

Public sector innovation in Norway - results from a survey

Svein Olav Nås

Outline

- Background: Lack of information on public sector innovation
- The survey
- Sectors and firm sizes covered
- Main findings
- Concluding remarks

Background: Lack of information on public sector innovation

- Interest in public sector innovation has emerged relatively late – and been met with some resistance
- There is no single agreed definition or statistical manual similar to the Oslo Manual for the business sector
- Existing evidence from case studies and reinterpretation of existing – administrative - data sources like SNA
- No proper survey data exist, although some sectors have been studied in specialised work (for instance health, education)
- Currently work is under way several places, in particular the Nordic group led by Carter Bloch on CIS-type survey data
- The Research Council of Norway has carried out a small scale survey over the last 4 years
- Is it feasible and meaningful to survey all public (and private) sectors with the same or similar instruments?
- What can we use the results for?

The survey

- Telephone interviews
- 500 responding organisations
- Four years: 2006-2009
- 18 questions plus background information
- Simple approach to “innovation” – no definitions supplied
- Partly comparable to a similar business survey
- Unit is “enterprise” in business (organisation) register
- Sampling is challenging
 - problematic to establish the population
 - differing practices for defining units across sectors

Sectors and size classes

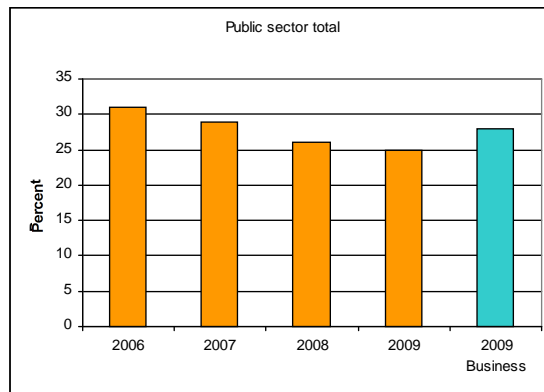
Number of respondents

Size class	Health and				Total
	Other public services	social services	Public administration	Education	
100 or more employees	0	67	71	34	172
20-99 employees	5	113	36	66	220
10-19 employees	9	53	24	22	108
Total	14	233	131	122	500
Total percent	2,8	46,6	26,2	24,4	100

Size class	Health and				Total
	Other public services	social services	Public administration	Education	
100 or more employees	0,0	28,8	54,2	27,9	34,4
20-99 employees	35,7	48,5	27,5	54,1	44,0
10-19 employees	64,3	22,7	18,3	18,0	21,6
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

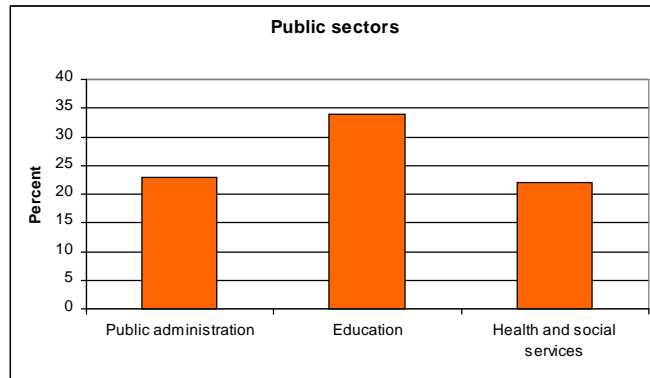
Main innovation question

- Does your enterprise invest in innovation, research and development in excess of standard operating costs?



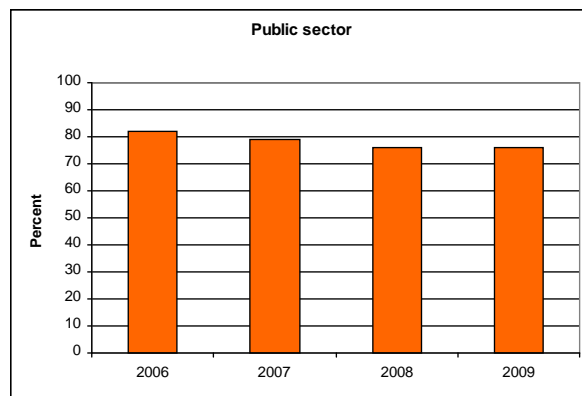
Main innovation question – by sector

- Does your enterprise invest in innovation, research and development in excess of standard operating costs?



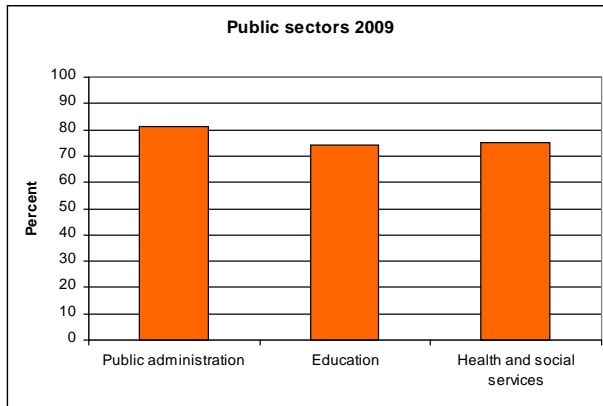
Alternative formulation of question on change (innovation?)

- Has your enterprise during the last 12 months worked on concrete projects to renew the enterprise's services or make them more effective?



