

Integrated Public Service Co-Creation and Provision: Guidelines and Lessons Learnt

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Abstract

Integrated Public Services (IPS) enable the provision of personalised, citizen-friendly services through seamless collaboration of the involved public authorities. In this workshop we will present results from the H2020 inGov European Union funded project. We will start by presenting the Holistic Framework for IPS co-creation and provision which includes a number of practical recommendations for public authorities. We will discuss the framework with participants looking for constructive comments and ideas. We will then proceed with presenting experiences gained so far in different European settings and prompt participants to comment and discuss our approaches and findings.

Keywords

Integrated public services, Holistic framework

1. Introduction

Integrated Public Services (IPS) are generally defined as the result of bringing and fitting together governmental services in such a way that users can access them through a single seamless experience based on their needs. IPS are regarded as a critical prerequisite for achieving strategic goals that can benefit citizens, such as one-stop and no-stop government. A key aspect for IPS provision is interoperability: in Europe, the European Interoperability Framework (EIF), currently in its third version, is considered a cornerstone document for public sector organisations [1]. Even with EIF however a number of challenges still exist such as citizens' limited role, the lack of IPS governance models, the shortage of holistic guidelines for public authorities, and the limited exploitation of mobile technologies [2].

The aim of this workshop is to bring together researchers, policy makers and practitioners interested in IPS co-creation and delivery to discuss these challenges and possible solutions.

2. Context

2.1. The inGov Project

The inGov project aims to develop innovative ICT-supported governance models and tools in order to enable stakeholder collaboration in co-producing inclusive and accessible Integrated Public Services (IPS) thus increasing citizens' trust and satisfaction. The main objective of inGov is to contribute to the

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creation of more inclusive and participatory forms of governance and to improve the quality and relevance of public services by involving citizens in their design and delivery. It is carried out by a multidisciplinary consortium consisting of 12 partners from 9 countries, and piloted in Malta, Austria, Greece, and Croatia. The project results will feed into European Union (EU) policies to achieve alignment between policies, research, and practice.

2.2. Co-creation and Sustainability

One important aspect of inGov project is the role of co-creation in IPS provision. Co-creation is an innovative strategy that involves different stakeholders, including end-users, in any phase of the public services' design, delivery and evaluation in order to deliver better and more democratic public services [3][4]. Co-creation is gaining attention as it is seen as bringing in knowledge and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders that can help provide better (integrated) public services. It is relevant especially as the public sector is facing challenges regarding citizens' trust and satisfaction, and scarcity of resources. Our approach proposes a shift in paradigm where IPS users are not mere consumers of services but instead are key stakeholders actively participating in IPS provision. In the context of IPS provision, inGov proposes that co-creation can lead to more efficient and effective solutions by fostering inter-organizational coordination, overcoming issues regarding interoperability of technologies, allowing to find common goals, and enhancing a holistic overview especially in the co-design stage [5][6].

In addition, inGov project is equally interested in the sustainability of its results. Ensuring sustainable and long-term co-creation processes and outcomes require stakeholder involvement, although such participation is complex, particularly when using digital tools and ICTs [7]. Several factors influence the sustainability of co-creation processes and outcomes, in particular the organizational culture, learning and attitude to innovation and technology. Capacity building is important in order to develop an innovation culture amongst key stakeholders, to facilitate knowledge sharing and to dispel myths about the co-creation process [8].

3. IPS Guidelines and lessons learnt

One of the main objectives of the inGov project is the development and deployment of an IPS holistic framework that will support IPS co-creation and governance. The holistic framework is built along the three phases of implementation (design, delivery and evaluation) and intends to connect IPS governance structures, IPS agreements, stakeholders' engagement methods, converging into an IPS agile roadmap.

The IPS holistic framework was created upon solid theoretical bases and practical experience (derived from the revision of European IPS best practices and inGov's pilots) and includes a set of recommendations, a set of KPI and an Agile roadmap for IPS co-creation.

The co-creation approach as well as the IPS holistic framework have already been piloted and evaluated in four countries, namely Malta, Croatia, Greece and Austria, to modernize and digitize public services. Specifically, the Maltese pilot aims at modernizing the digital common family household public service, the Croatian pilot aims at creating an AI-driven mobile virtual assistant for the citizens of the City of Bjelovar, the Greek pilot aims at digitalizing the issuing procedure of the disabled citizens discount cards for public transportation in the Region of Thessaly and the Austrian pilot aims at digitalizing the tourism overnight stay tax collection in Lower Austria. The piloting activities include 30 dedicated co-creation workshops with various stakeholders in order to collect valuable information for the IPS development and feedback for the project. The experiences gained so far highlight the strength and benefits of the project but also the challenges that remain to be addressed.

4. Workshop Outline

We will start this workshop by briefly introducing inGov project and proceed by presenting the holistic framework for IPS co-creation and provision. The holistic framework includes aspects, layers and a number of practical recommendations for public authorities. We will spend some time discussing

with participants the framework looking for their ideas and constructive comments. After that, we will continue with presenting experiences gained within the project from applying the guidelines in four different European countries and discuss sustainability challenges. Consequently, we will prompt participants to provide us with comments and discuss our approaches and findings based on their own viewpoints and experiences.

5. Acknowledgements

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