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Welfare innovations
at the local level
in favour of cohesion

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SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN BERN, SWITZERLAND

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INTRODUCTION

As we argued in the WP4 report, Bern is trying to identify itself as a social and innovative city. Although it is the capital, Bern is only the fourth largest city in Switzerland. The head trio is Zurich, often identified as the financial capital, Geneva known for its banks and its numerous international organisation, and Basel, with its dynamic pharmaceutical industry. The three of them have an international airport and close links with neighbouring countries.

In a famous quote of 1932, the American judge, Brandeis, enthusiastically stated: “It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.”¹ Being in charge of welfare, Switzerland’s 26 cantons and 2,495 communes enjoy considerable latitude in experimenting new forms of welfare policies. Cattacin (1996) showed how this room for manoeuvre allowed some communes or cantons to implement very innovative social policies, which would have had no chance on the national level. These innovations - in the field of addiction for example - were sometimes spread throughout the country, not by being scaled up and taken over by the federal government, but through a coordination between territorial units.

If we consider social rights as an essential part of citizenship, we could argue that urban welfare contributes to build urban citizenship. Marshall’s analysis addressed the national level, but it could apply to a sub-national level. A local welfare system could contribute to a feeling of belonging to the urban community, and hereby influence the perceived identity of the city. In this way, innovative policies are a feature of an innovative city. As well as tolerance toward the alternative cultural centre “Reithalle”², or the realisation of architectural flagship projects, innovative social policies contribute to the fulfilment of an image of the city as it is thought of by the local elites. As a goal and as a slogan, some recent administrative documents have used this headline: “Bern is a growing city, a creative city, a ecologic city, a world open city, a social city”.³

The three innovations to be presented in this document are flagship projects of the governing (left) coalition. All three occasioned extensive communication. Scientific documents preceded and accompanied the projects. Resources and information are available on paper and on the internet, addressing a large public. Evaluations are also made public. This effort of communication and transparency is meant to increase the project’s efficiency as well as its acceptance and to prevent political criticism. The first project is a compensatory preschool education programme. The second is a concept of guidelines and recommendations regarding integration of migrant populations. The third and most recent is a professional integration project addressing unemployed young mothers facing economic difficulties.

2. SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN BERN

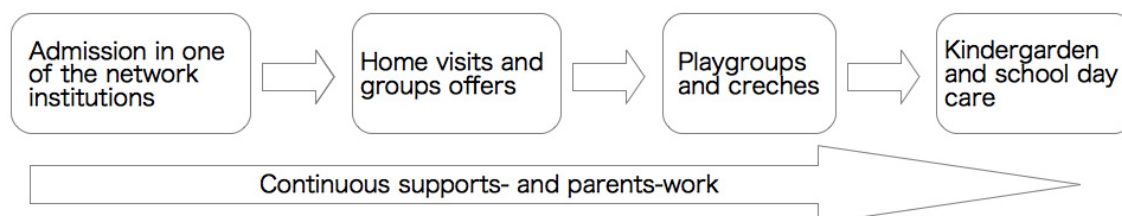
2.1. *Primano*: compensatory preschool education

Primano is a pre-school education programme targeting disadvantaged children and their families in selected districts. It started in 2007 with a home-visit programme. Bern was the first commune to implement a Dutch programme named *Opstapje*. The idea of a pre-school programme arose as school nurses noticed that some children had difficulties in the very first year of school. In addition, these children showed speech difficulties, and social interaction and psychomotor problems that could be linked with the family structure and

¹ Brandeis, J., “New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann”, United States Supreme Court, 1932.

² See report WP4.

social environment. The Director of the Health, Education and Welfare³ Department was encouraging multidisciplinary work and tasked the health unit to implement a home-visit programme. The result is a pilot project in the stream of social investment, which includes, besides home visits, educations modules for child-care facilities, playgroups, and a coordination structure inside the districts. The programme aims to build a chain of support that accompanies children until kindergarten. The following steps constitute the chain.



Primano was initially a 5-year pilot project (2007-12). An evaluation has been conducted and the project has now been adapted and extended as a regular offer by the city. The pilot project has been financed by private foundations. As a regular offer, the programme will be financed by the city from 2013. We will now detail the three elements of *primano*: home visits, educative modules and playgroups, and the district coordination office. Our description is mostly based on interviews and on documents such as the “pre-school education concept *primano* - regular offer from 2013”⁴.

2.1.1. Internal organisation and modes of working

PART 1: HOME VISITS. *schritt:weise*⁵ is the result of the implementation in Bern of the Dutch programme *Opstapje*. The association *a:primo* bought a licence from the Netherlands Youth Institute. The licence includes the right to implement the concept as well as working papers and user instructions. *a:primo* has a contract with the city of Bern and is in charge of the coordination, the training of personal and the production of information and play material. Professionals are involved as coordinators and non-professionals are hired for home visits. Workers in charge of home visits are from the neighbourhood and have no schooling in pedagogy. Instead, these persons should be experienced mothers themselves.

Two periods constitute the 18-month home-visit programme. During 9 months, the family receives 30 visits of 30 minutes and participates in ten 2-hour group meetings. During the next 9 months, ten visits of 30 minutes each and fifteen group-meetings are scheduled. During home visits, parents are introduced to educative play and activities for children. Play material is brought by the visitor. In addition to the visits, group meetings aim to discuss in more depth issues of education and development, as well as answering parents' questions. After 18 months, as a continuation of the support, children should join a playgroup or a crèche, and even a “mother and child” German class, if necessary. The pilot phase addressed 40 families; this number has doubled since 2013. After Bern, other cities implemented the programme: Winterthur, Basel, St Gallen, Solothurn, Grenchen, etc. In the canton of Bern, other communes followed the capital. One of them (Ostermundigen) even added the programme to the ordinary budget.

