

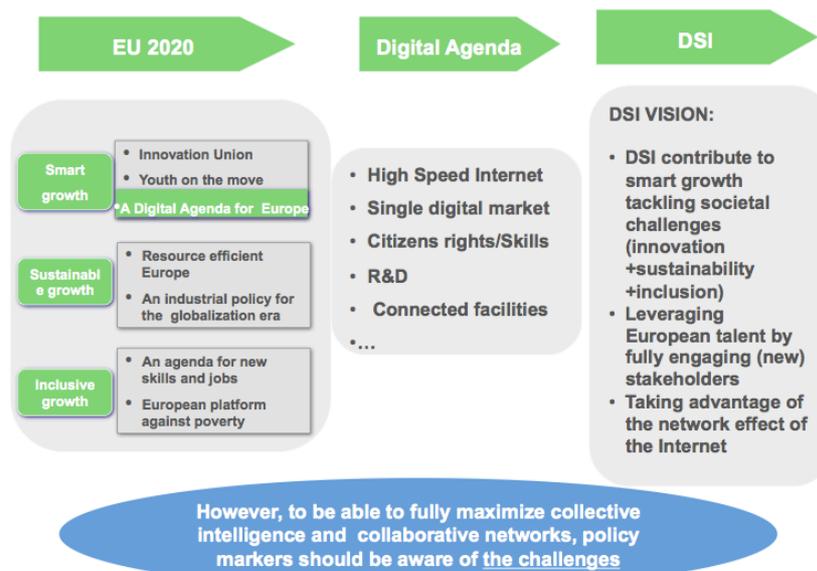
Study on social innovation in Digital Agenda – SMART 2012/0049



This study focuses on mapping and assessing **Digital Social Innovation (DSI)** activities, a type of social and collaborative innovation in which final users and communities collaborate through digital platforms to produce solutions for a wide range of social needs that have failed to be met by existing solutions and at a scale that was unimaginable before the rise of Internet-enabled collective platforms.

The study explores the potential in using digital technologies to enable better and more social innovation. This is an area that presents significant opportunities to leverage the power of European talent by fully engaging stakeholders, citizens, and civil society actors in the innovation process by **taking advantage of the “network effect” caused by the spread of the Internet and the Web throughout society.**

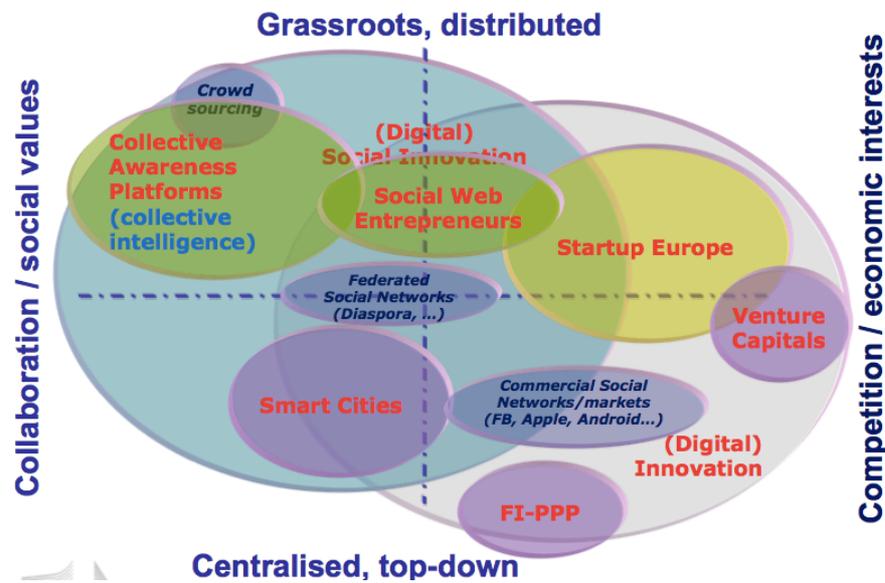
In the context of this study, DSI is defined as “social innovation enabled by ICT tools and networks, in the context of the European Digital Agenda”. The central research hypothesis proposed is that democratized ICT and open digital platforms, not only provide tools for people to collaborate in the virtual space but also facilitate the formation and diffusion of collaborative solutions in the physical spaces. In this process, social networks of the engaged communities are reinforced.



This study will strengthen and identify (1) research and innovation activities, (2) policy and regulatory activities and (3) processes of implementation in the following ways:

1. Identify and assess specific research and innovation activities together with future strategies to create a **favourable framework and research agenda to foster DSI in Europe**, tracing impacts in a rigorous manner
2. Mobilise a big variety of stakeholders and **Support a community of civic innovators** and users. In particular grassroots communities of civic innovators, web entrepreneurs, hackers, geeks, SMEs, open source and DIY makers, and the open data movement.
3. **Broad communication with the general public and citizens**, reach out and analyse social needs and integrate feedback coming from end-users
4. **Conduct experiments and prototyping** in a new and emerging field to improve the suitability of current implementation processes for DSI activities

The ability of this study to **identify, map, and mobilise key non-institutional actors** (such as “geeks”, hackers” and grassroots movements) **and civic innovators** will be crucial for its success. The DSI study will identify examples of socio-technological innovation, that challenge traditional ways of doing things, introducing a set of innovative and intrinsically more sustainable systems. **These micro-transformations become the groundwork for great systemic change.**



The study will explore the most relevant and novel approaches in innovation research namely “**Quadruple Helix model**”, i.e. the civil society is considered as a fourth and full stakeholder in addition to the traditional innovation actors, research organisations, businesses and public authorities (Triple Helix); and **Open Innovation Ecosystems approaches**. To support these ecosystems, this study will:

1. Identify the dimensions, categories and drivers that define DSI and constitute a comprehensive typology
2. Identify hypotheses and assumptions that need to be tested, developing the evidence base to ensure decision making draws upon the most effective approaches and solutions.
3. Dynamically map the various types of DSI networks to analyse and visualise how they are connected, how do they differ and the ongoing impact they bring
4. Assess and compare novel approaches in innovation and catalyse breakthroughs in policy at global level

