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**WP4: Case studies**  
**Deliverable D4.3: Synthesis report on case studies**

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## 1. Introduction

This is the third and final report of INNOSI Work Package 4. It consists of a synthesis of findings and learning from twenty case studies. Research literature on the Social Investment policy paradigm is extensive and influential, as shown in our report from the scientific perspective (D 2.2). There is also a growing body of policy-oriented discussion and analysis of ways in which welfare states are moving towards Social Investment. Both the academic and policy writing mainly concern the national and international levels. This is so despite the services that come under Social Investment being largely delivered and experienced locally. The case studies reported in detail in D 4.2 offer a unique set of original, empirically grounded research evidence about many challenges, successes and setbacks from implementation of innovative and strategic Social Investment at a regional and local level. They are informed by engagement with service users and local communities affected as well as with decision makers, managers, front-line professionals and volunteers. In this report we begin to advance the state of the art by bringing local contexts to the fore.

Our analysis of public policy (D2.3) showed that in most countries there is awareness of the EU definition of Social Investment within national policy communities. The case studies demonstrate that at the level of local government and service delivery, in contrast, Social Investment was almost never meaningful as a concept. Nevertheless, there was strong commitment to the principles of improving people's prospects for future employment and social participation over the life course. The report is organized in seven sections.

Following this short introduction we set the scene with an overview of the case studies and comment briefly on debates about Social Investment from the literature (covered in other InnoSI reports) which are reflected in this empirical research. Section 3 is about funding and resourcing. In section 4 we go on to assess some of the successes and challenges associated with collaboration across agencies and sectors to achieve the aims of Social Investment. Section 5 draws on local experience to show that building human capital, a core tenant of Social Investment, is in practice closely implicated with social capital. In section 6 we reflect on the nature and limitations of evidence for decision making and learning in the context of Social Investment. Finally, we bring all this material together to draw conclusions and set out some implications for policy and practice.

## 2: Social investment and innovation

The InnoSI project adopted the following as a working definition from the *Social Investment Package* (European Commission 2013a, p. 4).

The social investment approach stresses the case for considering certain parts of employment and social policies - and possibly other policy areas, such as education - as entailing investments improving prospects for future employment and social participation, together with more social cohesion and stability ... thus stressing the life course dimension of social policies and their long-term benefits for society.

According to this document, "[S]ocial investment policies reinforce social policies that protect and stabilise by addressing some of the causes of disadvantage and giving people tools with which to improve their social situations" (European Commission 2013a, p.3). The definition emphasises human capital for the labour market but, at the same time, recognises activating people and investing in the future for social participation and cohesion. It is somewhat more inclusive than, for example, the treatment of Social Investment by ESPN (2015) which concentrates only on employment prospects and labour market outcomes.

There are many questions, critiques and debates in the extant Social Investment literature. They are addressed in other INNOSI deliverables and it is beyond the scope of this report to reiterate them in detail. However, in order to set the scene for the case study evidence, we highlight a few key points because the synthesis of evidence from the case studies shows that they reverberate through social investment programmes on the ground and in the real world. Much of the literature on Social Investment aims to define and promote a ‘paradigm’, or to assess the extent to which particular nation states are moving towards this paradigm (2015; Morel et al., 2012; Hemerijk, 2013; 2015; Leoni, 2015). At its simplest, the Social Investment paradigm or perspective can be boiled down to viewing social policy as a productive factor, such that the resources employed are not merely used up (or sunk) through current consumption but instead applied to increase some form of capacity for future wealth creation (Lister, 2004; Morel et al., 2012).

Four important sets of critique challenge the above definition and subsequent usage for policy. First, in its focus on the individual, it de-emphasises the role of redistribution in macro-economic stability and lower inequality that could also be a productive factor (Rogers & Vernon, 2002; Schelkle & Mabbett, 2007). Second, and related, there are conceptual difficulties in distinguishing between social consumption and social investment, with most activity comprising a mix of the two. Supposedly passive transfers, for example, to the unemployed, sustain health for the future and enable job searches (Nolan, 2013; Morel et al. 2012; Deeming and Smyth, 2015)<sup>1</sup>. Third, there are fears that, as a policy, this definition allows a focus on the economic return such that some welfare provision is undermined, and that this is likely to penalise the most vulnerable segments of the population (Nolan, 2013; Cantillon and Van Lancker, 2013). Finally, there remains a question of how much Social Investment is actually new or merely ‘old wine in new bottles’ as welfare states in the past have also emphasised ‘productive’ social policy (Nolan 2013).

“Innovation is an essential element of Social Investment policy since social policies require constant adaptation to new challenges” (European Commission 2013b, p. 11). Social innovation is concerned with “the development of what are currently viewed as assets for sustainable development: environmental, human and social capital” (BEPA, 2011, p.20). Empirical evidence about the characteristics of social innovations in welfare across Europe highlights non-standard answers to non-standard risks; addressing vulnerabilities associated with transitions through the life course, multiple identities and notions of co-production based on strengths and assets (Evers, 2013). According to the European Commission (2011, p.30) “social innovation mobilizes each citizen to become an active part of the innovation process” (cited in Voorberg et al, 2015, p. 1334). Social innovation - until recently has - not taken much account of discourse on welfare and social policy, and vice versa (Ewart and Evers, 2014).

In this report, we examine empirical case studies across 20 projects or programmes in ten Member States. The evaluation approach allows us to start from a bottom up perspective, examining what it is that the programmes and projects set out to achieve and how, and ways that these achievements are evidenced. The InnoSI teams selected the 20 case studies on the grounds that they fit into the Social Investment paradigm and literature. This was based on initial understandings of the vision of the projects and programmes. An overview of each case, summarising its investive and innovative character, is given in Table 1. While it can be argued (as above) that most government spending is to a degree social investment, we were looking for activity that seemed to be more investive than the usual activity in that area of work. Furthermore, the case studies were selected for their innovative

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1 Furthermore, public investment in roads or hospitals have similar functions, and so could be counted as social investment (see Deeming and Smyth 2015)

character. For example, education itself is an investment in human capital but it is also a long-standing and standard part of society's investment in the future, so not necessarily an innovation: a project that aims to reconfigure education to reach those who use it least could be. It is also, therefore, the case that whether a given project or programme is innovative or more investive is dependent on what went before it.

The sources for this synthesis, then, are the twenty case-study reports of the InnoSI consortium (D 4.2). Each of these case studies was prepared using a broadly similar approach, with an evaluative research programme that consisted of:

- A literature and policy review covering the relevant social policy area
- An assessment of the problem or needs the project was set up to address, using the project's own data and other available data
- The development of one or more theory of change
- An assessment of the process
- An assessment of impact
- An assessment of economic impact

National teams reviewed secondary data and conducted new empirical research using mixed methods adapted to the specific circumstances. Full details are given in D 4.2. All the case studies include individual and / or group stakeholder interviews. These interviews were with local politicians, service managers and workers, local business owners, third sector leaders and educators. Semi-structured interview guides were tailored to the project context and often to individuals. Researchers also surveyed and /or interviewed beneficiaries, or in some instances their representatives. Interviews were usually one-to-one but where family groups, rather than individuals, were the intervention target they were interviewed together. This was supplemented with site visits and observation. Some researchers conducted participant observation, for example doing gardening work in an urban farm and helping out in early childhood education settings. This activity engendered multiple informal interviews. The national teams all undertook documentary analysis. Existing evaluation reports were valuable sources that usually included data from the recipients of programmes. Further available documents included management materials, media coverage, and other public domain sources (websites, government reports).

The twenty case-study reports, each of around 30-40,000, words were read and reviewed by researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University, UK, and Debrecen, Hungary. Team members (working first individually and then in pairs) analysed each of the case studies thematically, guided by an agreed template. A day-long meeting, in which the 20 case studies were compared and contrasted, was attended by five of this team and the discussions there form the intellectual basis of this report.