PART 2: EDUCATIVE MODULES AND PLAYGROUPS. Playgroups are seen as a complement to child care. They are meant to offer quality educative work. Quality should be achieved through sufficiently trained group managers and through a minimal participation of two half-days (2.5 hours) per week. Participation is not free but means-tested subventions are supposed

³ Bern has the particularity to gather in the same department health, education and welfare.

⁴http://www.primano.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/BSS_GSD_Konzept_primano_ab2013_web.pdf

⁵The name of the programme, *Schrittweise*, means “gradually” or “step by step”.

to make it accessible to everyone. The means test is based on the subventions parents receive from the canton for health care. According to the amount of the subventions decided by the canton - which is based on the fiscal declaration - parents pay between 0.80 euros and 6.50 euros per hour (with no subventions). Parents receive subventions for two half-days (2×2.5h). Only quality-tested playgroups can claim for subventions. They are organised in an association that holds an up-to-date list and offers information to inform parents in search of a place. The *primano* district coordination office links playgroups to the other existing pre-school education offers. It also helps parents during admission and subventions procedures. Playgroups also target parents interested in educative coaching.

PART 3: DISTRICT COORDINATION. A coordination point is located in every participating district. Its role is to coordinate the work of all stakeholders, to provide information and to help with admission procedures. The programme takes place in the neighbourhood of targeted families, and if possible, in the same place as other activities, such as child-care facilities, parental counselling or in a neighbourhood house. The idea is to gain visibility and to build trust with the potential users.

One problem is access to target groups. Home-visiting personnel experienced some mistrust toward the State. Hiring non-professional people, eventually living in the same neighbourhood and speaking the same mother tongue does not completely reduce the mistrust. Another issue is related to residence status. Some families move frequently, others have no permanent residence authorisation and will one day be asked or forced to leave Switzerland. This uncertainty does not favour participation in such programmes.

The programme is justified by two types of argumentations. The first emphasises two values: equality of opportunities and distributive justice. Children do not have the same conditions and opportunities at the start of their life. It becomes visible and public as soon as they enter school. The State has the role of reducing these differences and ensuring a good start. It seems to be a well-accepted role of the State: it is legitimate to ensure equality of opportunities (but not equality of outcomes).⁶ The second argument is related to a social investment perspective and is two-sided. On the one hand, social investment aims to reduce inequalities and break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Equality of opportunities is a goal, but one expects some outcomes in terms of reduction of inequalities. Social investment thus supports social cohesion.

On the other hand, some arguments insist on the efficiency of the method (rather than on its fairness). It is efficient in achieving its goals (reducing inequalities), but also financially, in the global budget. As social problems partly redound to the commune, the latter has an interest in preventing them from happening. *Primano* is thus presented as “A paying investment for the future”⁷. Efficiency arguments are based on reports of scientific studies. An intermediate evaluation run by the Psychology Department of the University of Bern argues that children do produce better school performance when they have attended pre-school education. Documents and interviews recount studies showing that, depending on the length of the period studied, investments in pre-school education are multiplied by 2.5 to 16⁸ for the most optimistic previsions.

⁶Cf. the WP4 report on Bern.

⁷“Frühförderungskonzept Primano - Regelangebot Ab 2013.” Stadt Bern, July 2012.

⁸Fritschi, T. & Oesch T., *Volkswirtschaftlicher Nutzen Von Frühkindlicher Bildung in Deutschland*, Büro Bass, 2008.

Fritschi, T, Strub S., & Stutz H., *Volkswirtschaftlicher Nutzen Von Kindertageseinrichtungen in Der Region Bern*, Büro Bass, 2007.

Knudsen, E. I., Heckman, J.J., Cameron, J. L., & Shonkoff, J.P., *Economic, Neurobiological and Behavioral Perspectives on Building America's Future Workforce*, Working Paper. National Bureau of Economic Research, June 2006.

2.1.2. Target groups

In the regular offer of 2013, the number of target areas is extended compared to the pilot project. Target areas are districts with high unemployment and social-assistance rates, with a median income lower than average, and with a high proportion of migrants. Target groups are usually addressed as “disadvantaged families”. *Primano* addresses children and parents in situations of poverty or close to the limit. Other factors are situations of unemployment or of a precarious job (working poor), parents with little formal education, lone-parent families, difficult migration situations (unstable resident status), trauma from the country of origin, difficulties with the local language, little knowledge about offers addressing children and families. House visits also occur in families with little contact with other families, little support from friends and family and little access to information. The need strengthens if these families live in small apartments and in children-unfriendly areas (with no playgrounds, lots of traffic). Poverty here is considered as a multidimensional concept.

