

Panel 6:

Citizens' Coproduction of Public Services

Over the last years we experience a revival of research addressing the role of citizens in the development and production of public services (e.g. Pestoff et al 2012). Much of this research illustrates that it is not suitable to make a rigid distinction between those that 'create' and those that 'consume' a service, since clients (citizens) contribute in different stages of public service provision. Think for example about citizens that co-design a service, citizens that participate in planning, citizens that participate in fundraising, citizens as members of a public funded school board or as members of a neighborhood watch team. This small selection of examples demonstrates that there is a wide variety of ways to contribute to the provision of public services.

Since co-production is currently seen as being a cure for all ills, it is crucial to bundle theoretic and empiric knowledge about active citizenship, co-governance and co-production. Already a lot can be learned from literature on active citizenship, essays on participation and co-production, literature on governance and literature on social psychology. However, it might that we -due to disciplinary boundaries- do not benefit enough from previous work concerning participation.

Moreover, although it is important to bundle knowledge and test the assumptions underlying these concepts, we need to look further and establish the various factors determining how proper co-production can come about in various sectors and which barriers and risks need to be addressed. As such we should not only focus on technical issues, concepts and structures, whilst neglecting sector specific dynamics, the human factor, human interactions and behavioral mechanisms, since we expect these factors to affect the success or failure of co-production.

This panel invites scholars to contribute to this debate either by bundling theoretic knowledge about active citizenship, co-governance and co-production or by empiric work testing the notions and assumptions underlying the motivations of citizens to co-produce, the processes, functioning, and effects and outcomes of co-production in various sectors. Additionally, we look for contributions that step beyond traditional academic discussion. We invite practitioners to present their experiences with coproduction, and encourage scholars and practitioners to jointly present and discuss initiatives for coproduction.

The panel could inform, and be informed by, similar existing initiatives like the 'seminar on co-production' (Budapest, November 2012), the SIG on Third Sector (IRSPM 2012) and panel session on third sector : co-production (IRSPM 2013), the SG on Public Governance of Societal Sectors (EGPA), the SG on Co-production (IIAS, 2013, 2014 and 2015), and earlier NIG panel sessions on co-production and participation (2013, 2014). As such, the panel could be another opportunity to further establish the growing research community on co-production, acknowledging the position of co-production in the broader debates on New Public Governance, network governance, and the role of the third sector in the public domain.

The panel aims to inform the new **NIG Colloquium on 'Coproductie in de publieke sector' (Coproduction of Public Services)**. Aims are to open the discussion on coproduction of public services, and invite practitioners and scholars to jointly reflect on coproduction, and enhance collaborative learning by joining academic insights with real life experiences.

Chairs:

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