**Table 1: Case studies with main investive and inovative themes**

<b>Case Study</b>	<b>Social Investment</b>	<b>Social Innovation</b>
Youth Guarantee <b>Finland</b>	Improve access to education and jobs for young adults	Public-private-people partnership with young people actively shaping their own future
User driven local public services <i>May I help you</i> <b>Finland</b>	Strengthen communality; engage unemployed youth and isolated older people;	Experimental service design with end users shaping services

<b>Case Study</b>	<b>Social Investment</b>	<b>Social Innovation</b>
Berufundfamilie (work & family) <b>Germany</b>	Reconcile employment and family life	Municipal stimuli for corporate and municipal family policy.
MAMBA (Action programme for the labour market integration of migrants) <b>Germany</b>	Support migrants to contribute to local labour markets	Inter-sectoral collaboration and networks between originally distinct systems;
Connecting vocational school graduates with the labour market <b>Greece</b>	Addresses youth unemployment through competences for the labour market	Forge new links between businesses and vocational education.
Women's Participation in Trade Unions	Active participation of women workers in positions of responsibility	New approaches to counselling and information on labour issues for women
Tanoda 'Brain Wheel' <b>Hungary</b>	Reduce drop out from education by disadvantaged mainly Roma children	Connects institutions around the children
Personalised care plans in Sardinia <b>Italy</b>	Autonomy and independent living for people with severe disabilities	Co-production between family, local social services and personal assistants
Early childhood education and care in Emilia-Romagna <b>Italy</b>	Education and early childhood care; support parents' labour market participation	Best-practice for the relationship between public, private and social economy actors
Employment from A to Z ("Accompaniment") <b>Poland</b>	Address social and labour market exclusion	Solutions that already existed delivered in new ways; involves representatives of all sectors.
Active regardless of the age <b>Poland</b>	Dignified aging through social activity; inter-generational integration	Many socially innovative local initiatives under the programme
Energy co-operatives <b>Spain</b>	Address fuel poverty; benefit future generations with greener energy	Foster new kinds of sustainable behaviours
Valenciactivia - active employment in the city of Valencia <b>Spain</b>	Preparing unemployed people for the new economic reality rather than reacting to it	Empower change agents at an increasingly decentralized level; bring together trade unions and a business association traditionally on opposite sides
School reform - improve teacher knowledge for immigrant children <b>Sweden</b>	Invest in human capital; prevent future marginalisation of immigrants.	Changes in strategies and structures in organizations linked to schools
Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations <b>Sweden</b>	Integration of unaccompanied young migrants into Swedish society	More equal long-term collaboration between sectors on new societal challenges
"Green Sticht" (diverse neighbourhood) <b>the Netherlands</b>	Move vulnerable people from dependency	Integration of self-reliant residents with socially vulnerable ones with regard to housing, work and living

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Case Study	Social Investment	Social Innovation
Urban Farming <b>the Netherlands</b>	Activation of vulnerable people (training, voluntary work, employment, entrepreneurship)	New forms of social value and exchange
Troubled Families in Greater Manchester <b>UK</b>	Improve school attendance; support for parenting; address parental worklessness	Challenging the way services have worked in silos; Payment by Results (PbR) to local authorities
Working Well in Greater Manchester <b>UK</b>	Tackle severe barriers to employment and achieve sustained job outcomes,	Fundamental reworking of how services work together across the sub-region; a PbR model to incentivise non-state providers

## Part 2: Policy Contexts

Active labour market programmes are strongly associated with the Social Investment paradigm. Reflecting this, more than half (twelve out of twenty) of the case studies examined by this research have active labour market interventions for people without work as either a primary or secondary focus. Other policy areas within the Social Investment paradigm are early intervention and education, social inclusion and solidarity, and supporting people in work. Many cases do not fit neatly under just one policy area. Table 2 indicates primary and - where relevant - secondary policy areas of the case studies. In the Netherlands, for example, both cases concentrate on supporting vulnerable citizens towards independent living. They aim to improve social solidarity and individual well-being. Their clients are helped to take steps towards the labour market where possible but this may be a long-term goal because of their extreme needs. It is also notable that some cases combine policy areas typically regarded as Social Investment with others that are not. *Working Well* (UK) is an active labour market programme targeted at people with complex barriers to work including mental and physical health. There is therefore an interface with health, which is not usually considered under Social Investment.

**Table 2: Policies and target populations**

Policy area /s	Case study	Target population	State
Active labour market	Valenciactivia Youth Guarantee Vocational school graduates Working Well	Long term unemployed Young unemployed Low skilled youth Unemployed with complex barriers to finding work	Spain Finland Greece UK
i. Active labour market ii. Social solidarity and inclusion	MAMBA (Action programme for the labour market integration of migrants) Social Land Programme Employment from A to Z	Unemployed migrants  Rural poor, Roma Unemployed homeless	Germany  Hungary Poland
Active labour market plus early intervention and education	Troubled Families	Families with many significant problems	UK
i. Social inclusion and solidarity ii. Active labour market	Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations User-driven local public services	Non EU immigrant children without adults Elderly; young people at risk of social exclusion	Sweden Finland

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Policy area /s	Case study	Target population	State
Social inclusion and solidarity	"Green Sticht" (inclusive neighbourhood) Urban Farming	Vulnerable with reduced work capacity	Netherlands
		Vulnerable with reduced work capacity	Netherlands
	Energy co-operatives Individualized care plans Active regardless of age	People in fuel poverty	Spain
		Severely disabled people Seniors at risk of exclusion	Italy Poland
Supporting people in work to improve their employment	Berufundfamilie (work & family) Women in Trade Unions	Working adults Women in the workplace	Germany Greece

Three cases, as indicated in table 2, are about social inclusion and solidarity, emphasising active forms of welfare and supporting people to improve their own social situations. The Spanish partners selected Energy co-operatives, the only case study that is not state funded, as a contrast to the limited action on the part of the state since the start of the 2008 crisis. The most prominent single policy issue interfacing with Social Investment in the case studies is immigration. Three cases specifically target non-EU immigrants and this could be identified as a distinct policy area, given the prominence that migrant issues have recently gained in Europe. In Sweden, both cases support young immigrants. One has a strong focus on their education and the other is mainly concerned about young people's well-being, with activities including - but not limited to - future human capital in the form of job practice and work training. The Münster project MAMBA pursues improved labour market participation and integration of asylum seekers and refugees into German society. It is therefore directed towards more efficient utilization of previously unused labour potential, although the main priority of the coordinating partner is enforcing the rights of asylum seekers. (See Spotlight 1 for more about this case).

#### **Spotlight 1: Labour market integration of migrants in Münster , Germany**

Münster has a growing number of asylum seekers and refugees although it is less affected than many other regions of Germany. MAMBA was designed by a local refugee aid association who coordinate it. It is delivered in partnership with four other local organisations, a catholic society for the vocational education of young people, a vocational training and placement company, a training centre of the local Chamber of Crafts, and the employment office of the city of Münster . These partners bring expertise in supporting youth employment, vocational and language training and labour market integration. Each partner provides individual support to participants in its particular field of expertise. Intensive support usually begins with psycho-social stabilization, then facilitates access to language and vocational training and is completed by labour market placement assistance. The programme was financially supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). The main goals, measures and organizational features were to a large extent prescribed by the federal BMAS funding guidelines. Although the primary aim is labour market integration the network is active in the fields of social assistance, housing, education and health, and also advocates on asylum and immigration policies. In addition to working intensively with individuals to improve their job prospects, MAMBA also attempts to address structural barriers to labour market integration by raising awareness with employers and providing training for Job Centre staff.

The case studies cover a mix of city-based, regional, and national programmes and projects. Eight of them examine local implementations of policies handed down from the national level. This 'handing down' can occur in differing ways, through national or European law, through funding regimes or detailed targets. One unusual spur to a social investment activity is the German audit

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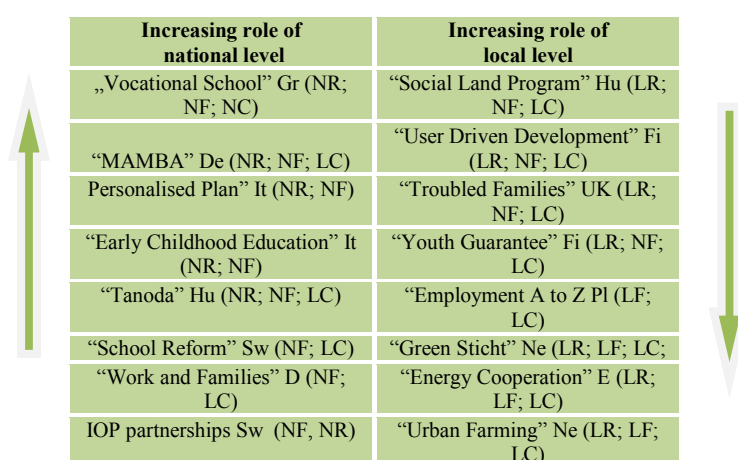
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berufundfamilie (work and family) which aims to activate change through the analysis of the status quo, followed by a plan of action that, if implemented, leads to berufundfamilie certification. Twelve of the case studies concern local solutions to locally identified problems, although even here there are still relationships to national and international decision making and funding, through EU funding for example. Thus, the activities are generated by a mix of top-down and bottom-up decision making and demands.

