

### Kurzbeschreibung des Projektes:

The effort to strengthen social cohesion and lower social inequalities is among Europe's main policy challenges. It means that local welfare systems are at the forefront of the struggle to address this challenge, and they are far from winning. While the statistics show some positive signs, the overall picture still shows sharp and sometimes rising inequalities, a loss of social cohesion and failing policies of integration. But, contrary to what is sometimes thought, a lack of bottom-up innovation is not the issue in itself. European cities are teeming with new ideas, initiated by citizens, professionals and policymakers. The problem is, rather, that innovations taking place in the city are not effectively disseminated because they are not sufficiently understood. Many innovations are not picked up, because their relevance is not recognised or they fail after they have been introduced, because they were not suitable to the different conditions in another city in another country.

In this project, we will look into this missing link between innovations at the local level and their successful transfer and implementation to other settings. We will examine innovation in cities, not as a disconnected phenomenon, but as an element in a tradition of welfare that is part of particular socio-economic models and the result of specific national and local cultures. By contextualising innovations in local welfare, will be more effective in understanding how they could work in other cities, for the benefit of other citizens. In short, the aim of the project is to examine, through cross-national comparative research, how local welfare systems affect social inequalities and how they favour social cohesion and sustainability. The results will be used, through strong interaction with stakeholders and urban policy recommendations, to link immediately to the needs of practitioners.

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**Funding Scheme:**  
Collaborative project  
(Small- and medium scale focused research project)

**Research Area:**  
Activity 2 - Path towards sustainable development  
Area: Socio-economic development trajectories

**Topic:**  
Local welfare systems favouring social cohesion

**Duration:**  
36 months

**Start date:**  
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**EC Contribution:**  
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**Project Website:**  
<http://www.wilcoproject.eu/>

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