



**“If you want to go fast, walk alone.
If you want to go far, walk together”**

Citizens and the co-production of public services

Dr. Elke Löffler, Prof. Salvador Parrado,
Prof. Tony Bovaird and
Prof. Gregg Van Ryzin,
Governance International

in co-operation with
Julie Gaillot and Marc-André Allard,
Tns-Sofres
Capgemini Consulting

with contributions from
Dr. David Capes, Dr. Petr Fanta, Kim Griffin, Mogens Hegnsvad,
Prof. Dr. Sabine Kuhlmann and Prof. Juraj Nemec

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PREFACE

The current debate on citizen participation in the public domain shows that European citizens are no longer just considered as passive service users. Indeed, increasingly we are seeing greater involvement of citizens in service delivery. Therefore, it is timely to ask citizens a new question. What role do they play and are they prepared to play in the delivery of those public services which matter most to them?

In order to get some quantitative information on the role of citizens in delivering public services, the French Ministry of Budget, Public Finance and Public Services commissioned this

As one participant of a focus group remarked: “*We have no data and information on whether we now eat and drink better than before*”.

scientific report, based on a survey of European citizens undertaken by Governance International and Tns-Sofres in 2008. The survey was complemented by focus groups with professionals and representatives of NGOs involved in public service delivery, which allowed us to capture the views of service providers on this issue as well.

You have several choices on how to read this report, depending on how much time you have available:

- If you only have 5 minutes you should read the Executive Summary which gives you an overview of the main results of the citizen survey.
- If you have about 30 minutes you can read the full report which provides you with more details on how and why citizens take an active part in providing solutions through ‘co-production’ and what public agencies can do to co-operate with citizens and service users more effectively.
- If you are interested in the questionnaire, the results to specific questions and the findings of the focus group sessions focusing on the views of public service professionals and representatives of NGOs on the role of citizens in improving community safety, the local environment and health you should read the annex to the report which can be downloaded in pdf format at www.5qualiconference.eu.

We welcome your views and suggestions on the issues covered in this report and look forward to hearing from you. You can contact the research team by email at info@govint.org.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report sets out the findings of a major research study into the role of co-production between citizens and professionals in the delivery of public services in five EU states. It draws on data from a representative citizen survey in five European countries, including Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom in May 2008 and from expert focus groups undertaken in those countries in early 2008. It is intended to contribute to the debate on how public agencies can deliver public services which best meet the needs of service users, citizens and taxpayers and the challenges for improving the future quality of public services.
2. Increasingly, we are seeing greater involvement of citizens in service delivery. Some of these developments have been driven by advances in ICT, particularly the internet, but there are also instances where citizens have begun to share with professionals some of the key service delivery tasks. It has also become clearer to service professionals over recent years that effective public services require the active contributions of both parties. Consequently, more and more service providers in the private and public sectors are seeking to co-operate with service users in order to tailor services better to their needs and to cut costs.
3. As a result, the relationship between service users and service professionals has changed profoundly, making service users less dependent, while, at the same time, giving them more responsibility. This has raised new interest in issues of co-production, a concept that is closely related to the inherent character of services. In particular, the literature on co-production highlights that production and consumption of many services are *inseparable*, which implies that quality in services often occurs during service delivery, usually in the interaction between the customer and provider, rather than just at the end of the process. Therefore, the concept of co-production is a useful way of viewing the new role of citizens as active participants in service delivery. Various objectives are being pursued by means of co-production, including
 - ❖ improving public service quality by bringing in the expertise of the service user, and often that of their families and communities as well,
 - ❖ providing more differentiated services and increased choice,

- ❖ making public services more responsive to users.

The definition of co-production used in this study is the “*involvement of citizens in the delivery of public services to achieve outcomes, which depend at least partly on their own behaviour*”.

4. Clearly, there is a wide range of citizen co-production roles in service delivery – from ‘hero’ to ‘zero’. Therefore, a citizen survey was undertaken to explore the level of this co-production between citizens and the public sector. However, to set this in context, the survey also explored the extent to which citizens sometimes become engaged in improving outcomes without any involvement with public sector agencies. In particular, the survey focussed on the following issues:
 - ❖ How big is the role which citizens play in delivering public services?
 - ❖ How does the involvement of citizens change their attitudes and expectations towards public services?
 - ❖ Is the role of citizens in public service delivery likely to be more important in the future than at present? What are the obstacles and drivers of co-production in the public domain?
5. The survey was conducted by telephone from April 16 to May 5, 2008, among a representative random sample of 4,951 adults (18 years of age or older), with about 1,000 interviews in including Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. The countries were chosen in order to get a wide range of different administrative cultures. The results presented in this report are weighted according to each country’s representation in the European Union. In all the cases where we compare results across sectors or countries, the differences highlighted are statistically significant. Furthermore, the study focused on three different sectors which reflect distinctly different types of government functions:
 - ❖ *Community safety*, as an example of coercive action on the part of the state
 - ❖ *Local environment*, as an example of the regulatory function of the state
 - ❖ *Public health*, as an example of the welfare improvement function of the state.
6. One key result of the survey is that, contrary to the assumptions made by focus group participants, there are significant levels of co-production by citizens in the five countries studied in all three sectors. Citizens are particularly active in taking steps to look after the local environment (index score 61), to a somewhat lesser degree in health improvement initiatives (index score 52) and considerably less active in prevention of crime (index score 45).
7. If we look at what kind of contributions citizens make on a regular basis, we see that citizens in these five countries show particularly high levels of engagement when they can undertake activities which do not need much effort by themselves and do not require getting in touch with third parties. When it comes to making changes to personal lifestyle, there is a sharp drop in the number of citizens who

walk, cycle or use public transport, change to a more healthy diet or try to exercise. Clearly, there are also activities that citizens are even less inclined to undertake, at least on a regular basis. Interestingly, all the activities at the bottom of the ranking list imply getting involved with others – be it a neighbour, a doctor, the police or strangers.

8. Although co-production in general is quite high, only a few citizens wish to get engaged in some form of organised activity on a regular basis. As the survey results show, the level of regular participation of citizens in groups and organisations is highest in health (9.7%), followed by environment (7.9%) and then safety (5.9%). This is an interesting finding since the index of overall co-production activities of citizens is highest in local environment, not in health. The fact that more citizens ‘co-produce’ in health by getting organised may indicate a lack of availability of individual forms of co-production.
9. We can see that citizens who are elderly, female and *not* active in the labour market are more likely to be active co-producers than other groups of citizens. This means that the ‘ageing society’ will not only generate higher demand for health and social care – it also increases the potential contributions which citizens can make in improving community safety, the local environment and their health.
10. When it comes to attitudes of citizens towards co-production the survey shows that citizens who are already strong ‘co-producers’ tend to be willing to do even more, in terms of spending more time each week tackling the issue themselves or helping others to do so. This means that, depending on the issue, concerned about 70%-80% of European citizens would be willing to do more to improve public services, in particular in health issues. The willingness to do more is most pronounced in Denmark and weakest in the United Kingdom and France.
11. Those who score higher on the co-production index also tend to believe that citizens can make a difference, although this is not quite as strong an association as in the case of willingness to do more. This suggests that some people who are active in co-production may not be sure that their interventions will make a difference but express, nevertheless, a willingness to do more.
12. Finally, active co-producers show only a weak tendency to be more satisfied with the performance of public agencies in the fields of community safety, local environment and health. Therefore, we cannot say that people who are involved in the delivery of services tend to be more or less satisfied with government performance.
13. When it comes to the scope for government action, statistical analysis shows that better government information and consultation cannot be considered as strong drivers towards more citizen co-production, even though clearly these factors can play a role. The survey shows that it is most promising for government to target young people in order to increase user-involvement, since the survey shows that

the younger people are, the more willing they are to do more. It is also critically important to ensure that initiatives are targeted at those who are likely to be interested in them. The results demonstrate that many people who actively co-produce in health or in community safety or in local environmental improvement have little interest in the other fields. It is therefore essential that citizen participation units in government do not try to talk to all citizens at the same time but rather capture the interest of citizens through addressing them on the specific services and issues in which they are personally interested – a much more sophisticated (and challenging) task.

14. A counter-intuitive insight of the survey is that urban-rural location and levels of education, as well as the level of ‘self-service’ behaviour in private sector services, are not much linked to co-production behaviour in public services.
15. More generally, the survey suggests that there has been too much attention on how to motivate citizens in general and service users in particular to get more involved in public service delivery. Our findings demonstrate that actually the underlying problem is more likely to be the way they are approached. This suggests that increased levels of co-production in the future will require appropriate mechanisms and initiatives, which are sufficiently easy and straightforward to encourage individuals and their families to get involved. Ideally, these should be initiatives that individuals can pursue on their own, if they want to do so – many individuals are reluctant ‘joiners’.
16. Many of these conclusions apply across all three service areas which we studied, albeit to rather different degrees. Furthermore, many of them are quite independent of any particular service – e.g. the need to target individuals who are interested in a single issue and to attract their interest by finding ways in which they can co-produce without joining a local association. Therefore, there are good grounds for believing that many of these conclusions will apply to a significant extent to many other public services as well.

PART 1: THE INCREASING ROLE OF CITIZENS IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Many of us can remember the days when flight bookings had to be done through a travel agency and all banking business had to be done in person over the counter at the bank.

According to the survey, 42 percent of citizens in five European countries use the internet for bookings or purchase.

Source: Tns-Sofres, 2008.

Today these transactions can be done comfortably at home on the internet. This also allows us to browse and consider the options. In most gas stations car drivers now have to fill the tank themselves and no longer get their windscreen wiped and other courtesy services.

As these examples show, this can have both an upside – faster, more comfortable access to services – but also a downside – dirtier hands at the gas station. Clearly, the ways in which many services are provided in the private sector have changed. In the age of self-service, what used to be done by professionals is increasingly being transferred to service users.

Similar developments can be observed in the public sector. At one time, public services were simply delivered by professionals with little involvement of users and often little choice. Increasingly, we are seeing greater involvement of users in service delivery. For example, e- government enables and encourages people to download and submit documents electronically, e.g. applications for permits or licenses, which gives citizens an element of self-service in their relations with public sector organisations. Even in social services such as health, new technologies allow patients to take responsibility for their own treatment, for example patients with kidney problems running their dialysis at home, so that they no longer need to go to the hospital several times a week. And of course, the world of education has changed as well, with schools and universities investing in e-learning, which gives students more flexibility.

Clearly, advances in ICT, particularly the internet, have profoundly changed the relationship between service users and service professionals making service users less dependent, while, at the same time, giving them more responsibility. However, ICT-led approaches are not the whole story

“Professionals across all sectors have woken up to the fact that they need to do things with people rather than for people”.

A participant at a UK focus group on community safety

in enabling citizens to play a more important role in delivering services and outcomes. There are also instances where citizens have begun to share with professionals some of the key service delivery tasks. For example, in Denmark parents (mainly of teenagers) in some neighbourhoods now patrol the streets at night so that they are visible in all the places where young people go. By doing so, they support the police and school/social workers to prevent riots in ‘hot spots’.

However, it has also become clearer to service professionals over recent years that effective public services require the active contributions of both parties. Consequently, more and more service providers in the private and public sectors are seeking to co-operate with service users in order to tailor services better to their needs and to cut costs.

This applies across a wide spectrum of the experiences that shape our daily lives. In manufacturing industry, for example, most car companies now plan and develop new cars with user groups, who are far clearer about what is important to them in a car's design than the engineers could be. Many governments have also argued that "*involving people in the design and delivery of services can offer not only greater levels of satisfaction but improved value for money and greater progress towards inevitably elusive objectives, including improved health and community safety, which often depend on our own behaviour*" (Sir Michael Lyons, 2006, p.3). Therefore, governments have set up new schemes such as the Expert Patients Programme in the UK (see <http://www.expertpatients.co.uk>, access 2 July 2008), local safety pacts ('contrats locaux de sécurité') in France (<http://www.cls.interieur.gouv.fr/>, access 2 July 2008), the safe locality project in Czech Republic (<http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archiv2008/bezpecnost/lokalita.html>, access 2 July 2008) and recycling schemes which give citizens a greater role in health, community safety and the local environment.

