, while the TEIP programme produced generally positive results over the years, some schools avoid it because they understand it as stigmatising. Thus, broader strategic umbrellas such as the PNPSE may be more attractive and successful in the medium term.

7.2.2 Amsterdam

Bottom-up initiatives to close the policy gaps: providing study rooms for vulnerable students

Despite the efforts from the Municipality of Amsterdam in improving access to equal opportunities in education for all its young people, our research and our interviews with NGOs highlight how some groups are still left out and are not reached by the policies that are meant to help them get out of their disadvantaged position. This is particularly true of second and third generation children and youth with a non-Western migration background who come from low-income households. They are particularly at risk of achieving low educational attainment, leaving school early and becoming NEET. Many children from Amsterdam Nieuw West and Amsterdam Noord, two districts with relatively high levels of poverty, are poor and have uneducated parents, some of whom speak or write poor Dutch. It is the most vulnerable target group in the city.

In this context, Studiezalen is an initiative born in 2011 to help students from deprived neighbourhoods and low-income families.¹⁰ The founder, Abdelhamid Idrissi, himself from a low-income family with a migration background, realized that many children and high school students with a migration background did not have the possibility to study at home due to

¹⁰ See <https://studiezalen.com>.

overcrowding, noise, and a general lack of proper space and tools. So, he set up Studiezalén, a network of study halls - quiet places across different vulnerable neighbourhoods in Amsterdam where students can go to concentrate on their homework. Initially there were few locations and the aim was simply to provide free quiet spaces with books and internet connection. With time the project has outgrown this rather simple objective and it has now expanded to include several other initiatives, and 29 locations across Amsterdam and Zaandam, where over 600 children and young people go every week. Today, the Studiezalén Foundation focuses on homework support, life coaching, expert pedagogical guidance, initiatives against bullying and talent development for primary and secondary school pupils and students - all completely free of charge. In addition, it now also provides support for parents, with language and financial literacy courses, and parenting advice. Unfortunately, the people in need are more than what the project can accommodate, and waiting lists are very long.

The main innovative feature of Studiezalén is that it fills a gap in the official policy through bottom-up coordinated action across the city. The lack of study space and support - especially for older pupils and students - was not addressed by either education or social policy, and Studiezalén met this social need with a seemingly simple initiative, which had a large impact. Furthermore, the way in which the initiative is managed is also innovative and contributes to fostering a sense of responsibility and community in deprived neighbourhoods. The study halls are run by a mix of paid employees - usually the educators and pedagogues - and volunteers. The latter are either adults from the neighbourhood that want to get involved or those same youth which used Studiezalén in previous years and that have now become young adults who want to give back to the community that helped them. In this sense, it could be said that young people are involved as implementers, at least as mentors for younger pupils, but it is unknown whether they have any say as co-designers of the activities of each Studiezalén location, and they do not seem to have a co-designer role for the overall initiative.

In terms of funding, the Studiezalén Foundation mainly relies on subsidies, but it has recently experimented with a sponsorship scheme, where private individuals and companies can support a study location through donations, and help the project by providing internships for the young participants. The likes of Shell, Rabobank, McKinsey and Orange Capital Partners have already joined in, and several municipal and regional institutions are also becoming partners. The objective is that each study hall in the 29 locations is sponsored and fully financially supported by a private partner, in order to break even and be able to employ more and more members of the local communities. This type of financing is in itself innovative, although it carries the risk of changing the nature of the project by involving corporate stakeholders. Finally, Studiezalén is a very good example of integration of bottom-up initiatives in the fabric of official policy making. Indeed, the Studiezalén initiative is now part of the Gelijke Kansen Alliantie (Equal Opportunities Alliance) from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (Ministerie van OCW), and the founder Abdelhamid Idrissi is a member of the Gelijke Kansen Board, a national body that tries to coordinate efforts towards the reduction on inequalities across the country. As a result, the Studiezalén initiative now falls under the

monitoring mechanisms of the *Gelijke Kansen Alliantie*, where local policies are evaluated yearly against the agreed objectives.

In addition to this kind of bottom-up innovation, in Amsterdam also the Municipality and other large institutional actors (such as some housing associations, organizations of relevant stakeholder groups, and also some of the biggest companies) are actors that initiate policy innovation. Although the ideological approach might differ, for both grassroots and institutional actors the main driver for the implementation of innovative policies is efficiency in terms of financial costs and of human resources: reaching the highest amount of people in need and effectively helping them with the smallest possible budget. In this sense it could be said that lack of financing is both a driver of and a constraint for innovation. Additionally, complex administrative procedures and difficult coordination across governance levels and local departments are among the obstacles to policy innovation.

As a final note, it is significant that almost the totality of the interviewees was unsure about what constitutes innovation, and they were also skeptical about innovation as a parameter to evaluate policy interventions. Many of the civil servants that we interviewed pointed out that among managers and higher ranks of both local and national governments, innovation is a buzzword used as synonymous of improvement and almost always seen as inherently positive, something which they regarded as a misconception. Rather than with innovation, they were more concerned with the effectiveness of a policy or project, and continuity and consistency were highlighted as more important towards policy effectiveness than innovation.

7.2.3 Barakaldo

A broad-based approach to facilitating local youth emancipation in Barakaldo

The example of innovation that will be described below corresponds to a youth policy model—selected from a pool of nine (9) different regulations, strategies, programs or territorial political actions- as part of a planning and implementation process that combines different regulatory frameworks, but clearly interrelated with each other. This is the program of ***Accompaniment for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood*** aimed at young people from Barakaldo.

Its innovative consideration has been granted at the discretion of some of the local policy makers who were interviewed in depth, while the case selection has been carried out by the UPLIFT Barakaldo research team based on the following very particular premises to its approach: a) holistic and process-oriented; b) coherent and transversal; c) contextualized and personalized; d) local and inclusive; and e) both physical and virtual. We then proceed to the exposition and justification of the case.

The ***Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood*** has been implemented in Barakaldo since 2016 by ***Gaztebulegoa***—*Office of Information, Participation and Support for Youth*-, a public center managed under the direction of the area of *Culture, Education, Euskera and Youth of the Municipality of Barakaldo*. This accompaniment program works with young people between 18-35 years old as target group since 2016, with the

objective of accompanying youngsters into their emancipation process and transition to adult life.

The outmost innovation traits are:

- A holistic and process-oriented approach to accompany young people through their concrete life aspirations, assisting them in pursuing the position wanted in society: guiding them in the type and profile of education or technical training they require for achieving their personal goals, recommending to them the kind of public aid they can go to for support, suggesting to them participating in existing support programs that complement the payment of housing rent and/or purchase of protected housing, helping them in their job search and in obtaining a job in the municipality, etc. It is holistic since provided in a way the recipients realize by themselves inequality is a construct composed of multiple social dimensions that need to be addressed progressively at certain points in time and level of advancement, as a process that demand a tailored pace consistent with user's necessities.
- A coherent and cross-sectional approach that take advantage of the most relevant and innovative laws —*the Social Services Law (December 2018), the Law for the Guarantee Income (December, 2008), and the Basque Housing Law (June, 2015)*- on social territorial norms, strategies, programs, and actions —related to education, housing, employment, health, and social protections, among others- to properly respond to users' complex and transversal demands.
- An accompaniment that starts with a multidimensional diagnosis of the youngster's situation and aptitudes —drawn on diverse social dimensions- to set a context-based and personalized social strategy to accomplish emancipation: employability, level of training or education, degree of social relationships, and state of emotional wellbeing, among many others.
- It is local and inclusive because it was locally created by Barakaldese's technicians from their own experiences of what they understood could be more fruitful for future users' goals, even though they knew it would be highly time and resource demanding; and inclusive because it offers the programs even to those young migrants who do not enjoy most of the legal rights needed to receive the full set of services.
- The program has been furnished both virtually and in-person since 2006, years before the Covid-19, with interactive videos and online individual and group meetings.
- It has its own internal monitoring mechanism that is supervised by the Municipality of Barakaldo, and its relevant social impact in Barakaldo can be recognized through its annual reports on actions carried out. It is economically supported by the Municipality of Barakaldo and partially from the Basque Country's Government.

As previously mentioned, this initiative began in 2016 as a complementary response to the set of actions that were being carried out in the territory to alleviate unemployment caused by the 2007-2008 crisis. At the beginning of 2015, it was locally observed that the progressive improvement in the recovery of local employment was not similarly registered to the same extent among young people; on the contrary, youth unemployment was taking hold in society.

With the *Accompaniment Program for Emancipation and Transition to Adulthood*, a response was achieved to a certain extent, but with the limitations expected for such a comprehensive

service certainly involves. However, the program has continued its functions facing the new challenges associated with the Covid-19 crisis, adapting the approach and incorporating the most recent political measures to tackle its effect on youth, while financially performing a balance between expected inputs and outputs.

