



## Policy Lessons on Co-creation

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*About 650 people in ten EU countries attended policy round table meetings about co-creation on a regional or national level.*

*The participants were policy makers at a national or regional level (32%) and practitioners at a policy level (22%). Other participants were citizens supported by a service, academics and civil society organizations.*

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*Innovation of services -to their greater effectiveness- has been demonstrated. Citizens have actively participated. Learning has taken place at all levels. The priorities that are enforced through EU financing, awards etc. are helpful and make it more attractive for politicians to go along this sometimes difficult path. The path of co-creation needs to be developed, time and time again. This is what we learned.*

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## Lessons: the co-creation process



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- *Co-creation is generally referred to as citizen participation in most circles of an institutional nature.*
  - *Programs that are developed in cooperation between various actors and stakeholders, and which are based on active participation and an asset-based approach, can be sustainable. Co-creation is a good way to find new ways to produce effective services.*
  - *Community approaches in the development of services were important. Co-creation strengthens communities and develops them.*
  - *Barriers: Innovation at a regional level is still very small scale and the sessions discussed the major barriers to increasing such practices: i.e. political silos, sector silos, lack of communication channels with citizens, lack of tools and know-how.*
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<https://sway.office.com/vGLdPd3Kt7kWBffx#content=jGnkn3iZjnzpYP>

1 - Video on gathering stories of lived experience (People Voice Media)

## Lessons: power structures, a shift towards more equality



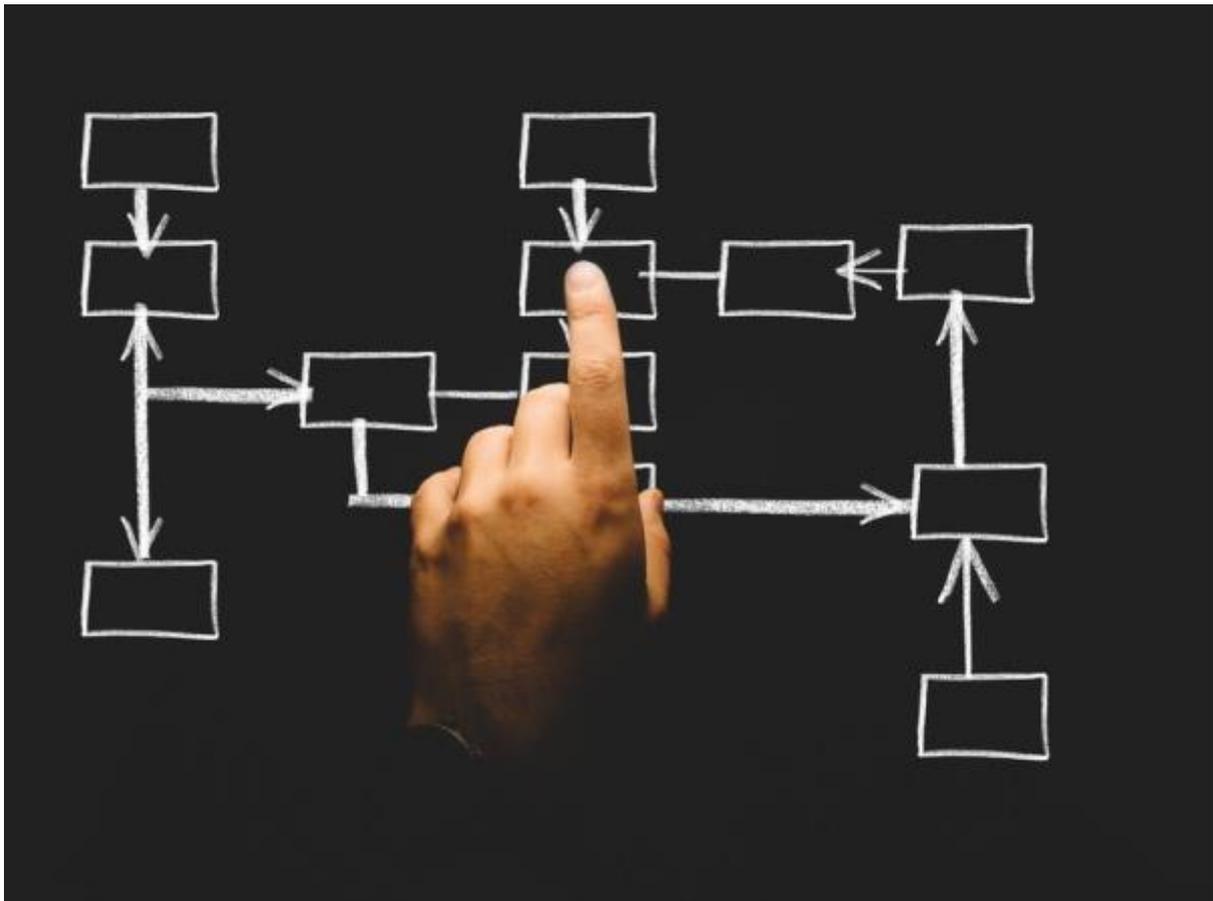
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- *Shift the perspective: see participants and people with lived experiences as 'source' of innovation, not as 'target' (having services "done to" them).*
  - *Stakeholders lack information about the most important element of the co-creation process, the inclusion of end users throughout the activity.*
  - *Power imbalances preventing co-creation exist both between user and professional and between different professions*
  - *People accustomed to being in control sometimes feel threatened by change and 'other' voices, and this can be true in charities as well as public sector organizations. The result can be a backlash against co-creative approaches.*
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## Summary



