

Web-COSI

Web COmmunities for Statistics for Social Innovation

Web-COSI is built up on the increasing trust in collectively - generated statistics with the aim to foster the involvement of citizens for the definition of better statistics “beyond GDP”. The debate on better statistics engages people belonging to all societal contexts - consumers, workers, communities, citizens at large – as well as all stakeholders- policy makers, civil society organizations, entrepreneurs, researchers, practitioners. Online platforms and networks where Internet communities interact provide a measure of how the roles of producers and users of information are radically changing.

Web-COSI is based on the European and global crowd sourcing experiences and initiatives beyond GDP to show how this “collective intelligence” enforces the sharing of knowledge and data, steering the development of new indicators of well-being and societal progress integrating official and non-official statistics. Taking advantage of Web 2.0, the project wants to implement new ways of collecting/producing/visualizing information and data, calling the communities to reshape the statistics. The main goal is the development a Wikipedia of Statistics, integrating official and non official sources, facilitating the uploading of statistical information relating to civil society grassroots organizations (Wikiprogress.stat).

Web-COSI will carry out a number of key activities to involve citizens with the final seek to make statistics more accessible for society at large: 1) a European Wikiprogress University Programme. Start of an initiative with European Universities, to get students involved in individual and group projects to develop knowledge and data on the Wikiprogress platform; 2) a campaign on Wikiprogress platform to engage citizens using twitter, facebook , online discussions, blogs, eBrief , data visualisation and an extensive network including Wikichild, Wikigender and local grassroots partnerships. The aim is to engage 20,000 more visits/ citizens on the Wikiprogress platform, 600 more followers on Twitter and 1000 more likes on facebook; 3) a competition to design a ‘youth section’ on the Wikiprogress platform with content and feeds aimed at young people and their involvement and contribution to progress; 4) four focus groups of social entrepreneurs in four locations of the EU to gain a sample perspective on how data can be best utilised in their locality; 5) organization of dissemination and communication open face2face events - 5 workshops and a conference.

Web-COSI is based on a four-partner consortium that sees the collaboration among two power Institutions (Istat- the Italian National Statistical Institute and OECD- the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), characterized by a historical top-down approach, and two young civil society Organisations (Lunaria – the Italian Promotion Association and i-genius- the Social Entrepreneur Business and Enterprise Community), representing society at large pushing for a bottom-up approach. The consortium is multidisciplinary and well-balanced to work creating synergies in order to impact towards a growing integration of the different approaches. The partners are linked by complementing expertise and each one represents a strategic actor within the target domain.

Web-COSI will carry out its activities in 24 months. Moving from the mapping of beyond GDP existing initiatives, the work plan will carry on activities with the aim to empower the engagement of communities in the next months, reaching a high level of citizens’ involvement at the end of the project. The generated critical mass is expected to grow over time after the end of the project. The activities will contribute to pave the way to engage and motivate citizens to access and utilize statistics on various topics as the beyond GDP measurements refer to a very wide range of data: Economic well-being; Health; Education and training; Work and life balance; Social relationships; Policy and Institutions; Security; Landscape and cultural heritage; Environment; Research and innovation; Quality of services.

Web-COSI is built on the awareness that the power of online communities grows ever stronger and that the institutions of diverse type and scope cannot ignore their centrality to produce better statistics for better policies for a better quality of life, positively impacting on sustainability aspects. The measurement of economic and social progress at a local, national and international level is a crucial topic for its high relevance to steer the policy makers to take co-established decisions responding to the real citizens’ needs, reducing the risk it poses if populations lose faith in governments’ ability to address “what matters” in their lives.