Indeed, as many Best Practice Cases presented at the 5th Quality Conference for Public Administration in the EU show, professionals working in many parts of the public sector are now attempting to place the '*citizen at the heart of public quality*' as the overall theme of the conference suggests.

This trend has major implications for how we can improve the quality of public services and raises key questions for the public sector:

- ❖ How big is the role which citizens play in delivering public services?
- ❖ How does the involvement of citizens change their attitudes and expectations towards public services?
- ❖ Is the role of citizens in public service delivery likely to be more important in the future than at present? What are the obstacles and drivers of co-production in the public domain?

This report will shed light on these issues, drawing from the results of a survey of citizens in five European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) and discussions with public officials and representatives of organised citizens in focus group sessions in the same five countries.

PART 2: WHAT IS NEW ABOUT CO-PRODUCTION

The idea of co-production is closely related to a key characteristic of services. As Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990) point out, production and consumption of many services are *inseparable*. Quality in services often occurs during service delivery, usually in the interaction between the customer and provider, rather than just at the end of the process. This means that customers do not evaluate service quality based solely on the outcomes (e.g. the success of a medical treatment in a hospital) - they also consider the process of service delivery (e.g. how friendly and responsive were the hospital medical staff and how comfortable was the ward).

Co-production puts the emphasis on the contribution made by the service beneficiary in the service delivery process. For example, in education, outcomes not only depend on the quality of teaching delivered by school teachers or university staff but also on the attitudes and behaviour of students. If students are not willing even to listen or not able to undertake follow-up exercises at home, the amount that they learn will be very limited.

In a public sector context, the ‘co-operative behaviour’ of service recipients may even extend to their acceptance of constraints or punishments – for example, improving community safety involves citizens accepting speeding or parking restrictions and being willing to pay a fine when they have ignored these restraints. Fines would be unenforceable, if no-one paid them and the speeding or parking restrictions would no longer have any effect.

At the same time, citizens may engage in co-production on behalf of other people, which we typically refer to as ‘volunteering’. For example, people may be active as a trainer of young people in a soccer club or may look after a sick family member or friend. However, this can only be considered as co-production with the public sector if it is done in collaboration with service professionals, e.g. if the care of the sick person is done in conjunction with a doctor’s diagnosis and advice.

Clearly, the essential idea of co-production is not new and there are many different definitions in social science literature which first discovered co-production in the 1970s (see Box 1).

Box 1: Definitions of co-production in social sciences

“In pure coproduction ... the client does some of the (...) work which could conceivably have done by the service company”.

Source: Richard Normann (1984), *Service management. Strategy and leadership in service business*. Chichester et al.: John Wiley and Sons, p. 81.

“ ... the missing factor – labour from the consumer – that is needed in every sphere of social endeavour”.

Source: David Boyle, Sherry Clark and Sarah Burns (2006), *Hidden work: co-production by people outside paid employment*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

“ ... the provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers (in any sector) and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions”.

Source: Tony Bovaird (2007), “Beyond engagement and participation – user and community co-production of public services”, *Public Administration Review*, 67 (5): 847.

What is new, however, is that in recent years all over Europe we are seeing greater involvement of citizens in service delivery. As Box 2 shows this has often been for mixed motives – not simply in order to improve service quality by ‘bringing the user in’ but also in order to cut costs, by making the user do more for themselves inside the service delivery process. At the same time, this has allowed public agencies to develop more differentiated services. By offering good web and phone access for customers with routine requests they are able to provide better face-to-face service for those who need them – elderly, ethnic minorities and disadvantaged people.

Box 2: Motives for increased citizen involvement in public service delivery

- ❖ Improving public service quality by bringing in the expertise of the service user, and often of their families and communities as well
- ❖ Providing more differentiated services and more choice
- ❖ Making public services more responsive to users
- ❖ Cutting costs

This trend has changed the relationship between professional service providers and service users by making them more interdependent. As a result, there is now new interest on the part of professionals in the co-production of public services and its implications for service delivery. As Table 1 suggests, there are already some situations where the citizen is active and gets significant public sector help (‘co-production’). A good example is the neighbourhood watch movement in the UK, whose local groups involve partnerships between the police and local residents. However, there are also some situations where the involvement of citizens is high but there is not much support by service professionals. The French focus group on co-production in health suggested that many patient associations would fall into this category, since they do not have much support from medical staff. The third situation, still quite common, is where passive users are ‘given service’ by a professional. The Czech focus group thought that the health system in the Czech Republic is still based on the notion of a “passive patient”. Finally, in many cases where users are passive and the public sector is largely absent, services

nevertheless still get provided –, they get ‘looked after’ by a volunteer system. As an example of this, the German focus group thought that some aspects of health and social services have become so complex that users require expert advice by NGOs about available treatment options and legal entitlements.

Table 1: The range of citizen co-production roles – from ‘hero’ to ‘zero’

	Level of active involvement of citizens in service delivery		
Level of active involvement of service professionals		<i>High</i>	<i>Low (or none)</i>
	<i>High</i>	Co-production	Traditional professionally-led services
	<i>Low (or none)</i>	User-led self-organising services	Volunteer-led self-organising services

This study seeks to establish how far the boundary has shifted towards the left hand side of this matrix – the high active citizen involvement boxes- and, in particular, the co-production box.

Of course, as the concept of sustainable quality management developed by the three scientific rapporteurs of the 4th Quality Conference for Public Administration in the EU suggests, user and citizen involvement may take place in all four phases of the production cycle of public services (Pollitt, Bouckaert and Löffler, 2007), including

- ❖ co-design of public services, e.g. community planning of public services
- ❖ co-decision in resource allocation, e.g. participatory budgeting at local level
- ❖ co-delivery of public services, e.g. volunteers of fire services, jurors in courts, parent governors in schools, etc.
- ❖ co-evaluation of public services, e.g. citizen inspectors in public hospitals and social housing.

However, given that the large majority of ‘best practice’ cases presented at the 5th and previous Quality Conferences have focussed on service delivery issues, the survey undertaken for this report concentrated on the phase of co-delivery.

Box 3: Definition of co-production used in this study

“The involvement of citizens in the delivery of public services to achieve outcomes, which depend at least partly on their own behaviour”.

The survey explored the level of this co-production between citizens and the public sector. However, to set this in context, it also explored the extent to which citizens sometimes become engaged in improving outcomes without any involvement with public sector agencies.

So our key question is “What role do citizens play in delivering public services”?
Obviously, the answer will be specific to different sectors and countries. This is clearly a daunting task. It is therefore not entirely surprising that, until now, there has been no systematic international survey on the level of co-production in public services. The following report presents the key findings of the first European citizen survey which has been undertaken to fill this gap.

PART 3: CO-PRODUCTION IN THREE PUBLIC SERVICES: THE STATE OF THE ART IN FIVE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

In order to gain an understanding of how co-production works, the interaction between public service professionals and citizens was explored in detail through a representative citizen survey in five different countries, which reflect quite different administrative cultures.

The countries included in this study are:

- ❖ Czech Republic
- ❖ Denmark
- ❖ France
- ❖ Germany
- ❖ United Kingdom

The survey was conducted by telephone from April 16 to May 5, 2008, among a representative random sample of 4,951 adults (18 years of age or older), with about 1,000 interviews in each of these five countries. The results presented in this report are weighted according to each country's representation in the European Union. In all the cases where we compare results across sectors or countries, the differences highlighted are statistically significant.

Furthermore, the study focused on three different sectors which reflect distinctly different types of government functions:

- ❖ *Community safety*, as an example of coercive action on the part of the state
- ❖ *Local environment*, as an example of the regulatory function of the state
- ❖ *Public health*, as an example of the welfare improvement function of the state.

Co-production by citizens in community safety, local environment and public health may involve a whole range of activities, from helping to identify the problems, helping to prevent the problems, right through to solving the problems and dealing with the damage done by the problems. In the survey, given the limited resources available and the short time afforded by telephone interviews, we decided to survey all citizens, rather than survey service users only (since it is much harder to achieve representative samples of the latter). The survey focused particularly on preventative activities of citizens, asking them what they currently do – and what they would be prepared to do in the future - to help public agencies to *prevent problems* from arising. However, in the community safety questions, citizens were also asked about how they personally dealt with some problems, specifically how they react when they come across crime and anti-social behaviour – do they try to help the police to deal with the problem (or even take some form of direct action themselves)?

As expected, the results of the survey show that there are significant differences between countries and between the three different sectors.

3.1. How important is the role of citizens in public service delivery?

When we posed this question to the focus groups in the five countries, the overall reaction of professional service providers was “we don’t know ... but probably very little”¹. A few participants even complained about the relevance of this question. In particular, in the three Danish focus groups sessions, representatives of public agencies initially had great difficulty understanding the topic to be discussed.

“It is difficult to find volunteers who wish to get engaged in community safety issues, even though many Danes are members of other types of association, such as sports clubs”.

A participant at a Danish focus group on safety issues

“When people recycle they think they have done their bit”.

A participant of a UK focus group on environmental issues

“There is no evidence that French citizens are doing more sports to look after their health and prevent health problems”.

A participant at a French focus group on health issues

The same applied to the focus groups focussing on health issues in most countries, where participants had to be challenged again and again by the facilitators to come up with examples of citizen involvement in service delivery. Only the German and UK focus groups on health issues shared the view that prevention has become a more important area in health care and that citizen involvement plays an important role in this area.

In a second step, we asked citizens about their level of involvement in prevention measures related to community safety, local environment and health. In addition to this, we also asked citizens how they co-operate with the police when being confronted with crime or anti-social behaviour. In fact, contrary to the assumptions of focus group participants, the results of the citizen survey showed a significant level of co-production by citizens in the five countries studied in all three sectors.

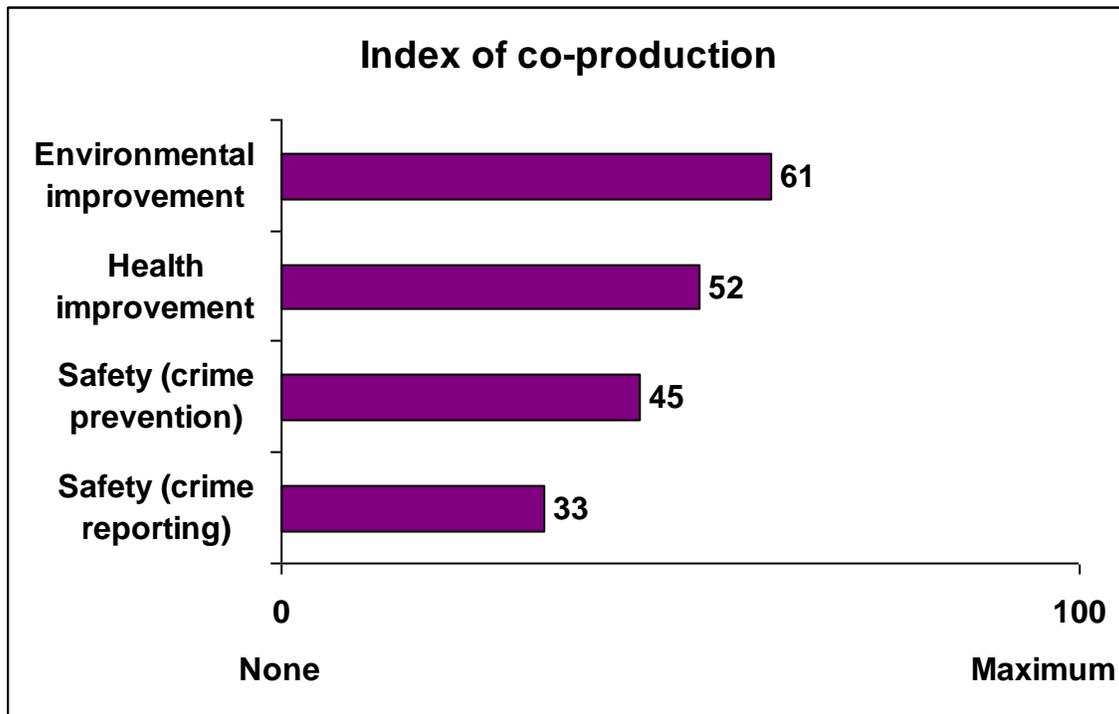
¹ This question also had to be addressed by the focus group participants in a questionnaire to be filled out at the beginning of each session.