Co-creation of public services was mentioned as a positive and promising approach in the majority of the policy meetings at national level. It makes the development of new and effective services possible, in close co-operation with local citizens. When co-creation is based on active participation and an asset based approach it creates new opportunities for all stakeholders involved, including the people with lived experience or so-called "hard-to-reach" group. There is a need for re-organizing power structures and educating professionals to make relational and co-creative service perspectives possible to develop services of general interest. Community reports can support this process and can give people a voice, that would otherwise not have been heard.

## Implementation



In order to implement co-creation of public services it is important to:

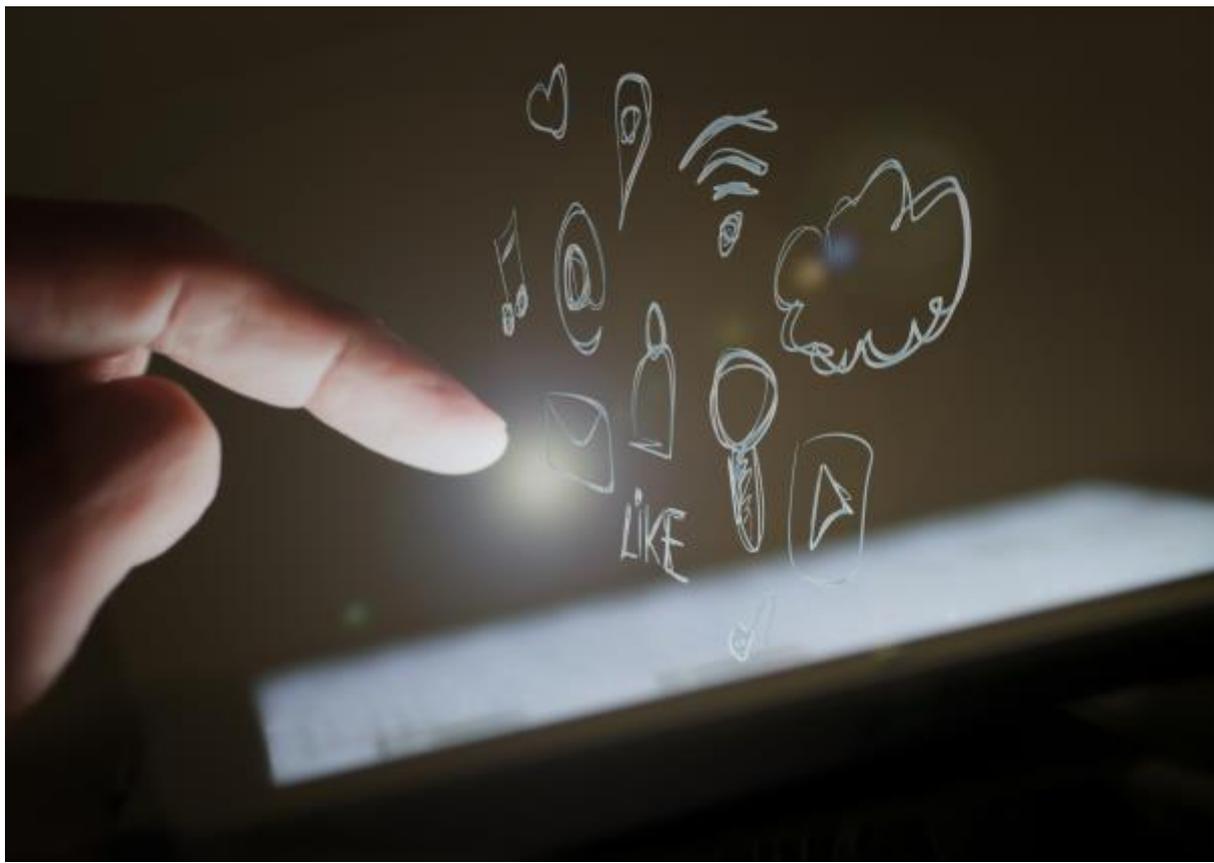
- Build a support infrastructure, a stakeholder group or consulting committee for the co-creation process that brings the project to a level more than "some co-creation events". If this group also develops into a community, it lasts -and is effective- beyond project life.
- In some countries there are programs telling policy makers when and how participation should be organized
- Continuity and long-term governmental support (way past the next election) from the local council are important for serious co-creation and co-creation infrastructure

## Impact and upscaling



- Many of the pilots were "scaled" to structural services
- The principles of co-creation were adopted by the organization, local government or even national government organizations
- Scaling to another region or community needs its own path and learning, transfer can help to teach about co-creation. An innovation "ecosystem" is needed as foundation for success.
- Services cannot be scaled in the sense of them being replicated, principles can be borrowed but the co-creation process, the community- and trust building have their own dynamics

[Read more](#)



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*More information:*

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- [CoSIE project: Co-creation of Service Innovation in Europe](#)
  - [Roadmap for co-creation of public services](#)
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