In connection with the transformation of welfare states and services in the case studies, two directions of development can be observed: increasingly national level and increasingly local. The direction of further development with regard to change in regulation, finance and implementation is indicated in Figure 1 as follows:

- Regulation: on national level= NR/on local level=LR
- Financial resources: national resources = NF/local = LF
- Implementation: on national level = NC/on local level level = LC



Increasing role of national level	Increasing role of local level
„Vocational School” Gr (NR; NF; NC)	“Social Land Program” Hu (LR; NF; LC)
“MAMBA” De (NR; NF; LC)	“User Driven Development” Fi (LR; NF; LC)
Personalised Plan” It (NR; NF)	“Troubled Families” UK (LR; NF; LC)
“Early Childhood Education” It (NR; NF)	“Youth Guarantee” Fi (LR; NF; LC)
“Tanoda” Hu (NR; NF; LC)	“Employment A to Z Pl (LF; LC)
“School Reform” Sw (NF; LC)	“Green Sticht” Ne (LR; LF; LC)
“Work and Families” D (NF; LC)	“Energy Cooperation” E (LR; LF; LC)
IOP partnerships Sw (NF, NR)	“Urban Farming” Ne (LR; LF; LC)

**Figure 1: The direction of further developing innovations**

In some of the partner Members States, notably the Netherlands, Finland and England (UK), Social Investment occurs against a background of national governments extending the roles and responsibilities of municipalities or sub-regions. In Finland, for example, the state has increased the freedom of municipalities to organize the implementation of local services for unemployed youth. In the *Youth Guarantee* programme, costs of the subsidy are transferred from the state to municipalities for multi-sectoral service cooperation. *Troubled Families* in Greater Manchester is a sub-regional implementation of national programme launched by the former Prime Minister to transform the lives of families with multiple and complex problems (Cameron, 2011). The national programme has been much criticised (see Crossley, 2016) but the case study report shows that to some extent, when implemented at a local level, the national agenda loses its importance. In Hungary the *Social Land Programme* is affected by low financial investment on the part of central government. This has resulted in forcing numerous innovative elements on the local level. The innovative features of the project include bottom up organisation, designed and carried out locally. The ambitions of national government and local leaders are not, however, fully in alignment (See spotlight 2).

The increasing role of the national level was present for example in case study Vocational School (GR) as an institutional innovation of the national employment policy which aims to help Greece avoid having large numbers of long-term unemployed in the future. The same aim can be found in the



MAMBA project in Germany, which is aimed at reducing the structural obstacles in migrant policy. Local early years and education interventions also targeted systemic solutions for successful policy *Early Childhood Education* (Italy); *Tanoda* (Hungary) and *School Reform* (Sweden). The *Personalised Plan* in Sardinia (Italy) had an explicit goal of active involvement of severely disabled adults in the assessment of their needs and the planning of the care and support services. Although the pilot intervention started locally, the final goal is the implementation (regulation and finance) of the new active measures into national policy. Similarly, IOP partnerships are Social Investment solutions that have expectations to receive increased national support and to be spread throughout Sweden as collaboration models.

### **Spotlight 2: National local tensions in the Social Land Programme, Hungary**

The Social Land Programme aims to strengthen self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on social aid. It does this by: helping people with no financial means to engage with agriculture, supporting production of goods, delivery to markets, creation of retail processes, strengthening network cooperation, and procurement of tools and equipment. There is a history of social land programmes in Hungary going back to the period between the two World Wars. In the early 1990s they were revived as an experimental project to combat rural poverty following the fall of communism and they have gone through significant restructuring over a quarter of a century. Since 2011, national programme priorities have focused more on labour market participation and less on household level production as originally envisaged. The case study investigated eight local communities participating in a Social Land Programme. Innovative features include bottom up organisation designed and carried out locally (in contrast to top down public employment programmes). According to local project leaders, mayors and notaries organising and executing the programme, producing food and raising living standard are its main points, with various other benefits that can include improving the social and physical environment and passing on positive role models within the family. They argue that the programme should be expected to achieve small steps towards employability such as increased self-confidence. The national goals of increased employment and self-sustainability are over optimistic, in the view of local leaders.

The European Union (EU) forms an important part of the policy context of the case studies. However this effect is sometimes more difficult to grasp than the national, since their influence (and financial transfer) can be indirect. Eleven out of the twenty the case studies received financial support from the European Structural and Investment Funds, mostly in the form of European Social Fund. Some of them were clearly reported to be implemented in the EU policy context - for instance the youth guarantee programmes (Finland and Greece) - although employment policy falls under the competence of the Member States. In the case of other projects, the national Operational Programmes (*Employment from A to Z* in Poland, *Tanoda* in Hungary) or national strategic frameworks (*Women's Participation in Trade Unions*, Greece) were the most important part of policy background. In some other cases, also co-financed by EU funds, such as the German cases, or the *Green Sticht* in the Netherlands, local and national policies seem to be dominant.

The direct effects of EU policy documents are not limited to cases which received financial support from the EU. Energy co-operatives in Spain receive no public investment and were established long before EU policies. However, EU directives, EU energy policies and the debates on sustainability and energy poverty are of utmost importance for these cooperatives seeking support against oligopolies. In Hungary, Social Land Programmes were included in the first versions of the Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, but finally the European Commission refused to co-finance it on the grounds of "latent support of agriculture". Nevertheless, the government still decided to finance it. The report

on *Active regardless of the age* in Poland refers to the decision of the European Parliament<sup>2</sup> on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity of 2012 as the main impulse for developing the governmental programme. EU policies seem to be particularly important elements of the development of initiatives in the convergence regions, where the cohesion policies allocate more resources. In other cases (both programmes in the UK and Sweden, Early childhood education and care in Italy, and the *User-driven local public services* in Finland) receive no EU funding and the influence of EU policies seems also to be at the most indirect if not marginal.

### 3: Finance and resources

Social Investment is about more than just money; but how Social Investment is financed, by whom, in what ways, and whether innovative approaches to financing Social Investment are being used are important questions. In this section, the investive and innovative aspects of the Social Investment financing across the twenty case studies are considered. This reflects wider debates and questions around the Social Investment paradigm – how is it defined and understood, what counts as Social Investment, and what returns, and for which actors, are expected. We address these in relation to the financing of the case study social programmes. Commonalities across the twenty case studies are discussed and ‘outlier’ examples of financing Social Investment also highlighted. This section considers ways that some programmes raise income to support sustainability and also notes the significance of non-financial resources.

#### 3.1 Financing of social investment: commonalities and outliers

A theme that emerges from the synthesis of the twenty case studies is the overall lack of innovation in the financing of the Social Investment programmes. This may of course reflect to some extent the selection of case studies, which were intended to show innovation but not necessarily in financial aspects. Funding sources for the 20 cases are indicated in Table 3. Most of the cases examined are financed wholly or mainly through public sources, although there are a few elements of financial input from the private and charitable sectors. An example of public funding supplemented by non-state sources is a nursery in Bologna (part of the Early Education and Care case study), which was made possible by an unusual arrangement of resources from public, for-profit and private non-profit actors. Another is the Spanish work activation programme, *Valenciactiva*. This programme and its various infrastructures are funded by the Valencia Business Association (the major business association in the area) as well as the municipality, with the support of the European Social Fund. The founders of *Green Sticht* wanted to avoid dependence on public funds from the outset because of the uncertainty it entails. They secured finance from a social housing corporation and a loan from Emmaus Haarzuilens (an international solidarity movement dedicated to combating poverty and homelessness), as well as local government and an EU structural fund grant.

Just over half of the case studies involved European Union (EU) funding as discussed above. This is perhaps not surprising: the EU is a key actor in Social Investment, as indicated in other InnoSI reports. The EU has increased its policy and wider role since the financial crash of 2008 (Leoni, 2015). Overwhelmingly, funding in the case studies takes a similar approach to social and public policy that would not be considered as Social Investment. Interventions are funded either on an ongoing basis or as projects with an expectation that funding will end on a given date. Project funded cases are typically ones that receive EU funding. Exceptions are the Kainuu participatory democracy project in Finland (funded by national government for a three year period to 2017) and *Troubled Families* in the UK (the second phase of this government programme is funded across England through to 2020).

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<sup>2</sup> No 940/2011/EU of the European Parliament.

**Table 3 Funding sources**

Funding combinations	Case study	Location
Public (national) funding sources only	Working Well User Driven Development Troubled Families Social Land Programme School reform Personalisation of care Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations	Greater Manchester, UK Kainuu region, Finland Greater Manchester, UK Hungary Sweden Sardinia, Italy Gothenburg, Sweden
European Structural and Investment Funds	Women in Trade Unions Connecting Vocational Schools Graduates with the Labour Market Active regardless of age A to Z employment	Greece Greece Poland Wroclaw Poland
Public (national) and European Commission	Berufundfamilie (work & family) MAMBA Youth Guarantee	Münster , Germany Münster , Germany Finland
Public (national), European Commission and non-public funding elements	Tanodas Valenciactivia Green Sticht	Hungary Valencia, Spain Utrecht, Netherlands
Public (national) and non-public funding	Urban Farming Early Childhood Education & Care	Utrecht, Netherlands Emilia Romagna, Italy
Non-public only	Energy Co-operative	Valencia, Spain

Most of the academic and policy literature around Social Investment focuses on government welfare spending, so it is perhaps not surprising that public funding is so significant to the financing of Social Investment programmes examined in this research. A notable exception is that of the Alginet Electric Co-operative in Spain. The co-operative was established in 1930 and provides cheap energy, from renewable sources, for people and businesses in the region. The co-operative provides free energy for those unable to pay and also free food for those in most poverty (through an arrangement with local retailers). Energy poverty is also reduced for those most in need through work to re-educate and reduce energy consumption, as this is a condition of having their bills paid by the co-op.