2.1.3. Conclusion

Two innovative aspects of the project should be highlighted. The first is the strong emphasis on accessibility. “No access, no effect” says the creators of *primano*. Non-take-up of public services is an issue for the contemporary welfare state (Hernanz *et al.* 2004). Recommendations to prevent non-take-up often state the importance of evaluation of the needs and of the policies efficiency. Bern pre-school education programme arose from a need observed by school nurses. Regular evaluations of the needs and of the efficiency of the programme are led by independent stakeholders. However, being close to the needs and being efficient is not enough to prevent non-take-up. Problems of lack of information, administrative complexity, mistrust, shame, and financial obstacles have to be tackled. Statistics of the school nursery would show that 40 per cent of families with a difficult socio-economic situation do not have or do not find information on pre-school offers in Bern. Issues of trust are pointed out, particularly regarding migrant families. *Primano* developers count on coordination. Coordination centres are distributed in the targeted districts and, if possible, are combined with other offers from places already visited by the target groups. These centres should inform, orientate, and build with the population a relationship based on trust. Proximity is also reinforced by hiring mothers with no formal training for home visits. Because it recognises individual differences in the ability to convert the same resources into valuable activities, this concern over accessibility is close to Sen's capabilities approach. This is thus an innovative aspect of *primano*.

The second aspect is related to the child-centred-ness of *primano* as a policy. Switzerland is rather conservative on children-oriented policies. Recent votes on child care and on making school compulsory for 4-year-olds showed that a considerable part of the population consider such measures an attempt to bring children under the control of the state. Even if this stance is less likely to appear in big cities, pre-school education is somehow innovative in Switzerland. Precautions have been taken; participation is voluntary and paying (in some cases the contribution in symbolic) and *primano* is run in the field not by “state agents” but by “mothers from the neighbourhood”. The project is a kind of public-private partnership as it has been developed by the licence holder, the private association *a:primo*. *Primano* is a path-breaking measure in a welfare system where the State should not intervene in the private sphere. It is also recognises that children are both a private and a public responsibility. This recognition can be linked to social

Masse, L. N. & Barnett, W.S., *A Benefit Cost Analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention*. New Brunswick NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), 2002.

Schweinhart, L. J., Barnes, H. V., & Weikart, D. P., *Significant Benefits: The High-Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*, High/Scope Press, 1993.

Schweinhart, L. J., Barnett, W. S. & Belfield C. R., *Lifetime Effects: The High-Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40*, High/Scope Press, 2005.

investment perspectives as children are suddenly seen as potential targets of social policies.

However, outside of the Swiss context, pre-school education programmes have existed for a long time in countries all across the world. One of the first was launched in 1964 in the USA under the name “Head start”. This federal programme was part of a “war on poverty” (Currie and Thomas 1993). A summer school was meant to prepare children of low-income families to start kindergarten. In 1969, Israel implemented a programme called the Home Instruction Programme for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) (Baker *et al.* 1999). This project was then exported to the USA and Australia - among other countries - where it is now widely spread. In Holland, a pre-school education programme named Opstapje was born in the 1990s and was exported to Germany in the early 2000s. In 1999, Tony Blair’s New Labour launched a compensatory education programme under the name “SureStart”. This programme has been exported in other European countries, such as Germany. Finally, a well-known example is the successful programme “Triple P” for Positive Parenting Programme. It was developed in Australia 30 years ago (Sanders 2008) and now exist in twenty-five countries, among which Switzerland is one. Why did compensatory education take so long to be developed in Switzerland? One reason could be that the need was not felt. Poverty is not (and has never been since the Glorious Thirties) considered as a central issue in Switzerland. NGOs, such as Caritas, regularly fight to publicise the fact that poverty does exist in Switzerland. Beside that, public education is a Swiss pride and is considered as egalitarian, as there are no “good” schools and no “bad” schools. A second reason is that children of pre-school age and the family, in general, are largely considered a private responsibility.⁹ Switzerland’s largest political party regularly condemns the attempts of the left to bring children under State control and their egalitarian tendencies.¹⁰

2.2. Integration guidelines

In the second half of the 1990s, Swiss cities started taking charge of the challenges of migrant integration. Until then, right populist parties were alone on this ground. Schönenberger and D’Amato 2009 attribute this change first to the growing heterogenisation and fragmentation of the social and urban structure, and to the arrival of new lifestyles (of nationals as well as of migrants). The specific urban context allowed the cities to take over this theme, which was ignored by the Confederation and the Cantons. Debates rose in the cities. One of the problems was the implementation of the ageing Foreigners Law (of 1931). It had become necessary to adapt the policies to the context and to more actual concerns. However, the authorities of the different levels barely cooperated, as they had different understandings of the procedures.

Establishing guidelines was thought of as a way to define specific needs. In 1999, after years of discussion, Bern was one of the first Swiss cities to establish guidelines for the integration of migrants. It resulted in a document that was heavily publicised. It is not a law, but recommendations were addressed to everyone, particularly to institutional stakeholders. It is mandatory for public stakeholders - as a work instruction - but has the status of a recommendation regarding private stakeholders. The document is also meant to inform the population about the position and aims of the city council regarding integration. The project is coordinated by a competence centre for integration.

2.2.1. Internal organisation and modes of working

The city council first demanded a study about facts and potential issues linked to the integration of migrants. The report of the University of Bern highlighted the need for a

⁹A example, paid maternity leave only existed from 2004, 60 years after it was planned in an constitutional article. Every project had been rejected in popular vote (in 1974, 1984, 1987 and 1999).

¹⁰“Enfants étatisés? Non à l’article sur la famille”, UDC Suisse, 2013.

coordinated and needs-related integration policy. A working group dedicated to the redaction of the guidelines gathered representatives of the foreigners' police of Bern, of diverse departments such as welfare, education, equality between men and women, of the Federal Foreigners' Commission, together with an anthropologist. Some non-governmental organisations were represented, among other Caritas (charity), the information point for foreigners and the Forum for migrants. It is noteworthy that representatives of migrant populations among others were not invited.