On the other hand, the main actor-networks who have promoted this initiative in Barakaldo has been mainly the Gaztebulegoa's facilitators, the local young community, the Municipality, a network of local voluntaries, the local public-private institutions that support social services (Eretza, Inguralde, etc.), and the local network of non-profit organizations (e.g. Goiztiri). It also receives the support from other territorial governments' representatives when it is required, but it is sporadic.

As a result, the project has accompanied more than 200 young people in their personal emancipation processes, being almost never focused just on one timeframe, but rather progressive and at different moments of the young subject's personal progress. Another achievement of the program is to make young people realize that the solution to their demands does not depend solely and exclusively on a single social dimension, but on multiple ones that interact to curb their aspirations for life. Finally, the program has served to incorporate young people into the social agenda of the city, opening the doors to citizen participation in a conscious and motivating fashion.

These facts, among some others, can categorize this program as a success story that preserves as its main lesson learned the need to contextualize, personalize, be transversal and work in constant local collaboration, although such a degree of intensity in the service provided translates into a high demand on time and resources.

7.2.4 Belfast

Following the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, Belfast took on a new identity as a 'post conflict' city. As part of the integration and in its new identity, Northern Ireland policy makers have adopted innovative practices, such as community participation and dialogue when proposing, developing and finalizing policies to meet the needs of all the communities within the city. The Belfast Agenda is one example of an innovative policy. It sets out to lead change and co-operation in Belfast. It works as a community plan that was written collaboratively, bringing together representatives from all communities that make up Belfast's population. Representatives included statutory community partners, political parties, further educational institutions, key community representatives, city partners and residents. It also involves quadrennial public consultations and reviews against the long-term goals.

The Belfast Agenda is an ongoing, living policy, with an end date of 2035, by when the ambition is that the goals will have been achieved. This joint agenda aims to create 'a safe, fair and inclusive for all' city, 'where everyone benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy'. It aims to create 46,000 new jobs, wants to ensure that every young person that leaves school has a destination that fulfils their potential, and aims to close the health and life expectancy gap between the more affluent and deprived areas of the city. As well as economic growth and education, the agenda priorities social, wellness and environmental goals for the city's

residents. Thus, any new commissioned development will be guided by these goals and ambitions.

Given the historical and socio-political context, the collaborative foundations and regular public consultations to review is what makes the Belfast Agenda a policy innovation. The Belfast Agenda is set apart from conventional policy making and demonstrates an innovative approach. Methods such as lived experience (ethnography) and co-design provide policy makers with insights into the lived experience of residents and add value to analysis of statistics and trends (Norman, 2020). As well as this, it is a 'living policy', which is reviewed every 4 years.

Of particular relevance to Uplift is the Belfast Youth Council which is embedded into the Agenda. Young people make up a third of the population of Belfast, making the city one of the youngest in Europe. The creation of the Belfast Youth Council has been an innovative way to get young people involved in policy creation, as well as having a say in how the city is run. It supports young people to feel valued and heard, as well as creating the conditions for learning, skills development and opportunity. The Youth Council is made up of 40 young people of all genders and is representative of the communities and needs across Belfast. All the members are aged between 13-18 (21 if disabled or have just left care). Young people remain in their roles for two years and actively lead projects in the city. The group utilises social media channels to communicate with and update other young people and agencies throughout Belfast. The Youth Council get involved with issues that matter to young people in the city.

A recent project that the Youth Council have led and delivered is the 'Heads Up! Toolkit'. This project is part of ongoing youth mental health projects, in line with findings and recommendations from the Youth Wellbeing Survey commissioned by the Health and Social Care Board. The toolkit is designed to equip young people from any background to be able to organise a mental health project in their community and support them to campaign on local mental health issues, as well as promoting good mental health in their community and prioritising their own mental, emotional and physical wellness. Thus, this toolkit engages the positive characteristics within Belfast's community to promote better mental health in an equitable way. There is evidence for the effectiveness of such community led interventions for improving mental health. Studies indicate the importance of ongoing resources and training to maintain long-term outcomes, equitable partnerships, and policy reform to support sustainable healthcare-community collaborations (Castillo et al, 2019).

Our interviewees described the Belfast Youth Council as a forum that explores 'childhood poverty' and inequality. Our official from the Department for the Economy (which covers employability and skills) suggested that bottom-up projects do, however, need to work more collaboratively, as progress isn't uniform across different areas of the city. He also suggested that to ensure progress, funding structures could become incentivised based on timelines to measure positive outcomes.

Although the programmes prompted by the Belfast Agenda are not yet complete, Belfast's policies are increasingly adopting community-led and grassroots strategies to engage and bring reform. The principles of a having a shared vision and priorities (The Belfast Agenda), with local cross community voices in the lead, will build on local strengths (rather than a focus on divisions), is intended overall to achieve positive long-term change.

7.2.5 Bologna

Innovative post-crisis policies

The interviews carried out for the FUA in Bologna allow us to make the following reflections on innovation. In the first place, the concept of innovation seems to depend on the starting point of the innovative process of change. In this sense, one could speak of very innovative projects in the Bologna city hall, but one could also speak of others that could be considered as traditional for the same environment. However, if in the context in which the innovations are made they contribute different aspects or new initiatives, these initiatives also become innovative.

On the other hand, innovations are difficult to transfer to different realities. The "transferability" of innovative tours, therefore, must be carefully monitored, carefully taking into account the context in which they have been created, the history of the context, the people who interpret the innovative tour as such within and outside of the process, and above all, the people who understand what problems this innovative process is solving or what realities it allows us to discern.

In this sense, innovations are also necessary to anticipate changes that are taking place in society and that can be positive for our communities, linking the concept of innovation to the idea of improving a present that enables future social transformations. Having said that, we proceed to present the most innovative action or project identified in for this FUA:

"Insieme per il Lavoro": A project to reduce the most pressing inequality

Coinciding with Mr. Marco Lombardo, at the municipal level, one of the projects with the greatest impact on reducing inequality in the territory has been known as "Together for Work", whose main objective is to tackle labour inequality fundamentally among those between the ages of 50 and 60 (people excluded from the labour market for reasons of age, but too young to retire).

These people were practically chronically unemployed, without work and without the help of retirement. For this reason, to support them, a network of collaborating organizations belonging to the municipality and the metropolitan area was created, in which companies, workers' unions, various institutions, and even the church participate, in order to facilitate the creation of new positions of work, taking into account the basic needs of both people and companies. In the last three years, a thousand new jobs have been generated, being a unique experiment in Italy.

The eligibility conditions are very simple, just having the need to find a job and be unemployed. For this, there is a whole team of people prepared to advise and accompany applicants in the reintegration process.

The "Together for Work" project began in 2016 and has recently been renewed until 2025, reorienting its new stages towards a more balanced approach to gender and to support those at work risk because of Covid-19.

On the other hand, when this type of project is worked with multiple organizations in the territory, diverse interests and goals are combined simultaneously. In the case of Bologna, for example, the perspective of the church as an institution that participates in programs to support insertion will surely be mainly welfare; not so that of the City Council, which will be more related to achieving the personal independence of the individual. However, both approaches converge in the search for people's well-being through active employment policies.

Bologna conceives "Together for Work" as a real opportunity to put into practice the collaborative capacity of the territory; a challenge that brings together workers, companies, the church, and the public administration, among others, in proposals for improvement for the community, restoring confidence to the beneficiaries in a better future.

Finally, the funds for this project currently come from contributions that the Christian Church makes thanks to the benefits generated by the international business group FAAC. For its part, the Metropolitan Bologna contributes with managerial and administrative personnel, while the municipality of Bologna, apart from contributing economically, puts relevant political figures in front of it in order to make the project visible. In the link <https://www.insiemeperilavoro.it/> you can find the audits carried out on the project, as an exercise of inter-institutional transparency, as well as the references to the monthly public commissions that monitor the results and the evolution of the project itself. The committee of participating companies also meets every three months to evaluate the results of the project and propose new measures necessary to face new challenges.

This local network collaboration also aims to generate public debate on current labour issues closely related to the labour protection of women, the digital transition, digital workers, etc.

Finally, in budgetary terms, the "Together for Work" project has meant the expenditure of five million euros to produce a thousand jobs. A very efficient result if we take into account that at the national level there is a range of thirty thousand euros per job generated in the communities.

This project is also tremendously innovative because it highlights as a fundamental essence the territorial understanding of inequalities: what are the basic needs of people who live at risk of exclusion or the inequality suffered by working women. It always listens to those men and women who urged to find a job, listening to their personal life stories and family context.

7.2.6 Borlänge

As was indicated above the three potentially effective counter-segregation approaches are now on the agenda of Borlänge policy makers. Why this is the case is a long story but based on several interviews we judge that it is due to three developments.