Let us first of all look at the levels of co-production in the different sectors (as measured by a 0-100 co-production index which we created for each sector, representing the sum of five specific questions in each sector about co-production behaviour).² As Graph 1 shows, citizens are particularly active in taking steps to look after the local environment (index score 61), to a somewhat lesser degree in health improvement initiatives (index score 52) and considerably less active in prevention of crime (index score 45).

The general reluctance of people to get involved in community safety issues only changes when citizens are directly affected by some crime.
A shared view of focus groups on community safety issues in all 5 countries

When it comes to reporting crime to the police, including making personal interventions to stop someone behaving in an anti-social way, the co-production index goes down to 33. (A separate index of reporting crime was created, in the same manner as the other indexes, because additional questions were asked about crime reporting).

Graph 1: Total level of co-production in community safety, local environment and health issues



² The index is a min-max (0-100) scale, with 0 representing minimum co-production (answering "never" to all the co-production questions) and 100 representing maximum (answering "often" to all the co-production questions).

3.2. Where co-production works well and less well

If we look at what kind of contributions citizens make on a regular basis in each of these sectors, an interesting pattern emerges (see Graph 2). In general, we can see that European citizens in these five countries show particularly high levels of engagement when they can undertake activities which do not need much effort by themselves and do not require getting in touch with third parties. This applies, for example, to locking doors and windows in their home before going out, recycling household rubbish and saving water and electricity, which about 80 percent of citizens indicate as doing often. All these activities do not require interactions with other citizens or public sector organisations.

When it comes to makes changes to the personal lifestyle, there is a sharp drop in the number of citizens who walk, cycle or use public transport, change to a more healthy diet or try to exercise. Just about 50 percent of citizens indicate to undertake these activities often.

Clearly, there are also activities that citizens are even less inclined to undertake, at least on a regular basis. Interestingly, all the activities at the bottom of the ranking list imply getting involved with others – be it a neighbour, a doctor, the police or strangers.

Graph 2: A ranking list of co-production: What citizens like doing best and least



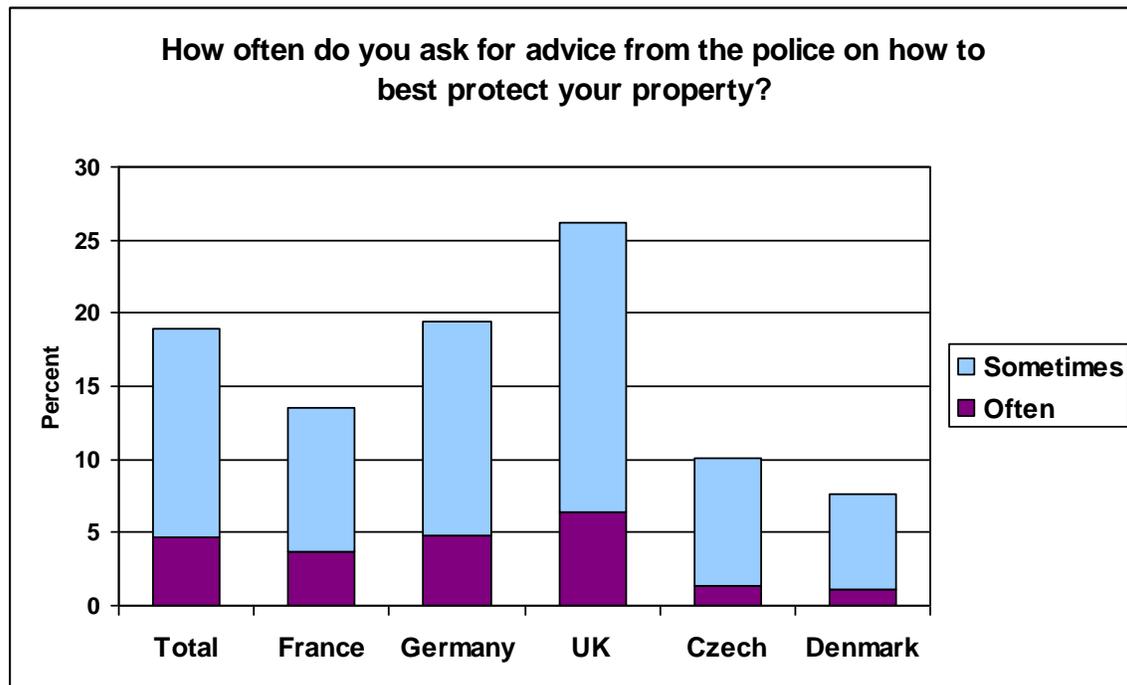
At the very bottom of the responses on prevention activities is ‘seeking advice from the police on safety issues’. Only 5 percent of European citizens often ask the police for advice on how to best protect their property, while 14 percent sometimes do so. As Graph 3 reveals, UK citizens are most inclined to make use of this free service provided by the police, whereas Danish and Czech citizens are the most reluctant. In particular, the Czech case is interesting. As the citizen survey shows, Czech citizens feel relatively unsafe in their neighbourhood and we know from national crime statistics that property-related crimes made up 70 percent of all crimes in 2004. Even though the number of police staff dealing with crime prevention has increased in recent years, crime levels have stayed persistently high. In this difficult situation, the

The Czech focus group suggested that the most important barrier to more active involvement of citizens in community safety is the historical heritage – not only from socialism, but also from pre-1918 regimes. *“Most people still feel that the police are not a friend and are not serving the citizen, but rather are a repressive power”*. A participant in a focus group on community safety issues in Prague.

Czech Ministry of Interior launched the ‘Safe Locality’ Programme in 2007 which encourages citizens to take action to protect their property. According to a Czech survey on safety perceptions of the population, 40 percent of citizens know about this programme (see the interview with the Czech Ministry of Interior at www.govint.org). However, as representatives of the local and national police and other participants suggested in Prague during a discussion on the role of citizens in public safety issues, levels of trust in the police are still low, which may be why only 1.3 percent of Czech citizens in the survey often contact the police for crime prevention advice.

The fact that Danish citizens also make little use of this free service is less surprising as most Danish citizens feel relatively safe. The question is whether the establishment of community beat officers, which are closer to citizens than the current national police force, will be able to trigger a higher demand.

Graph 3: Co-production with the police in crime prevention



This discussion has sought to throw light on one ‘low involvement’ activity, namely citizens seeking advice from the police. However, as Graph 2 shows, there are quite a few other activities with similarly low rates of response. In particular, there were very low numbers of respondents who participate regularly in groups, whether the topic is community safety, local environment or health. This clearly demonstrates that seeking to tackle these issues simply through organised associations has major limitations – and these limitations are likely to persist. This indicates the importance, to which we will

return later, of getting people involved on an individual basis, and not simply through third sector organisations.

It is not surprising that only a very few citizens wish to get engaged in some organised form on a regular basis. This is where the so-called ‘usual suspects’ come in, even though some countries seem to have more than others (see Graph 4).

Graph 4: Levels of regular participation in community safety, local environmental and health organisations/groups across countries



Clearly, the level of regular participation of European citizens in groups and organisations is highest in health (9.7%), followed by environment (7.9%) and then safety (5.9%). This is an interesting finding since the index of overall co-production activities of European citizens is highest in local environment and not in health (see Graph 1). The fact that more citizens ‘co-produce’ in health by getting organised may indicate a lack of availability of individual forms of co-production which may partly be due to the attitudes of

“Most doctors appreciate better informed patients but about one third of doctors prefer to be the only ‘clever participant’ in the care process”.
 A focus group participant in the Czech focus group on health issues
“In hospitals the amount of consultation with patients is zero. Typically they are told what to do but doctors do not necessarily listen to what they say. ...”
 A focus group participant in the French focus group on health issues

professionals working in health care as participants in several focus groups on health issues suggested.

The number of ‘organised activists’ in community safety and environmental issues is lowest in Denmark (2.4% in safety-related organisations and 3.5 % in environmental organisations), whereas the UK has the highest proportion of citizens who often take part in organisations to improve safety in their neighbourhood (12.2%). This finding is not surprising, given that there are more than 10 million members in UK neighbourhood watch groups (although admittedly not all are active members).

The UK has developed a quite powerful network of associations which encourage citizen participation in community safety – these are the local Neighbourhood Watch groups. There are about 170,000 Neighbourhood Watch groups in the UK, although “*coverage is patchy*” as a representative of Neighbourhood Watch.Net, the national website, pointed out at the focus group session. Membership figures suggest that about 10m individuals are involved in these groups but, of course, some Neighbourhood Watch groups are more active and others are less so - the national website estimates that probably only about one-sixth of the groups are really active.

The UK also has the highest number of citizens who often get involved in environmental groups and organisations (9%) but also a high proportion of Czech citizens often participate in groups or organisations to improve the local environment (8.4%).

As far as the participation of citizens in groups and organisations dealing with health issues is concerned 13.5 % of Czech citizens indicate to participate often in such groups whereas in France only 6.5 % of citizens do so.

As participants of the French focus group on health issues acknowledged, there are associations of people suffering from severe diseases such as kidney failure or heart transplants but they have very small memberships, compared to the number of people suffering from such conditions. Furthermore, doctors and other professionals do not work with them much.

The number of citizens in other countries is between this range.

Looking at the figures in Graph 2 again, it is encouraging to see how many people are prepared often to take steps to encourage others to behave more appropriately, e.g. telling them not to drop rubbish (26%) and intervening to stop anti-social behaviour (17%). Given that these are high effort actions, and not to be undertaken lightly, this indicates that there is a significant group of the population who see themselves as real ‘activists’, at least in those areas about which they genuinely care.

As the more detailed country analysis in Graph 5 shows, German citizens are the least inclined to intervene personally to stop someone behaving in an anti-social way,

The German focus group on community safety also suggested that when it comes to show civic courage to stop anti-social behaviour or to help victims of crime by intervening personally and getting help the situation has become worse in particular in Berlin. One participant suggested that “*this was because citizens who tried to help victims of crime often became victims themselves so that people have become more cautious*”.

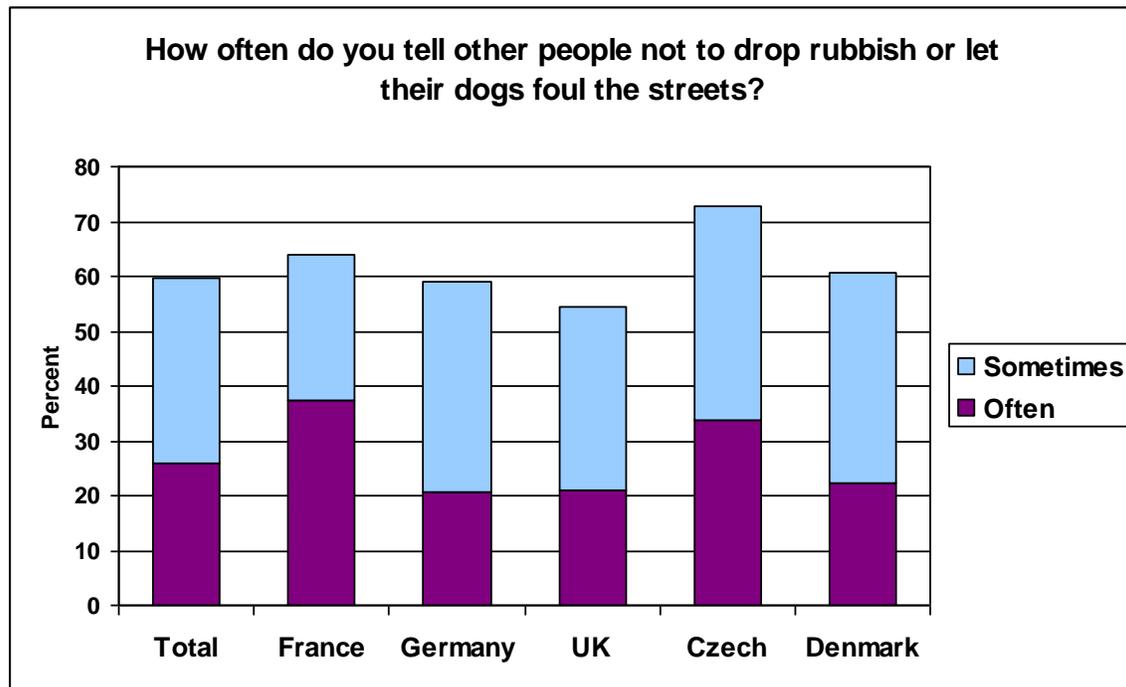
being below the European average (17%) at only 13 %, while the other four countries show levels of personal intervention above the European average. In particular, in Czech Republic 24% of citizens indicate to have intervened personally.