The guidelines set milestones. They include ten principles that should constitute a new understanding of integration in political discourses. It should "open the way" to the implementation of lasting integration measures¹¹. As an introduction, the executive councillor of the time¹² underlined the importance of the contributions made by migrants to Switzerland. Following her, although some were among the most successful people of the country, a disproportionately high number have low paying jobs or are unemployed. This fact would be the sign of an economic, social and cultural disintegration that threatened Bern's prosperity. Schönenberger and D'Amato (2009) stated that although there has never been an active integration policy in Switzerland, the "declining" economic situation intensified the challenges faced by migrants.

The situation kept changing in the 10 years following the publication of the first guidelines. A new foreigners' law was voted in 2006 in a climate of heavy debates on the migrant population. The right Populist Party SVP presented several xenophobic popular initiatives. In the same years, bilateral agreements were signed with the EU. The Bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) allows European workers to freely choose their country of employment. Furthermore, with a decade of experience with the first guidelines, an adaptation of the guidelines was required: they had to be modernised.

In 2009, the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population study was asked by the Competence Centre for Integration to write a report on the question.¹³ It included an overview about the actual debates and challenges, possible perspectives and propositions. In addition, new hearings were organised, this time with representatives of the migrant population. As a civil servant explained, "We invited a lot of people for a day of discussion. They could make proposals, ask questions. It would have been unimaginable to come with these guidelines and say 'here you have got guidelines you have to implement.'"¹⁴ The new document was approved in 2010.¹⁵

The document first details the five guidelines. The sentences below are detailed in three or four sub-points.

- The city of Bern recognises diversity and difference as a strength of our society.
- The city of Bern supports the potential of migrants.
- The city of Bern commits itself in the fight against discrimination.
- The city of Bern supports equality of opportunities and participation of migrants.

¹¹Claudia Omar-Amberg, preface to "Leitbild zur Integrationspolitik der Stadt Bern", Stadt Bern, 1999.

¹²The social-democrat Claudia Omar-Amberg, in charge of the Department of education, health and welfare.

¹³Schönenberger, Silvia, and Gianni D'Amato. *Das Integrationsleitbild Der Stadt Bern Neu Überdacht*. Forum suisse pour l'étude des migrations et de la population, 2009.

¹⁴Interview 19 with a Public administrator in the field of integration.

¹⁵ "Leitbild Zur Integrationspolitik Der Stadt Bern 2010." 2010. Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern.

More specifically, the aims are detailed in several fields of action such as training and education, labour market, hobbies, culture and sport, health, civic and social participation, information and living area. Finally, the list documented the involved stakeholders and their specific role in the implementation of the guidelines. However, the most important novelty of 2010 is list of tangible measures.

A catalogue of 37 measures planned for 2011 and 2012 should transpose the ideas into reality. The Competence Centre does not provide the measures itself, but instead coordinates and informs. The city finances them in the global city budget. Some measures address the migrant population (financial support for German courses for example), while others address workers in contact with migrants (trainings in diversity management for example).

2.2.2. Target groups

The guidelines have many goals and so they have many different users. Three main roles and their respective tasks and users were identified. First, the guidelines have an instructional role. For the users - administration offices, as well as for social-partners, associations (sport, for example), institutions of community work or religious communities - the guidelines should influence everyday work. Integration is seen as a challenge concerning practically every stakeholder and institution.

Secondly, the guidelines have a very practice oriented role as they serve as a basis for tangible measures. The idea is that action needs a consensus on the aims and on the definition of concepts. The document says explicitly what is often implicit. It states in black and white that the city of Bern wants to promote integration, and specify what exactly is meant with integration, why it is important, and who is responsible for it. As accomplishing the aims needs the coordinated work of many stakeholders, clarifying all these aspects is crucial.

The third role is less explicit and is politic and strategic. As a civil servant said, "The guidelines were a political project. The idea was to show that they handled it [integration]".¹⁶ The guidelines are used as a political tool, to legitimate measures of integration. Integration is a hot topic for debate. As Vogel stated in another Swiss city, establishing guidelines on this topic puts an end to endless discussions in the city council (Vogel 2006). Thus, it can be seen as a way of imposing a political programme. As everybody agreed on the principle of promoting integration, the left managed to establish a model that bound the principle to the measures, in order to make them harder to contest.

2.2.3. Conclusion: collectively defining integration

Even if concepts vary on how to balance rights and duties or how to share responsibilities between migrants and settled citizens,¹⁷ all political forces agree on a concept of integration as a reciprocal duty, based on the principle of "encouraging and demanding"¹⁸. Migrants are expected to exercise their own responsibility and provide an active contribution to their integration, but also the settled population has to be open and tolerant, and offer a support to the integration process.¹⁹

A condition of appearance and success of such a project on a such controversial theme is a certain political consensus. "The guidelines have to be endorsed by parliament. Some

¹⁶Interview 18 with a civil servant in the field of integration.

¹⁷"Vernehmlassung Zum Gesetz Über Die Integration Der Ausländischen Bevölkerung." Schweizerische Volkspartei Kanton Bern, 7 September 2010.

¹⁸The german expression is "Fördern und fordern".

