



**Co-Production and Co-Governance:
Strategic Management, Public Value and Co-Creation in
the Renewal of Public Agencies across Europe**

D6.2 and M5:

Making Co-Creation Work: A Public Leaders' Guide to Engage Professionals

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COGOV partners have contributed with case studies of co-creation attempts across a range of policy areas in six European countries, at national and local / regional levels.

For a summary and evaluation, see Appendix.

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**MAKING CO-CREATION WORK:
A PUBLIC LEADERS' GUIDE TO ENGAGE PROFESSIONALS**

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Introduction

This report critically evaluates types of co-creation and what public professionals and public leaders can do to improve the strategic renewal of public agencies and their impact. It is based upon a literature review and an empirical study of 14 cases of co-creation initiatives across six European countries¹. The guide presented here should allow public decision-makers at the EU, national and local levels, and those in the non-profit and private organizations funded by government, to understand more clearly how co-creation with citizens and other stakeholders can be organized. In particular, the guide will provide insight on the conditions that public leaders can shape to facilitate the effectiveness of public professionals in networking and co-creation. It is based on empirical evidence from professionals' first-hand accounts on what they need to co-create. This guide also categorises how innovative processes can be embedded in public organizations and networks.

We briefly introduce here three key concepts in this report: co-creation, public professionals and public leaders.

Co-creation: what purpose?

Co-creation can be defined as 'a process through which two or more public and private actors attempt to solve a shared problem, challenge, or task through a constructive exchange of different kinds of knowledge, resources, competencies, and ideas' (Torfing et al. 2019, p. 802). There is a growing literature mapping different interpretations or stages of the co-creation process, such as co-construction, co-design and co-production (Dixon et al. 2021; Osborne 2018). As Pollitt (2003) already noticed, an important characteristic of co-creation is the direct involvement of 'users' in policy formulation and/or service delivery. Users can be citizens or their representatives, and organizations, networks and associations that are related to public problems and/or solutions (Dixon et al. 2021). In the next section, we will distinguish three different types of co-creation, based on their main purpose.

Professionals in co-creation

This report's particular focus is on engaging public professionals in co-creation, as their contribution to solving complex societal problems and implementing public policy is crucial (Hupe and Hill 2016; Zacka 2017). Public professionals, in particular the ones in direct contact with citizens and other stakeholders, traditionally have a key role in balancing policy implementation with the needs of the communities they serve (Lipsky 1980). In literature, differences have been highlighted between what is required of public servants, in particular at 'the street-level', and what is offered to them in terms of conditions in the meso- and macro

¹ For the Literature review, see COGOV Work package 6, Deliverable 1, www.cogov.eu. For the empirical study across nations and sectors, see the Appendix of the current report.

context (Hupe and Buffat 2014). ‘Implementation’ is often described as the most neglected and underestimated ‘phase’ of public policy (Hupe and Hill 2016).

From a change perspective, professionals’ capabilities and attitudes in the public sector have been under scrutiny, and professionals are often seen as resistant to change. Yet, it is recognized that much of the valuable knowledge needed for effective interaction with citizens and other stakeholders is among professionals (Dent et al. 2016). Collaborative initiatives thus need to be highly prepared to enhance the involvement of professionals, if they are to succeed rather than flounder. A common storyline of policy implementation is the misuse of discretion of public professionals to replace legally aimed outcomes (Lipsky 1980), but discretion can also be used to circumvent barriers to implementation and achieve agreed policy objectives (Campbell 2012). Also, some segments of professional groups (e.g. social work and community development; law and free law centres) have a tradition seeking to develop more of a client and community facing orientation. These ‘new professionals’ have origins in the 1960s/70s (Gross and Osterman 1972); they are seen as less interested in building conventional careers – and this movement could fit well with more recent co-creation ideas. This report takes public professionals as (potential) change agents in co-creation attempts.

In literature, the label ‘professional’ is drawn from three theoretical insights (Wilensky 1964): Professionals have acquired a ‘technical base’, a shared expertise through specialized training (Abbott 1988; Freidson 2001). They ideally share a ‘service ethic’ and know how to act according to their professional standards (Wilensky 1964). And professionals have a relatively high degree of autonomy within the context of their profession (Noordegraaf 2007). They have the discretion to make decisions about individual cases (Lipsky 1980), based on their professional judgement (Zacka 2017). Based on these defining characteristics, occupations can be described as professions². We focus here on professionals in the public and voluntary sectors that apply specialized knowledge to specific cases where individual citizens and other stakeholders are involved and who render judgements under conditions of ethical uncertainty.