First, local developments on the ground have exposed the degree of seriousness of the emerging situation where in particular one Borlänge neighbourhood have figured frequently in the national debate and has been and still is on the Police list of the (security-wise) worst neighbourhoods in Sweden (*utsatta/exposed neighbourhoods* is the term applied). That designation further stigmatizes this particular neighbourhood but renders also Borlänge a bad reputation. A comprehensive overview document published by the municipality in 2017 draw the conclusion that "Borlänge is a segregated municipality where people with different socioeconomic background to a large extent live socially distant from each other and where children grow up under unequal conditions regarding life opportunities and health." (Translation from [Social hållbarhet - behovsanalys 2017.pdf \(borlange.se\)](#)).

Secondly, the city has had a growing focus on sustainability issues for a couple of decades and like so many other cities, the sustainability concept have gradually come to include the social dimension. This conceptual broadening has also been pushed by city planners and other members of the municipal administration (according to some informants not without some internal resistance).

Thirdly, central state counter-segregation programmes have been launched from time to time since the mid-1990s (see Andersson 2006) but only recently have these programmes broadened their urban focus to include smaller cities like Borlänge. Initially they only targeted city districts in the Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö urban regions.

In 2018, the Government launched a new policy to be carried out by a new State authority, "The Delegation against Segregation (*Delmos*). Delmos "should encourage cooperation, produce and spread knowledge and provide economic support as to make interventions for countering segregation more effective. Its long-term aims are to improve the situation in socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods and to counteract structural causes that produce segregation." (translation from website: [Delegationen mot segregation - Delmos](#)). The government has made it clear that Delmos' primary focus is on socioeconomic segregation, and not ethnic segregation (however, they acknowledge that these dimensions overlap). The new agency has now developed online public databases, proposed indicators and produced national overviews of segregation development in Sweden over time. Regions as well as municipalities and NGOs can apply for different types of support for either more structural knowledge-creation in the field of segregation, or specific projects. As one of 32 municipalities, Borlänge received funding for 2019-2020 for developing its approach towards socially deprived neighbourhoods and for particular project activities, partly in cooperation with NGOs (focusing on younger schoolchildren and their leisure-time activities). The State funding was not huge in monetary terms but our local informants nevertheless very much welcome this

and see this as an important and innovative part of the municipality's approach to combatting inequality. In June 2020, Borlänge's renewed application for counteracting and reducing segregation was again approved by Delmos. ([Beslut borlänge 2020.pdf](#)).

In Borlänge's strategic plan for 2020 to 2023, the explicit key vision is "social sustainability and to combat inequality and segregation". A strategist (a new municipal position within the unit working with education and labour market issues) have had a key role in developing Borlänge's applications for Delmos funding, and an informant taking an active part in the process emphasizes that focus is on "bringing together physical planners and professionals from other sectors in order to promote a more holistic approach". According to the application itself (Delmos document no 2019/515), Borlänge states three aims for its cross-sectorial cooperation approach:

1. Internal coordination of Borlänge's work with social sustainability.
2. Strategic cooperation for equal community planning that contributes to decreasing and counteracting segregation.
3. Strategic cooperation with civil society for increasing children's and the youth's equal opportunities for leisure time activities that can promote democracy, health and quality of life.

The latter aim arises from an insight that "different actors need to jointly address key issues of participation and trust, childhood living conditions and social anxiety and disorder, as well as develop methods for establishing more fair conditions for the young and their leisure activities" (ibid). The list of people involved in the planning of this programme is long and involves the heads of the sustainability unit, crime prevention, public health and youth health, pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, adult education, labour market, refugee reception, neighbourhood project leaders, social work, and strategic units working for the welfare of children and the youth.

Establishing cross-sectorial teams and bringing different competencies together are seen as necessary for accomplishing real development. Interviews with physical planners confirm their active participation in such collaborative planning discussions although in practical terms work has so far not resulted in many concrete plans. Some ideas, such as planning for housing tenure mix and to let administrators working in the social sector become earlier involved in the physical planning activities, may bring benefits in the long run. Some of the Delmos-funded initiatives, such as a project on younger children's leisure time activities, are also followed (on-going evaluation) by researchers based at the university college in Borlänge (Dalarna University). The municipality closely monitors and analyses inequality issues, including comprehensive reporting on child inequalities from a range of perspectives (school results, poverty, physical and mental health, domestic violence etc.; see for example [Social hållbarhet - behovsanalys 2017.pdf \(borlange.se\)](#))

7.2.7 Bratislava

Identifying innovative policies and programmes that have relevant effect on vulnerable young people is a challenging task in the case of Bratislava. One of the reasons for this is that Bratislava is not eligible for EU funding, which finances many of the pilot programmes in the fields of education, employment, and social services. Social problems are also seldom recognised on the local level, and the local governments (on city and district level) often lack the capacity and resources to carry out effective programmes. The new local government in Bratislava city has been trying to develop a much stronger social profile from 2018, but the programmes and projects have been less innovative in the field of youth policy; they were rather the replication or adaptation of already existing services from other cities of Slovakia and elsewhere in Europe.

Under these circumstances the researchers see the greatest innovation potential in activities aiming at sensitising the public to social exclusion; supporting an ecosystem of organisations that are able to mitigate social exclusion; as well as improving inter-sectoral cooperation, and opening up the municipality towards civil society initiatives that bring about positive bottom-up change.

An example that connects all the above is the cultural and creative centre Nová Cvernovka (New Cvernovka), which is the main venue of the Cvernovka Foundation.

The Cvernovka Foundation was established in 2015 with the aim to enhance the cultural, social and material value of the former industrial site of the Thread factory (Cvernovka) in Bratislava.¹¹ The Foundation represented the voice of artists and creatives who had worked in the former Cvernovka factory building since the late 2000s, who rented the premises from their private owner, and used them as studios. However, the building changed ownership in 2015, and after several negotiations about the future of the former spinning mill building, it became clear that the new owner's ideas did not coincide with the plan to build a creative centre and the building had to be abandoned by Foundation Cvernovka (Repka, 2021).

In the meantime, however, Cvernovka had become a significant cultural and social hub in Bratislava, so the founders of the Cvernovka Foundation tried to transfer the potential of Cvernovka to another building in Bratislava, building on the energy of the creatives and artists united around the Cvernovka Foundation.

Thanks to the willingness and committed cooperation of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region (regional municipality), in 2017 the Cvernovka Foundation managed to open the so-called New Cvernovka. This was established in the building of a former chemical school owned by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, which leased it to the Cvernovka Foundation free of charge for a period of 25 years. Thanks to the enthusiasm of the artists and creatives from the "old" Cvernovka, the support of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region, the Foundation's partners, and the cooperation of several authorities, it was possible to renovate the building in a

¹¹ Annual report of Cvernovka Foundation, web of Cvernovka - <https://nadaciacvernovka.sk/>

relatively short time, to continue the activity of the studios, and to expand the range of activities offered to the public by the Foundation.

Today, the New Cvernovka brings together 132 artistic and creative studios, a community garden, a public park, a playground, a multifunctional space, an outdoor terrace with a stage, a public library, and a shop offering the works and products of the participating studios. The complex provides a wide range of cultural and educational programmes in music, visual arts, literature, film, theatre, and multi-genre activities. It provides internet access, and it is also accessible by wheelchair.¹²

In 2018, the social programme “Housing Cverna” was launched,¹³ which in its pilot version rented three housing units for homeless people, building on the Housing First approach. These are located in the dormitory of the former chemical school, and are in direct contact with the community of residents and creatives using the New Cvernovka space.

The Housing Cverna programme illustrates the socially committed attitude of an organisation that is not primarily focused on the provision of social services or social assistance. However, the opening of the space to an initiative aimed at addressing homelessness and the organic integration of this initiative into the broader context of the cultural and creative centre also significantly influences the attitudes of other actors, who, through personal contact with homeless people, are becoming sensitized to issues of deep poverty, and are able to provide opportunities for people from socially excluded backgrounds under their own projects.

The New Cvernovka is perceived by the public as an open space for all, which goes beyond its functions in the creative industry and significantly expands these to include activities that are more inherent to the social sphere.

The founders of the New Cvernovka themselves say that the buildings and the whole area have become a kind of laboratory for them, on which they test new models of governance, coexistence, and participation. The stakeholders refer to themselves as a living community whose values are freedom, responsibility, openness, cooperation, creativity, diversity, civic awareness, experimentation and self-realisation, and which seeks to combat xenophobia, discrimination, racism and prejudices.¹⁴

The New Cvernovka is, among others, a unique partnership between a regional municipality and a civil society initiative, while the premises used by the Cvernovka Foundation are still fully owned by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. The Bratislava Self-Governing Region also maintains control over the use of the property, and the members of the Supervisory Board of the Cvernovka Foundation are nominated by the Bratislava Self-Governing Region. This means

¹² For more info see <https://novacvernovka.eu/>

¹³ The programme is implemented by the non-governmental organisation Vagus (www.vagus.sk), but hosted by Cvernovka Foundation

¹⁴ From Manifesto of Cvernovka, accessible on <https://novacvernovka.eu/>

that the Bratislava Self-Governing Region has access to all internal documents and books of the Cvernovka Foundation, and has a real influence on decision-making in relation to the Foundation.