¹⁹"Leitbild Zur Integrationspolitik Der Stadt Bern 2010." Gemeinderat der Stadt Bern, 7 May 2010.

small points were disputed, but in general, everybody is in favour of integration. There is neither discussion on the need to intervene, nor on the definition of integration. It is now clear that we do not speak of assimilation. Integration can only be reciprocal.”²⁰

The consensus is based on a rather liberal conception of integration, seen as a reciprocal and never-ending process. However, on the national level, a much more conservative idea of integration prevails. The recent tightening of the conditions required to obtain Swiss citizenship is a clear example. Naturalisation is the end point of the integration process, which requires, for many politicians, assimilation. A condition for success of such guidelines is thus the low level of application. Such a consensus can hardly exist at a higher level than the one of the city.

The concept of integration and the advancement of it are also innovative. Similar to social cohesion, integration cannot only rely on the State and its administrative agencies. In addition, it cannot be reached through big projects or campaigns, or on quotas and compulsory measures heading toward civil society. Inclusion, equality of opportunities and non-discrimination (also) takes place everywhere and every day. Like a civil servant explained, “People often think that there is no will to implement these guidelines. What we see is a lot of motivation and perhaps a lack of know-how. People expect big projects. But integration is also a matter of small things we do not necessarily see.”²¹

The way of discussing, negotiating and finally writing down guidelines is an innovative way of building social policies. It supports participation and acceptance through consultation and involvement of stakeholders. It acknowledges the limits of enforceable rules in a field such as integration. Definitions and responsibilities first have to be collectively defined and endorsed. The coordinating and informing role of the Competence Centre illustrates the innovative (in this context) role of the State as an encouraging and enabling stakeholder. However, here lies the limit of this way of governing. The city can somehow enforce its guidelines in its own administration and institutions. However, there is no legal basis to enforce them in associations and private companies. Even if there is no need to enforce it (it is not the idea), the implementation of the guidelines is highly dependent on the cooperation of third parties.

Another limit is related to the competences attributed to the Confederation. As an example, a journalist explains that if a migrant comes with an academic degree that is not recognised by Swiss authorities, the city has no leeway to offer him better job opportunities. The same problem weighs upon the naturalisation process and the requirements. If Bern - its government and its population - predominantly think that naturalisation can be a tool to support integration, the city has no authority to reduce the requirements of the procedure; those are defined by the Confederation and at a national level. Naturalisation is mostly seen as the reward for “completed” integration.

2.3. Professional integration and education for young mothers

The project for young mothers is a pilot project aiming to improve the employability of women between 16 and 25 years with young children, no professional training and dependent on social assistance. Although it is a typical case of a management programme aiming to motivate, this project has some innovative features. These are first linked to a new - with respect to the context - social investment perspective. Second, innovation is evident in the organisation and the implementation of the programme. Let us look first at the context in which this project appeared.

²⁰Interview 18 with a civil servant in the field of integration.

²¹Ibid.

2.3.1. Internal organisation and modes of working

In 2001, the city council, with its left majority, decided that unemployment should be tackled by the city (fight against unemployment is primarily a cantonal responsibility). In 2004, a concept was implemented in collaboration with an association named “Jobs instead of assistance” (*Arbeit statt Fürsorge*). As a result, the Competence Centre for Labour (*Kompetenzzentrum Arbeit*) was created, which started its activities in 2005. The Competence Centre provides professional and social integration. One of its main focuses is the struggle against youth unemployment. It collaborates with the canton and encourages inter-institutional collaboration;²² collaboration is particularly close with the social services.

Over the last few years, a growing proportion of young beneficiaries that become mothers between the age of 16 and 25 years was noted. They identified motherhood (particularly successive motherhoods) as a risk as some of the participants never completed any professional training. These women are seen as isolated from the labour market by their parental duties, resulting in a lifetime dependency on social assistance. The Competence Centre for Labour consequently developed a pilot project addressing this particular group.

Bern’s basic strategy against unemployment consists of four points. The first is to provide low threshold offers. The underlying idea is that people differ greatly in their capabilities, in other words their ability to convert opportunities into positive outcomes. Education institutions and the labour market would be too demanding for some people who can neither complete professional training nor step into the working world. Welfare programmes against unemployment should note the capabilities and improve accessibility to education and jobs. This perspective is based on an individual and structural explanation of unemployment. The labour market is very demanding, and some people, no matter how they try, cannot meet these expectations.

A second point is the principle of “supporting and demanding” (*fordern und fördern*). It is close to Giddens and New Labour’s “no rights without responsibilities” (Giddens 1998). Support depends on cooperation. The collaboration with social services establishes a system of carrot and stick. Non-cooperating beneficiaries receive deductions of their allowances. Another example is the implementation of “test jobs”. If civil servants have doubts regarding the motivation of social assistance beneficiaries to get a job, the latter are hired as road-mender, for example, where their “real” motivation to work can be tested. If they do not come to work or do not cooperate, allowances can be cut. Those are typical features of activation policies of an “enabling state” (Gilbert and Gilbert 1989) that requires cooperating citizens.

The third point is the orientation toward empowerment and employability. The aim of the Competence Centre is to improve people’s capacities and employability, including skills and knowledge, but also attitudes and behaviours. Some programmes focus on getting people (or maintaining them) used to the working world. The part-wage jobs and the “social firms” are examples.

The fourth and last point is multidisciplinary work and partnerships. Inter-institutional collaboration should bring together efforts of the different public stakeholders in welfare, amongst others, the social insurances and social services. It should also define the responsibilities and coordinate actions of cantonal and communal stakeholders. Furthermore, public-private partnerships (PPP) are encouraged. Networking is seen as essential as there is a consensus over the fact that the State alone cannot tackle unemployment.