Public leaders

There is more than one way to define who are public leaders in co-creation attempts: do we restrict public leadership to politicians and public managers in a public-office role or do we broaden the definition of public leaders to all who lead processes of public value co-creation, either from the state, market or civil society, as suggested by Hartley (2018)? In this report we follow the broader concept of ‘public leaders’, but with a particular eye on politicians and public managers. While public leaders outside government are essential for reaching public aims, e.g. governors and managers of NGOs, or local community leaders; public leaders inside government have a special role related to public professionals. They are

² Some occupations are however perceived as more professionalized than others (e.g. medical doctors versus social workers).

key in deciding upon regulative and financial conditions for co-creation. As public professionals are either government employees or indirectly paid by public finance, public leaders inside government also are responsible for them as employers. Moreover, politicians and public managers have the important role of bridging the traditional political decision-making process with the co-creation attempts of government with citizens and other stakeholders (Sørensen et al. 2020). Our guide is thus particularly meant for politicians and (senior) public managers, although it is relevant to public leaders outside the public office.

As a guide for public leaders to organize co-creation and to engage and facilitate professionals, this report builds on an earlier 'guide' for public managers of networks (Milward and Provan 2006) that found its way to a broad, international audience of academics and practitioners. The current report differs in important aspects from the Milward and Provan 'managers guide'. First, we focus on what *public leaders* can do to involve, facilitate and support *public professionals* in co-creation attempts. Second, our focus is on *co-creation* rather than *networks*, as networks do not automatically include co-creation with citizens by their direct participation in policy formulation and/or service delivery (Pollitt 2003). Finally, we include what can be learned from our empirical findings (as evaluated and summarized in a report, see Appendix) to embed 'promising practices' of co-creation in the public sector.

Public sector co-creation: Types and purpose

As a starting point, we discuss three *types of co-creation*, based on their (main) *purpose*. In all three types, non-state organisations and citizens have a role in defining and implementing public services³. In practice, co-creation attempts often combine the different purposes, or switch from one purpose to another over time.

Service delivery co-creation

The first type can be described as service collaboration to improve service delivery to clients. Such partnerships for the joint production of services, often for vulnerable citizens like the elderly, families on welfare, or the mentally ill, are critical “so clients will not fall through the cracks.” (Milward and Provan 2006, p. 6). The actors involved in this type of co-creation can be government agencies, but also non-profit or private actors. Service delivery co-creation often has a prominent role for public organizations that aim (or are mandated) to cooperate, and include non-state actors as far as necessary for achieving public sector aims. Examples in our study are the cases on Social and Employment policy in the Netherlands and the case of the Directorate for digitalization of the National ministry for public administration in Slovenia (see Appendix).

Problem solving co-creation

The second type of co-creation is aimed at solving complex problems that need the coordination between many actors from different subfields (Bryson, Crosby and Bloomberg 2015; Lecy, Mergel and Schmitz 2014; Provan and Lemaire 2012). Problem solving co-creation goes further than integrated service delivery while aiming to create new solutions beyond existing policy frames (Ansell and Torfing 2021). Complex problems in need of such innovative approaches can be diverse (e.g. energy transition, climate change, cybercrime, deprived neighbourhoods) and the problem character shapes the nature of the response and the set of relations that emerge. Examples of problem solving co-creation in our study are the case of Tyne Housing Association in the Newcastle area (UK), an NGO that provides housing for people that are excluded from traditional housing options due to problems with mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, offending history or difficulties in managing finances. Another example is the co-creation attempt of the City of Copenhagen to find solutions for climate change (water) problems together with home owners organisations.

Building community capacity

The purpose of the third type of co-creation can be described in line with Milward and Provan (2006), as “to build social capital in a community so that it is better able to deal with a

³ Another type of network distinguished by Milward and Provan (2006) is the Information Diffusion Network; this type is not recognized in our study as a distinct type. Information diffusion was an element of other types.

variety of ongoing and future problems” (p. 6). The main actors in this type of co-creation are non-profit agencies or associations, funded by government and/or private funders, and citizens or their local representatives. An example is the non-profit association INSP in Roskilde, Denmark, a civil society initiative to address the needs of vulnerable young people by enhancing education, integration and cultural/music activities. Another example is the co-creation project in Knabstrup village, in Holbaek municipality, Denmark, to support a rural community that faces an aging population and a decline of services. Community building can also be initiated by local government, like the Rijeka Local Partnership Program (RLPP) in the City of Rijeka, Croatia, to promote civic society values; or the Municipality of Velaux (France) that stimulates collective cultural activities in the local community.

Table 1 Co-creation: Types and Key characteristics

Co-creation Type	Key characteristics
Service Delivery Co-creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services are jointly produced by two or more organizations • Horizontal collaboration of service providers is key • Public organisations are often in the lead with private and non-profit organisations involved • Focus on building relationships and monitoring the process • Key tasks include mobilizing external actors and negotiating resources
Problem Solving Co-creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus is on solving existing complex problems by developing solutions beyond current policy frames or services • Setting the agenda for national or local/regional policy-making about pressing issues that need co-creation • Relationships are built to address a specific problem, but are not necessarily long-lasting • Initiatives can be either designed or emergent
Building Community Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-creation is to increase social capital in (local) communities and maintain/add/improve public services for the future • Can be created bottom up (by local participants, NGOs) or by private and government funders (top-down) • Involves a wide range of public, private and non-profit agencies • Has a prominent role for citizens

Inspired by Milward and Provan (2006).

