# INNOSERV
## SOCIAL SERVICES INNOVATION

## INNOSERV — Social Platform on Innovative Social Services — Newsletter

**Newsletter 1**
**December 2012**

## About INNOSERV

INNOSERV is a project focusing on identifying the potential of innovative social services in the fields of health, welfare and education including the multi-faceted activities put in place by stakeholders across Europe, and the policy frameworks at different levels of governance to address the needs of citizens.

This project is driven by a consortium that brings together key representatives of the research, practice and policy communities in the field of social service planning and delivery to mutually assess recent trends in science, practice and policy, identify knowledge gaps and propose research questions and agendas to address them.

An important feature of our project is the use of innovative and low-threshold communication means, such as films, podcasts and visual sociology reach out to a wide audience of scholars, practitioners, policy makers and service users.

What will the platform do? Investigate, identify, evaluate and reflect upon innovative practice in the provision of social services across Europe;

- Identify and systematise the theoretical discussion on innovation in service planning and delivery;

- Link up the empirical evidence and theoretical discourse to identify gaps, inconsistencies and demand for further research;

- Assess the issues identified and propose research agendas for various aspects of service planning, provision and evaluation.

## Who are we?

The INNOSERV consortium brings together European organisations from various disciplines and countries, so that we can gather a whole picture of what is happening at the grassroots level in the field of social services in Europe.

The project team can thus build on the strength of its members to conduct quantitative and qualitative research, apply knowledge of different institutional settings and legal frameworks, engage with different stakeholders across Europe and build an online social platform using low tech communication tools.

The multidisciplinary and multi-country team spans social policies, welfare-related issues, civil society, social economy, health and social care services, education and training policies .

### The partners at a glance:

### Coordinating organisation:

Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Germany—Institute for the Study of Christian Social Service;

**Project Partners—The Consortium**:

Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften, Hamburg, Germany

Roskilde Universitet, Department of Society and Globalisation, Roskilde, Denmark;

Diakonhjemmets Hogskole, Norway;

Budapest Szakpolitikai Elemzo intezet Korlatolt Felelossegu Tarsasag, Budapest, Hungary;

Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale SCARL;

University of Southampton, Southampton, UK;

Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France;

The European Association of Service providers for persons with Disabilities — EASPD, Brussels, Belgium;

SOLIDAR, Brussels, Belgium;

The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL), Dublin, Ireland.

> "The INNOSERV Partnership builds on the key strength of academic, research and civil society organisations to research, analyse and showcase innovation in social services, to build a research agenda for the future.,"

With the new social platform we hope to assess the latest trends in research and practice, identify knowledge gaps and stimulate research inquiry. The idea is for service providers, political decision-makers, associations, researchers and consumers to use the platform to discuss which service offerings in Europe are innovative and what future scenarios should be envisaged in the welfare, health and extracurricular education sectors."



**Prof. Dr. Johannes Eurich of Heidelberg University, Project Coordinator**

## Our research methodology

The ultimate objective of the INNOSERV project is to deliver a research agenda to evaluate the plurality of available approaches to meet new demands and tackle changes that social services face.

To deliver on this ambitious goals, the partnership has planned to carry out its work using a mix of methodologies, that will allow us to learn from practice and also from research.

The INNOSERV work plan has therefore been structures in three main phases:

- A first phase, geared towards an understanding of innovation in social services through scientific knowledge (WP and 2);

- A second phase, geared towards an understanding of innovation from practice, through the collection and analysis of good practices form the field (WP 3 to 7);

A third and final phase, which will culminate in the drafting of the research agenda. This will be done based on the results of the previous project phases and involving stakeholders and researchers via workshops, expert meetings and surveys. A roadshow will offer further opportunities to discuss the results and finalise the research agenda.

# INNOSERV website now online!



Social platform on Innovative Social Services

Our new website, providing comprehensive and up-to-date information on the project is now live and can be accessed on www.inno-serv.eu!

In addition to information on the project and its objectives, the consortium and our deliverables, it will be the 'home' of our new social platform on innovative social services. It will

contain all videos showcasing the 20 innovative social practices analysed by the consortium which will form the basis to collect feedback on innovation in social services from researchers and stakeholders with the aim of defining a research agenda.