Although Social Investment is intended to generate future benefits and outcomes, there is very limited focus in the case studies on understanding or demonstrating the return on investment generated through the financing of these programmes. An outlier in this respect is the use in the UK of an outcome-based funding mechanism known as Payment by Results (PbR). Implementations of PbR vary but in essence it means that payments to a service provider are wholly or partly dependent on documenting the achievement of specified outcomes. Advocates argue that this approach gives independent providers flexibility to innovate and offer more personalised services to help people whom state provision has failed (Webster, 2016). Opponents contend that it encourages ‘creaming’ of cases most likely to trigger payments and ‘parking’ of those involving more effort and less certainty of financial reward (Thorburn, 2013).

In the *Working Well* (UK) PbR format, non-state providers are paid partly on attachment and partly on client outcomes. Although there is an element of ‘investment’ on their part upfront for financial returns that depend on results, they do not take over risks from the state as advocated in more

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radical PbR models underpinned with new financial instruments such as Social Impact Bonds (Social Impact Taskforce, 2014). English local authorities delivering the *Troubled Families* programme are paid partly through demonstrating to central government that they have met programme outcomes. As with *Working Well*, there is a combination of payment for each family enrolled in the programme and on evidence of families being ‘turned around’. We found concerns at local level that PbR mechanisms in *Troubled Families* are not well aligned with Greater Manchester’s ambitions for making Social Investment interventions more effective through better integrated services. The two Greater Manchester examples of PbR do not appear to have led to ‘creaming and parking’ as feared by PbR opponents. Nor, however, did we find evidence of direct links between PbR and innovation, as anticipated by its advocates. See spotlight 3 for more on Payment by Results in the UK case studies.

### **Spotlight 3: Payment by Results in the UK case studies**

The two UK case studies, *Troubled Families* and *Working Well*, are delivered using variations on Payment-by-results (PbR) models. In *Working Well* PbR is intended to incentivise non-state providers of work activation for hard-to-help clients who have participated in the national *Work Programme* but remain without jobs. The PbR mechanism, however, is less heavily weighted towards job outcomes than the *Work Programme*. Providers (private sector and social economy) receive half their fee on ‘attachment’ (a commitment to work with the individual), and the remainder in stages when the client starts a job and achieves a sustained job outcome. This particular arrangement reinforces the moral imperative to work with all clients with the hope that some will gain work and trigger further payments. A local lead in *Working Well* explained, “we were as interested in the 80 per cent who don’t get a job outcome as the 20 per cent who do”. In the national *Troubled Families* programme, the PbR element is intended to encourage local authorities to focus on outcomes rather than processes. In Greater Manchester, it is used in different ways to pay for different things across the sub-region, depending on the individual borough’s local context. Some but not all boroughs pass on a proportion of the PbR to commissioned services. Some Greater Manchester decision makers welcome PbR as a means to set priorities, incentivise partners and help ensure a common understanding of expected outcomes. In the boroughs, in contrast, many managers and front-line staff claim that it is an administrative burden and can be a source of tension between different services and sectors.

## **3.2 Activating new resources**

A recurring theme from the case studies is the shortage of resources for municipalities. It is hardly surprising that financial constraints are repeatedly stressed by decision makers and front-line workers alike in the case studies. This concurs with evidence that across Europe, Social Investment has been stalled by the emphasis of many national states on fiscal consolidation to reduce public budget deficits following the economic crisis (ESPN, 2015). Against the overwhelmingly gloomy picture of diminishing local budgets the INNOSI case studies offer some interesting – albeit quite small-scale – instances of ways new resources have been activated to help sustain Social Investment initiatives.

Hemerijk (2012) has criticized Dutch governments for reducing welfare expenditure that has been generally aligned to Social Investment (cited in D2.3). According to the ESPN (2015) analysis, cuts in welfare budgets and decentralisation risk undermining the Social Investment approach in that country. Against this background, the evaluation of both Dutch case studies showed that income earning activities have put the projects into a strong position. The income of De Volle Grond urban farm is mainly from contracts with the municipality to provide care. It supplements this by selling vegetables through a weekly subscription system and deliveries to a nearby restaurant, providing a reliable source of revenue independent of public funds.

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*Green Sticht* has created an entirely new neighbourhood with an informal support system for socially vulnerable people. Residents who choose to move there out of idealism live alongside citizens who are formerly homeless, often with psychological and psychiatric problems. Inspired by the ideas of the charismatic preacher, activist and social entrepreneur Ab Harrewijn (1954-2002), this innovative and strategic approach successfully circumvented the ‘not in my backyard’ sentiment present in the city of Utrecht. *Green Sticht* has become financially self-reliant. The foundation owns the real estate and generates income by renting out rooms in the residential/working community. In addition, it operates social enterprises on site: a restaurant, a furniture workshop, a thrift store, and catering at neighbourhood festivities.

There are similar examples in the case study reports in Italy and Hungary of enterprising income generation. A nursery in Bologna (part of the Early Education and Care case study) has achieved a sustainable income by taking children paid for by local companies on behalf of their employees as well as those whose places are financed directly by the municipality. In Hungary some “entrepreneurial municipalities” associated with the *Social Land Programme* have increased responsibility for standards of living and employment of local residents and for a “self-sustaining community”. Some are acting like businesses, participating in production, with examples of locally produced goods (pasta, jam, garlic, paprika powder) being used to generate income for the municipality and/or to provide resources for the community.

### 3.3 Unpaid work as a resource

Some interventions in the case studies are made possible by non-financial resources in the form of substantial inputs of volunteer work, often drawing upon local traditions of civil participation. In Münster the MAMBA coordinating association is supported by about 200 volunteers. It matches volunteer learning mentors and suitable mentees with a migrant background. It is able to achieve this because there is a strong civil society in the city with hundreds of associations, foundations, citizens’ committees and other voluntary organizations. Münster is the seat of a Catholic diocese and both Catholic and Protestant initiatives are of great importance for refugee aid. The Swedish *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations* depends heavily on volunteers and an important strength of the partnership with nine non-profit organisations is their ability to connect to volunteers. They match-make volunteer mentor families living in the city and also recruit and coordinate volunteer counsellors to deliver a service developed for the particular needs of young, unaccompanied migrants. In this way, public resources are maximised by collaboration with non-profit actors, using their (non-publicly financed) resources. Contributions in the form of unpaid work are mainly from volunteers associated with non-profits but one without any volunteers called upon its retired staff to help out.

Community activism is highlighted as an important resource for the achievements of ECEC in northern Italy. The active role of families is as essential as the leadership of staff and children. A successful childhood centre in an isolated town 50 kms from Bologna originated with a group of young mothers who mobilized to demand conditions facilitating the growth and education of their children. In this example, unlike those in Germany and Sweden mentioned above, volunteer (unpaid) activity became professionalised and remunerated when the original initiative was formalised, initially with the support of philanthropic and later public funding.

In Finland’s *User driven local public services*, citizens’ experiential knowledge is brought in during the planning process and their activities are needed in the implementation of the *May I Help You* service that the process developed. It also needed the effort of many people from different stakeholder groups. Some stakeholders expressed concern that functions formerly undertaken by

paid employees (design and performance of welfare functions) are transferred to the realm of voluntary work. The availability of volunteers is not the same in all cases and countries. The significance of volunteering as a resource is lower in those case studies where innovation aims to improve national public service systems (e.g. *Youth Guarantee* in Finland), or where established traditions of volunteering are lacking (eg *Social Land Programme* in Hungary). Volunteering tends to be somewhat less prominent in the case studies in Mediterranean and East-European countries. In *Tanoda* schools in Hungary it is described as an innovation partly driven by lack of funding. *Active at any age* in Poland features volunteering as an output to enhance trust and solidarity, rather than a resource for service delivery. We return to that aspect of volunteering in section 5.

## 4: New relationships across the public, private and social economy sectors

### 4.1 Non-state actors

The importance of non-state actors in implementing Social Investment policies has been affirmed by the European Commission (2013b), as noted in D3.2. Social innovation implies new relationships between people and organisations across public, private and social economy sectors (D 2.3). Almost all the INNOSI cases involve new actors, or new combinations of actors. A recurrent theme is the joining up (or better coordination) of services, professions and agencies, often involving more than one sector. Claims to innovation typically rest upon the pioneering (or extension) of multi-organizational and cross-sectoral activity.

Many different kinds of social economy organisation work alongside government bodies. This is characteristic of almost all the INNOSI case studies. For-profit enterprises also take on new roles in some cases (for example in Italy and the UK). This is not present in all countries. In the Swedish case study *Idea-based public partnerships*, for example, the expectation of added value to public funding by engaging civil society actors is clearly stressed by the decision-makers as a reason for choosing non-profits rather than for-profit actors. Social economy organisations in INNOSI are highly diverse in kind, size and ethos. They include international NGOs (eg Save the Children), umbrella organisations, social enterprises, local community-based groups often dedicated to specific issues (eg refugee integration, early years provision), user led organisations, faith groups and many others. For extended discussion of the emergence and (often contested) meanings of ‘social economy’ and related terms such as civil society, third sector, non-profit, social enterprise and social entrepreneurship, see D 3.2.