In all the three types listed above is important to consider how break-through innovations and continuous improvement can be realized. A crucial actor in this are the public professionals, in particular the ones in direct contact with citizens, business and other stakeholders. However, arenas of co-creation are complex for public professionals to operate, with goals to be collectively established and local partnerships where stakeholders might be ill-defined (Lowndes and Sullivan 2004).

Given the complex arenas, it is important to address what professionals need in order to be highly efficient and effective in co-creation, and what public leaders can do to support successful change initiatives. This report builds on a large empirical study across six European countries for a clear conception of what role(s) are expected from public professionals and which conditions public leaders can develop to strengthen professionals’ engagement in co-creation and embed innovation.

Public professionals: New challenges in co-creation

In the era of networks and co-creation in the public sector, new roles and skills are expected from public professionals. Most public professionals involved in co-creation are highly motivated and feel more meaningful in contributing to the life of citizens and to societal/sustainability goals. Professionals in our study point to the energizing contact with citizens and other stakeholders (if the co-creation works). In a few cases, co-creation is interpreted by professionals as a process of informed decision-making (Copenhagen case, Denmark) or internal cooperation within government (Ministry, Slovenia). Based on our study including focus group sessions and individual interviews with lead professionals and managers across 14 case studies in six countries (see Appendix), new challenges for professionals in co-creation can be divided in three categories: (1) dealing with multiple role expectations; (2) operating in broader environments; and (3) communicating with non-state partners. Table 2 summarizes these challenges that will be explained below.

Table 2 Challenges for public professionals in establishing co-creation

<p>Dealing with multiple role expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals need to navigate through a governance landscape with different role expectations: being a legal servant, a service provider or a network partner. They should be able to easily switch roles, e.g. to guide the collaborative process but to intervene when necessary. • More awareness is needed of the necessity of funding and staff capacity when beginning a co-creation project/service. Shifting responsibilities ‘downwards’ should imply shifting resources. • Professionals need more leeway and less administrative burden to allow for co-creation, in particular because their workload is often increased by co-creation processes.
<p>Operating in broader environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals in co-creation projects often have a broader target group and need to include different types of expertise (from other disciplines, and users’ knowledge). Professionals need time and resources for training in their new roles, including project management. • The internal vertical organisational structure and culture of (local) government is perceived as an important barrier for co-creation; in order to collaborate with non-state stakeholders effectively, government agencies should invest in internal (horizontal) cooperation within the public sector. • Co-creation needs more development as a method, with expert knowledge better integrated.
<p>Communicating with Non-State partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals need good communication skills to collaborate with citizens and stakeholders in co-creation. Co-creation requires professionals to be a good listener, but also to be clear about (own) roles and responsibilities from the start. • Professionals should use the right tone (not top-down). They need to mobilize participants that represent social interests in (local) society rather than only individual- or business interests. • Co-creation requires patience from professionals as well as from non-state participants. Citizens and other non-state stakeholders need better insight in legal demands and the workings of government, to avoid dissatisfaction and distrust in co-creation attempts.

Dealing with multiple role expectations

A first challenge for professionals is to act in a context of multiple reforms based on diverse incentives (legal, managerial, collaborative), and to cope with their tensions. The New Public Governance (NPG) model, based on collaborative networks, is recognized as guiding their co-creation practices; but the Traditional public administration (TPA, based on hierarchy) and New Public Management (NPM, based on market principles like competition) are also present and often tend to dominate the work of public professionals. Professionals in co-creation thus often operate in a hybrid environment of various incentives for actions and performance that are difficult to combine (Van Gestel et al. 2019). For example, changes in professional work in line with NPM (contracting, tenders, management targets) have often been reported as a barrier to co-creation (e.g. Tyne Housing, UK; Maastricht Region, NL); they lead to competition and one-sided accountability demands that discourage cooperation.

Not only public professionals from national and local government but also professionals involved in NGOs and executive agencies struggle in co-creation projects with the NPM type of government policy and performance measurement that offers limited room for qualitative outcomes. Also legal rules, for example to restrict the sharing of information between public agencies for privacy reasons, conflict with the aim for sharing information in co-creation projects, for example when households have various problems (family, health, education, debts, criminality, housing, etc.) that are addressed by different agencies (e.g. Maastricht Region, NL). So public professionals are often challenged to be both the traditional public servant carrying out governmental policies (TPA), an excellent service provider striving to meet management targets (NPM) and a network partner in co-creation (Hendrikx and Van Gestel 2017). In most cases in our study, we saw that professional roles are more demanding by combining NPM type of work (e.g. competing for contracts) and NPG type of work (internal and external collaboration).