²² Inter-institutional collaboration is a concept promoted by the Confederation to coordinate the work of institutions (sometimes in different fields or different territorial level). www.iiz.ch

These guidelines in the fight against unemployment are part of a whole workfare programme. It is a central point of Bern welfare strategy as a job is seen - in the discourses and the documents - as the best way to ensure social integration and avoid dependency on social assistance. Forcing beneficiaries to work is seen at the same time as a tool to promote professional - and consequently social - integration and as a tool to fight against welfare fraud (Cattacin *et al.* 2002). It also sorts the willing from the unwilling (or undeserving) welfare beneficiaries.

This workfare approach is mixed with a social investment perspective: “measures are not free, but the money is well spent. The city of Bern invests for the future, in order to avoid more ‘fixing’ costs”,²³ says the director of the welfare, education and health department. As we will see, the investment component is the main justification brought to convince of the project necessity and the legitimacy. It is neither justified by the extent of the need, nor because it is a public problem,²⁴ but because it is economically efficient. Therefore, the project is cheap and should, at the same time, enable savings.

2.3.2. Target group

The Competence Centre for Labour has three target groups: (1) people dealing with lack of training, (2) unemployed people and (3) people facing long-term unemployment. The project for young mothers takes place in the first field. The cause of employment is here supposedly the lack of training and the abandonment of any professional project in order to concentrate (willingly or by necessity) on parental duties.

The project addresses mothers between 16 and 25 years old, who meet the social assistance criteria and with no professional training. Following social services, around seventy people actually (in March 2013) meet these criteria in Bern. For now, ten women are involved in the programme.²⁵ They are volunteers and should be involved for the long-term until they reach their aim. Objectives are set considering their double role, mother and worker. Their personal situation must allow them to dedicate themselves to a professional activity. Even if it is no criterion, participants often are lone mothers (nine out ten²⁶). Thus, the first task will often be to find day-care for their children.

In a case management approach, the project provides tailored programmes seeking to improve participants’ capabilities and employability. The outcome should be either a job or training. The programme is flexible in terms of duration. Some attend a full-time programme, others just come for one day per week. It mostly depends on the arrangement regarding child care. As it is very individual, women can start at any time of the year. The programme includes education, coaching and work modules. Coordination is central. Participants have the possibility to develop their work experience and professional perspectives, as well as defining their role as a mother. The aim is to show that there is an alternative to potential isolation - or at least distancing from the labour market - caused by motherhood.

The programme mainly consists of a coordinator in charge of defining the needs of the participants and of coordinating the different parts of the defined programme in several external institutions. Some offers are provided by the Competence Centre, but others are

²³ “Diese Massnahmen sind nicht gratis zu haben. Das notwendige Geld ist aber gut angelegt. Die Stadt Bern investiert damit in die Zukunft und vermeidet gesellschaftliche „Reparaturkosten“. Mittel- und langfristig führen diese Investitionen zu Minderausgaben”. Edith Olibet, “Strategien und Massnahmen. Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Integration in der Stadt Bern 2010-2013”, Stadt Bern, 2010.

²⁴ Juvenile delinquency, for example, is a public problem in the sense that people (and the media) worry about it (and often overstate its extent).

²⁵ Hearing “Projekt Junge Mütter”, Bern, 7 March 2013.

²⁶ Ibid.

outsourced. Offers can be divided in three fields. The first is education. A teacher provides individual support to fill the gap in school knowledge (in German or mathematics, depending on the needs). The second is coaching. Individual advice is provided, as well as parental advice (on how to raise children and to manage the everyday life with children, or health issues), and advice on job applications (how to write a résumé, how to manage a job interview). The third field is related to work. Participants are taught the reality of the labour market, for example, “Punctuality is one of the simple but essential skills we teach here,” a civil servant stated. Participants can take part in workshops (of the Motivation Semester²⁷) or internships (in the regular labour market). A task of the coordinator of the project is to develop a network of companies that could potentially hire participants.

2.3.3. Conclusion

The first innovative aspect is the social investment perspective added to a welfare approach. The matter is not whether or not social assistance must be earned, it is not about moralising and disciplining unemployed people. The project is about saving money. Similar to *Primano*, the project for young mothers aims to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Mothers of participants often are, or were, dependent on social assistance themselves.²⁸ There is a high risk that these young mothers spend their entire lives receiving allowances. Furthermore, it would be quite likely that their children would follow this path.

In presentations and assessments about the project, the most prominent argument is a costs-benefits analysis. The evaluation led after the pilot-phase use of a tool named Social Return On Investment (SROI²⁹) to estimate the potential financial benefits of the project.³⁰ The assessments consists of two levels: profitability (or cost-effectiveness, *Rentabilität* in German) and efficiency (*Wirkung*). As we argued in the WP4 report, this investment perspective based on a cost-benefits analysis leads to a broad consensus between the two leading coalitions (the more social-democratic one and the more liberal one).

The second innovative aspect resides in the concept of the project. It is a very flexible structure. The pilot-phase lasted for 18 months at a cost of 170,000 euros. The project uses existing infrastructures only (infrastructures of the Competence Centre, of the Motivation Semester, of the Youth Department, the parental advising, etc.). According to interviewed civil servants, a flexible structure and low costs are conditions for success for such pilot projects. Of course, not having its own premises and employees requires a high degree of cooperation from all involved partners. Yet, as it has been pointed out, obstacles to cooperation in a welfare system are numerous (Demailly and Verdière 1999). Conflict regarding power, territories, budget, recognition and expertise are likely to restrain cooperation. In our case, all stakeholders have to understand and support the project, as well as see their own interest in participating. Regular hearings were organised with partners and stakeholders, from the conception phase to the evaluation phase.

