

Measuring public innovation in the Nordic countries

Insights from the Nordic project

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Background for project

- National interest in Public sector innovation in Nordic (and other) countries
 - Demographic changes necessitate innovation
 - Competition with private service providers
 - Better quality services to citizens
- However lack of systematic data on public sector innovation.
 - Hinders efforts to better understand and to promote public sector innovation

Funding support

- Project initiated by: Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation
- Other Nordic contributors:
 - Nordic Innovation Centre (NICE)
 - Research Council of Norway
 - Innovation Norway
 - VINNOVA
 - SALAR (Swedish Assoc. of municipalities and regions)
 - Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy
- Eurostat (separate grants for pilot studies in Denmark and Finland)

Participants

- Denmark:
 - DAMVAD
 - CFA, Aarhus University
 - Statistics Denmark
 - Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation, Denmark
- Norway:
 - NIFU-STEP
 - Statistics Norway
- Finland: Statistics Finland
- Sweden: Statistics Sweden
- Iceland: RANNIS

Main goal of the project

- Develop a measurement framework for collecting internationally comparable data on innovation in the public sector
 - Improve our understanding what public sector innovation is and how public sector organisations innovate
 - Develop metrics for use in promoting public sector innovation

Project work

- Conceptual framework
- Survey methodology
- Studies of user needs
- Respondent interviews and testing
- Pilot study in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

– Project website: www.mepin.eu

Key inputs to the development process

Review of
existing
studies

User needs

Respondent
interviews
and testing

Oslo Manual

www.damvad.dk

Towards a conceptual framework – some key aspects

- Characteristics of public services – how to define innovations?
- Blurred organisational boundaries
 - Autonomy
 - Incentives
 - How is innovation organised in individual organisations?
- Broad, multiple objectives
- Wide range of interfaces
- Heterogeneity

What is the "public sector"? What organisations do we want to measure?

- Government sector?
- Public services? (which may include both businesses and publicly owned organisations)
- Front-line delivery institutions? (Schools, hospital(wings), etc)
- Challenges in identifying organisations (in registers, etc.)

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How to account for heterogeneity

- Systematic, comparable data – need to have large common element (limits to specialisation)
- Different levels of government
- Different activities/sectors
- Generic approach seems possible
- But, specialised modules would provide useful information

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Proposed measures of public sector innovation

- Innovations
 - What types of innovations are being implemented? (if any)
- Investments
 - How much are organisations investing in innovation? (in-house and externally)
- Interaction with external actors (informal sources and active cooperation)
 - User involvement in innovation process?
 - Interaction with other public sector organisations?
 - Collaboration with public research?

Proposed measures of public sector innovation

- Innovative procurement (how is procurement used to promote innovation among suppliers?)
- Innovation process (strategy, mgmt, organisation of innovation)
 - How are innovation activities organised?
 - How much focus is on innovation?
- Drivers (policy and others)
 - Role of employees?
 - Importance of policy-related drivers?
- Barriers
 - What types of barriers are viewed as most important?
- Output measures
 - Measuring performance

Project status and next steps

- First stage (preliminary framework) completed (documents can be found on www.mepin.eu)
- Pilot study underway (300-500 observations in each country).
 - Central government
 - Local and regional authorities
 - Individual institutions within education and health (selected countries)
- Results and final report in Fall 2010