Another influential change for public professionals is discretion of policy and implementation to local or regional levels, along with reduced budgets and a following loss of staff and expertise. Administration and managerial work take up more time, implying less time for public professionals to spend to contact with service users (e.g. AMU, France; Tyne Housing, UK; INSP, Denmark; Pijnacker-Nootdorp, NL). Public professionals often mention that NPM-type changes for contracting, competitive tenders, with a focus on short term efficiency and stringent top down accountability are at odds with facilitating co-creation. One effect of the multiple role demands that is frequently reported is an increased workload of frontline professionals and managers.

Thus, professionals are expected to fulfil diverse roles (public guardian, service provider, network partner) and to switch between these roles. They need to guide the collaborative process in practice but to intervene where necessary, while a co-creation dialogue does not simply imply 'saying yes to citizens'. Their efforts are often made in a context of lower budgets, competing governance models and higher administrative requirements.

Operating in Broader Environments

Public professionals are expected in co-creation projects to operate in different fields of (expert) knowledge and navigate between them; they often need to provide services to a broader target group than before, and to develop new and systematic ways of working (a 'co-creation method'). Also the project management (the role of network manager, connecting external and internal actors and interests) is often mentioned a new challenge for professionals (e.g. in the cases of AMU, France; National Ministry, Slovenia; Netherlands Enterprise Agency; Tyne Housing, UK). Professionals say they need additional (expert) knowledge beyond their own profession to cope with the issues in co-creation: they are expected to be familiar with a broader range of laws, rules, external actors and target groups in collaborative settings. Some professionals illustrate the difficulties of working in multi-disciplinary teams, where professionals represent various policy subfields, and may hold different perspectives on clients and their problems (e.g. Pijnacker-Nootdorp, NL).

Co-creation also requires more internal public sector collaboration to facilitate co-creation with non-state actors. Professionals in co-creation projects need support from colleagues and managers in their (partner) public organisations; respondents in our study highlight that the success of co-creation depends on the ability of professionals to navigate in a traditional top-down hierarchy (for example, in the municipalities of Slagelse in Denmark and Drechtsteden in the Netherlands, or in Aix-Marseille University in France). Internal collaboration (with other professionals, managers and politicians in and between local government, a national department, or an executive agency) is often viewed by public professionals as even more challenging than external collaboration. So far, only a minor group of public professionals is involved in co-creation attempts, and many other public servants still operate in more traditional, vertical ways. The internal vertical organisational structure and culture of (local) government is perceived an important barrier for co-creation.

Also, public professionals say co-creation needs more development as a method, with expert knowledge better integrated. Some supervisors wonder if professional expert knowledge is still perceived valuable in co-creation by participants, and how this may impact the quality of outcomes. Others are concerned if general public interests are protected well enough in co-creation projects, as public professionals must always consider fairness, equity, and public value. Public professionals feel insecure as they have to take decisions in co-creation projects without a clear political mandate. This feeling is even more evident in countries with a strong hierarchical tradition (e.g. the cases in France; Croatia and Slovenia). Yet, many professionals currently feel like conducting co-creation without recipes. Many believe they are ill-prepared and have to find out 'the method of co-creation' along the way.

Although public professionals in our study generally are positive and motivated for co-creation, they mention that 'everything is still new and quite unclear' and they feel they have to fend for themselves. They call for more guidance, training and education in co-creation, to increase their capacity in using (expert) knowledge beyond their traditional area, and to cope with diverse partners in team/project management (which is often a new task for them).

Communicating with Non-State partners

A third important challenge is communication. Public professionals need communication skills to mobilize citizens and other stakeholders that represent the full diversity of (local) society, instead of just those citizens that are easy to reach. Moreover, public professionals should be clear to other partners in co-creation about their own roles and responsibilities, making explicit they represent a legal authority while being a dialogue partner at the same time. They need to explain these responsibilities and how they aim to navigate between them, using the right tone (not top-down). Communication with non-state partners thus requires flexibility and improvisation skills, especially when working with vulnerable citizens (e.g. INSP, Denmark; Tyne Housing, UK; Dutch Social policy cases). Professionals should be good listeners instead of mainly giving information (Nova Velaux, France; Climate change, Copenhagen). They need patience and persistence, because co-creation projects often have a slower pace than their professional or management targets (Holbaek case, Denmark). All these skills are crucial in building and maintaining trust and relationships with citizens and other local actors (as mentioned e.g. in Slagelse, Denmark; Municipality of Ljubljana, Slovenia; the French and Dutch cases; and the NGOs in UK and Denmark). Co-creation thus may entail a major transformation in terms of skills and role perception for professionals involved.