The model is easily replicable in other cities and regions. Local and regional governments often have surplus of real estate assets that are frequently dilapidated, when they could be provided free of charge and on a long-term basis to non-profit initiatives that create creative hubs open to different social groups, thus contributing to the building of local social capital, which is an essential condition for reducing poverty and inequalities at the local level.

The Cvernovka Foundation relies on loans from commercial social banks, but also on volunteering and donations. Although the loans create a financial stability for the foundation, the other resources also contribute to the financial sustainability of its initiatives.

In 2020, the Cvernovka Foundation conducted research on the implementation of similar initiatives in Slovakia, and published the document "Don't Sell! Rejuvenate" (Sidorova, M. et al, 2020), which serves as a guide for local authorities on revitalising underused publicly owned buildings.

7.2.8 Chemnitz

On the federal level, innovations in German youth policy and practices are to a large degree developed in network relations between practitioners from youth and welfare organisations and youth-lobby organisations. The federal Ministry of the Interior binds together the national responsibilities for youth policy and strategy towards an 'independent youth policy approach'. This should foster a balanced youth focus in all policy fields, especially with regards to youth welfare¹⁵ and other policy fields, on which the federal government has little under the principle of subsidiarity. On the state level, issues of young people in policy and practice are addressed by the Ministry for Social Affairs and Cohesion', which structurally replicates the federal level (Spiegelverwaltung). On the local level, and in the city of Chemnitz, youth policy and innovation are debated in the youth administration and the welfare-committee of city government/parliament. This two- tier organisation of youth work is a mandatory institutional arrangement for all public policy and action towards the young generation (Jugendverwaltung).

Other inputs into the debates about youth policy and practice innovation come from professional training institutions and the academic sector. On the local level innovations are also often developed at the workplace in administration and youth related projects. In all cases, low hierarchies, and comprehensive communication, which also includes the clientele are important to develop piecemeal strategies of change.

¹⁵ Book VIII of the welfare code (in German) <https://www.sozialgesetzbuch-sgb.de/sgbviii/1.html>

In Chemnitz, innovations were described as a) coming out of perceived necessities of change in the context of the lives of young people, b) legal requirements c) an intrinsic wish to improve access. However, it was innovation in welfare services for young people that was interpreted in different ways by different actors.

Especially from state bureaucracies, themselves under pressure to save especially in situations of crisis, the demand to cut costs was seen as a main factor of innovation. Those who deliver services are having quality of services more on their minds than the cost and see innovation more from a professional perspective.

While acknowledging that innovation should be seen from the side of the clientele, the interviewees spoke about conceptual innovations, innovations in service integration over actor's borders and in actor collaboration, and innovative models of financing services. So far, digitalisation of youth welfare services in Chemnitz has not played an important role. However, innovations looking across different sectors of society and markets was seen as interesting options for the development of youth welfare projects.

The following story of an exemplary youth project builds upon a hybrid structure incorporating cross-thematic work – youth-welfare, education, therapy, urban gardening and aquaponics – to provide the young people with a lifeworld to start from. In Chemnitz, a small number of comparable projects have emerged over the last decade: a producer-collective of seeds for obligatory motorway-side-green always has had one or two highly problem-ridden youths and carries them through an apprenticeship or a basic helper career.

DELPHIN Chemnitz¹⁶

Delphin is an example of an integrated youth welfare project run by a private youth and social work carrier under multiple contracts by various public youth welfare services, foundations and in steady contact with professional further education. The independence from administrative intervention, while cooperating with public welfare services is seen as the basis and precondition for its successful work with young people who have suffered from inequality and demotivation.

'We want to shape the future in an innovative and sustainable way and encourage young people to develop their potential and use resources optimally. We enable everyone to participate in life, work, living and education. We create awareness for fellow human beings and the environment and stand for tolerance and respect, integration and inclusion.'

As the clients – from about 12 to 25 years – are urban kids, all activities are taking place in Chemnitz' at the direct perimeter of the inner city in – by now renovated – blocks, in unbuilt gaps and on fallow inner-urban land.

¹⁶ <https://karree49.de/de/delphin-projekte/>

The project's target groups

DELPHIN is an inclusive socio-educational care service. The focus of work is on providing support for socially disadvantaged children and young people and on young people in a conflict-ridden life situation, mentally ill children and adolescents, children whose parents are disabled or long-term impaired, and multi-problem families. DELPHIN steps in, on the basis public contracts, when more conventional types of social assistance have failed or are overtaxed.

Clients' problems

Young people with multiple problems from general neglect to employment difficulties, educational problems to indebtedness in crisis situations in the everyday lives are referred to DELPHIN, or they find their way to the project. For almost all these young people, multifaceted vulnerabilities exist, which often leads to exclusion and self-exclusion. Difficult family setups, poverty and general problems in maturing are common amongst the clientele and aggression is not an uncommon state of mind.

The team

Delphin works with two teams in Dresden and Chemnitz in vulnerable neighbourhoods. For Delphin, teamwork is a central starting point for 'healthy professionalism, permanent quality assurance and a positive attitude in the everyday work environment.' The majority of the employees are trained 'socio-educational' experts often with a therapeutic or socio-psychiatric qualification.¹⁷ The team is supplemented by various thematic experts, e.g. for occupational therapy, technical training, or urban agriculture.

The acceptance of the biographical and fateful origin of the clientele is a high value for DELPHIN. In effective individual and group work, the project wants the clients to ultimately find joy and motivation for their lives. Structures of casework as the overriding methodology as a joint and cross-disciplinary approach enables the young people for an independent and interdependent life. A special emphasis is on maintaining contact with the families even in conflict.

The project focusses on step-by-step assistance for young people with serious development problems in the family, at school, or in society in general. DELPHIN offers alternative schooling, including the possibility of external exams at regular schools, and job finding assistance.

Services

DELPHIN's start with strategic clearing to secure a 'holistic and personal approach to life structuring and social therapy'. In individual care strategies, young people are helped to build a foundation to independent life-careers.

¹⁷ Sroka, K. (2019): The Concept of mindfulness in a professional context of social work, Master thesis, University of applied science Mittweida

- Training in everyday matters and general life advice
- Securing a livelihood and job, dealing with debts
- Securing housing: rent debts, impending termination, etc.
- Accompanying to offices, the police, courts, juvenile court assistance
- Protection of children in their families of origin

Housing provision and emergency housing

Helping those in the care of DELPHIN to housing is a general service to the clients, which is arranged in collaboration with municipal and private housing providers and alternative housing initiatives. As DELPHIN clients often are in a phase of detachment from the parental home, homeless or in precarious housing situations, emergency housing is offered as supervised individual or small-group housing.

Aquaponic and urban-farming projects

The core of DELPHIN's projects – organised in a legally independent entity – are larger neighbourhood gardening and a aquaponic vegetable and fish production. These projects provide special spaces and opportunities for collaboration between the young clientele and the youth workers, making urban food production a living experience and a field for learning about social and environmental sustainability, at the same time providing attractive spaces for the clients and the neighbourhood.

Also the aquaponic project is the basis for testing biological and technical as well as educational and therapeutic procedures and processes. Knowledge and education, especially in the ecological area, is made available to all interested parties and everyone can work out and research information for themselves.

JustiQ – Strengthening youth in on the Block

The JustiQ Projekt DELPHIN goes into the wider neighbourhood and takes part in a nationwide program Youth 'STRENGTHS in the neighbourhood', funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). The project contractor is the City of Chemnitz' Office for Youth and Family.

JustiQ is implemented by Delphin-Projekte gGmbH (non-profit) under the title 'Courage to Gap in the Educational Area'. Delphin enacts individual aid and micro-projects, especially in the north-east of Chemnitz in the urban areas of Hilbersdorf and Sonnenberg, which have been urban renewal hotspots for over 20 years, first in building rehabilitation, later in the framework of the 'Socially Integrative City' programme.¹⁸

Research

Since its foundation, DELPHIN has been engaged in experimental urban social projects on the local, national and international level under the auspices of 'Citizen Science' and 'Open-Source principles'. The main fields of research, which is always collaborative with other institutions, are

¹⁸ Zimmermann, K. (2005) Soziale Stadt und Local Governance, Phd Thesis, Hannover (English summary)

theory and practice development in youth work and urban social development, and more recently, urban Aquaponic production and its implementation in social welfare projects for young people. This research is part of an international network that builds upon connectivity to global research into resource saving and environmentally neutral food production chains. Internally research supports the building of competence, while externally it also is ports projects in other locations.

The first sturgeon offered by Aquaponik49 tasted excellent. What did not end up on the plate resulted in fish stock with soup greens after an hour of cooking.