Graph 5: Level of personal interventions to stop anti-social behaviour



Interestingly, a different pattern of behaviour can be seen across countries when it comes to telling other people not to drop rubbish or letting their dogs foul the streets. As Graph 6 below shows French citizens are the most outspoken on this issue (37% often tell others not to drop rubbish or let their dogs foul the street) whereas German and UK citizens are much more reluctant to remind other citizens of appropriate forms of behaviour (21% for both countries). This reminds us that not only does the level of co-production vary between countries but so also does the form which it takes, being partly dependent on national cultures and socially-acceptable behaviours.

Graph 6: Level of personal intervention to stop inappropriate behaviour concerning the local environment



The figures are considerably lower in all five countries when it comes to reporting crime to the police. It is interesting to observe that there is little difference in the responses between citizens reporting an incident of crime or anti-social behaviour in which they are personally involved (European average 12%) or where they are not affected personally (European average 11%). This may indicate that many citizens are afraid of acting as a witness. In particular, the assessment of the Czech focus group on community safety issues is interesting in this respect.

One participant observed that there is no general and institutionalized system of preparing citizens (e.g. victims and other witnesses) to “stand in front of a court”. However, there are some local initiatives to help citizens through the often difficult processes involved in attending court (the quite frequently used ‘White Circle of Safety’ provides a network of advisory bodies to help victims of criminal offences and their families (regardless of age, sex, race, nationality and type of criminal offence) with free-of-charge assistance in ways which emphasise impartiality, confidentiality, and independence. In general, however, the protection of witnesses was considered to be limited and not developed.

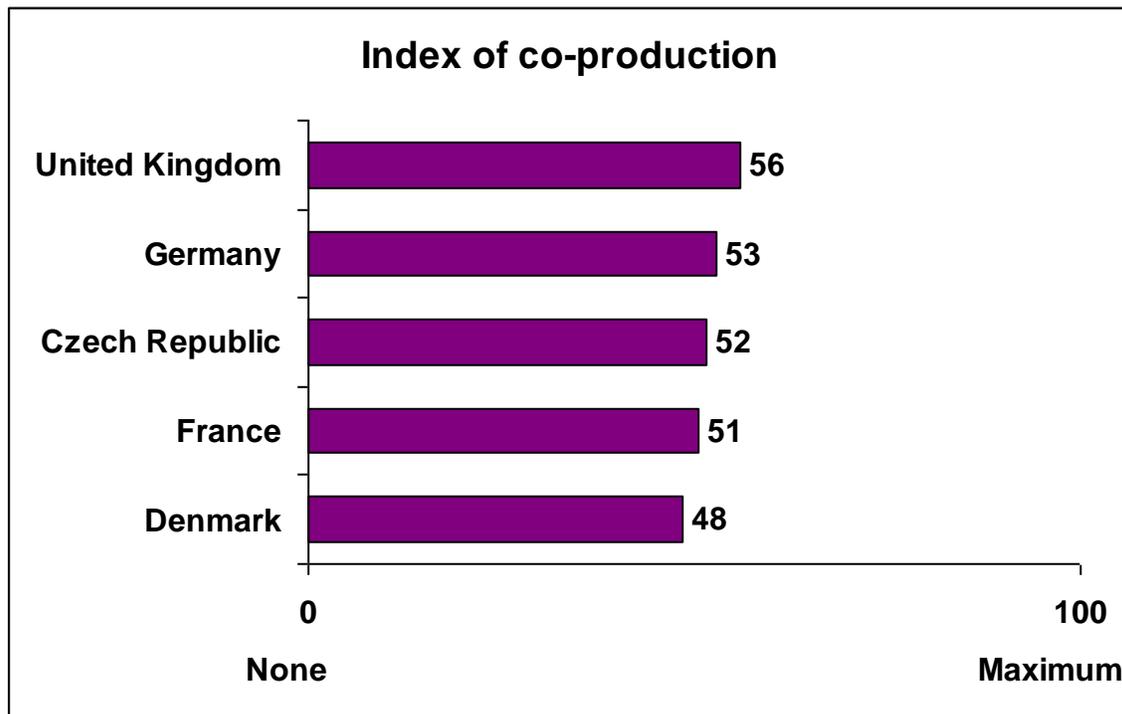
Excerpt from the Prague focus group session on community safety issues

3.2. Who are the leaders and laggards in co-production?

The question arises whether citizens are more active in delivering public services in some countries than in others? And are some types of citizens more engaged than others?

Graph 7 provides us with a country-specific analysis of overall co-production behaviour, showing the 'average' level of involvement of citizens in all three sectors covered by the survey. (This overall index of co-production is calculated by averaging the sector-specific co-production indexes, explained earlier, and so also has a 0-100 scale).

Graph 7: Levels of co-production in European countries



As the results show, the five countries studied in the survey are not far apart, with the United Kingdom having the highest level of co-production (index score 56) and Denmark having the lowest level (index score 48). This index demonstrates that, in all these countries, the involvement of citizens in the delivery of public services, specifically health, environmental quality and community safety, which depend at least partly on their own behaviour, is moderately high – it is roughly equivalent to about 50% of citizens saying that they ‘often’ get involved or 100% of citizens saying that they ‘sometimes’ get involved. .

It may come somewhat as a surprise to readers of this report that Denmark has the lowest score on this overall index of co-production. As European surveys show (see, for example, OECD, 2006), the Danish public sector has relatively high levels of trust but all three focus groups in Denmark shared the view that most Danish citizens expect the welfare state to deal and solve social issues, as the quotes of two participants at a focus group session in Copenhagen suggest.

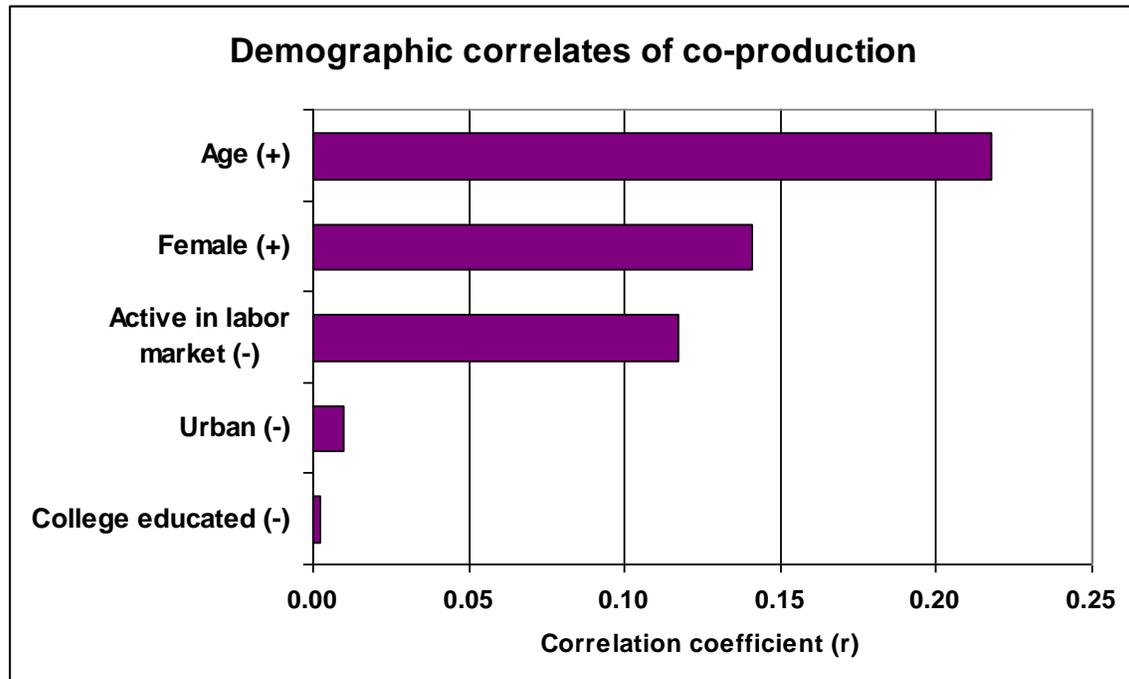
“...Danish society is a bit different. Somehow we gave all social affairs to the public sector and people do not want to get involved...”. “... as x said, we don’t take part in voluntary initiatives as citizens, because the public sector is taking care of that... it is not like in other countries in which the involvement of the state is not high...”

Two participants of a Danish focus group

In addition to differences in national cultures,

do other demographic factors matter? In particular, are some groups of citizens more likely than others to play a more active role in delivering services?

Graph 8: Who are the ‘active citizens’?



Graph 8 shows results of a correlation analysis, and we can see that citizens who are elderly, female and *not* active in the labour market (note the negative correlation) are more likely to be active co-producers than other groups of citizens. This means that the ‘ageing society’ does not only mean higher demand for health and social services – it also increases the contributions citizens make in improving community safety, the local environment and their health. Clearly, people who are active in the labour market have less time to contribute as an ‘active citizen’.

What is perhaps surprising is that there is no significant tendency for people in rural areas or people with college education to be more active as co-producers – this counters the common stereotypes that village life is more ‘social’ than life in cities, with people more willing to help each other, and that co-production behaviour is more likely amongst those who are better educated.

PART 4: ATTITUDES TOWARDS CO-PRODUCTION

Obviously, giving citizens a greater role in improving services is not without costs for public agencies. For example, encouraging citizens to report incidents of crime or anti-social behaviour to the police involves the police service in designing and funding communication campaigns and, where they believe incentives have to be given, even in making financial payments (e.g. the small rewards by the police in Berlin to young people whose information leads to arrests). Public managers have to ask themselves if this time and resource is well spent or if it would be better to spend it on hiring more professionals.

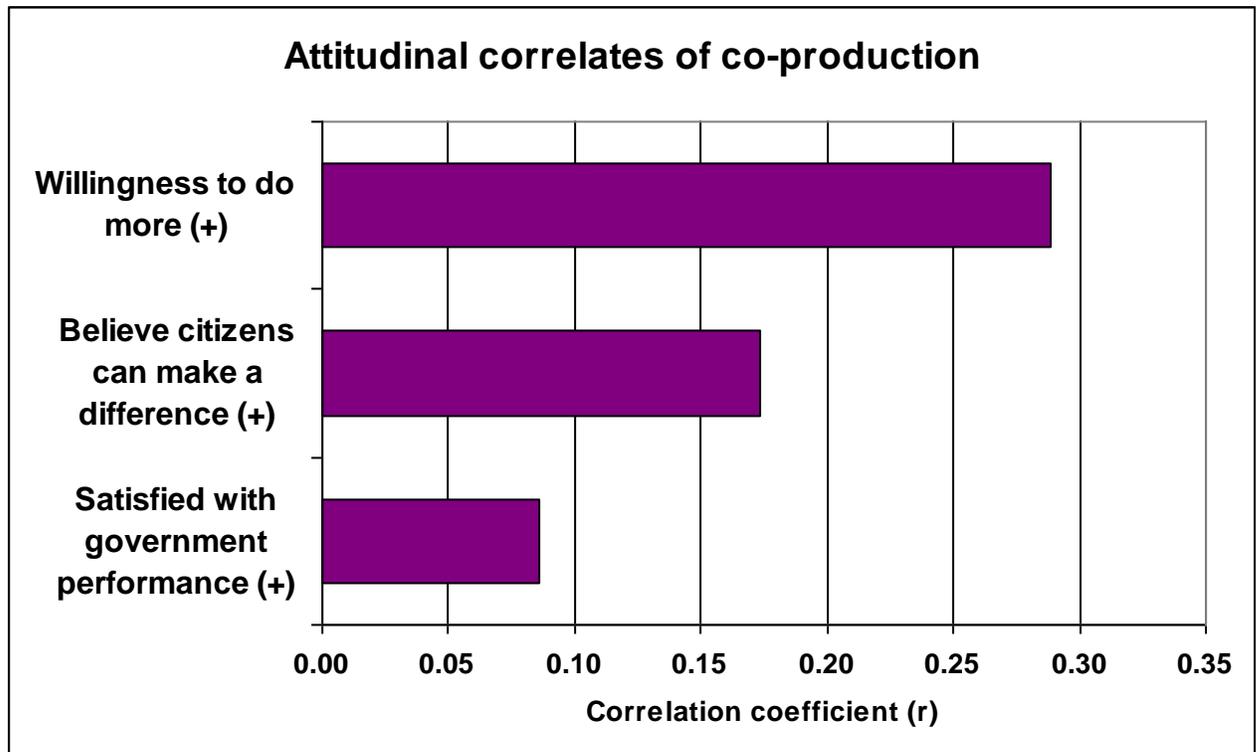
Therefore, it is necessary to look at what benefits co-production has produced, in terms of changing the attitudes and behaviours of citizens, and how these compare to the costs. Obviously, the highest level question is whether the contributions made by service users or citizens in co-production have actually led to improved service quality and outcomes. To answer this question fully, we would require objective performance information in each of the countries in our study, ideally on a comparative basis. However, the path to reliable international benchmarking of public service outcomes is a very rocky one and it clearly takes us far beyond the goal of this study.

