

Stimulation of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISES) and
Combatting Social Exclusion at the Local Level

Betreft
GSEF 2016 Abstract Workshop

Datum
September 8th 2016

Stimulation of Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISES) and Combatting Social Exclusion at the Local Level

In this workshop we presented a model of governance on the public-private collaboration which resulted in a growing sector of WISES in Amsterdam. This workshop was designed by Corine van de Burgt, De Omslag in collaboration with Nienke Boesveldt, former representative of the City Council of Amsterdam, now researcher at University Utrecht.

As in many other European countries the Dutch national government has made large cuts in the public expenditure during the last years. At the same time the national government has decentralized many public tasks from the national to the local level. Now the local government is responsible for the social care and participation of people with mental, psychiatric or physical disabilities and those who suffer from homelessness and/or addictions. The local government has to support this task with at least 25 % less budget and the support for the social participation of these groups is under severe pressure.

At the same time we saw the development of a new private sector with the Work Integration Social Enterprises. From 2012 we have set up lobbying activities to the local government to become aware of the opportunities WISES offer. They work on the social inclusion and participation and earn an important part of their income from the market. Some still get money from social programs of the city (for daytime activities) but are successful in meeting the decrease of the public contribution.

From 2013 tot early 2015 the local government has been working on the development of a working plan to stimulate WISES in Amsterdam. Through the collaboration by means of funding a network and the support activities by an NGO, the local authorities and De Omslag created a greater awareness of the potential of WISES in Amsterdam.

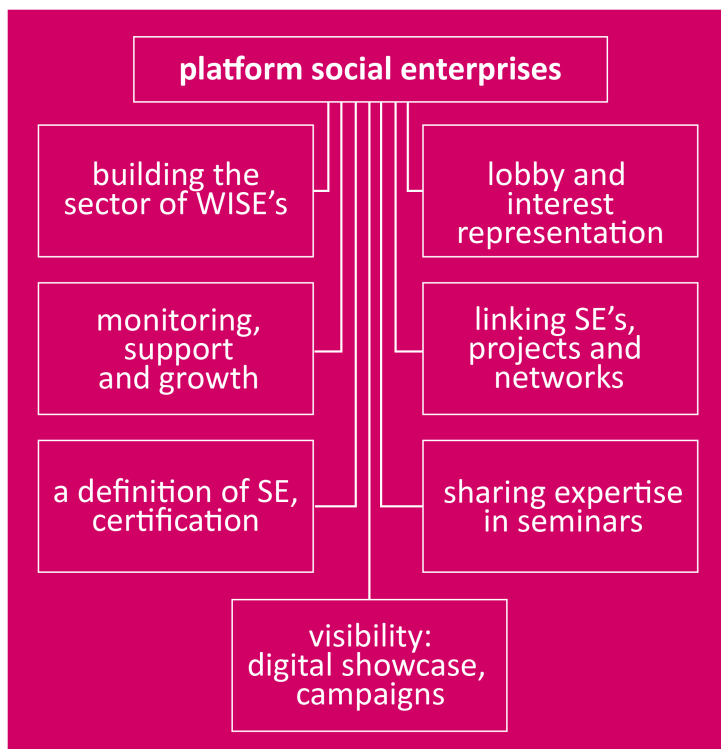
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We have presented how these actions and reactions in the collaboration between local authorities and ngo's and network organizations lead to positive outcomes, but also the risk of isomorphism (a progressive loss of inner characteristics under the pressure of legal frameworks or professional norms coming from the for-profit private or public sector).



In the Netherlands the Amsterdam platform is the first local Platform of WISES. We are collaborating with partners in other European member states by the European network ENSIE.

As a founder of the local platform on social firms network organization De Omslag has been active in supporting this this development. For example by establishing a digital window (www.socialezaken.info) in which the WISES present themselves with their goods and services to the public, to partner companies and to the local government. And we have set up change management support for companies and projects to improve their commercial strategies

We presented the most recent figures during the workshop. In Amsterdam we notice that the social sector is growing (from 20 WISES by the end of 2012, up to about 60 by mid 2015). Also, and more importantly the number of people working at WISES is growing.

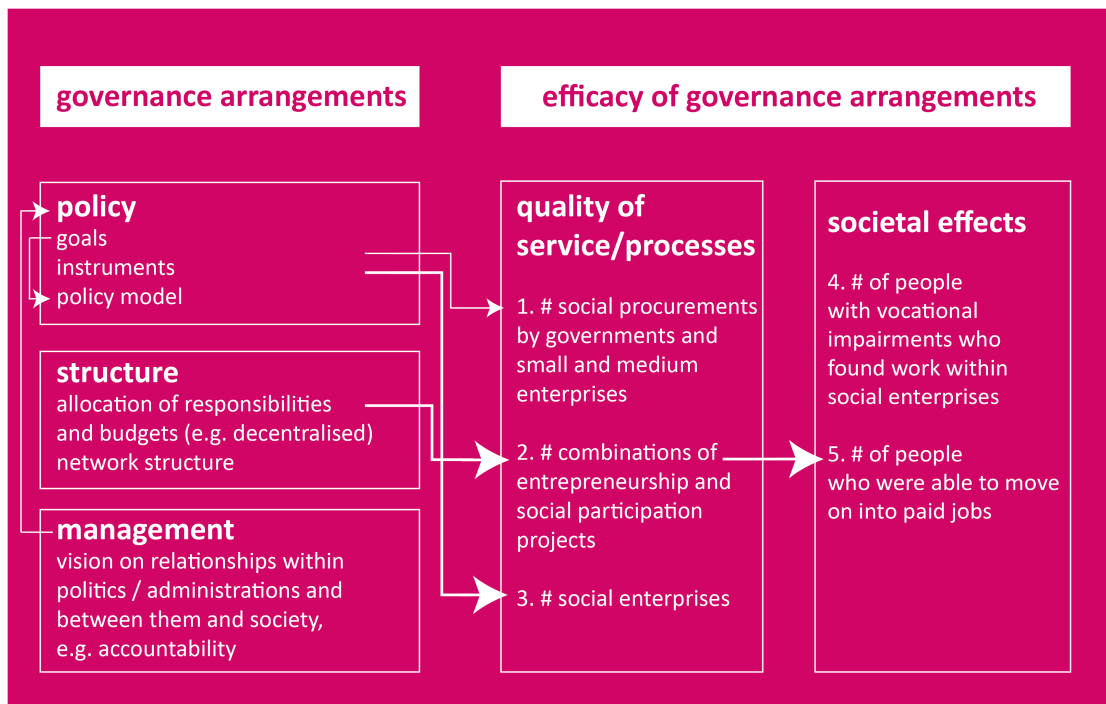
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In 2015 more than 3.000 people (with disabilities, large distance to the labour market) were working at WISES (in paid jobs, as volunteers, and in subsidized daytime activities) and this number is still growing.



We have presented how these actions and reactions in the collaboration between local authorities and ngo's and network organizations were fruitful, although there are risks of isomorphism especially when old structures, rules- and regulations get in the way.