Although most professionals in our study are in favour of co-creation/collaboration with non-state actors, some wonder if citizens and other stakeholders are fully capable for co-creation. They notice that non-state actors usually have limited knowledge of government policies and tend to prioritize individual- or organisational - rather than wider interests. Citizens also tend to question professional expertise as they rely on other (internet) sources of knowledge. At the same time, citizens and external stakeholders often expect 'the government' in co-creation projects to fulfil a traditional role: to provide money, services, solving problems (e.g. Holbaek, Denmark; Municipality of Ljubljana, Slovenia). Citizens' trust in government, administration, and institutions seems weaker in previously communist countries, and professionals have lower expectations from citizens in co-creation (RLPP, Croatia; Slovenian cases). Citizens and other non-state partners who are not well informed about how (local) government works, can easily become disappointed by co-creation if their ambitions do not match well with legal procedures, political decision-making, or intentions at other policy areas or at other government levels. In some cases they then tend to blame 'the government' as rigid or slow. Some professionals say that citizens expect them to be constantly available in co-creation projects, although the co-creation project is only one part of the professional's job. So clarifying professionals' roles and the government's context and operations, is important to avoid distrust of citizens and inconvenience for professionals.

The challenges for professionals operating in co-creation projects lead us to what public leaders can do to engage professionals in co-creation by improving conditions and facilitating the co-creation process.

Conditions for co-creation: Essential tasks for public leaders

Co-creation has no hierarchical chain of command but includes a more voluntary interaction that ideally relies on mutual interest, trust and exchange. This makes leading and managing co-creation much different from traditional public administration processes. Also, the organizational design of co-creation concerns more often developing and managing interorganizational networks rather than single organizations. In this context, leading tasks in co-creation must be performed by politicians and (project) managers, but also by public leaders of organizations and communities who are part of a co-creation initiative or network. The work of public leaders is crucial in producing conditions to facilitate co-creation and to involve public professionals as well as other stakeholders in this process. As explained in the introduction, in this report we primarily focus on the tasks of politicians and (senior) managers as public leaders.

Based on our study of 14 cases across six European countries, the public leadership of co-creation includes four different tasks to enable and facilitate professionals in co-creation, and making co-creation more effective: 1) building legitimacy; 2) working out an appropriate design; 3) ensuring accountability; and 4) embedding innovation. Each task is an essential step in setting out a vision and associated strategy for the co-creation initiative.

Building legitimacy

An important task for public leaders in co-creation is establishing legitimacy of co-creation projects. This is crucial for the co-creation project or programme to evolve. We suggest three ways to create legitimacy for co-creation.

First, public leaders should invest in the co-creation concept. As legitimacy is ultimately dependent on performance for clients and the wider public (De Waele et al. 2021; Moore 1994), it is important to define which specific challenges (individual/societal) should be addressed, and why co-creation is the best possible concept to achieve impact in a specific case. This focus on outcomes is particularly relevant while co-creation projects tend to pay more attention to processes than results (Voorberg et al. 2015). The most important external trait of legitimacy, the relevance for public services users and societal targets, is often under developed in collaborative initiatives. Moreover, as co-creation projects often require a network structure, public leaders need to 'convince outside groups that the network itself is a viable entity that can and will be effective in addressing and resolving complex public problems.' (Milward and Provan 2006, p. 20).

Next, public leaders should clarify the specific responsibilities of the public sector organisations among other participants in co-creation, to avoid misunderstandings and manage expectations. A co-creation program or project is usually a cooperative venture that must continually negotiate its legitimacy, particularly if its boundaries cross the public, private, and non-profit sectors. It operates in an environment with many expectations that do not necessarily coalesce. Participants in co-creation have a tendency to prioritize their own interests and tasks, and may feel they benefit less than other participants from their

involvement in the co-creation project. Public professionals in co-creation have a dual responsibility: to help creating value for users and establishing agreements among them, but also to follow political decisions, which in some cases may imply overruling individual citizens' or stakeholders' wishes and needs (Sønderskov and Rønning 2021). Public leaders' clarification of public sector responsibilities thus seems crucial to delineate 'the broader picture' in co-creation attempts.

A third element of public leaders' task for building legitimacy of co-creation is mobilizing participants, attracting positive publicity, and additional resources. Commitment of other stakeholders and users of public services is hard to achieve without the support of public leaders (Torfing and Sørensen 2019). Public leaders, in particular politicians, have a role as brokering agents between the traditional political arena and the co-creation project or program (Sørensen et al. 2020). They can attract positive publicity, by their contacts with the media and the wider public, and secure resources, e.g. through grants or contracts, and by developing programs. Long term programs (for example, the Rijeka Local Partnership Program) rather than short term experiments or projects will make co-creation less dependent on political turbulence that may disturb collaborative initiatives. Mobilizing participants also includes the important task for public leaders of building commitment to co-creation goals *within* the public organisations.