Nevertheless, the survey was designed in such a way that it would give some answers to the following questions:

- ❖ Are citizens who co-produce willing to do more?
- ❖ Do citizens believe their co-production can make a difference?
- ❖ Are citizens who co-produce more satisfied with the performance of public agencies?

4.1. Are citizens willing to do more?

Graph 9: Attitudes of high co-producers



As Graph 9 shows, citizens who are already strong ‘co-producers’ tend to be willing to do even more, in terms of spending more time each week tackling the issue themselves or helping others to do so. Indeed, the correlation between the co-production index and the index of their willingness to do more in these ways is nearly 0.3 – this is quite a strong statistical association.

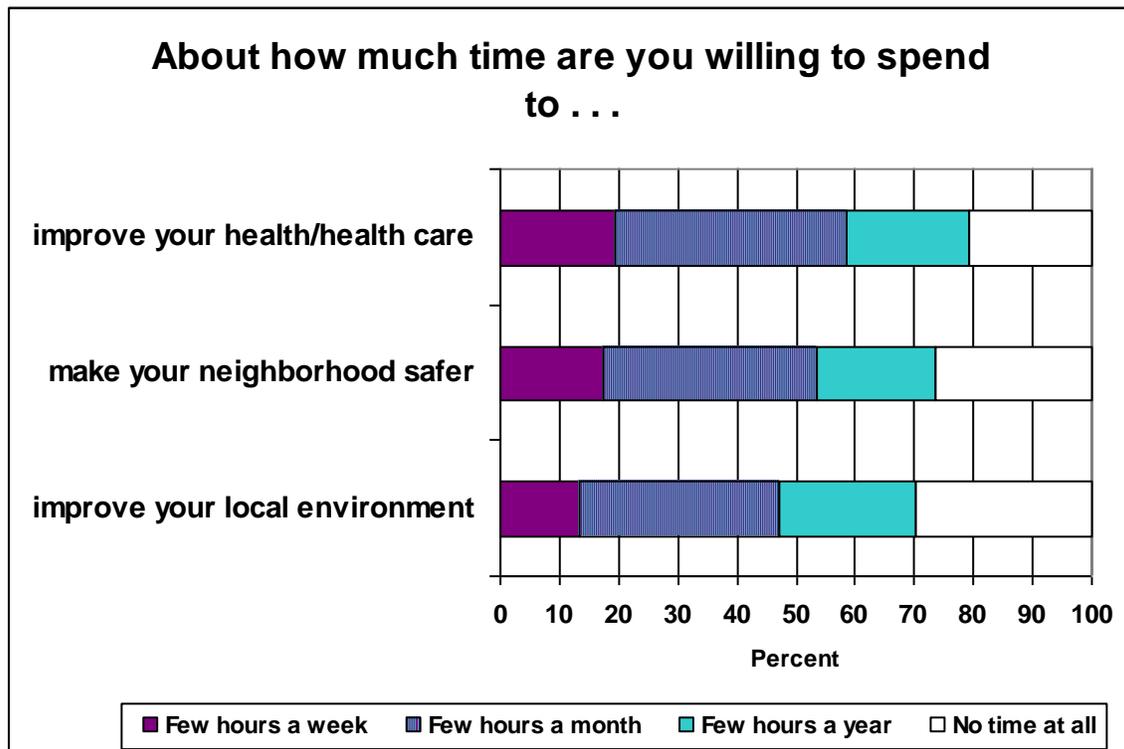
Those who score higher on the co-production index also tend to believe that citizens can make a difference, although this is not quite as strong an association as in the case of willingness to do more. This suggests that some people who are active in co-production may not be sure that their interventions will make a difference but express, nevertheless, a willingness to do more.

Finally, active co-producers show only a weak tendency to be more satisfied with the performance of public agencies in the fields of community safety, local environment and health. This means that we cannot distinguish between several arguments which are conventionally made. One hypothesis is that many people may actually become co-producers explicitly because they are dissatisfied with public services and want to improve them. Another hypothesis is that people who do co-produce may become more satisfied with services because they have helped to improve them. Again, another hypothesis is that citizens who are engaged in service delivery become more dissatisfied

because their expectations increase but are not realised. Our finding, that the two variables are not strongly related may indicate that all three sets of behaviour are taking place simultaneously, However, it would require more detailed research to demonstrate which of these hypotheses is most consistent with the evidence.

Of course, the statistical relationships illustrated in Graph 9 do not allow any conclusions as to which variable is the cause and which is the effect. Therefore, it is useful to look more closely at these relationships. In particular, it is interesting to explore whether there are any sector- or country-specific differences in the attitudes of ‘active citizens’.

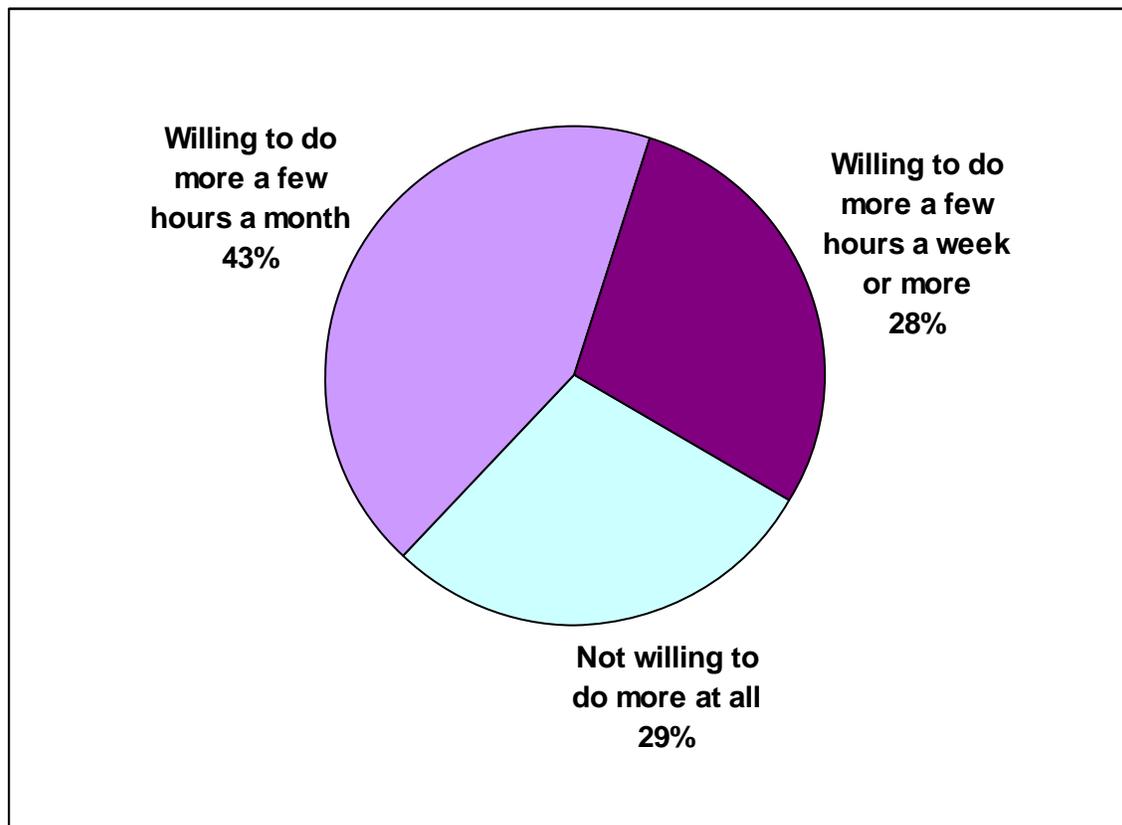
Graph 10: How much more time are citizens willing to spend in different sectors?



Graph 10 shows that 19 % of European citizens are willing to spend a few hours more per week to improve their own health or the health of other people. Further, for improving community safety, 17 % of European citizens are willing to invest a few hours per week but for improving the local environment only 13% are willing to do so.

Taken together over the three sectors, 28% of citizens indicate themselves to be willing to spend a few hours more per week, while another 43% are prepared to spend a few more hours per month, and only 29% indicate that they are not willing to spend any time at all (see Diagram 1).

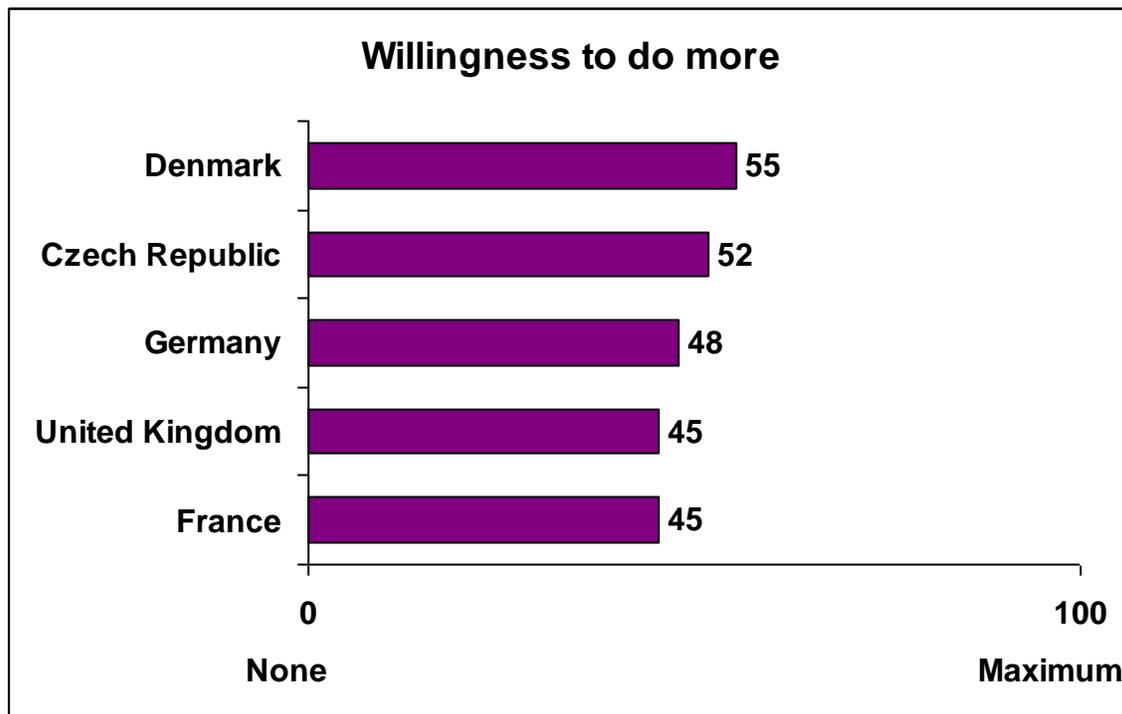
Diagram 1: How much more time are citizens willing to spend overall (whether in community safety, local environment or health)?