However, success not only depends on partners, but also on the city council, which has to endorse the concept and the strategy against unemployment. Scientific evaluation was often mentioned in interviews as a key element of acceptance in the political field. The risk and efficacy of the measure have to be well documented. For example, the presentation document states that having basic training reduces the risk of being

²⁷Motivation Semester (SeMo) is a programme for unemployed teenagers and young adults with no completed professional training. <http://www.ch-semo.ch>

²⁸Hearing “Projekt Junge Mütter”, Bern, 7 March 2013.

²⁹Social Return on Investment is an analytic tool created for measuring and accounting a broad concept of value. It estimates social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. See (Scholten 2006).

³⁰“Evaluationsbericht zum Angebot für Sozialhilfe beziehende, ausbildungslose junge Mütter”, Hochschule Luzern Soziale Arbeit, January 2013.

unemployed by a factor of three and the risk of being poor by a factor of 2.5 (based on Strahm 2010). The assessment report undertaken by an academic institution provides “evidence” of efficacy. It highlights the effects of the measure on the participants as well as the effects on the global welfare budget. The estimated return on investment is certainly of primary concern for many politicians.

A last factor for the appearance and the success of such a project is an existing, similar project elsewhere. To sum up, it is good if it is innovative, but it is reassuring if it is not the first experience of this kind. Programmes for young unemployed mothers exist in Zürich and Luzern. Bern had the opportunity to learn from their experiences. It also helps to convince of the merits of the project. If it exists and works in Zürich, why not try it in Bern? In a hearing where assessments of the pilot-phase were presented, representatives of the cities of Zürich and Luzern were present, as well as other city representatives interested in implementing a similar project. If the “federal states as laboratories” idea existed, it is through this method sharing of ideas and information. Over the coming years, the project could appear in other cities, but it could also be scaled up at a regional level in Bern. A discussion is scheduled.

Some limitations of this innovation can be highlighted. First, the model of the working lone mother advocated as the only way out of poverty by the unemployment strategy can be critically addressed. Even with full-time child care, working full-time turns out to be impossible for the mother, for example if the work place is distant from home. Furthermore, participants’ chances to get a skilled and well paid job are thin. This means that these lone mothers, even following the Competence Centre programme, are condemned to become and probably stay working poor. Indeed, statistics show that lone parent families are highly exposed to a risk of poverty.³¹ In addition, with a high activity rate, the mother and her child spent less time together. This contradicts recommendations of educational programmes such as *primano*.

Another critical view could highlight that the changing role of women in society corresponds mainly to aspirations of women from higher social layers (Esping-Andersen 2009). The working mother as a model of emancipation and equality of men and women probably does not match the situation of every participant. For ethical and economical (demographic) reasons, the State should not spread (even unintentionally) the idea that having children only is for those who can afford it. A preoccupying fact has been mentioned by a manager of the programme: none of the participants had more children after the start of the programme.³²

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we will highlight some characteristics of the selected innovations. Then we will review some conditions and challenges for the appearance and success of innovations in Bern.

Characteristics of innovations in Bern:

For Chambon and his team, the State can have three roles regarding innovation. It can be a barrier to social innovation or be a facilitator for public debate, or play a regulatory role (Chambon *et al.* 1982). The case of Bern shows a fourth option: the State can create innovative ideas. Social innovation is often considered as a product of the third sector, but our case studies testify that the State itself can produce social innovations. What are the conditions for such a situation to arise? First, the selected innovations arose from administrative agencies enjoying both autonomy and support from the hierarchy (the

³¹“Les familles en Suisse: pauvreté et aide sociale”, Office fédéral de la statistique, Neuchâtel, 2013.

³²Hearing “Projekt Junge Mütter”, Bern, 7 March 2013.

Department of Welfare). Second, these agencies demonstrated an interest in cooperating with other stakeholders. The result is a wide network composed by stakeholders from different levels and different fields, public and private. The recurrent opposition (in Moolaert *et al.* 2010, for example) between state-led programmes and civil society social initiatives is not relevant in the case of Bern. The programme for young mothers, for example, was created by the State but its development and its operationalisation includes many private stakeholders. The case of Bern illustrates that innovation does not necessarily arise from an emancipatory logic and from a community dynamic.

An objection could be whether these so-called innovations are “real” innovations, as they are implemented by administrative agencies, which were inspired by already existing projects. It all depends on our definition of innovation. Since WILCO considers projects as innovative regarding a specific context, innovations can be a replication of already existing projects. We saw that the three projects (except maybe the guidelines where there is no evidence of replication even if some were to exist in other Swiss cities and in Germany) were inspired by experiences initiated elsewhere. A first point is that we - researchers - evaluate the innovative character of a project. Stakeholders themselves do not always consider the selected projects as innovative. For example, civil servants in charge of the development and the implementation of the guidelines for integration do not consider the guidelines themselves as innovative. In the focus group, participants agreed that innovation is mostly a buzzword (“Schlagwort”). This could be a reason why administrative agents do not insist on this aspect. As we have shown, other arguments than innovation are much more powerful and add more value.

One of these arguments is a global approach to social problems. Two innovations - Primano and the project for young mothers - particularly illustrate the tendency to build a “whole family approach” in social policies. Morris *et al.* (2008) and Clarke and Hughes (2010) emphasise the success of such approaches with the aim of “supporting families to help themselves” and to consider the importance of family, both as a source of support and as source of potential obstacles to social and integration processes.