Of all the INNOSI partner Member States Hungary arguably has the weakest grassroots civil society culture (D 2.3). Paternalism is strong and the state is generally expected to solve social problems. This is partially reflected in the case studies. There is very limited involvement from civil organisations that have appeared recently in the communities studied for the *Social Land Programme*. In the other Hungarian case study in contrast, *Tanodas* are typically led by religious or community organisations and their significant role is innovative in this context.

Multi-organizational and cross-sectoral activity in INNOSI comprises various configurations ranging from quite loose collaborative networks to formally constituted partnerships. These ‘innovations in governance’ have in common that they are conceived and implemented above the level of a single agency, and are able to tap into new resources (Moore & Hartley 2008; Hartley, 2015). The following are examples of how collaborations successfully accessed new resources:

- Exchange of information and databases: *Work and Family*, Germany; MAMBA, Germany; *Troubled Families*, UK



- Mutual use of funds: *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations*, Sweden; *Early Childhood Education and Care*, Italy
- Operating shared services: *Youth Guarantee*, Finland; *Tanoda*, Hungary; *Energy Cooperative*, Spain

#### 4.2 Collaborative advantage

'Collaborative advantage' results from different organisations having a shared vision and achieving more together than they would do separately (Huxham, 2003, 1996; Huxham & Vangen, 2013). In the most successful InnoSI cases, there is evaluation evidence that the quantity, quality, and structure of organisational relations was changed, more cohesive systems were established mainly on a local level, and significant synergy effects were noticeable in everyday operation. This is illustrated in Spotlight 4 with reference to *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations* (Sweden). Other outstanding examples that demonstrated collaborative advantage involving multiple partners from different sectors were MAMBA (Germany), and *A to Z Accompaniment* (Poland).

#### **Spotlight 4: Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations, Sweden**

The *Idébaserade offentliga partnerskap* (IOP) represents **a new kind** of relationship between the public sector and civil society organisations in Sweden. IOP partners define societal challenges together in areas where there is a lack of functioning solutions. The partners participate on equal terms, very distinct from the more familiar ways the public sector works with civil society (awarding grants and commissioning services). The IOP in Gothenburg was initiated by its partners as a means to address the complex challenges of accommodating, supporting and integrating young people who arrive in Sweden as migrants without accompanying adults. The municipality of Gothenburg partners with nine non-profit organisations ranging from international NGOs to local community groups. This partnership (the largest of the kind in Sweden) is innovative in the way it is organised and managed. In particular, it pools partner resources (including financial resources) to increase its service quality and capacity. The partnership has been successful in creating new services (eg. family mentoring and psychological counselling) and has delivered on several of its promises including service variety, quality and ability to react quickly. Non-profits were able to maintain their distinctive character. Moreover, they report that they have greater abilities to influence local policy. The partners face significant challenges with regard to immigration flows, national financial contributions, and changes in national policies regulating newcomer reception. These create some difficulties with sustaining commitment to quality, and also for trust and collaborative relationships. Nevertheless, this partnership has ambitions to serve as a reference model for similar collaborations on unaccompanied minors elsewhere in Sweden.

There are five operative partners in MAMBA (Germany) as discussed in Section 2. Although the objectives of the co-operating organisations are somewhat divergent, the efficient and sustainable labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers furthers their various interests, providing a rationale for collaboration. Due to the target group's multiple disadvantages, the establishment of cooperation between different agencies and professions is key to successful implementation. This partnership is innovative in the way it pools different bodies of expertise to offer a very wide variety of highly tailored services for individuals.

The Catholic charity Caritas France pioneered the idea of joining forces and powers of public services and charity organizations working for the benefit of job seekers. The model was brought to Poland by Caritas Poland. The essence of accompaniment is to build a relationship based on trust and cooperation between host (accompanist) and a person looking for support. Representatives of all sectors are involved in the implementation of *Employment from A to Z* (accompaniment). Caritas InnoSI: H2020 - 649189

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and local faith groups are coordinators. Other partners are from the Public Employment Service (county labour offices) and public institutions including social welfare centres and sometimes - depending on local specifics - public educational cultural and sports institutions. For-profit businesses make a contribution with internships, contracted work, training and/or employment. Evaluation demonstrated that the intersectoral cooperation between non-governmental organisations and public sector actors worked as intended and contributed to the positive outcomes for beneficiaries produced in the project.

Collaborative approaches are always challenging (Huxham & Vangen, 2013). This is evident in the case studies despite the many successes. In the *Youth Guarantee* (Finland), for example, the evaluators noted that officials in different administrative branches interpreted the problem of social exclusion of a young person in different ways and they also had a different understanding of how that exclusion can be prevented, and what kind of interventions should be used. At the start of the MAMBA partnership there were occasionally disputes regarding strategies, measures and priorities in specific cases. The interviews with MAMBA workers undertaken for InnoSI indicate that although some differences remain, they have learned to manage the institutional diversity. This is not easy, however, and the interviewees stressed that it is necessary to invest time and effort in communication and coordination between the partners.

When buy-in for collaboration is present at a senior level this is not always thoroughly reflected on the frontline (Baines et al, 2010). Commitment to the IOP partnership in Sweden was very strong, especially at top to mid management levels, and also, but to a somewhat lesser extent, at street-level. Some personnel especially in housing services struggled with their own daily challenges and, as a result, sometimes missed opportunities to make better use of common partnership services.

## 5 Building human and social capital: focus on service users

### 5.1 Investing in human capital and social capital

A core principle of Social Investment is that welfare states should invest in human capital. Social Investment policies are designed to strengthen people's skills and capacities and support them to participate fully in employment and social life. Aspects of human capital building in most case studies are the improvement of skills that enable labour market participation, as well as activity and development that establish self-sufficiency and better living standards. The strengthening of social capital is essential to many of the interventions introduced in the case studies to improve labour market participation, for example networking to access vital sources of information beyond the community and family (Granovetter, 1983). Throughout the InnoSI case studies are examples of the enhancing of human capital and social capital, realised through various interventions including courses and informal means of education (individual curriculum plans, flexible timeframes, experiential learning, gaining work experience, etc.). Utilising mentors, case managers and key workers serves the purpose of direct motivation and the possibility of tailored assistance and personalisation. Figure 2 summaries areas of development in human and social capital from the case studies.

According to Coleman (1988), social capital materialises in the structure of relationships between actors. He mainly emphasises the significance of relationships that stimulate individual action. With the transformation of the role of the welfare state - through the growing presence of active social engagement in lieu of passive benefits - the need for individual action has started to become more and more relevant. The broadening social relationship system is the source of increasing social capital. Many of the case study target groups were seen by decision makers and service providers as characterised by a narrow scope of relationships and mainly passive behaviour. One of the most

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isolated target groups in all the case studies is the young unaccompanied migrants in Sweden. Family mentoring provided as part of the intervention was seen by these young people as providing a “supplementary family” and the evaluation indicates that it is helping their integration into Swedish society as intended.

Cognitive	Physical	Personal	Social
<b>-being generally well-informed</b> (MAMBA D; „Valenciactivia E; Employment from A to Z” PI) <b>- being able to make sense of bureaucratic systems</b> (Individualised Care Plan” I; School Reform „S, „User-driven Local Services” FIN) <b>- work experience</b> („Working Well” UK; Work Experience” Gr)	<b>- better health</b> („Individualised Care Plan” I, „Social Activity for Elderly People” PI) <b>- self-sufficiency skills</b> („Social Land Program” HU; „Urban Farming” NL; Youth Guarantee” FIN) <b>- better physical performance</b> (Social Activity for Elderly People” PI; („Individualised Care Plan” I) <b>- improved stamina</b> („Work Experience” Gr; „Social Land Program” HU	<b>- motivation</b> („Working Well” UK; „Youth Guarantee” FIN; „Work Experience” Gr) <b>- confidence</b> („MAMBA” D; „Green Sticht” NL; „Energy co-operatives” E; <b>- sense of usefulness</b> („Youth Guarantee” FIN; „Work Experience” Gr <b>- self-esteem</b> („Working Well” UK; „Urban Farming” NL; <b>- independency</b> („Youth Guarantee” FIN, „Social land program” Hu;	<b>- communication skills</b> („MAMBA” D; „Urban farming” NL; „Energy co-operatives” E; <b>- cooperative skills</b> („Work Experience” Gr; „Social land program” HU, „Green Sticht” NL; <b>- increased network of relationships</b> („MAMBA” D; „Early Childhood Education” I <b>-increasing network contacts “weak ties”</b> („Working Well” UK; „Work Experience” Gr <b>- stronger self-sufficiency skills</b> („Youth Guarantee” FIN; „Urban Farming” NL) <b>- being integrated</b> („Working Well” UK; „MAMBA” D; „Early Childhood education” I; <b>- “empowerment”</b> („Youth Guarantee” FIN; „Partnership” S)

**Figure 2 Social and human capital**

## 5.2 Activation, personalisation and co-creation

With regard to all areas and target groups, most cases involve an activating approach. This is consistent with the demands of user-led organizations, policy makers, front-line workers, academics and advocacy organisations for a way of thinking about social policies that rejects standardised services. Overall, the cases examined in INNOSI were consistently person-centred in ways that reflect a shift towards active welfare and the Social Investment principle of ‘preparing’ rather than ‘repairing’ (Hemerijck, 2015).