Résumé

DELPHIN is in its self- and the external image a highly successful innovative youth work actor that has helped a large number of young people with complex development problems through difficult times. The project is internally well set up to serve its clients and develop its staff professionally. DELPHIN not only serves the individual clients and the neighbourhood, but also is seen by the interviewees as an important provider of incentives for other projects in the city and the wider region. For the city of Chemnitz and collaborating partners, DELPHIN is a sustainable service provider, who answers to new challenges and policy suggestions and works as a robust knot in the youth policy and practice networks of the city of Chemnitz.

The main elements of DELPHIN were, according to the interviewees, its professionalism, its cross thematic and cross departmental effects, and its training effect in the local professional realm. The structure of the project with its many facets and its funding structure from a multitude of clients in the past has helped the project to grow according to needs and demand even at times of public finance crisis.

7.2.9 Corby

Kingswood and Hazel Leys (KHL) is a ward in Corby, just south of the town centre (Figure 2). As of mid-2019, it had a population of 7,795, of which 19% (1,477) were young people aged 15-29 (ONS, 2020c). The 2011 census showed that the neighbourhood performed poorly on several indicators of economic hardship, and consistently fell behind Corby and national (England and Wales) averages (nomis, n.d.):

- 13.9% of 16-64-year-olds were unemployed (compared to 7.6% both in Corby and nationally);
- The majority of those employed worked in low-skill and low-pay jobs: in elementary occupations (28.8%, compared to 21.1% in Corby and 11.2% nationally) or as process plant and machine operatives (21.5%, compared to 16.2% in Corby and 7.2% nationally);
- 29% had no qualifications (compared to 20.1% in Corby and 15% nationally) and only 9% had a Level 4 qualification or above (compared to 16.1% in Corby and 29.7% nationally).

In 2012, KHL became a 'Big Local area', and its community was set at the heart of leading an innovative post-crisis funding programme in the area. **Big Local** provides long-term, resident-led funding with almost no strings attached. Delivered by Local Trust, it is the largest single endowment ever made by the National Lottery Community Fund, a non-departmental public body which distributes National Lottery funding for the benefit of communities across the UK. Altogether, £217 million was invested in 150 neighbourhoods across England (including KHL), with each area awarded £1.1 million on the basis that it could be spent over 10-15 years at the communities' own chosen pace and according to their own plans and priorities (Local Trust, 2019).

The programme demonstrates an innovative approach to funding provision for local change. It is distinct from conventional funding programmes in five key ways: i) resident-led, rather than top-down, decision-making; ii) long-term, rather than time-limited, funding cycles; iii) non-prescriptive, rather than project-led, agendas; iv) patient, rather than judgemental, evaluation; and v) accompanied by flexible and responsive support (Local Trust, 2019). As its *Halfway Point* report explains, "In terms of scale, time horizon and ethos, nothing like Big Local has ever existed. Designed from the outset to be radically different from other funding programmes, Big Local has at its heart a vision of empowered, resilient, dynamic, asset-rich communities making their own decisions on what is best for their area" (Local Trust, 2019: p. 2).

As well as being among the changemakers involved in resident-led decision-making, young people are also key beneficiaries in KHL. Alongside several other activities, the community in KHL have decided to dedicate its Big Local funds towards various initiatives aimed at its young population. With grants ranging from £100 to £5,000, these have focussed on a range of areas, from providing opportunities in the arts, to environmental projects and physical activity, health and wellbeing initiatives (Northamptonshire Community Foundation, n.d.). For example:

- In July 2016, £5,000 was granted to Corby Mind to provide young parents with support and a series of workshops including an 8-week psycho-educational group, a self-help group & relaxation therapy
- In April 2017, £5,000 was granted to HQ Can CIC to provide mentoring and studio services for aspiring Rappers, Singers and Producers for 11-19-year-olds in Hazel Leys and Kingswood
- In July 2017, £5,000 was granted to Jason Strachen Personal Fitness to enable the group to deliver two 12-week programmes to improve the health and well-being of young people in Corby
- In February 2018, £2,432 was granted to Mad2Perfom to enable the group to deliver breakdance lessons to the children and young people of Kingswood and Hazelwood Estate

These funds are administered and accounted for by the KHL 'Big Local Partnership'. This is a group of at least 8 people, of which the majority must live in KHL, who are responsible for agreeing a shared vision, creating the Big Local plan, overseeing its delivery, collecting

evidence to show how the plan is progressing, and reviewing the plan and partnership to make sure they are working in the best way possible (Local Trust, 2015) A locally trusted organisation(s) can also be chosen by the Big Local Partnership to administer and account for the distribution of its funding, and/or deliver projects, activities or services on behalf of the Big Local Partnership (Local Trust, 2015).

Antony Mason (2019) notes that, whilst all communities worry about their young, “there is a particular sense of crisis and urgency in deprived communities” (p. 10), exacerbated by the withdrawal of national and local funding, notably under austerity. Consequently, the wellbeing and the futures of young people ranked high in the priorities identified by almost all Big Local areas when formulating a vision of what they wanted to achieve with their £1 million (Mason, 2019). As the intergenerational social contract breaks down, Mason (2019) argues that the Big Local model demonstrates how grassroots action and neighbourhood-level localism can fill the gaps left by funding cuts and short-term localism; whilst youth provision must remain the responsibility of local and national government, it highlights how community-led approaches can increase the effectiveness of policies.

Although the programme is not yet complete, Matt Leach, Local Trust’s Chief Executive, explains that, “as neighbourhoods overcome past and present inequalities ... there is now evidence to suggest the impacts of Big Local will be sustained over the long term. Since that initial leap in the dark ... we are coming to see that it really is possible for funders to give money and support in completely new and innovative ways, with residents in the lead” (Local Trust, 2019: p. 1). This includes emerging evidence about the impacts of Big Local on the four dimensions of inequality discussed in this report. There is particularly strong evidence of improvements in health inequalities. For instance, through conducting a survey of over 850 residents involved with the 150 Big Local areas across England, McGowan et al. (2021) found that a sense of ‘collective control’, and some measures of social cohesion, were positively associated with better mental well-being and self-rated health. These positive associations were often greater amongst women and participants with a lower education (McGowan et al., 2021). In addition, Halliday et al. (2021) use qualitative evidence from Big Local areas to describe the health impacts of living in stigmatised places, and Egan et al. (2021) use five examples from Big Local areas to demonstrate the relationship between health and community-led improvements to the built environment.

In this sense, Big Local is helping to address the ‘evidence paradox’, which undermines abilities to demonstrate the worth of ‘community power’ approaches because the current public services model is driven by a narrow framing of ‘value’ and a strong focus on quantitative metrics (Pollard et al., 2021) (Figure 13). This fails to capture the relational benefits of community-led approaches. For example, George Hill, chair of KHL Big Local, explains “this estate has massively improved because of the collaboration between the borough council, other organisations and Big Local ... The best way to get on with the council is to get to know the people in it. They’re just human; they’re just trying to do a job. With the council, I’m a bit

of an advocate for how important they are, and it's not as if I'm high flying or a council officer. I'm one of the cleaners!" (Tickle, 2018).

Reframing the role of communities, particularly in shaping the central government funds granted to local areas, will be increasingly relevant given the recent focus on 'levelling up'. As the majority of 'macro funds' and economic interventions over the last two decades have not involved communities in a meaningful nor sustainable way, interventions have consistently failed to address the most deprived communities, contributing to a 0% average change in the relative spatial deprivation of the most deprived local authority areas (Yang et al., 2021). This "prompts the question of why this intervention has proved so ineffective" (p. 10)?

Plumb et al. (2021) argue that "what continues to be missing from the funds that are put in place to drive levelling up forward is a focus, not just on what is done, but on how it is done" (p. 4). They suggest that the current policy approach risks creating and reinforcing inequalities due to an inadequate focus on investment to build the capacity of communities to contribute to levelling up. Through learnings from Big Local, it is proposed that investment in social infrastructure would have economic as well as social value, with the potential to help 'level up' communities (Local Trust, 2021).

Two caveats of this potential are that investment must be "done in the right way" and "targeted at the right places" (Local Trust, 2021: p. 4). Corby has been identified as a funding 'cold spot'. Yet, despite being among the bottom 10% of English local authorities to receive the most public, philanthropic and charitable funding (297/315), the town ranks comparatively high in terms of its community strength (92/315) (Tauschinski et al., 2019). Yang et al. (2021) propose a 'locally engaged approach to levelling up' (Figure 14) which would tap into this 'community power' to enhance the impacts of funding programmes, such as the Towns Fund or Get Building Fund. This would mark a shift towards a 'community paradigm' for the allocation of public resources, moving away from state and market paradigms (Pollard et al., 2021). As Mason (2019) questions, "if communities prioritise allocation of resources to intergenerational fairness, why can't central and local government" (p. 63)?