This means that depending on the issue concerned about 70%-80% of European citizens would be willing to do more to improve public services, in particular in health issues. As the index shown in Graph 11 suggests, the willingness to do more is most pronounced in Denmark and weakest in the United Kingdom and France.

Interestingly, the willingness to do more in health is statistically correlated with the willingness to do more in community safety and in local environmental improvement. However, these associations are of only moderate strength – many people willing to do more in one field have no interest in doing more in other fields. This strongly suggests that, in order to tap this willingness to do more, it is necessary to make an offer to citizens which is immediately and directly relevant to their interests. As the moderate association suggests, it is likely that many of these ‘new recruits’ are likely eventually to develop an interest in becoming active in other fields – but this cannot be taken for granted and should not be allowed to confuse the original ‘recruitment’ approach.

Graph 11: Index of the ‘willingness to do more’ of European citizens to improve community safety, the local environment and their health

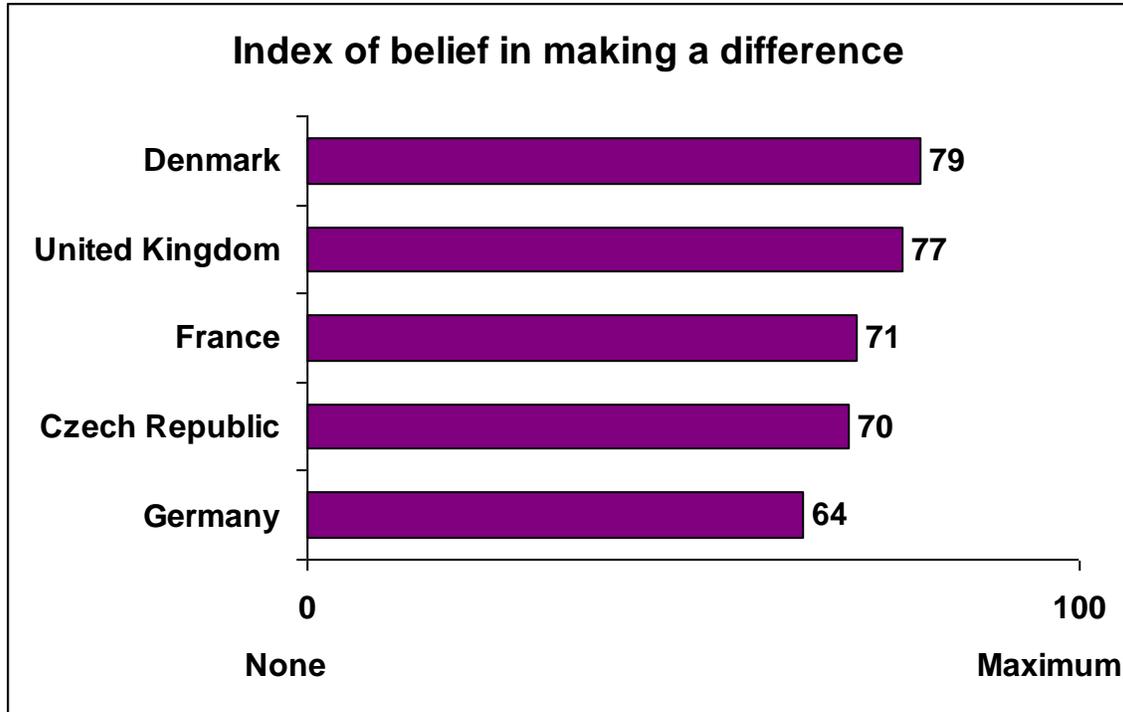


The index reported in Graph 12 shows that the belief of citizens that they can “make a difference” is also strongest in Denmark. It also reveals that this belief is least pronounced in Germany, even though we know from the overall co-production index in Graph 7 that German citizens are relatively active when it comes co-delivering public services in the three sectors studied. This demonstrates once again that citizens may play an active role in delivering services, even when they are not very convinced that they can make a difference. This raises the question of what other motivations might be driving citizens to ‘co-produce’ in the public domain (e.g. social motives, personal values, or insurance benefits). Again, exploring these issues goes beyond the scope of this study.

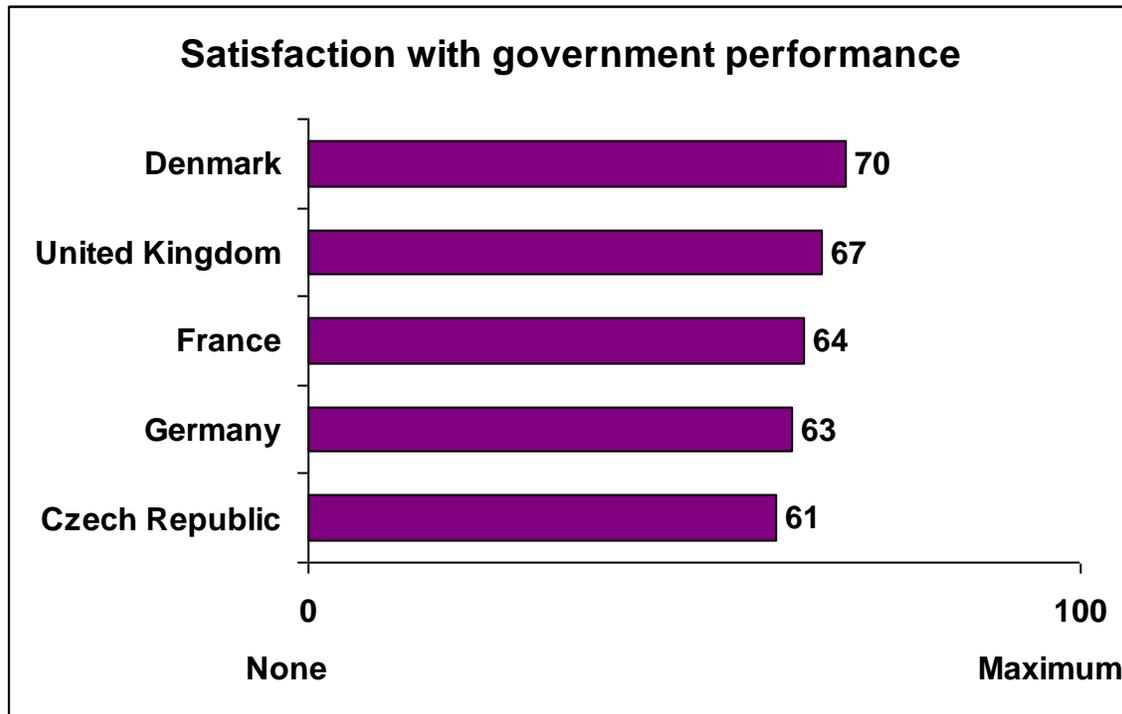
When being asked about the effects of citizen involvement in community safety issues a French focus group participant thought “*we still have crime and prostitution but at least people know each other and feel safer*”.

4.2. What do co-producers think about public services?

Graph 12: How much do citizens believe they can make a difference in improving community safety, the local environment and health?



Graph 13: How satisfied are citizens with government performance in community safety, local environment and health?



Graph 13 shows that the overall satisfaction with government performance in the three sectors studied is highest in Denmark (index 70) and lowest in Czech Republic (index 61). A comparison between the satisfaction indices and the co-production indices of the five countries suggests that the relationship between satisfaction with government performance and a high involvement of citizens in the delivery of services is not linear: in Denmark citizens are quite satisfied with public services but not very strong co-producers, whereas in Germany we have higher levels of co-production but a lower level of satisfaction with public services. Therefore, we cannot say that people who are involved in the delivery of services tend to be more or less satisfied with government performance. Nevertheless, some focus group participants still thought that this would be the best motivation to encourage professionals to work more with service users.

“Citizen involvement takes professionals more time because they need to explain their actions and invest more time in coordination, so they will only do it if they see some pay-offs. The best pay-off is feedback on increased satisfaction with their services”.

A participant in the French focus group on environmental issues

PART 5: OBSTACLES AND DRIVERS OF CO-PRODUCTION

In this part, we examine the extent to which co-production by the respondents in our survey is associated with a range of variables which are often thought to be important drivers of co-production activity.

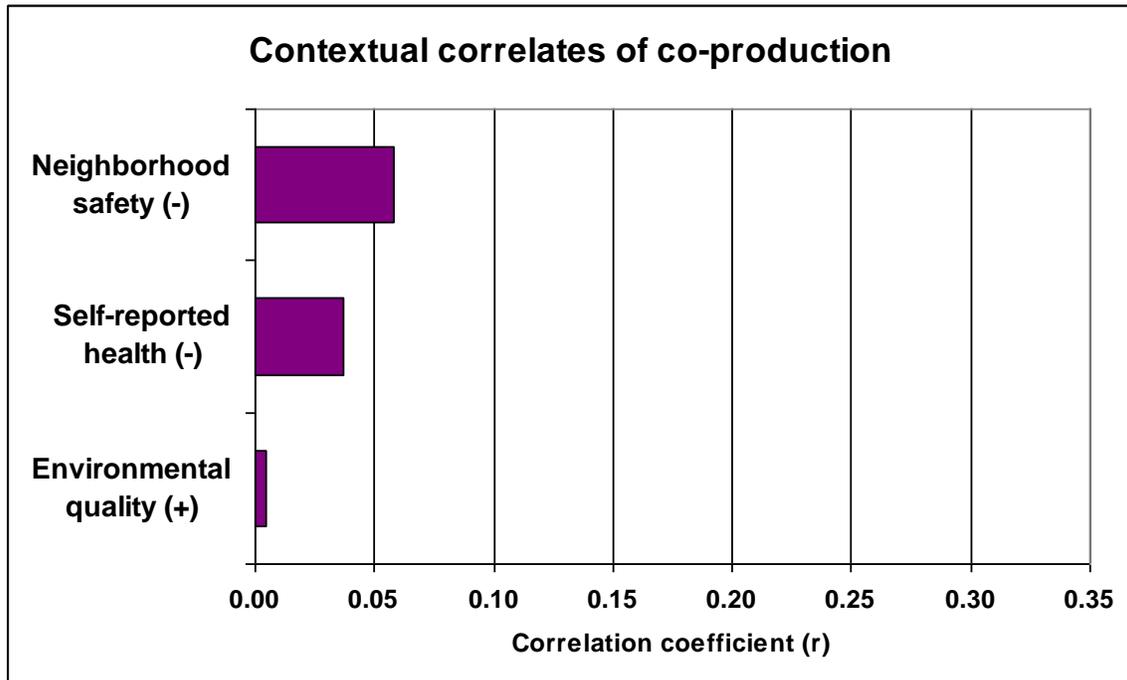
5.1. Some myths about ‘obstacles’

One very obvious issue to explore is “does context matter”? The conventional wisdom is that co-production will only occur in certain circumstances. We have tested the extent to which co-production behaviour is associated with some often-cited contextual variables, – in our study, that referred specifically to how safe and healthy citizens feel and whether they think their local environment is attractive. As shown in Graph 14, there is a weak association between the level of co-production in general and how people feel about their safety, their health and the quality of their local environment. While people who do not feel safe in their neighbourhood and who do not feel healthy are more likely to co-produce, overall these relationships are very weak – this suggests that there are many other factors which are more likely to be important.

Interestingly, the UK focus group discussing co-production in community safety issues pointed out that Neighbourhood Watch groups tend to exist more often in areas where crime is low and where people know each other, while, in deprived areas where crime is high, it is often more difficult to get residents to join Neighbourhood Watch groups. However, this survey result suggests that it may be the other features of these areas which makes it more difficult to get people to co-produce such as the lack of social capital.