A second argument adding value to social policy programmes is a combination of an investment perspective with a workfare approach. Our three innovations include such a combination. A key element for the investment perspective is the selection of the target of the policies. Investing in children appears obvious (Palier 2005), but what about grown-ups? The dominant discourse, in the administrative field at least, postulates that some people are cognitively and socially too weak for realistic professional integration. A worthy target group includes people likely to get back to work. Work is thus the focal point of our innovations. *Primano* aims to improve children’s learning and social skills, in order that in the future, they will be well trained and thus have less risk of being unemployed. The project for young mothers aims to improve beneficiaries’ employability. Last, but not least, the guidelines converge toward work as a tool for gaining financial independence and as a tool for social integration. In the preface to the 1999 edition, executive councillor Claudia Omar mainly talks about professional integration. She highlights the contribution of migrants who “build houses and roads”, are “top-managers” and “sports champions”. Then, her (only) argument about the need for action is that migrants are too often unemployed.

Some innovations in other cities studies highlighted by WILCO feature work integration in social enterprises (“work corporations” in Nijmegen and “Yalla Trappan” in Malmö, for example). In Bern, owing to a very favourable employment situation, work integration can be done in regular firms. Civil servants in charge of the project for young mothers stated that internships in regular firms were much more appreciated by beneficiaries than temporary jobs in the Competence Centre workshops. The above-mentioned “part-wage jobs” project follows the same path. There is a will to orientate work integration toward the “real” labour market. It is seen as more efficient (and bringing more recognition) and it does not imply the creation of new structures. Such practices can only occur with

cooperation between public and private stakeholders. Again, the innovation starts with a public initiative and then needs the support of the private sector.

Conditions for appearance and success of innovations:

The report on values (WP4) helps to understand the context in which these innovations appeared. The context analysis allows us to draw some hypothesis about the conditions that could favour the appearance of social innovations. Of course, as our innovations arose from the public sector, our hypotheses only concern the appearance of innovations in the public sector. Conditions of success are even harder to establish, as the “success” is hard to define. We will consider that the three innovations are successful, as they have lasted for several years and have not been contested.

First, we stated that in Bern, the leading coalitions have a consensus on core values and on a certain part of policy core. The centre-left coalition (“RGM”) and the right coalition (“Die Bürgerlichen”) agree on basic values. For example, the project for young mothers fits some values shared by both coalition: self-determination - individual responsibility and solidarity - equality of opportunities. The consensus also involves the role of the State. Both leading coalitions agree on an enabling State providing public support for private responsibility.

Second, as we have shown, there is no overly dominant regime. A configuration where a growth coalition and an integration coalition are overlapping facilitates innovations, as they are more likely to find converging interests. In the case of Bern, workfare and social investment are considered as win-win policies for both coalitions. They emphasise different arguments (or have a different arguments hierarchy), but they support the same policy.

Third, a basic condition for the appearance and success of an innovation is surely its cost. The lower it is, the bigger the chance of success. Almost all interviewed stakeholders mentioned the low cost (for the community at least) of their project as a key-element. In order words, good innovation would be an answer to the question “how to make better or more efficient use of existing (infra)structures?” The three innovations do not imply the creation of new big infrastructures. It was regarded as a factor of success (and acceptance).

Fourth, as Evers and Guillemard (2012) showed, the landscape of social policy is changing. The process of transition from one paradigm (the remains of post-war welfare state) to another (motivated social investment state) offers conditions for innovations. There is a shift between the existing structures that still correspond to a rather classic providing state and the values in which the population and the leaders believe. Innovations can be seen as adaptation of an old system to new values, new understandings of social-problems and new ideas of what solutions could be.

Fifth, the relative independence of a territorial unit in a federalist system probably favours innovations. In the introduction, we emphasised the idea of federalism as a laboratory to try new solutions at a reduced scale. As we argued, some values are widely shared in a city such as Bern, but heavily disputed in the rural areas. It is the case for child care and *primano*. The innovations could only appear in the territorial unit where they fit values and representations. Furthermore, it is (or it looks) less risky to try new ideas in a relatively small area. Small size also facilitates cooperation when needed. Stakeholders are more likely to know each other personally. As many interviewees said, the innovations studied were quite person-centred. Each person was supported and advocated by one or two people. One or two people cannot support and lead a project alone. A certain consensus between stakeholders (not only coalitions and not only leaders) is necessary. The innovation in the unemployment sector could only rise with an certain consensus over values and policy core, between the health, education and welfare department and the

legislative council, between the youth unit and the welfare unit, between the administration and stakeholders of the labour market, between the leaders and the base of all these organisations.

Interviews (undertaken between the 31 July and the 13 December 2012 in Bern)			
<i>Nb</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Position</i>
7	08.10.12	<i>Primano</i>	Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party, E.O.
2	11.09.12		Public administrator of youth department - city of Bern
11	16.10.12		Civil servant in the field of childhood, M.S.
18	13.12.12	Guidelines for integration	Public administrator in the field of integration, U.H.
19	13.12.12		Civil servant in the field of integration, M.H.
7	08.10.12		Executive council representative of the Social-Democratic Party, E.O.
3	21.09.12	Programme for young mothers	Public administrator of the employment department - city of Bern, J.F.
10	12.10.12		Civil servant in the field of unemployment, A.K.
14	05.11.12		Civil servant in the field of unemployment, Y.P.
20	02.11.12	Focus group in Bern	

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