7.2.10 Leuven

New living concepts towards affordable living

In the context of high prices and rents that make it difficult for low- and moderate-income groups to find affordable housing in the city, in Leuven several actors are looking for new ways to provide affordable housing solutions and avoid the "migration" of these income groups toward the municipalities in the outskirts of the FUA. One of these new solutions is a Community Land Trust, which is currently in the making and is planning its first housing project.

It is important to note that, although Community Land Trusts have been used across the world for decades (see Baets et al., 2020 for an overview and history of CLTs), they are not very common in Europe. Indeed, in Belgium this is only the third initiative of this kind. The first was

in Brussels (see Aernouts, 2020), the second in Gent and others are currently in the making in Antwerp, Bruges and Hasselt.

A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a member-based legal entity that owns land and creates permanently affordable housing. Community Land Trusts offer an alternative to both public housing and classical ownership, and the private market. They are democratic organizations, managed by the community and with no profit motive. They develop and manage affordable housing for low- to median-income families, as well as other facilities for the benefit of the local community. They have long-term responsibility for these facilities, including ensuring long-term affordability. To do this, they use mechanisms that ensure that the added value stays within the Trust. Indeed, the Trusts pursue an active land acquisition policy through donations, or through purchases made possible by subsidies and subsequently develop housing. They then sell part of the property, namely the buildings, but retain ownership of the land. The buyers get pretty much the same rights as any other homeowner, including inheritance of the property, but have to live there themselves and cannot rent it out to others. When a resident sells their home, the CLT will buy them back at a capped price below market value. The residents will get back their initial investment plus a small part of the added value, which mostly stays with the Trust. The homes thus remain affordable to subsequent buyers without additional government input. In this way a one-off subsidy from the government to set up the CLT will continue to yield affordable dwellings through the generations.

The legal and operational models of CLTs have been refined over time. After being driven mainly by bottom-up movements in the early years, more and more local governments are now starting CLTs as well. Indeed, in the case of Leuven the CLT was advocated for by the Green Party for years, and it was finally initiated by the AGSL and the Municipality. In early 2019, the Autonoom Gemeentebedrijf Stadsontwikkeling Leuven (AGSL) decided to have a feasibility study carried out by the Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB) in collaboration with the research group Cosmopolis from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, with the objective to find out if and how a Community Land Trust could be one of the answers to the affordability problems of Leuven. The feasibility study was finished in March 2020 and it led to the currently ongoing process of creation of a Community Land Trust, aimed at the realisation of a first CLT housing project in the area of Klein Rijsel in Leuven¹⁹.

Despite this top-down nature, the process has been set up as highly participatory, and numerous public meetings took place between institutional stakeholders, prospective residents, current residents of the neighbourhood where the project will take place, housing experts and the Leuven community at large. These meetings have several objectives. In the beginning, they served on one hand to identify the groups who are most in need of affordable housing and which are underserved by the current policies, and on the other hand to connect

¹⁹ All the relevant info can be found on the website of the AGSL, including the feasibility study: <https://www.agsl.be/community-land-trust-leuven#hoe-doen-we-dit-3>

relevant institutions and individuals that can become partners in the Trust and involve them in the process of setting up the CLT itself and its governance. At a later stage, the meetings will become about creating interest and momentum for the initiative, by involving associations and groups interested in fostering a sense of community in the neighbourhood where the housing site is, as well as finding the future residents. See Table 2 for an overview of the different phases of the process.

Table 4. Phases of the process to establish a CLT in Leuven

Phases of the process to establish a CLT in Leuven

Phase 1: May – December 2021

Application phase: who is involved in thinking about a Community Land Trust in Leuven?

Phase 2: January 2022 – August 2022

Establishment phase: Various workshops are organized with the aim of shaping the organization from the bottom up.

Phase 3: from August 2022

Foundation of the non-profit association: signing of the statutes and charter, establishment of the board of directors and further development and design phase of the pilot site Klein Rijsel.

The main innovative feature of the CLT is of course the decoupling of land and buildings in terms of ownership, which allows residents to purchase their homes at a substantially lower price, since the highest cost - that of land - is sustained by the Trust. However, also the creation of a community of residents and stakeholders through a participation process from the very beginning, including in the setting up of the Trust itself and not only in the design of the housing project, is an innovative aspect in the Leuven context. Moreover, the type of knowledge sharing and support provided by the network of CLTs in Europe and across the world is a valuable model of cooperation and of dissemination of sustainable housing and management practices.

In terms of financing, in Leuven a preliminary financial plan has been drawn up, which will evolve depending on the final composition of institutional actors in the CLT partnership. For now, the Municipality of Leuven has provided an initial capital of 5 million euros, and the AGSL provided the land on which the first housing project will be built.

Decisions are still in the making and the process is ongoing; nevertheless, we selected this initiative as an innovative policy because of the very high potential of CLTs as a long-term sustainable solution to provide affordable homeownership for lower-middle income households in a country where homeownership is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric, much more than social housing is.

Finally, it is relevant to mention that the housing experts we interviewed expressed some concerns with regard to the use of innovative housing concepts to solve the housing affordability issue. They argued that effective tools already exist, namely social housing, and that what is missing is the political will to address the housing problem in a structural way. Their fear is that innovative projects could become small one-off wins with much “marketing potential” and obfuscate the need for a structural approach.

7.2.11 Łódź

The following chapter shows an example of a public led inner city revitalisation programme that we consider innovative in certain aspects. Although there are many revitalization programmes happening across Poland and Europe, this one stands out thanks to its innovative elements with regard to the tailor-made approach implemented in the process: communication and cooperation with the local residents, and the aim to achieve socially heterogeneous communities in buildings and in the residential area. We have to emphasize however that not all aspects of the revitalisation process can serve as a good practice – e.g. many of the former residents cannot afford to return to their home due to the increase in rents and housing costs after renovation. It is also important to emphasize that the revitalisation process and its innovative components do not have a specific youth focus; but they do have elements that have a strong impact on vulnerable young people, like the inclusion of youngsters coming from foster care, or the establishment of youth and backyard clubs.²⁰

The city centre of Łódź consists mainly of old tenement houses, built around the end of the 19th century or at the beginning of the 20th century. This means that the buildings are in an obsolete technical condition, often lacking basic sanitary installations. The renovation of the building stock as described in the ‘Mia100 Tenement House – Kamienic’ strategic plan was not only about renovating the buildings, but also revitalization, thus creating and bringing new functions in the inner city of Łódź. It emphasized close cooperation between the inhabitants of degraded buildings and local communities, some of which have been called by Łódź sociologists as ‘enclaves of poverty’.

The renovation process has been implemented since 2011, but it was modified and further expanded through an EU supported revitalisation programme from 2016. The national legal framework for this process was included in the Revitalization Act of 9 October 2015. One of the most important elements of this Act is the declared endeavour manifesting in certain tools to involve local communities in the process. According to the Act the municipalities have to designate Special Revitalization Zones, which allows special measures, such as the possibility for the commune to grant subsidies to owners for the renovation of buildings. According to the provisions of the Łódź Municipal Revitalization Programme, the total value of revitalization projects in the city will be almost PLN 3,700,000,000 (EUR 814 million) between 2017 and 2026. The implementation of the programme receives financial support from European Funds.

²⁰ <https://urbact.eu/transfer-story-%C5%82%C3%B3d%C5%BA-birmingham-toulouse-three-paths-mediation>

The revitalisation area of Łódź covers 1,783 ha, i.e. over 6% of the total area of the city, and is inhabited by approximately 22% of its population, i.e. over 152,000 people. There are about 10,000 properties in the central area of Łódź. Only 9% of the residential buildings in the revitalisation area are owned exclusively by the city, and it has partial ownership in another 15%, the vast majority of which requires major renovation. Reconstruction activities in the city centre are divided into 20 areas with separate regeneration sub-projects. Comprehensive activities cover entire city blocks, and involve not only the thorough renovation of buildings and surrounding public spaces, but also the creation of new roads, bicycle lanes and green areas.

The renovation process also endeavours to tackle local social issues, both those in the revitalized areas and the newly emerging ones resulting from the revitalization process. For this end, new employees were hired at the city hall: 'area managers' (8 people) and 'personal managers' (8 people). These officials work in the field, directly with the residents. Their task is to support residents in solving various types of problems, e.g. housing, family issues. The so-called 'community lighthouse keepers' form a support network composed of various institutions and organizations, such as the social welfare centre, the police, the employment office, which are able to respond to the various problems and needs of residents. Problems are diagnosed in the field, through conversations with residents. Cases requiring intervention are also reported by the area owners and the neighbours of people in need of support.

The Revitalization Office also supports entrepreneurs who will have to transfer their business or encounter difficulties due to the revitalization.

One of the goals of the revitalization process is to make the environment youth friendly. Thus, young people living in the revitalization areas are affected by the renovation, but are also involved in the new youth centres and clubs. Another issue related to young people is wide spread drug use and trafficking in the area. Experts hope that the revitalization efforts can help curb these issues.