> "Our website will be the home of the social platform on innovative social services — hosting videos showcasing examples of innovative practices being implemented across Europe."

# Our objectives

INNOSERV stresses the participation of the research and policy communities and of civil society and service providers. We established a systematic search process to bring together the knowledge of these diverse stakeholders. We are working to identify key trends and decisive elements for innovation in social services to produce an integrated research agenda,

**Our objectives:**

• **Highly communicable 'innovative service examples'**: to present a solid picture of innovative practices meeting different needs in the sectors of health, education, and welfare by sampling examples showing key aspects of innovative service delivery and outcomes;

• **Dialogue on and evaluation of trends in policy making** by involving a wide range of stakeholders throughout Europe. The scientific community shall analyse and systematise the theoretical discussion on innovation in order to present its findings to policy makers, professionals and users. A multi-level dialogue and evaluation process between the stakeholders will be made possible with the use of new media.

• **Substantial input for further research activi-**

**ties in the EU 2020 strategy**: to identify future scenarios for social services in Europe in the identified sectors. New perspectives on innovative social services will be unclosed by combining insights from practical models with the theoretical analysis carried out by researchers; **Dialogue platform on innovative social services:**

To achieve our objectives, we plan to create a **dialogue platform on innovative social services to involve** stakeholders from **NGOs and NPOs, user groups, private entrepreneurs, research institutes and universities, policy makers and European institutions**. Innovative practices were collected via a *peer recommendation* system and using a *snowball* method.

**20 examples of innovative services**, identified through stakeholder networks are the key tool to achieve our objectives and will be portrayed in videos and podcasts that will be the starting point of discussions, involving stakeholders throughout Europe on web-based platforms and chat rooms, video conferences, and regional workshops.

# Project Outputs

## 1. Literature review on innovation in social ser-

**"What does innovation in social services in Europe mean?"**

**This report on the literature review answered the key research question via a comprehensive literature review in 13 European languages.**

The main aim of the literature review was to answer the question "What does innovation in social services in Europe mean?" The definition of social services of general interest used was that proposed by the European Commission (2006), based on which a working definition of innovation in social services was proposed: "innovations are those social services that meet individuals' needs in the areas of health, education and care in living in wider society through the promotion of social interaction for mutual support and the delivery of organisational arrangements for the provision of directed support to individuals or groups."

The review, was carried out to identify and analyse the concept and state of the art of innovation in social services, the contents (and impacts) of Innovation in Social Services for each chosen field including practical examples of significant innovative forms and trends and demand for further research. The aim was to obtain an idea of key innovative aspects and to identify the main trends for social service provision, their logic, problematic aspects, socio-

economic impact of these innovations, new capacity of services to be more inclusive, and gaps within our scientific knowledge.

A bibliography was compiled using a variety of methods including and two Group Libraries were created in Zotero to collect and to collaboratively manage bibliographic data.

The Final Report presents the main findings from the review dividing the literature into themes. A definition, concepts of innovation and a state of the art of literature - with its strengths and limitations are provided. The report clarifies the terminology used and analyses the links and overlaps between the topic reviewed and other ones such as social innovation, service innovation and social change. It further shows what the literature tells us about innovation in each field and in cross-sectoral services. Finally, it includes a section on the criteria (and key words) to identify innovation in social services, in Europe, as they arise from the literature.

This public report is available for download on the INNOSERV website:

http://bit.ly/XP4IBk

## 2. Literature-based criteria for innovation

This report draws on the results of the literature review plus the work undertaken to identify innovative social services to detect theoretical trends and criteria for innovative service development practices. These inputs have been formed into a criteria framework used to show key links between innovation and the pressures for change and development in social services to identify future developmental trends, and to link key aspects of innovation with current and future challenges which are driving innovation and social change.