Personalisation can mean many things (Needham, 2011). Most simply it means that public services respond to the individual needs of clients rather than offering a standardised service. This is characteristic of the INNOSI case studies in all policy areas. In labour market activation programmes, in particular, local decision makers invariably articulate a stark distinction with ‘one-size-fits-all’ interventions that have failed in the past. In their theories of change they identify the dysfunction of overly specialised systems that consist of many branches and ‘silos’, and the need to make up for missing services and institutions. “Tailored, participant-focused measures” are a central element of MAMBA, Germany. Similarly in Utrecht, the Netherlands, the model employed in the De Volle Grond urban farm sought to support people with complex and intensive care needs towards employment, with a strong focus on the empowerment of individuals. *Connecting Vocational Schools Graduates with the Labour Market*, Greece responded to the needs of clients with personalised vocational counselling sessions rather than standard services which had been usual before. In Working Well (UK) Key Workers with low caseloads address barriers to the labour market with “intensive, personalised and continuous support to clients” (GMCA, 2016: 9).

In some versions of personalisation, users of public services are treated as consumers according to market principles in an analogy with the customisation available in consumer goods and services

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(Roulstone and Morgan, 2009). Personalisation is therefore enabled by mechanisms to devolve budgetary control from state agencies to the individual, and service users become in effect commissioners of their own services, selecting and buying what they decide will best meet their particular needs. In the INNOSI case studies this model is only apparent in Sardinia, where severely disabled people and their families were involved in assessing their own needs and planning their care through the instrument of a personal budget. Budgets are mainly used to employ personal assistants but there are some examples of young people using part of their budgets for other activities such as participating in sport. Overall, personalised care in Sardinia achieved its intended outcome in that users and families were no longer seen as mere passive targets, but as people with competencies and capacities, able to elaborate solutions. Success, however, was limited for two main reasons. One was the tightening of financial resources and attempts to contain and curtail the costs of the programme. The other was a lack of institutional embedding; families and personal assistants were largely left alone by social workers whose role became confined to economic monitoring of care plans. The evaluation report points to a risk of the creation of a system based on marketization, re-familisation and de-qualification.

In more radical (sometimes called deep) versions of personalisation, individual responsibility and commitment form the basis of a concept of active inclusion that seeks to encourage autonomous citizens and families to participate in designing their own portfolios of support (Jenson 2012; Künzel 2012). This is apparent, for example, in Valenciactiva, Spain which took a new, collaborative (with the service user) approach and a more equal engagement. The ethos of Tanodas (Hungary) is to work with each young person as an individual and to respond to their needs. The young people and their mentors design the weekly timetable together, adapted to individual remedial plans.

Recent critiques of personalisation have noted its lack of focus upon relationships, community life and responsibilities (Fox 2012). “Co-creation” is a term adapted for public services from the private sector, where customers are increasingly seen as a source of product and service innovation (Voorberg et al, 2015). It denotes “**active involvement** of end-users in various stages of the production process”, *ibid.* p. 1335, *emphasis original*). The rationale for co-creation in public services is that service innovations should be designed and implemented in conjunction **with** citizens, not for them (Alves, 2013). The notion of co-creation shares with deep personalisation the goal of active involvement of service users in reciprocal relationship with professionals. In contrast to even the most radical versions of personalisation, co-creation locates users and communities at the centre of the decision-making process.

The Finnish youth guarantee is based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership model, where young adults are themselves the actors, responsible for their own future. In Emilia Romagna new early childhood services were developed to respond to specific local contexts, with more emphasis on community participation and empowerment than individual service users as ‘customers’. The services included in that case study have in common a strong commitment toward working with families in a participatory and inclusive way that values the contribution each parent can bring to the centres for childcare and education. In Kainuu, Finland the user-driven approach is said to make municipalities more competitive and responsive to user needs. The overall emphasis is on how democracy is served rather than on individually tailored services. In Spain, the Alginet Energy Co-operative has resulted in a changed relationship between energy providers and consumers. The Co-op has developed a more personalised service for those in energy poverty. This is not just through its intensive work with those unable to pay bills to reduce their energy usage, which raises awareness of consumption and empowers them to control this aspect of their lives. There is also a substantially

changed power relationship between provider and consumer inherent in the co-operative model structure.

Sometimes an element of co-creation was an ideal, not fully realised in practice. In the IOP partnership (Sweden) voices were raised at the start to include youngsters in assessing planned services following empowerment and democracy logics, but this was not carried through successfully. A reference group was formed of 12 youngsters to represent views but this did not work as intended because members dropped out. There was self-criticism within the partnership that they did not involve the youngsters enough. Their reflections on this experience suggest that there was lack of understanding and interest among the youngsters mainly due to psychological insecurity. A lesson for the future, they commented, is the need for more time to prepare both youngsters and partners for youngsters' involvement.

### 5.3 Social Capital in communities and groups

In Putnam's (2000) highly influential interpretation, social capital is a public good. The building of social networks can have a variety of different, beneficial aspects which we can show through the case studies:

- the flow of information (e.g.: when it comes to job seeking or recruitment): *Valenciactiva*, Spain; *Youth Guarantee* Finland
- the norm of reciprocity/mutual assistance (e.g.: in the case of complementary needs): *User Driven Development* Finland; *Work and Family*, Germany
- community improvement and competitiveness (e.g.: in the case of developing special skills and integrating new motivators) *Social Land*, Hungary; *Connecting vocational school graduates with the labour market*, Greece.
- collective/community consciousness, trust and solidarity (e.g.: through the enhancement of social engagement) *Active at any age* Poland; *Urban Farming*, Netherlands; *Women in Trade Unions* Greece.

Bourdieu (1983) saw social capital as the set of resources that are related to the permanent, more or less institutionalised system of relations, in other words, belonging to a group. This provides creditworthiness to the individual as the total capital possessed by each individual serves as a guarantee for all members of the group. In most case studies, it was the individual (or sometimes the family) who was targeted with the supporting activity. Some of the case studies, however, helped the process of creating groups from the target population, thus further enhancing the integration and social status of the members (e.g. Energy Cooperative, Spain; Urban Farming, Netherlands; Green Sticht Netherlands; Tanoda Hungary).

A possible way to strengthen social capital is to volunteer to do some kind of social activity. In most of the case studies, there is some form of volunteering present, but the nature and extent of the work performed can be very different from case to case. Volunteering on the part of citizens can represent an important input of time, enthusiasm and skills, as in the cases discussed in section 3. But giving time through service-providing organisations does not encompass all sites and kinds of volunteering (Rochester et al., 2016; Hardill and Baines, 2011). Volunteering features in some case studies relevant to Social Investment not so much because of input into service provision as its power to build capacity for some excluded individuals. Volunteering is a significant feature of the Polish *Active at any age* case study where it can be seen as an output, developing social activity to improve beneficiaries' quality of life and helping to build social networks within and between generations. In both the Dutch case studies, volunteers support service delivery, for example by working in the *Green Sticht* social enterprises. At the same time, clients undertake voluntary work

intended to help move them towards employment and to support community integration. See spotlight 5 for more about volunteering as both an input and an output in one of the urban farms.

#### **Spotlight 5: Volunteering in De Volle Grond Urban Farm**

Both of the Dutch cases target people with severe needs and aim to move them closer to work as a means of securing their independence and personal empowerment. Volunteer labour supports service delivery but the line between volunteers and clients is not distinct. De Volle Grond Urban Farm works with people who have complex and intensive care needs. Many of them have severe behavioural problems and have failed in several other integration projects. Care clients work in the gardens alongside other volunteers. Therapeutic benefits come from working with others, being accepted for who they are, and engaging in purposeful activity. One of the founders explained, “volunteers working at the garden often have their own social or psychological problems and for some it is not clear whether they are a care client or volunteer”. Care clients sometimes move into other volunteer roles and this can form part of their progress towards paid employment.

When it comes to the development of social capital, an ‘added value’ approach is predominant: it builds on the resources of the target group and accordingly, it does not only improve, but use and involve already existing social capital (motivation, personal skills, professional knowledge, key skills). There were some notable examples of initiatives where enhanced social capital helps to strengthen aspects of the public sphere. The early childhood centre in the small Italian town of Comacchio, for example, offers a space where people of different generations, ethnicity, religions and cultures can meet in a safe and controlled environment. In Hungary, there is some evidence that the exchange of goods and services by barter encouraged by the *Social Land Programme* strengthens involvement in the community and contributes to reducing tension between locals and “outsiders”.

## **6: Assessing innovative social investment: decision making and learning**

The case studies took an evaluative format drawing on the expertise of the project team (Fox et al., 2016). This has been fruitful for ascertaining population needs, interpreting stakeholders’ views and expectations, exploring process for service change and assessing evidence of impact for beneficiaries. In this section we reflect critically on the limitations of the evaluation evidence and then go on to comment more generally on the use of evidence and need for learning in the policy and practice of Social Investment.