Examples of revitalization projects:

79 Sienkiewicza Street: Daily Residence for Seniors.

There are 4 council flats, 1 protected flat for people with physical disabilities, and 10 art studios in the building. In addition, a room for physical activity was created on the ground floor with one completely glazed wall, massage chairs and exercise bikes, and a club room with a piano. A spacious common dining room was created on the first floor. On the 2nd floor, a fully equipped, modern kitchen and food storage rooms were equipped. On the top floor, a common room and a big terrace were made.

142 Piotrkowska Street:

The building was completely renovated and connected to the heating network. On the ground floor of the building there are commercial premises, including one adapted for running a restaurant or café. The first floor and part of the ground floor is converted into a Daily

Residence for Persons with Disabilities. An elevator was installed in the building to make it wheelchair accessible. There are apartments on the upper floors, each equipped with a bathroom and a kitchen or kitchenette. The backyard was also reconstructed. A terrace was added to the building for the Daily Residence, which is also a roof for part of the courtyard. The old farm buildings were demolished. New concrete covering and a terrace board were laid in designated places. The garden was also redesigned with flowering plants, shrubs, trees and climbing plants. The building includes 9 council flats, 3 commercial premises, and a Daily Residence for Persons with Disabilities.

39 Kilińskiego Street:

After the renovation of the apartment building at 39 Kilińskiego Street, part of the building was retained for apartments, and part was converted into creative and service premises. An elevation with windows and balconies was created on the previously windowless gable wall. An elevator and a main entrance from the street level were also installed. An attic was added to the outbuilding. The building was connected to the municipal district heating network. Trees and climbing greenery were planted in the yard. The market was developed on the corner of Jaracz and Kiliński Streets. The roof of the market was replaced with an Art Nouveau style steel structure, and the place was equipped with a sanitary point. The building includes 7 council flats, 1 protected flat for people with physical disabilities, 2 creative studios, and 3 service premises.

The revitalized buildings have various social functions, which is a positive development. However, most of the former residents either do not want to or cannot afford return to their former apartments due to the rent increase. The revitalization of buildings in the city centre is carried out in part to improve the living conditions of the poorest inhabitants, but also to improve the image of the city. The result of these activities is inevitably gentrification, as most of the poorest inhabitants have to move outside the programme area. This, of course, does not detract from the value of this programme for the city, but it undermines its social character.

On the other hand, the personalised approach of communicating with the residents is a locally new and innovative approach. The city has recognised that there is a need to find the proper language and create trust in the local community. The employees of the Rehabilitation Office knocked on every door and made personalised interviews with all residents to find out what their problems and future visions were. The methodology (e.g., representatives of different disciplines visit residents in pairs, and define area-based and person-based responsibilities) was developed locally. So even if the rehabilitation cannot be called 'social', it may at least be called 'humane'.

7.2.12 Pécs

Experts claim that the Hungarian education system is so rigid that any attempt at change could count as source of innovation (Bíró, 2015). The programme we have chosen to briefly analyse as an innovative measure is the János Arany Talent Support Programme. The reason for choosing this programme as an innovative measure is that besides its general innovative

nature it provides the framework for micro-innovations in the education system as well. The other reason for the choice was that we believe that this programme focuses on one of the most crucial drivers of educational inequalities, namely that the choice of secondary school greatly influences the later possibilities of entering tertiary education, which is proven to be strongly related to family background (Csákó et al., 1998²¹). By the time a student reaches the possibility of applying for tertiary education, societal selection criteria 'has already done their job' in early childhood socialization and during elementary school studies, which indirectly affects the students' capabilities and choices (Csákó et al., 1998).

Based on these evidences, the János Arany Talent Support Programme (AJP) was launched in 2000, financed from the state budget. The program was initiated by the Ministry of Education as an experiment to help students coming from disadvantaged families and/or living in disadvantaged areas to learn in the best secondary schools of the country.

- First the programme operated as a talent management programme that provided a one year preparation before entering secondary school (e.g. language courses, mathematics, computer use, communication, learning methodology) and dormitory placement. The aim was to assist students mostly coming from small villages in remote areas in entering tertiary education. These students attend normal secondary education after the preparatory year, but their school career is constantly assisted by tutors and mentors mostly in the form of after school courses in the dormitories. (This is why dormitory is compulsory for these students.)
- Then, from 2004, a new sub-programme was launched that concentrated on the dormitories themselves. In these dormitories (11 of them) the students are living within the same group, while they attend different secondary schools. They also participate in preparatory courses before entering secondary school. This programme seems to be quite similar to the previously mentioned one, but it has a stronger social support dimension, and the emphasis is on compensating for learning difficulties rather than on talent management. The goal of this programme is to help students to get a secondary school diploma.
- From 2007 another sub-programme was added to the János Arany Talent Support programme, targeting students in vocational education. The aim of the programme was to help students to obtain a profession. The dormitory plays a key role in this programme, but the complex development of the students is implemented according to an 'individual development plan' which is assisted by the teachers and teaching assistants, and also involves the family.

At the end of 2017, 2,508 students took part in the original programme, 921 students participated in the "dormitory" programme, while and 428 students were in the vocational school sub-programme.

²¹ Csákó Mihály et al. (1998): A felsőfokú továbbtanulás meghatározói 1998-ban. Budapest, ELTE Szociológiai és Szociálpolitikai Intézet.

As for the current target group of the programme, students can apply if they are 1) legally enrolled in 8th grade and are applying for 9th grade (the first year of secondary school); 2a) disadvantaged according to Act XXXI of 1997 on the Protection of Children and the Administration of Guardianship (Gyermekvédelmi törvény) or 2b) receive regular child protection allowance; 3) already in temporary guardianship; 4) in need according to the recommendation issued by the Child Protection Services (CPS), based on the request of the elementary school and the parents.²²

The financial source of the program has barely changed since its beginning. All currently participating institutions (schools and dormitories) receive state (and partially EU) support after each involved student on a normative base set in the law. In 2014 this was HUF 315,000 per person per year (approx. EUR 950).

Even at the very beginning the programme aimed to cover broad areas of the country. The first 13 joining institutions were from 13 different counties (of the 19 total), and later it covered the entire country, now present in 71 secondary schools in 36 cities nationwide.

The Programme has been operating for decades, seemingly resistant to the structural changes in politics and education. Analyses show that the programme successfully contributes to reducing inequalities among young people by providing substantial support to students who otherwise would not have a chance to reach high educational attainment. One indicator of success is the high share - 80-82% - of the students in the first programme type who were able to attend tertiary education. Still, the programmes have difficulties as well (e.g. a 5.3% dropout rate; only about 70% of the budgetary framework is used).

The main reasons for considering this programme innovative are:

- It was created as a mixture of bottom-up and top-down policy making.
- It provides a framework for complex and tailor-made assistance, including compensating for learning difficulties, providing appropriate physical conditions in terms of accommodation, and helping to develop the possible talents of students.
- The programme generated methodological innovations in pedagogy, e.g. in the field of drama pedagogy, workshops were organised for fostering cultural identity and psychological aspect were considered very important. Several of these innovations were mainstreamed later on into standard pedagogy²³.
- The programme had a reflective nature: as it was progressing in time, new elements were added according to feedbacks and assessments of the program.

²² The CPS has to decide on the indigence based on the previous 3 years prior to the application to the AJP.

²³ A guideline was written, collecting good practices based on the AJP's experiences between 2000 and 2018. This provides a great opportunity to further mainstream the potential good practices into the standard education system. Brahmi Ilona and Csirke József (ed.) "JÓ GYAKORLATOK AZ ARANY JÁNOS TEHETSÉGGONDOZÓ PROGRAM KOLLÉGIUMAIBAN Módszertani kiadvány, 2000 – 2018" ISBN: 978-615-001251-3

In Pécs 3 institutions are participating in the Talent Programme (2 out of them since 2000): Klára Leövey Secondary Grammar school; Zoltán Kodály Dormitory (in close cooperation with Klára Leövey Secondary Grammar School) and Gandhi Secondary Grammar School.

The Kodály Dormitory implements, besides extra curriculum, a complex program including regular family visits firstly to inform parents in segregated and poorer areas but keeping a good relationship with parents. This attribute seems to be a rather important element of the success.

7.2.13 Sfântu Gheorghe

Poverty, social inequality and segregation are three issues that are often related. The problem of segregation in Sfântu Gheorghe has existed since 1990, as evidenced by the so-called 'Berlin Wall' (built between 1985 and 1987), which separates part of a segregated neighbourhood from the rest of the town (Mionel, 2013). As we mentioned in the previous chapters, the Atlas of Marginalized Urban Areas identifies 2 segregated areas at the level of FUA Sfântu Gheorghe, to which the Local Development Strategy (SDL) adds another one. If at the level of FUA, there is a process of population aging - due to declining birth rates and leaving the town by young people - at the level of the three areas the population consists mostly of young people and families with over 3 children.