Table 3 Tasks of Public leaders in co-creation

Essential tasks	Conditions for co-creation to enable professionals' engagement
Building legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting co-creation initiatives by building and maintaining legitimacy of the co-creation concept, and the involvement in co-creation. • Clarifying the specific responsibilities and workings of the public sector organizations among other participants in co-creation. • Mobilizing participants, attracting positive publicity, and resources.
Co-creation design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciding – in consultation with partners – which governance structure would be appropriate for co-creation success. • Ensuring that public resources are distributed fairly to participants, based on their contribution to collective aims and needs. • Stimulating the set up of ways to manage conflict and dispute resolution.
Organizing accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciding upon who is responsible for which output and outcomes. • Ensuring that dedicated public resources are used for co-creation activities. • Supporting compliance of participants with co-creation goals.
Embedding innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating co-creation attempts to detect drivers and barriers of innovation. • Sharing knowledge about innovation across co-creation projects to improve process and outcome conditions. • Institutionalizing co-creation involvement so that support of collaborative goals and participation goes beyond single persons or experiments.

Co-creation Design

There are design choices for co-creation, and the management of design (the structure for decision-making, finance and operations) is a key issue. A co-creation design can have a more informal character, for example a few participants in a self-governed association or network that operate on the basis of consensus (Provan and Kenis 2005). This may work well in an initial stage of developing ideas for co-creation and innovation, but in cases where the network grows in number of participants and a variety of tasks, it often requires a more formal design to keep focus on its aims and organize implementation. Other options are then the lead organization network “where one member shoulders the responsibility for network management as well as its other network duties” (Milward and Provan 2006, p. 7) (often the government) or a specific organization whose task it is to manage the process: the ‘network administrative organization’ (NAO) (Provan and Kenis 2005). In each design it is important ‘starting as much as possible with the ends in mind and designing processes, structures, and their interactions in such a way that desired outcomes will be achieved and required accountabilities met’ (Bryson et al. 2015, p. 647). In particular, it is important to take in the ‘users’-perspective on desired outcomes by directly asking for their wishes and needs – while they may differ from formal goals and performance ends defined by policy makers, public organisations or representative bodies.

Moreover, public leaders should ensure that public resources for co-creation are distributed equitably to participants, based on their contribution to collective aims and needs. Our study shows an interesting paradox in that co-creation often has its origin in decentralization and reduced budgets, with the (implicit) expectation that costs will be reduced when government collaborates, also with non-state partners. Still, professionals and managers in our study highlighted that co-creation needs more time and resources rather than less (see also Pegan, 2021, p. 21). Austerity and its consequences for lower staff capacity is thus considered a big problem in carrying out co-creation projects, especially in areas of social policy, education and culture (Dutch municipal cases, AMU case, France; Tyneside Housing, UK; INSP, Denmark). Another concern of professionals and their supervisors is the wide-spread trend toward competition for state contracts that may run counter to co-creation attempts, when non-state actors and community groups are viewed as agents rather than as partners (see also, Sommerville and Haines 2008, p. 66). Even in the type of service delivery co-creation where public organisations often are in the lead, the distribution of public resources should be more closely linked to what organizations actually contribute to co-creation goals.

In co-creation design, public leaders should stimulate the set up of procedures for conflict and dispute resolution. Conflicts can develop from different goals among the organizations and individuals in the co-creation network or project, and cannot be resolved by hierarchy. It is thus important that public leaders promote the development of skills and methods for conflict resolution and listen to the voices of other participants. An example of such a method developed by MIT-Harvard is the Mutual Gains Approach⁴. It is important that

⁴ Susskind, L. and Cruikshank, J. (1987). *Breaking the Impasse: consensual approaches to resolve public disputes*. Basic Books Inc.: New York, New York.

public leaders are clear about the position and responsibilities of government. Although co-creation has the potential to be more inclusive than hierarchical governance, it would be naïve to suggest a position of equality between state and non-state participants given the unique role and position of the state in society. Equal relationships with local people and communities are difficult to establish since they often are in a weak position due to low resources, low organizational power, and an unpaid, voluntary status (Somerville and Haines 2008). Thus, procedures for conflict and dispute resolution should take into account specific government responsibilities but also strengthen the capacities of citizens and local communities against an almighty government.

Accountability

An essential task for public leaders is ensuring accountability. With no chain of command, this is a critical issue that politicians, network managers, professionals, citizens and other stakeholders must successfully negotiate. First, a decision has to be made upon who is responsible for which outcomes of public investments. Likewise it should be considered ‘how to respond to free riders who don’t contribute their fair share but continually demand more resources.’ (Milward and Provan 2006, p. 7). In more traditional models of public management (TPA/NPM), citizens and other stakeholders are viewed as to be ‘served by the state’, but in co-creation they should take more responsibility themselves. This is not only a role switch for public leaders and public professionals but also for citizens and other non-state partners. In co-creation attempts, deciding upon who is responsible for which (contribution to) outcomes is therefore an important issue. Taking responsibility can have many different forms, from financial resources to staff capacity, building and using networks, education, etc.