The framework assists in identifying the innovation phenomena, potential and processes important to future research in this area. It interlinks aspects of innovation (novelty, type, context, improvement, sustainability) with analysis of challenges and changes which are acting as driving forces of innovation in social services. As the project is future facing, it is proposed that key social challenges and changes are likely to inform the development of new change paradigms for the delivery of social services across Europe.

# 3. Innovative practices in Europe
# INNOSERV project selection of innovative practices

The partners of the INNOSERV project have assembled 167 innovative services in health, education and welfare from 20 European countries and about 750 service providers have been contacted. A structured template has been used to describe each practice and to gather information on its innovative character, the origins of the innovation and its impact. Some partners integrated this template with interviews with chosen professionals and stakeholders taking into account the representativeness of the different service fields of the project. Those project partners who are membership-based organisations used their networks to distribute the template. Of the innovative examples collected, 74 are in the field of welfare, 23 in the field of health and 23 in that of education. 47 examples are so-called blurring examples overlapping several of the service fields. Only 4 combine services from education and health. This means that approximately 45% of all examples deal with welfare issues which is understandable bearing in mind that welfare covers a whole range of services. Education and health are more regulated service fields leaving less room for innovation.

This sample of innovative practices illustrates the need and efficiency of innovation in social services for the user and the service provider addressing actual evolutions in society.

The report describes the different types of innovation in social services: Innovation can deal with new services and/or co-operation across different service fields and new forms of organisations in cooperation with authorities, the stakeholders and/or citizens. New ways of financial resourcing may enable the start of new services. Also the delivery of the service can be innovative being based on targeted actions or on new target groups. Secondly, possible origins for innovation are listed. Innovation can grow from within the organisation of the service provider with the objective to address unmet social needs. Thirdly, an overview is made of broader factors in society that may have positive influence on innovative projects. The last chapter gives an overview of the possible impact of the projects on the user, the service provider and society.

> "The project partners have sampled close to 170 examples of innovation in social services in Europe illustrating the needs for efficiency and innovation both for users and providers."

# 4. European Compared Selection of Innovative Social Services

The aim of this work phase was to select 20 European innovative practice examples out of all the projects sampled across Europe. The selection considered the wide coverage of the three fields analysed within INNOSERV and the widest possible geographical coverage. The examples were evaluated according to theoretical knowledge gathered in the first work packages that led to the framework of innovation criteria. The aim of the selection was to collect detailed information about the selected illustrative practice examples including various means of media. The collection of the European service examples was clustered into 6 service fields. In addition to the categories education, health and welfare, the cross sectoral fields of education and health, education and welfare as well as health and welfare were added The evaluation of the service examples was guided by the following questions, which were

raised with the aim to understand what innovation in social services really means:

• Does the reason for starting the innovative social service match with one of the drivers identified in the relevant service field? • In which way does the service respond to the drivers? (in at least one of the 5 categories called 'Response')
• How can we classify 'novelty' in this service?
• What are the other hallmarks of the service?

## Next steps in the project

The first work packages were geared towards an understanding of innovation in social services through a review of literature and the collection and analysis of close to 170 good practices in the field of health, education and welfare.

20 of these innovative practices have been selected for visualisation. The filming is currently under progress, and videos are expected to be online by the end of January 2013.

We will then start collecting feedback across Europe. Using the films, all partners will ask stakeholders in their respective countries to express their opinion on drivers and influencing factors for innovation in social services. Service providers and users will be contacted through local workshops and/or online questioning. Researchers will be invited to specific workshops in Brussels and Budapest.

A thorough analysis of this feedback process will be the basis for the elaboration of the research agenda which will then also be addressed to stakeholders in national roadshows.

This accumulation of analysis and feedback must guarantee a realistic view on gaps and needs as subjects of a research agenda on innovation in social services.

We're on the web!

www.inno-serv.eu/

INNOSERV is a 7th Framework Programme project funded by the European Union dealing with innovations in the field of social services.

INNOSERV aims to establish a platform bringing together researchers, practitioners and policy-makers working on the planning and conduct of social services. Eleven research institutions from nine European countries are involved in the two-year project. Its funding amounts to just under EUR 1.5 million.

### For more information on the project please contact:

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
European Research Area

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME

Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities