

Crossing Governance Levels – Highly inspiring 1st Policy Dialogue Workshop

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Brussels, June 23, 2014: Policy and decision makers from all governance levels (regional, national, EU) across Europe discussed the topic «Public Policy Implications of Social Innovations».

Organised by the University of Bath and hosted by Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), participants shared experiences of the challenges and opportunities posed by social innovation, and the scope for transforming traditional modes of public intervention and regulation. The interactive agenda setting by the participants, turned the discussion on future (new) modes of policy production to the following subjects:

The exchange on «Effective Engagement with Stakeholders & Citizens» revealed that trust, risk taking, leadership and community capacity are core dimensions to be considered when engaging with stakeholders. Cooperation with citizens, NGOs, entrepreneurs and other social innovation stakeholders must be meaningful and fair. At the same time policy and decision makers need a clear understanding when to engage with whom for what purpose.

Educating policymakers about social innovation and their importance for future development was discussed as a first step to «Integrate Social Innovation in Structural Funds». Suggestions for concrete measures comprised the application of balanced score card methodology to develop a joint vision and strategy among stakeholders. Enhancing the visibility of social innovation through, for example, SI case studies and improved communication, and pilot projects was discussed as a further measure. Here the availability of actionable knowledge is seen as key success factor.

«Sustaining the dynamics of social innovation» was valued as another core issue considered in policy making. Creating the conditions for social innovation to flourish and achieve maximum impact was viewed as key challenge. However, the question arose whether sustainability contradicts social innovation. What is needed is an enabling environment for creativity also allowing for experimentation, sharing experiences while taking account of the ecosystem. This includes a virtuous circle of research & evaluation, planning, acting, and doing.

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Under the topic «Performance & Governance» impact measurement (e.g. use vs. exchange value), organisational and institutional processes, and dimensions of value (social, economic, impact on governance structures) were discussed. Moreover, actors' roles, logics of behaviour, capacities and their embeddedness in the institutional context have been subject of discussion. Further issues of concern were the use of resources, decision-making and contingencies in the triad of markets, institutions and social innovation actors.

The outcomes of this lively and open discussion contributes to the production of a White Paper on «The Policy Challenges of Social Innovation». This will be widely distributed within the social innovation communities across Europe.

If you are interested in joining the policy dialogue, please visit SIMPACT's LinkedIn group at:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Social-Innovation-Public-Policy-8131036>



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