In line, public leaders should ensure that dedicated public resources are used for co-creation activities. In co-creation attempts aimed at joint service delivery, there are typically multiple principals who need ‘to balance competing interests and conflicting expectations of numerous stakeholders and find multiple accountability relations’ (Lægreid and Rykkja 2021, p. 5). Given the hybrid character of many public organisations (Denis et al. 2015), accountability needs to take into account more dimensions, related to “economy”, “efficiency”, “effectiveness” and “(social) equity” (De Waele et al. 2021). Lægreid and Rykkja (2021) found ‘a shift towards more informal, voluntary, and horizontal accountability existing in the shadow of hierarchy, constraining the collaborative arrangements’ effectiveness and making them more complex and multi-layered.’ (p. 1). Accountability for co-creation activities thus is a complicated process that deserves full attention from public leaders in order to rightfully allocate and spend (public) resources. Public professionals are an important source of information for public leaders about how resources are – and can be (better) used for co-creation activities.

Moreover, compliance of participants with co-creation goals should be monitored and strengthened during the co-creation process. As demonstrated in our study, initial enthusiasm for collaborative attempts from public leaders, managers and professionals, and from non-state partners does not necessarily last. Co-creation plans and agreements need frequent

monitoring of actions and conditions. It is important to keep the broader (political) environment updated and well informed, to guarantee future support. Compliance is easier when participants have a clear overview of actions and progress, and evaluations of the process of implementation and its output and impact are available (see next task).

Embedding Innovation

Embedding innovation is important to avoid co-creation as an endless process of trial and error without learning. Usually, very little attention is paid to the implementation process (Hupe and Hill 2016). As a consequence, progress and innovation are not recorded and the method of co-creation is not anchored. To learn from the many experiments and to retain lessons learned, co-creation attempts need evaluation to detect drivers and barriers of innovation. However, based on our study, evaluation and learning do not have high priority. Participants in co-creation seem less aware of co-creation projects at other locations, or are geared to learn from previous attempts. In general, participants in co-creation tend to invent the wheel themselves. To a certain degree this is a necessary part of co-creation, because collaborative aims are developed during the process. But to reflect more thoroughly on the tool/method of co-creation can help to improve results.

Our earlier literature review (Hendrikx et al. 2019) found that innovative processes in public administration that aim for sustainable impact rather than partial change, need conditions at three levels of strategy and intervention. At the micro-level of daily practices, public leaders should allow professionals to increase their local capacity for co-creation, including skills' improvement. At a meso-level, managerial and professional cultures in the public sector require more reflection, as they often are not geared to learning. Evaluations should be used for improving policies, which sounds obvious but often is not practice. At a macro-level, the governance structure of a policy area and the regulative support and incentives (including finance) needs institutionalization so that support of collaborative goals goes beyond single persons or projects. In our empirical study, we found cases with a long term cooperation, such as the Rijeka Local Partnership Program (RLPP) in Croatia or the Drechtsteden case in the Netherlands, where the aims of the program and its participating actors are more embedded in the (local) government. Public leaders (e.g. Mayors/ government executives) played a distinctive role here in initiating and supporting the programs, and co-creation has received a status in local government beyond a temporary project. Interestingly, the local public leaders in these cases have strengthened their local collaborative initiatives by seeking support and incentives at national/EU levels.

Embedding innovation also requires knowledge sharing across co-creation projects. Among (potential) participants there often is much confusion about what co-creation is. For example, a few cases in our empirical study are set up – or understood by participants – as co-creation attempts but are in fact traditional practices (Climate change collaborative, Denmark; City of Ljubljana, Slovenia) given their characteristics. In another case, the co-creation attempt was instigated during the Covid pandemic as an instant solution, but operated in a highly specialized structure (the French case of AMU) that limited its impact. Even where co-creation

clearly led to an alternative approach (still a majority of cases in our study), this was on the basis of a single project or a program, but did not represent an all-encompassing change of the public policy or (public) organisations involved. That 'Co-creation is still in its infancy' corresponds with conclusions based on other large EU-wide studies (Dixon et al. 2021). Public leaders thus face a big challenge to support evaluation, learning cultures and knowledge sharing as important conditions to improve co-creation processes and outcomes.

Conclusion

While each co-creation type has its own characteristics and difficulties, they all need to operate effectively. To do so, public professionals must accomplish a challenging set of tasks and public leaders need to create conditions to engage professionals and support the co-creation effort.

Up to now, most of the literature on co-creation has focused on discussing its (potential) contribution to better integrated public services, solving complex public problems, and building community capacity. Co-creation is considered a panacea for many complex social and environmental problems that cannot be solved by traditional hierarchy-based policy-making or market-based principles alone. The basis for a co-creation approach is not new, because of the realization that support, knowledge and resources from citizens and other non-state actors is essential to tackle public problems more effectively.