“If we are successful in crime prevention there will be fewer volunteers because everybody feels safe”.
A participant of the UK focus group on community safety

Graph 14: Level of association between co-production and perceptions of safety, health and environmental quality

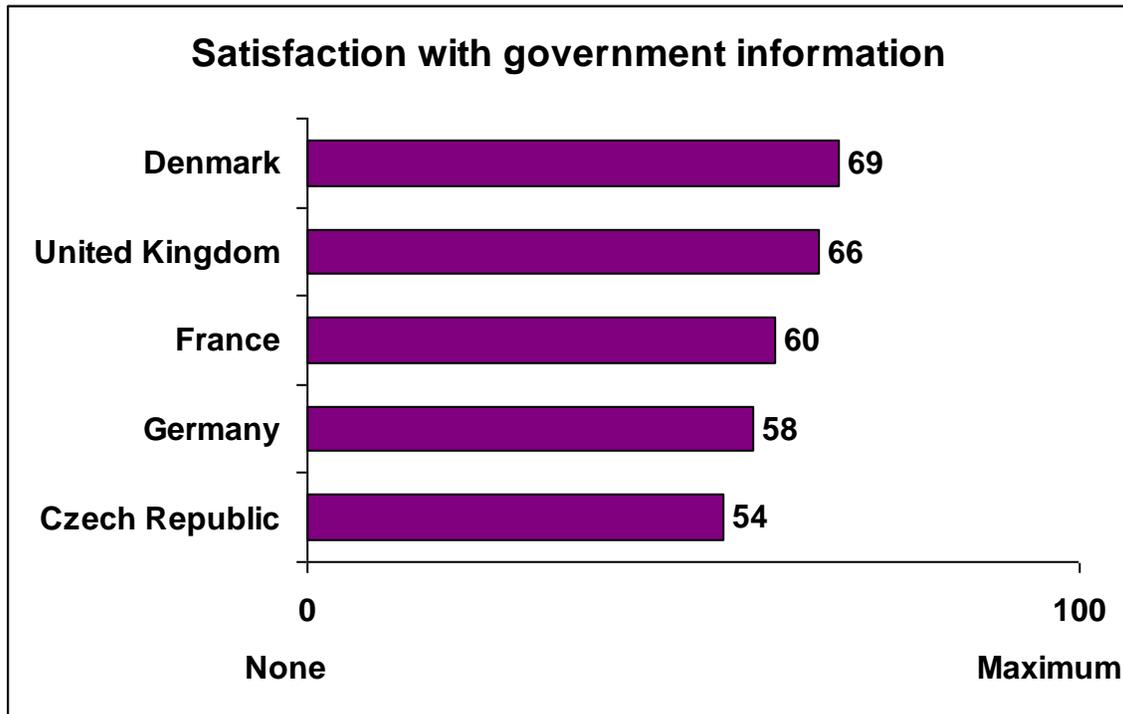


5.2. The scope for government action

Clearly, for government the key question is whether it is within its scope to increase levels of involvement of citizens in the public domain. In particular, there has been a lot of debate about the importance of informing and consulting with citizens in order to get them involved in public issues.

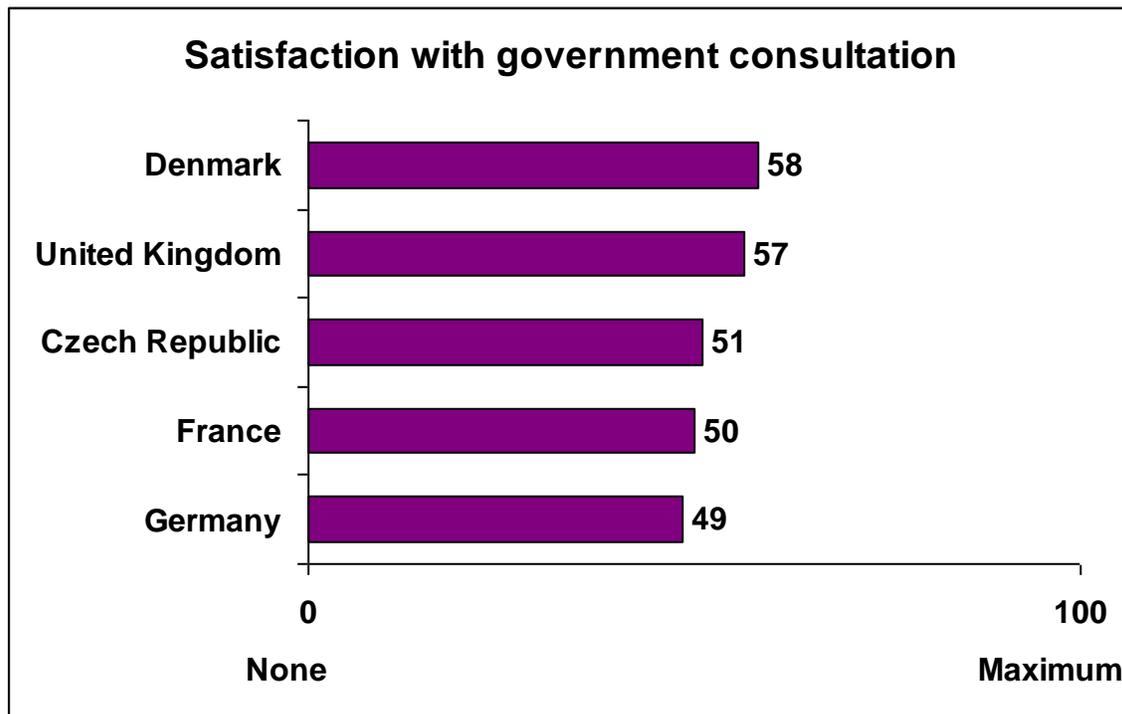
A comparison of the strength of satisfaction with government information (Graph 15) and the strength of satisfaction with government consultation (see Graph 16) reveals in all countries citizens are more satisfied with the information provided by government than with consultations. This could mean that citizens do not think that government asks sufficiently for their opinion but, at the same time, they may also be dissatisfied when public agencies consult with them but give them no feed-back or take no action.

Graph 15: Index of satisfaction of European citizens with government information in community safety, local environment and health



Clearly, the satisfaction of citizens with the information provided and consultations being carried out by public agencies is highest in Denmark and the United Kingdom. In France, Germany and Czech Republic citizens are considerably less satisfied with these government activities.

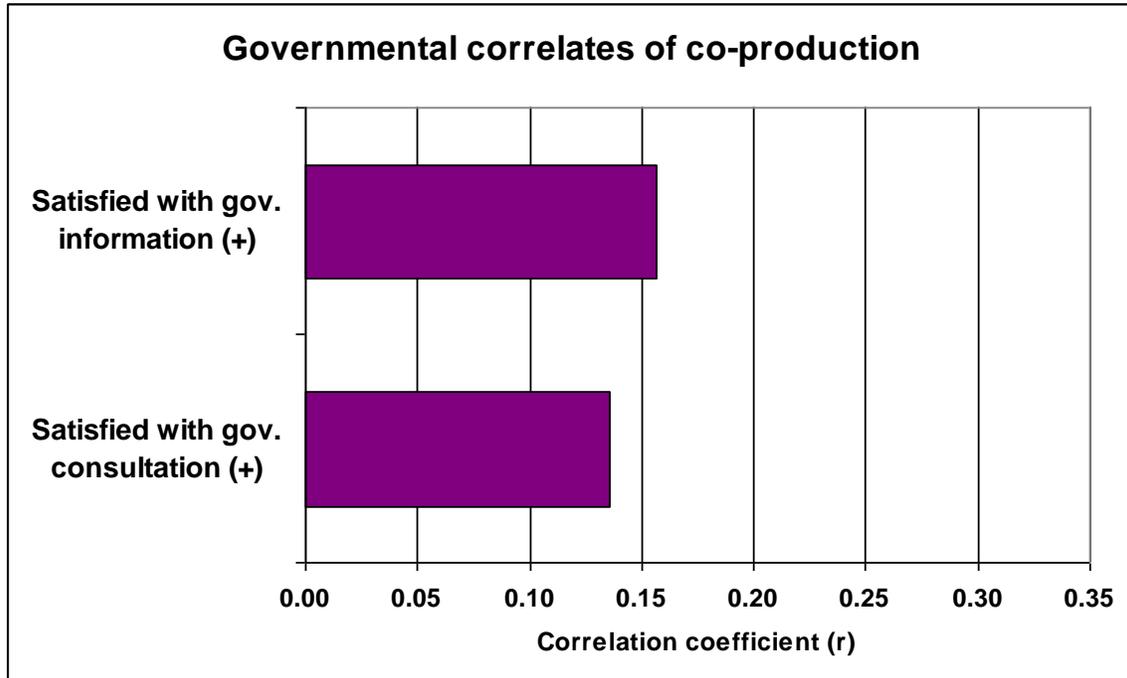
Graph 16: Strength of satisfaction of European citizens with government consultation in community safety, local environment and health



The question is whether overall satisfaction with government information and consultation matters and encourages citizens to become more active in public service delivery? Correlation analysis reveals that the frequency of public sector co-production is, indeed, related to levels of satisfaction with government information and consultation (see Graph 17) although the relationships are not all that strong. Still, these findings suggest that government may indeed be able to encourage co-production to some degree, by doing a better job at consulting and informing citizens.

One participant at the UK focus group on health issues suggested “*there are lots of examples of consultation with citizens and service users but what happens to it at the end is a complete mystery*”.

Graph 17: Strength of correlation between co-production and satisfaction with government information and consultation

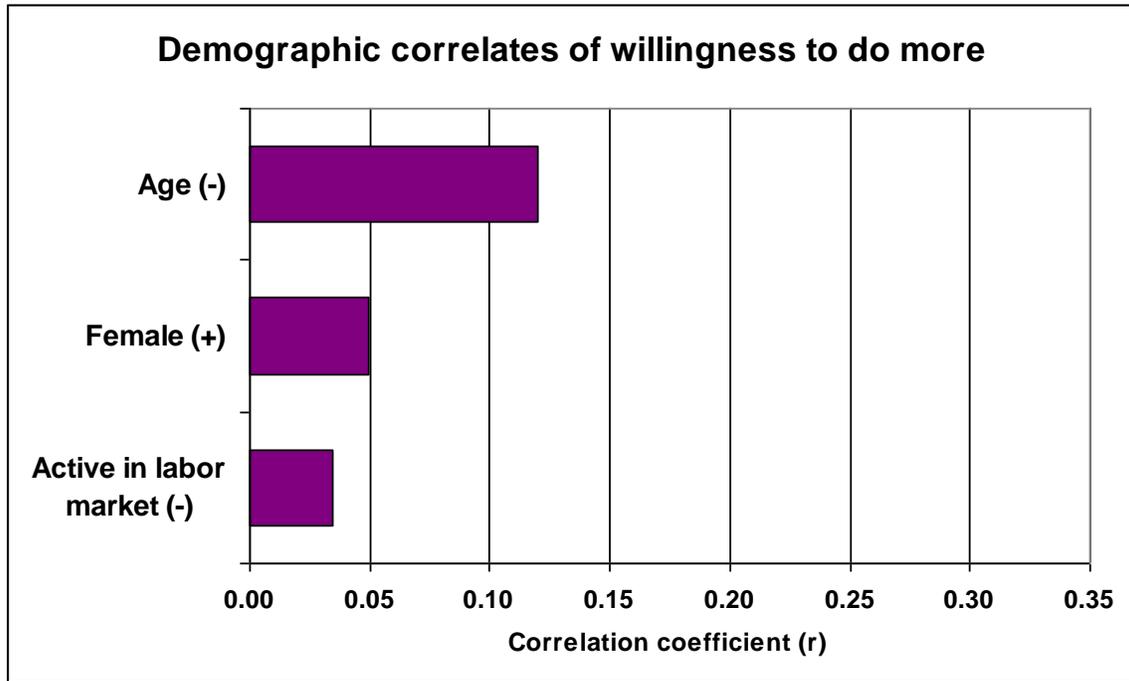


5.3. Where to start?

In this regard, it is interesting to have another look at demographics and to analyse 'who' is likely to do more. As Graph 18 reveals the willingness to do more increases the younger people are.³ This is consistent with the previous finding that elderly people tend to be more active citizens which is why their willingness to do even more than at current levels is limited.