### **6.1 Generating evidence**

All projects and programmes generate *some* data, whether as part of a formal evaluation or as a by-product of their activity. This includes the financial information created as organisational accounts, administrative data created for the management and implementation of activity, and the extra data created through evaluation and research activities done during and after the activity. These data can be assembled and analysed in a number of ways, through which inputs, outputs and outcomes are assessed or measured. Projects and programmes themselves, and the InnoSI teams, have created and analysed data with the aim of producing *stories or pictures* of the activities, with varying levels of formalism, from narratives of process to calculations of Social Return on Investment (SROI), Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) or Cost Effectiveness Analysis (CEA).

Spending seems to be the easiest data to get hold of, with even the smallest projects having some idea of the financial resources that pass through their books. That said, one of the case studies found even this difficult. The Swedish *School Reform* programme was accounted for in different ways in different schools, such that it was difficult to unpick spending in this area from that of the broader school budgets. In other circumstances, financial information can be considered ‘sensitive’

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by partners and so full figures are not given. Furthermore, where a budget gives a figure for resources used by a project, it is not always clear if this includes all resources that it uses over its lifetime. Important inputs are made in-kind as well as in money, often through volunteering. It is possible to attribute market values value to work done by volunteers through replacement wage calculations (Gaskin and Dobson, 1997) although estimates produced in this way vary widely according to the different wage values selected (Dostál and Vysko, 2014). Volunteers, however, are sometimes also beneficiaries, as in the Dutch urban farm, thus exacerbating the difficulty of any meaningful economic estimate of their inputs. Furthermore, the longer-term development costs associated with a particular set of activities, including those of organisations that may have been involved in shaping or bidding for work, are not directly included as inputs.

Case study authors pointed to many challenges in assessing and measuring impact, broadly defined. Firstly, some of the case studies were explicit that what to measure is itself subject to choice and can be contested. The report on Finland's *Youth Guarantee*, as discussed in section 4, notes that administrative branches interpreted problems and desirable outcomes of their target group in different ways. Similarly, the Hungarian *Tanoda* report identified the different but overlapping criteria used by the various organisations involved. Thus, an unintended consequence of the cross-agency or cross-sector collaboration in Social Investment can be the multiplication or complication of targets and reporting. This seems especially likely to be the case where multiple funding sources, with different requirements, are used in the same programme. Secondly, there are some circumstances in which projects or researchers cannot use potential sources of data. Relevant aggregate data such as sickness rates, job turn-over rates and working hours were considered too sensitive to hand out for evaluation of *Berufundfamilie (work and family)*. In the Swedish IOP partnership case study access to youngsters was impeded by high work loads of partner staff whose assistance would be needed in order to contact them. Finally, the most common difficulty identified was the disjunction between the short-term nature of funding, programmes and evaluation activities, and the need for assessment of long-term outcomes. Thus, project reports talk of 'interim impacts' (Tanoda) or comment that 'a reliable summative evaluation of the long-term outcomes is hardly possible' (MAMBA)<sup>3</sup>. This is a significant limitation given the emphasis of the Social Investment paradigm on the long term.

This, of course, means that judging economic impact is extremely challenging. Interventions with an employment component are more likely than others to assess economic impact. The UK's *Working Well* and Spain's *Valenciactivia* used Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). In the Netherland's Green Sticht researchers also suggested a CBA method but lacked substantial data. The German MAMBA used ROI and break-even analysis, and Hungary's *Tanoda* evaluation used a Cost Effectiveness Analysis. Overall, where a project aims to have an impact on an easily monetisable area of life, especially employment and resultant taxation and out-of-work benefits, then it is much easier to produce an assessment of economic impact<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note here that while a placement rate or educational outcomes are nonetheless real and positive outcomes, the assumptions of future subsequent outcomes are based on our current models of society. For example, we know that those with level of education X have Y chance of good employment now. This does not imply that improving the education of a set of young people to level X means that they will subsequently have Y chance of good employment, as a) they have other relevant attributes, and b) the change in their education changes the distribution of educational credentials.

<sup>4</sup> There are different levels of robustness of this work, especially considering that deadweight, substitution and displacement effects are not always considered and that it is unusual to find a sensitivity analysis that outlines how changing assumptions can change the end result.

Poland's *Assistance from A-Z* and *Active regardless of the age* evaluations used Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology. SROI differs from conventional cost-benefit analyses in applying a concept of value that incorporates social and environmental as well as economic costs and benefits, using monetary proxies to represent non-monetary impacts (Gibbon and Dey, 2011). Other approaches such as revealed preference (developed for the context of consumer behaviour) could in principle be applied to goals that are difficult to monetise and valued differently by different people. For some local participants who drive change in the InnoSI case studies, the problem of representing the non-economic ambitions of Social Investment can not be reduced to the selection of measurement tools. In the Italian ECEC evaluation, for example, local stakeholders asserted a vehement commitment to children's rights and social justice, and rejection of a 'return on investment' logic.

## 6.2 Using evidence: Innovation survival, development, and roll out

The overriding questions of how evidence can be used in these circumstances are those that ask how we can unpick the multiple interventions, processes and outcomes apart. This includes: asking where the limits of impact are drawn, when it is possible that there are chains of impacts; asking how different policies, projects and programmes work together; how the context itself is changing, including the context of evaluation and research; and how the unique nature of one particular project or programme can create general lessons applicable elsewhere. This inherent complexity means that a wide range of attributes of context, programme, participants, other related and competing social policy, are all contributing to the level of success. For some commentators this means moving beyond evidence-based policy making towards a 'pragmatist complexity' where values, politics and evidence all contribute to experimentation and learning (Sanderson, 2009; Ansell & Geyer, 2016).

In this context, then, we are forced to ask how imperfect evidence is used to justify changes to future practice. Indeed, we could ask what would be the decisions made following some of the economic analysis in the case studies. A rational response to *the Active at any age's* SROI figure of .64 would suggest closing it down, while the German MAMBA project, with a return of 35 times initial outlay, would be done everywhere. We assume that decision makers would be sceptical of such figures, noting that these are unlikely to tell the full story. Given that often *something must be done*, then it seems more reasonable to assume that policy can draw upon specific parts of the evidence created, and other rationales, and this can then be used to adjust current activity and inspire new activity. Thus, the *Green Sticht* can undergo 'continuous process evaluations' and Working Well can draw on learning from both *Troubled Families* and the UK's *Work Programme*. That said, the studies also point to the relationship of projects with the wider policy arena as an influence on survival and roll out. Poland's *Assistance from A-Z* was found to be on the 'micro scale' and so did not affect 'existing institutional arrangements', and this could result in a working under the radar that facilitates long-term survival. For Finland's *Youth Guarantee*, however, it is 'sponsors from the political level' who ensure continuity and funding.

All this emphasises the difficulties of using simple impact or economic metrics to make decisions to begin, develop, manage, expand or end particular programmes or projects. Policy aims are often not well defined in advance, may change over time, and are not always directly translatable to actual practice (Sabel and Simon 2011). For these writers the answer is 'experimentalism' in which the discretion of the street level bureaucrat (Lipsky, 1980; 2010) is a source of adaptation, learning and continuous improvement, rather like the craft worker in flexible, agile industrial production. Under experimentalism, frontline service professionals become problem solvers supported by evaluation

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and peer review, leading to institutional learning (Sabel and Simon 2011). This implies that key elements essential to the relationship between funder and fundee, commissioner and project, and manager and managed, are *trust and knowledge*. While some of the assessment can be made via economic or other impact measurement, at least some of the value is unmeasured and/or unmeasurable. 'Hard' evidence is used to ensure that organisations and individuals are doing what they are supposed to do, to influence funding decisions, and to help organisations learn. However, this is supplemented with knowledge and intuition that arises from long-term experience and relationships, and is interpreted in the context of such relationships. If, therefore, experimentation is needed for adaptation and change, it must be assumed that sometimes things will go wrong. In the context of 'good faith', this need not be a problem, as organisations and individuals have 'permission to fail'.

## 7 Conclusions and policy implications

This report has presented a synthesis of empirical evidence from twenty in-depth, evaluative case studies in ten countries. The body of new evidence from the case studies has begun to incorporate social innovations into debate surrounding a 'social investment state', and to nudge them towards reflection on more than the national and international contexts (Ewart and Evers, 2014). In this concluding section, we highlight some of the outstanding themes from the synthesis and then go on to put forward a few implications of this research intended to inform impact partners and stakeholders.

### 7.1 Conclusions

#### **Building human capital usually goes along with social capital**

Human capital is at the core of the Social Investment paradigm. The case study interventions in labour market activation usually involve the building of social capital alongside human capital. Some interventions explicitly aim to improve communities through strengthening social capital and there is evidence of some success in this, for example in the Hungarian *Social Land Programme* and the Italian *Early Childhood Education and Care*.

#### **New relationships across agencies and sectors**

There are some highly positive examples in the case studies of success at achieving collaborative advantage through various kinds of joint working to achieve common Social Investment goals. The rationale is usually that the social challenges are too big and complex for one agency, and that users' needs do not conform to professional and organisational boundaries. MAMBA, Germany for example, stands out as a success story of innovative Social Investment mainly as a result of intensive, time consuming personal assistance achieved through fruitful cooperation of very different organizations. Collaborations and partnerships are rewarding but also challenging. Cross sector and cross agency value frameworks can compete. Barriers include reporting regimes as well as divergent goals and priorities.

#### **Interdependency with wider policy and politics**

Social Investment goals typically align closely with national as well as EU policy priorities e.g. for labour market activation, work and family reconciliation, early years education or active ageing. There are counter examples noted in some of the InnoSI case study reports where linkages between different policy areas were lacking and there was evidence of mismatch with national policies and other programmes. The report on the Alginet Energy Co-operative found that the Spanish legal

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framework seems to inhibit community renewable energy and the report on Hungary's Social Land Programme argued that it was thwarted to some extent by passive elements of social benefit system and faced competition from the national *Start work*-program.

### **A strong social economy presence.**

Governments involve non-state actors in welfare state reforms and, in turn, non-state actors may pilot reforms themselves, which are then adopted by governments (D2.3). In the case studies, there were many examples of the redistribution of implementation roles, often expanding the importance of social economy actors. The social economy can generate new ideas and be crucial in the beginning of small, locally based, experimental, pilot activities, projects and actions. Innovations they initiate may remain local but are sometimes replicated elsewhere, as in the case of *Green Sticht* in the Netherlands, or taken up by government agencies and mainstreamed. This happened with the childcare model in rural Emilia Romagna, part of the ECEC case study, Italy, which was rolled out in the region and became internationally well-known.

Social economy groups are mainly engaged in delivery in InnoSI case studies but some try to influence policy. This was so in MAMBA, Germany, where in addition to case based work, the partners contribute to awareness-raising to sensitize the public, officials and employers to the precarious situation of refugees. In the *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations*, Sweden non-profit participants told evaluators that they have gained greater abilities to influence local policy though participating in a partnership with local government.

InnoSI cases involved many different kinds of social economy organisations. Faith groups were important in the German city of Münster, which has many long established Catholic and Protestant institutions and the *Green Sticht* had support from a Catholic foundation. Faith groups also made significant contributions in Poland and to some extent in Hungary, both former communist countries where civil society traditions are usually said to be weaker than Western Europe.

### **Tension between logics of economic growth and social solidarity**

At national and international levels, economic justifications of Social Investment reform agendas appear to weigh more heavily than societal ones (2.3). The case studies paint a very different picture at the local level. This is partly explained by the involvement of value driven social economy organisations. Social justice rather than economic efficiency is typically their motivation, as we saw for example in MAMBA, Germany; ECEC, Italy; both Dutch case studies and *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations*, Sweden. In Hungary, where the social economy is weaker, it was local elected representatives responsible for implementing the *Social Land Programme* who questioned national policies prioritising labour market outcomes over more social ones.

### **Citizens becoming an active part of the innovation process**

Personalised, user-focused services were characteristic across all the case studies. There was a strong sense from providers and users alike that this replaces a one size fits all model that has failed in the past. Some interventions went much further with involving users in the design of services.

### **Financial Innovation**

The case studies revealed few and quite limited examples of innovation in funding Social Investment programmes. The outcomes-based models in the UK case studies represent just two of many versions of Payment by Results mechanisms that have been trialed in that country and elsewhere. The UK InnoSI cases are not full-fledged implementations of risk transfer from the public to the



independent sector. Their success has been mixed, neither as detrimental to service users as feared by critics nor as conducive to innovation as advocates expect.

There were a few examples of innovative ways of securing additional private financing for Social Investment programmes. This was achieved in various ways: a nursery serving the children of corporate employees as well as local residents; setting up social enterprises, and selling produce from land-based projects (as in Hungary and the Netherlands).

The case of Alginet Electric Co-operative in Spain stands out as a successful initiative that has achieved Social Investment goals of long-term welfare improvement (combatting fuel poverty) and citizen activation without any form of state funding.

### **Unpaid work to support Social Investment**

In some cases, non-financial inputs (mainly unpaid work on the part of citizens) are essential to make Social Investment initiatives viable. This is particularly so where social economy partners are able to access local traditions of volunteering. Involving volunteers is characteristic of many social economy organisations but not all do so. One of the non-profit partners in *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations* did not have any volunteers but managed to enroll retired members of staff to meet the partnership's needs. There are many reasons for volunteering. Religious faith can be a strong factor for altruistic volunteering to help people perceived as unfortunate, for example supporting refugees in Münster, Germany. Some groups of volunteers are united around a shared interest in the tradition of self-help, as was the case with the mothers who worked together to create new childcare facilities in a small town in Emilia Romagna, Italy. Volunteering tends to be viewed very positively by all stakeholders including decision makers, service staff, beneficiaries and volunteers themselves. There are indications that this is less so when it is seen as a substitute for publicly funded professional services rather than additional to them.

### **Very poor, vulnerable and stigmatised groups**

Critics have warned that the Social Investment paradigm is not pro-poor and may serve to undermine the normative basis of social policy and drive economic rationales to replace human rationales. Many InnoSI case studies set out to benefit some of the most vulnerable and stigmatised social groups, often with some elements of compensation. Nevertheless, they demonstrate success for initiatives with a socially investive and innovative character in tapping into new capacities and resources. They do this in ways that support personalised interventions to assist the poorest and most disadvantaged (non EU migrants, Roma, people with physical or mental health problems) and achieve positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

### **Social Investment and migration**

Usability of the concept of "Social Investment" with regard to open European borders for immigrants was questioned in the conclusion on D 2.2. The SIP working doc (European Commission, 2013a) notes that migrants from outside the EU are generally younger than the population they join, so they rejuvenate it. In this sense, programmes to support their labour market participation and social inclusion look like a good fit with Social Investment. But the Social Investment paradigm, with its emphasis on the whole life course, may not be easy to apply to mobile populations who arrive in a Member State in adulthood often with their closest family ties overseas. We saw this tension in the MAMBA project. For the lead partner, the rationale is furthering social justice irrespective of the likelihood that some long-term benefits will accrue outside Germany.

## Conceptualising Social Investment

The difficulty of distinguishing Social Investment from social expenditure is a significant strand of criticism of Social Investment as a conceptual paradigm and as a guide to policy. InnoSI case studies include elements that are not about future returns but rather around more immediate support and safety nets. The *Partnerships between idea-based and public organisations*, in Sweden, for example, finds shelter for newly arrived young migrants before addressing their psychological needs, social networks and work preparation. Awareness of the concept of social investment hardly exists at all at the local and regional levels but, nevertheless, the case studies provide compelling evidence of strong commitment to long-term improvement in prospects for future employment and social participation, plus more social cohesion and stability.

### 7.2 Implications

**Social innovations supporting Social Investment reforms** may be initiated at the local level in the social economy and driven forward by “social entrepreneurs”. However, case study evidence suggests that systematic change needs sponsors from the political level and continuity in the form of public funding. There are opportunities for social innovations to be mainstreamed when a crucial role is played by the different agencies of the public administration, as in the Italian Early Education and Care. As a counter example, the Spanish Energy Cooperatives demonstrate one way in which the social economy can help to shape the future of the welfare state in the absence of state funding and in the face of national policies that are not well aligned.

**An element of co-creation is a significant achievement** in some case studies and an ideal not quite realised in others. It is important to recognise how time consuming co-creation can be especially with user groups who are very disengaged. Time needs to be factored in to make this possible. Innovative means will also be needed to engage them. One way forward may be building upon the success of the Community Reporting model used in InnoSI to complement the research evidence with service users’ own stories told with easy to use technologies ‘in the pocket’.

**Reliance on activism, volunteering, and unpaid efforts** (e.g. in participation and co-production) is prominent in many case studies. Usually, with a very few exceptions, stakeholders regard this as positive. It is perhaps something of a paradox that Social Investment (with its emphasis on labour markets) relies in practice on so much non marketised time and activity. It leaves unanswered questions about the sustainability of voluntary action in the long term, and how to compensate the work of those citizens who may not be a part of mainstream work but still perform valuable and impact-laden services for the community.

**Overall there was a lack of monitoring outcomes and demonstration of the return that financial and other investments generated.** The UK case studies were an exception in that they deployed an outcome-based funding model (Payment by Results). This is not a panacea that can be recommended whole heartedly for other contexts. There are many criticisms of the principles of PbR and indications from the UK (in InnoSI and other evidence) that it has not so far delivered on its promises. PbR is consistent with usage of the term ‘social investment’ in the English speaking world to refer to new financial instruments for funding social programmes rather than the European Social Investment paradigm. There has been little dialogue to date between these meanings of ‘social investment’. It will be useful, based on this observation, for stakeholders to examine the potential for PbR (and various kinds of financial investment that can underpin it) to support - or inhibit - the future-oriented ambitions of the Social Investment paradigm.

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