Local authorities have failed to establish a coherent local youth policy or to form a youth council, although they have been trying for more than 10 years to (re) attract young people to the city. Through cultural programmes and the programme 'Come home' (described in the Housing chapter) are attracted rather young people with a high level of education, but one of the major problems is managing the difficulties of young people in precarious socio-economic situations, those who have the lowest mobility.

Although at the declarative level, public institutions have taken action against segregation and the reduction of social inequalities, until recently, the results did not have a really significant impact. Unlike other localities in Romania, in recent years, the municipality has tried to take concrete measures; in this regard, in 2017, the Sepsi Local Action Group Association (GAL Sepsi) was established²⁴ in order to submit an application for funding to the Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds on the rehabilitation of marginalized urban areas in Sfântu Gheorghe. The funding application contained the Local

²⁴ It is important to mention that in Romania are dozens of Local Action Groups Associations. A GAL and is a form of partnership established in a rural area (or small urban area) that brings together representatives of the public, private and civil society sectors from that territory; GAL represents a local response to a government initiative.

The association GAL Sepsi was established with six founding members, as follows: Sfântu Gheorghe Municipality, Maltese Help Service Association in Romania - Sfântu Gheorghe Branch, "ESÉLY" Mental Health Promotion Association Lelki Egészségvédő Egyesület, "AMENKHA" Roma Association, Social Assistance Branch of Caritas Alba Iulia and Femild Bauinvest SRL. Then the number of members increased to 9, with the affiliation in the Association of the action company TEGA SA, respectively with the registration of two representatives of the disadvantaged areas (Albert Andrea - Ciucului District and Fejér Imre - Câmpul Frumos). The local action group got its current and final composition with the affiliation in December 2019 of the Social Assistance Directorate (DAS).

Development Strategy (SDL) which includes the infrastructure and human capital development plans in the three marginalized urban areas (ZUM) on the administrative territory of Sfântu Gheorghe municipality - for a period of 6 years (2018-2023).

The PROSPERA SEPSI project²⁵ was the first project approved for financing within the first call for projects launched by the Sepsî LAG and also the most ambitious social project that existed in Sfântu Gheorghe. The project was born from the collaboration of 6 organizations²⁶ with the aim of reducing poverty and combating discrimination in the municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe, respectively combating the social exclusion of disadvantaged communities identified by the Local Development Strategy. The coverage area of the project is represented by the three marginalized urban areas of Sfântu Gheorghe. A team of 36 professionals will work with the target population, supporting participants in their daily lives and activities, helping them to get out of their disadvantaged situation in the long run. The most important indicators of the project are: **facilitating access to services**²⁷, facilitating access to educational services²⁸, facilitating the assessment and improvement of general health²⁹, increasing the level of acceptance³⁰, promoting integrated interventions to reduce the risk of poverty and combat discrimination and segregation³¹. The project addresses several aspects of the lives of people facing extreme poverty, not only finding a job, but also other actions to help them find their way to a decent life. The project is designed at the family level, but primarily targets children and young adults. The innovative element of the project consists in its multi-disciplinarily and the mobilization of such a complex team consisting of state institutions and important NGOs,

²⁵ PROSPERA SEPSI - Integrated services for reducing the number of people at risk of poverty in the territorial area of Sfântu Gheorghe Municipality"POCU / 717/5/1/137460, co-financed from the HUMAN CAPITAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM 2014-2020.

²⁶ The main applicant is Caritas Alb Iulia, in partnership with the City Hall of Sfântu Gheorghe, the Eurocenter Amôba Educational Center, the Covasna Community Foundation, the Maltese Aid Service - Sfântu Gheorghe Branch and the Covasna County School Inspectorate.

²⁷ For a number of 600 beneficiaries from the three identified marginalized urban areas (ZUM), of which 300 Roma, through basic activities and services such as social assistance, information, mentoring, regulations, acts for obtaining social assistance rights, development of social skills, the establishment of 3 licensed social services for children and families, respectively 3 socio-medical services - until the end of the implementation until the 24th of the project (source: <https://caritas-ab.ro/ro/project/prospersa-sepsi/>).

²⁸ Reducing absenteeism and reducing the dropout rate in the three identified ZUMs, through educational, recreational and social services for a number of 140 children, parental counselling services and parents' school for 80 parents, literacy services for 20 illiterate adults, respectively through the professional training of a number of 25 pedagogues (source: <https://caritas-ab.ro/ro/project/prospersa-sepsi/>).

²⁹ Of the target group through mobile medical services, for a number of 600 beneficiaries during the project period (source: <https://caritas-ab.ro/ro/project/prospersa-sepsi/>).

³⁰ Of vulnerable communities served by the project, combating discrimination and segregation through community actions, promoting volunteering and anti-discrimination campaigns for 600 beneficiaries throughout the project (source: <https://caritas-ab.ro/ro/project/prospersa-sepsi/>).

³¹ Through a number of 4 activities for disseminating the project results at the level of county, national and international networks, every six months during the 24 months of the project (source: <https://caritas-ab.ro/ro/project/prospersa-sepsi/>).

operating in different fields. All the institutions have previously started projects or had been in contact with the three communities, but they have never managed to simultaneously offer integrated services in several fields. At the same time, establishing partnerships between private companies (possible employers) and trainers in the field of work, of such magnitude has not taken place in Sfântu Gheorghe; in fact, few similar initiatives are known to have taken place in the country.

7.2.14 Tallinn

Introducing the ‘nudge’ theory as a new method of national level policymaking by the Ministry of Social Affairs

With respect to innovative policies, we present a new approach which applies softer social work methods which themselves are based on the nudge theory. At this very moment this is being tested in the Ministry of Social Affairs. The first tests for this method have not particularly been targeted towards young people, but they have been seen by interviewees as something which will be used for this target group in the future.

The ‘nudge’ theory is a concept in behavioural sciences which assists in gaining positive incentives without prohibiting or reducing freedom of choice. It aims to create a stimulus,³² one which guides a person or social groups towards more socially-beneficial behaviour. The policy is deductive, as it layers over the theory being applied in social sciences (see also Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). A nudge will be provided in a situation in which change is needed, but ordinary policies which are based on prohibitions are not possible or effective here. Nudge theory has been applied in short scientific projects in order to test the efficiency of various softer measures regarding how later to address socio-economic issues at the employment policy level.

Table 5. The main characteristics of nudge method implementation

The main characteristics of nudge method implementation	
Timeframe	Since 2021 (one nudge project lasts about one year)
Actors involved	Ministry of Social Affairs Universities and research institutions which are eligible to conduct a scientific survey
Funding	From the ministry budget (usually between 50,000 to 100,000 euros)
Monitoring mechanisms	Selected by the applicant and confirmed by the ministry (methods differ)

³² A nudge means a light touch or push.

The first nudge project was targeted in May 2021 to make better use of paternity leave and its benefits. It was addressed towards gender segregation in the labour market and the issue of there already being new opportunities for taking longer spells of paternity leave but with these not frequently being used. Since 1 July 2020, paternity leave has been extended to thirty calendar days instead of the previous ten working days, and the Social Insurance Board has begun to pay the father's additional parental benefit. Fathers can go on leave from the thirtieth calendar day before the expected date of birth of the child, and can access their benefits until the child reaches the age of three. Paternity leave can be used in several parts. Despite this, since 1 July 2020 only 4,415 fathers have made use of the benefit, which totals about 60% of all fathers ('Paternity leave and benefit payment nudge project', 2020). A one-off project aimed to study why fathers were not making full use of the opportunity for supplementary parental benefit, while also being intended to develop and test interventions which could persuade as many fathers as possible to make use of father's supplementary parental leave:

'This is a scientific and flexible approach which identifies what factors should be changed or done differently in order to make paternity leave more accessible. It first studies the reasons for young people not taking paternity leave. Then researchers can create potential nudges which try to remove obstacles in order to help more people to use this service. The next step is to carry out a valuation of the nudges. The project will test two reference groups to see what differences may have emerged between the group for which a nudge has been applied and the group which has not received any intervention at all. As a result, a level of understanding will be constructed in regard to potential obstacles to taking paternity leave, while also providing ideas about the necessity for potential interventions and supplying an assessment of their effectiveness.'

Public sector official

The project will end in May 2022, resulting in a comprehensive report which will make it possible to test the potential of such a method in terms of it being used permanently in employment policy.

In June 2021 the Ministry of Social Affairs announced a second nudge project which was aimed at developing and testing interventions which are intended to support applications for a job by long-term unemployment benefit recipients before the end of the benefit period. Both projects have only recently been launched and as yet there are no final reports or results available. However, using the nudge approach in the identification of methods and testing future potential policy measures marks a development in national level social policies towards a more flexible on-demand notion.