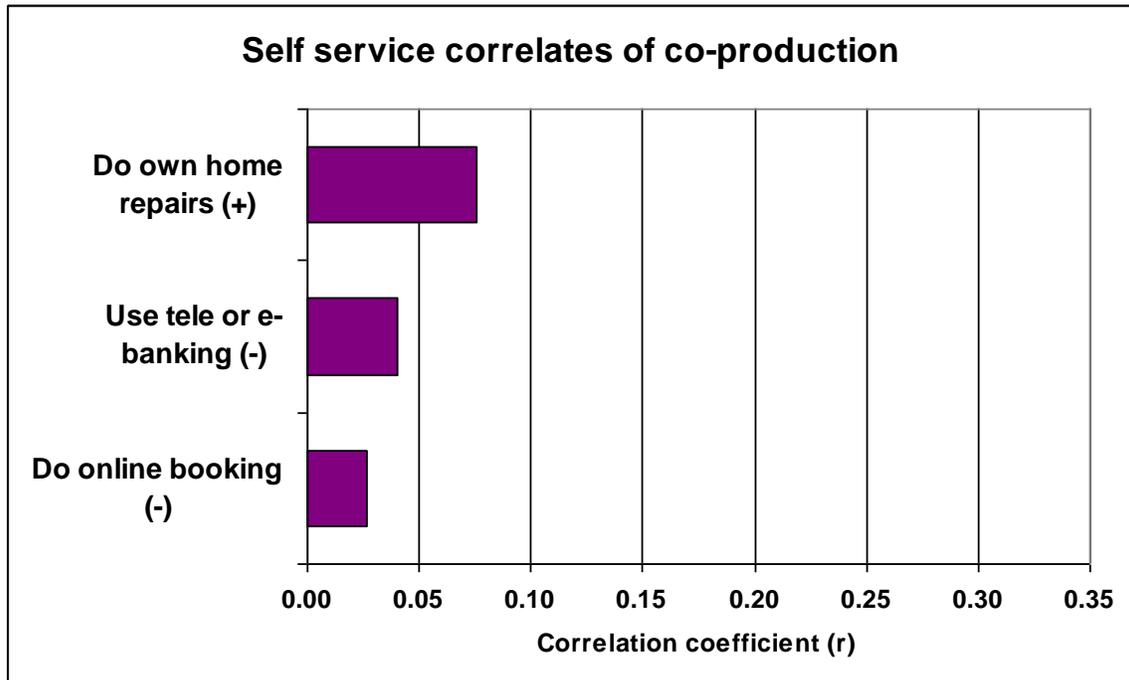
³ This is expressed in a negative correlation between age and 'willingness to co-produce'.

Graph 18: Strength of correlation between co-production and demographic factors



The question is whether there is a particular type of citizen who is more ready to become more involved in public services delivery. Therefore, we looked at the extent to which co-production of public services appears to be associate with ‘self-service’ behaviour in relation to some private sector services. Here we find an interesting surprise – the frequency of public sector co-production is only weakly related to whether people engage in ‘self-service’ by doing their own home repairs, using telebanking or e-banking or doing online booking (Graph 19).

Graph 19: Strength of correlation between co-production and some self-service activities in private services



PART 7: POLICY CONCLUSIONS

A number of policy conclusions emerge from these findings. Here, we focus only on those which apply across all the countries in our study – there are, of course, some policy conclusions which are specific to each of the countries separately.

The key finding of the survey is that if we look at the range of citizen co-production roles – from ‘hero’ to ‘zero’ - we are now around mid-way in the scale.

In particular, the survey has shown that ...

- ❖ **there is already a lot more citizen involvement in public service delivery than the professionals taking part in our focus groups wanted to acknowledge.** This is particularly evident in local environmental and health issues but also, though to a lesser degree, in community safety issues.
- ❖ **there will be more citizen involvement in service delivery in the future** due to the demographic changes taking place in most European countries. The involvement of citizens in delivering public services clearly increases with age, so that the ‘ageing society’ is good news in terms of increasing levels of ‘co-production’.
- ❖ **citizens are most willing to make a contribution towards improving public services when it involves them in relatively little effort and when they do not have to work closely with other citizens or staff or professionals in the government.**

What does this imply for public service delivery and the ways in which we have been trying to improve service quality? So far, the quality improvement approaches in most public services have focussed on how *professionals* can improve service quality and outcomes. Indeed, the most commonly used quality assurance systems tend to view service users and society from the perspective of what results are achieved *for them*, rather than viewing them as a resource. Once they are seen as a resource, working with them has a very different set of implications for the management and governance of public services. However, this perspective is still far from universal - as our focus group participants suggested, not all professionals working in public services are prepared yet to give service users a more active role.

How can government make more effective use of citizens as co-producers of public services?

The survey results point out a number of ‘drivers’:

- ❖ While older people and those not currently working are already quite ‘active’, there is a significant number of citizens willing to do more in the future. **In**

particular, the younger people are, the more willing are they to do more.

- ❖ This willingness to get more involved is **most strongly evident in relation to improving their own health and the health of other people** but it also applies to an important extent in improving community safety and improving the local environment.
- ❖ It is also critically important to ensure that initiatives are targeted at those who are likely to be interested in them. Our results demonstrate that **many people who actively co-produce in health or in community safety or in local environmental improvement have little interest in the other fields**. Unless they are approached and engaged directly in relation to the issue about which they actually care, they are likely to shy away from any involvement at all. Of course, some people are indeed active across two or more issues – and there is therefore room to hope that capturing people’s interest in one issue may lead them eventually to become more ‘active citizens’ in a rounded sense. However, this is by no means certain – many people may remain ‘single issue’ indefinitely. It is therefore essential that citizen participation units in government do not try to talk to all citizens at the same time but rather capture the interest of citizens through addressing them on the specific services and issues in which they are personally interested – a much more sophisticated (and challenging) task.

This suggests that government should take on the challenge of targeting young people and getting them more involved – while many young people clearly have little or no interest in this, the ones that do should be identified, encouraged and supported. The most obvious way of doing this would be to start by helping young people to take steps to improve their own health.

Of course this last conclusion leads naturally to the question: “How can young people be motivated to do more on terms of looking after their health?” This brings us to the issue of **barriers to citizen involvement**. Again, the survey provides some interesting insights:

- ❖ **More than 70% of European citizens are already willing to do more to improve some aspect of those public services, which impact on their quality of life**. While particularly true for health, it also applies to local environmental and community safety issues. The missing piece of the jigsaw is the **provision of attractive opportunities** for them to put this motivation into practice.
- ❖ Our statistical analysis shows that **better government information and consultation cannot be considered as strong drivers towards more citizen involvement**, even though clearly they can play a role. Surprisingly, perhaps, even the commonly held view that citizens only care when they believe that they can make a difference is not confirmed by the survey results – many people turn out to be active co-producers even though they have to admit that they do NOT believe that what individual citizens do makes a difference. This means that there must be other ‘pay-offs’ for citizens playing an active role in service delivery. Of

course, this does not mean that governments should stop trying to influence citizens' beliefs in their own ability to make a difference (e.g. by focussing on projects that produce 'quick-wins' or visible results) – for those citizens for whom this is indeed important, this could help increase their co-production activity.

- ❖ Another counter-intuitive insight of the survey is that urban-rural location and levels of education, as well as the level of 'self-service' behaviour in private sector services, are not much linked to co-production behaviour in public services.
- ❖ More generally, the survey suggests that **there has been too much attention on how to motivate citizens in general and service users in particular to get more involved in public service delivery. Our findings demonstrate that actually the underlying problem is more likely to be the way they are approached.** This suggests that increased levels of co-production in the future will require appropriate mechanisms and initiatives, which are sufficiently easy and straightforward to encourage individuals and their families to get involved. Ideally, these should be initiatives that individuals can pursue on their own, if they want to do so – many individuals are reluctant 'joiners'. Clearly, many e-government initiatives are ideal in this respect, in that they can cater very well for those who prefer 'bowling alone'. Of course, many citizens who do get involved later admit that one of the reasons they remain active is that they value the social contact it brings – but this was not the reason they first became involved.

So what are the benefits of more user involvement in public services? One long debated question is whether involved users are more satisfied than other users who are less involved? In fact, the survey shows that **active co-producers show only a weak tendency to be more satisfied with the performance of public agencies in the fields of community safety, local environment and health.**

This finding is in-line with the hypothesis that many co-producers may have taken this pathway explicitly because they are *dissatisfied* with the public services related to the issues in which they are most interested. Whether their co-production is likely to lead them to become more satisfied with services over time could not be tested in this survey, because it provides only a 'snapshot' of the current situation. Nor have we evidence about whether co-production will level off if services are seen to improve. It does, however, suggest that, from the citizens' viewpoint, co-production has so far had limited pay-offs. Clearly, anything that government can do to improve these pay-offs – e.g. help to engineer 'quick wins' or make the co-production process more painless or give small rewards to co-producers – might help to make it more sustainable.

Of course, co-production of public services will always be a learning process for both professionals and citizens. The differences in viewpoint between the citizens responding to our survey and the professionals participating in our focus groups indicate the gap in understanding which currently divides them. Working together will not be without frictions and will inevitably raise new governance issues such as:

- ❖ What will become of those people who cannot or refuse to participate in a ‘co-production’ model?
- ❖ How much power do users really have over service professionals or managers, given that the budget typically remains with the latter?
- ❖ Who will decide in cases where users and professionals disagree on how the service should be delivered?

Tackling these issues will be critical to the successful adoption of the co-production model. If they are ignored, then the new model will simply reproduce the old problems.

It is clear that many of these conclusions apply across all three service areas which we studied, albeit to rather different degrees. Furthermore, many of them are quite independent of any particular service – e.g. the need to target individuals who are interested in a single issue and to attract their interest by finding ways in which they can co-produce without joining a local association. Therefore, there are good grounds for believing that many of these conclusions will apply to a significant extent to many other public services as well.

Finally, these findings, when considered in the whole, suggest that the relationship between citizens and the professionals and managers working in the public sector had shifted from dependence towards inter-dependence. This reinforces the message that co-production is not only about technical issues of service delivery but also “about the balance we strike between citizen, community and government in terms of power and voice” (Lyons, 2007, p. i). In this new world of jointly produced public services, professionals are no longer the sole ‘experts’ and gate keepers on the journey to better services – but their role is still vital. Only if citizens and public agencies walk together on this journey are they likely to be successful in finding the way to better public services.

Naturally, ‘walking together’ may not be as fast as both parties wish. However, the co-production of citizens in service delivery will be a prerequisite for arriving at the destination desired by everyone concerned – the achievement of sustainable improvements in the outcomes experienced by citizens and their quality of life.

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ANNEX 1: NOTE ON METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This scientific study is based on a survey of citizens in five European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) and discussions with public officials and representatives of organised citizens in focus group sessions in the same five countries.

The survey includes nationally representative samples of the population aged 18 and over with the following sample sizes:

- UK – 988 individuals
- Germany 1000 individuals
- Denmark 1011 individuals
- France – 988 individuals
- Czech Republic – 1000 individuals.

The samples have been compiled by quota sampling taking into account gender, age and/or occupation of head of household) and geographical stratification (which means that geographical regions have been weighted by the size of the population). The national samples have been weighted according to each country's population weight in the European Union.

The survey has been carried out by Tns-*Sofres* in the form of phone interviews within a wider (omnibus) survey from 16 April – 5 May 2008. This has meant that the questionnaire could not exceed 20 units of questions without any open questions.

Before the launch of the survey three focus groups were convened in the capitals of the five countries with public officials and representatives of organised citizens, working in the three fields of community safety, local environment and health. The objective of the focus group sessions were three-fold:

- ❖ To provide insights which can be used in designing the questionnaire of the survey;
- ❖ To provide background information to the statistical part of the report (since the survey had no open questions)
- ❖ To provide material which will help to make the report lively and will provide examples and quotes which can be used to highlight and supplement important points and conclusions arising from the statistical analysis of the survey.

The sessions lasted 1.5 hours and followed the same template. In all cases, a representative of *Governance International* and a local expert facilitated the session jointly, and produced a summary of the focus group session. By definition, focus groups are not statistically representative but the intention was to get a wide perspective from different stakeholders involved in delivering services and outcomes in each of the three sectors.

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Jonathan Landsberg, Neighbourhoodwatch.net, London
John Tatam, independent consultant, London
Tina Benfield, the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management

Contact details for Governance International:

Governance International

2nd Floor, 3 Brindley Place
Birmingham B1 2JB
United Kingdom

Phone: (0044) (0)121 698 8743
Fax: (0044) (0)121 698 8600
E-Mail: info@govint.org
Web: www.govint.org