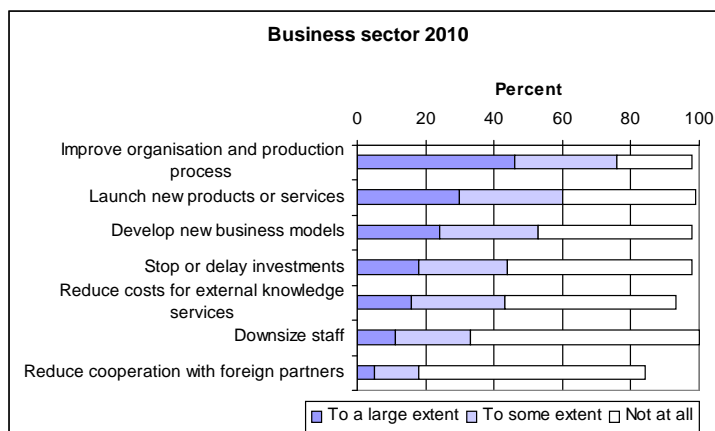
Alternative formulation of question on change by sectors

- Has your enterprise during the last 12 months worked on concrete projects to renew the enterprise's services or make them more effective?



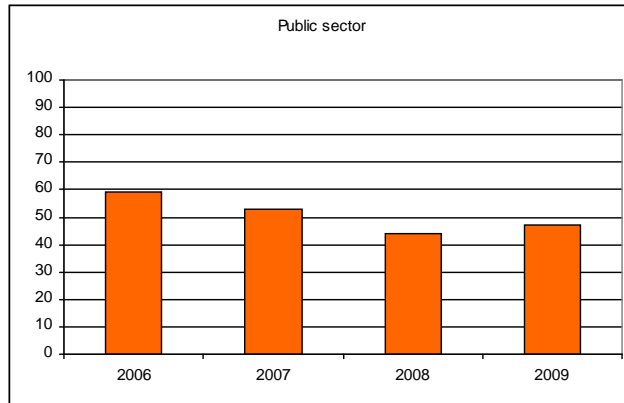
Business sector on actions to cope with the finance crisis

- The following are possible actions to cope with the finance crisis, please indicate to what degree each of them has been adopted in your firm



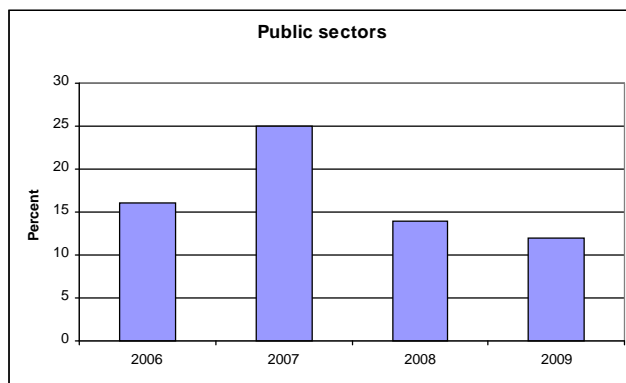
On future plans (innovations?)

- Is your enterprise about to start significant renewal- or innovation projects during the next 12 months?

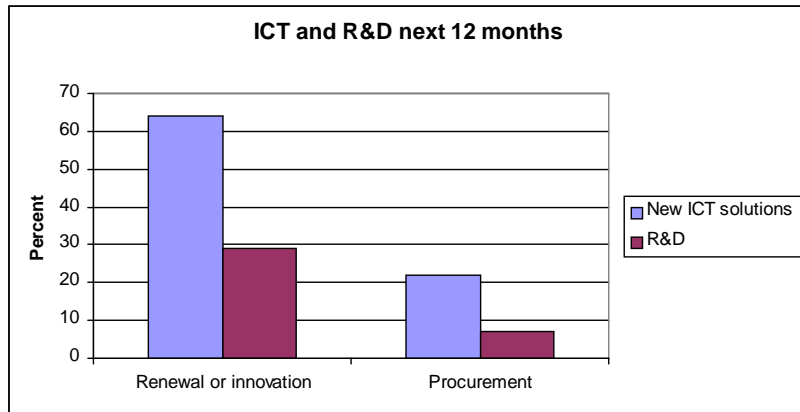


Use of procurement

- Will your enterprise make one or more single investments to the value of more than 10 mill NOK (1,5 mill Euro) over the next 12 months?

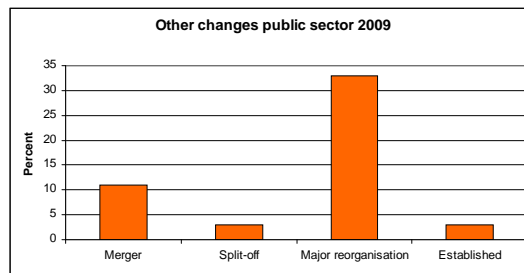


Contents of renewal or innovation plans next 12 months



Other changes

- Merger with other public enterprises last 2 years
- Split-off from other public enterprise last 2 years
- Major reorganisation of the enterprise last 2 years
- Establishment of the enterprise last 2 years



Concluding remarks

- “Innovation activity” can be identified in public sectors at a rate or level comparable to what is found for the business sectors (also CIS)
- Results seems to be relatively stable over time and at comparable levels across sectors
- It is nevertheless questionable if “innovation” is similarly understood or interpreted across sectors or event enterprises
- Responses are extremely sensitive to phrasing and formulations in the questions – both for public and business sectors
- Reorganisation and other changes take place to a large extent (maybe overlapping innovation)
- Half the enterprises plan significant renewal- or innovation projects over the next 12 months
- ICT involved in all sectors in a majority of cases
- Still a big challenge to define and survey the units (and sector) properly
- Questionable to what extent and for what such general results are useful -- apart from establishing that innovation occurs also in public sectors