

Outsourcing, competitive tendering, more charities delivering public services. These have a lot in common with Big Society policies in the UK. And we can get more clues about what's in store for the NSW public sector by following the Big Society platform. Here is some background.

First NSW [Social Impact Bond Project](http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/bond-plan-to-get-funds-for-welfare-programs-20130326-2qs3q.html) <<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/bond-plan-to-get-funds-for-welfare-programs-20130326-2qs3q.html>> "The NSW government will sign the first contract for a social benefit bond, in which investors will direct funds to community programs. The first contract is with child and family support group UnitingCare Burnside, which will receive funds for programs which help struggling families stay together." Will the NSW government dividend for the UnitingCare Burnside program be an incentive to send children back to families despite a risk of abuse, because of pressure to meet targets for the dividend to be paid? This program is based on the UK government's social impact bonds which actually only have one pilot program which began in late 2012 with the aim of reducing reoffending by prisoners released from one jail in Peterborough.

So do social impact bonds work? No one knows. What the First Social Impact Bond Won't Tell Us <http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/what_the_first_social_impact_bond_wont_tell_us> is discussed [here](#).

Big Society or Good Society <http://prezi.com/n7ow6-l4zhu2/big-society-and-australia/> Prezi by James Whelan overviews the scale of cuts in the UK as part of Cameron's Big Society policy. Big Society claims to "empower communitites, encourage a diversity of service providers, [and] foster volunteerism". It is really about "small government logic" which says that "We spend too much on the pubic sector. We're over-taxed. Public sector spending slows the economy. We have too many public servants."

James Whelan's Prezi is based on his report Big Society and Australia : How the UK Government is dismantling the state and what it means for Australia. A co-author of this report said on the [ABC website](http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2013/03/13/3714868.htm) <<http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2013/03/13/3714868.htm>> "It seems that bad results overseas won't necessarily stop Big Society from being imported to Australia. To resist, or at least modify, these ideas we need to know what the flaws were, both in implementation and in the theory itself, and we need to have our own ideas on what the alternative might be."