Although collaborative efforts thus are seen as helpful and influential to address public problems, there also is increasing attention to the problematic aspects of co-creation, such as the tensions with formal democracy and the focus on processes ('input legitimacy') rather than outcomes ('output legitimacy'). The co-creation debate seems to focus on pros and cons of the concept, but there is still limited in-depth empirical knowledge of co-creation attempts in various jurisdictions and sectors. In particular we lack insights in the important role of public professionals in co-creation, who often are the ones with the closest contact with citizens, private and non-profit organisations. The empirical research in various sectors and countries that forms the basis of this manual contributes to filling this gap (Appendix).

In this guide for public leaders, we have argued that addressing complex public sector problems effectively is largely dependent on how public professionals are facilitated and engaged in co-creation. This is not simply about establishing a project or program and leaving it up to professionals to find out how to operate in a highly complex environment. What we have argued here is that public leaders have essential tasks in creating conditions in supporting public professionals, and enhancing co-creation attempts more widely.

We hope that the discussion of the various types of co-creation (joint service delivery, solving complex problems, building community capacity) contributes to a critical discussion of the (main) purpose of co-creation efforts and their level of success. Moreover, we hope that the important challenges that public professionals face in co-creation, and the discussion of essential tasks of public leaders for building legitimacy, co-creation design, accountability, and embedding innovation, provide a useful guide to consider these tasks and achieve the level of success that is expected.

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APPENDIX

Evaluation and summary of the WP6 Case reports

(as a basis for WP6 D2 and M5: Guide for Public leaders)

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4. Co-creation and self-governance in Slagelse municipality (Denmark)
5. Cocreation in Holbæk municipality, the case of the village of Knabstrup (Denmark)
6. Municipality of Ljubljana: Perspectives of Professionals (Slovenia)
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8. Maastricht Hill Region: Social policy, housing and employment (Netherlands)
9. Reforms in Social policy: professionals in PERSPECT, Drechtsteden (Netherlands)
10. Case report on Social policy – Pijnacker-Nootdorp municipality (Netherlands)
11. Engaging professionals in a Public Value strategy: the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (Netherlands)
12. The Rijeka Local Partnership Program, City of Rijeka (Croatia)
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14. Professionals from a faculty of Aix-Marseille University facing Covid-19 (France)

Introduction

The aim of this summary analytic report (relating to Deliverable 6.2 and Milestone 5) is to provide an overall analysis alongside the 14 case studies that were selected for inclusion in Work Package 6. We follow the format of the WP2 summary analytic report (Regal and Ferlie, 2020) but this report's analysis is based on the specific objectives for WP6. It thus focuses on the role of frontline professionals and managers in the strategic renewal of public organisations and networks providing public services. It will also discuss its wider context as considered in the case study template: the legal and strategic role requirements, barriers and drivers of professional engagement, and how strategic renewal can be embedded in the public sector beyond a status of a single project or experiment.

The overall research strategy of COGOV Work Package 6 was to conduct a systematic literature review and case studies covering a range of co-creation attempts within European public agencies. In particular, the research sought to illuminate the roles and viewpoints of professionals and their managers in these practices, the political and organisational support, and the role of citizens and other non-state stakeholders. To understand more about these themes, see the earlier Literature Review in Work package 6 (Deliverable 6.1).

Researchers from each of the COGOV partner countries (Denmark, Croatia, United Kingdom, Slovenia, Netherlands, and France) carried out a set of 14 cases in total. They were provided by partners across the following institutions (Northumbria University – England; Roskilde University – Denmark; University of Ljubljana – Slovenia; TIAS, Tilburg University – Netherlands; City of Rijeka – Croatia; and Aix-Marseille University - France).

This report is the basis for the Deliverable 6.2 and Milestone 5: Guide for public leaders in the strategic engagement of professionals in the organisation or policy network they run. The report will first cover the methods and case selection. It will then provide an overall analysis. Finally, an overview of the 14 case reports will be added as background and ease of reference.

Methods

The case studies were based on the collection and analysis of qualitative data: focus group sessions, semi-structured interviews, and documentary analysis. The focus group sessions and semi-structured interviews followed an interview pro-forma and each full case was reported according to a common template following the interview topics (see WP6, D.1, Appendix), to facilitate comparative analysis across all cases which is undertaken as the basis for a Guide for public leaders in the strategic engagement of professionals in the organisation or policy network they run (Work package 6, Deliverable D.2 and Milestone 5).

Selection of the cases

The key selection criteria (see WP2) were that the cases should:

- display promising co-creation practices with learning points in relation to the key themes of WP6;
- cover a variety of policy sectors, i.e. sustainability and environment, work and income, culture, education, social policy and digital government;
- involve different levels of government (e.g. local and regional governments, central-level ministries, public agencies) and new organisational forms (public, private or hybrid entities);
- strike a balance between the participating countries, e.g. six countries were involved: namely, Croatia, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Slovenia and United Kingdom (England);
- display interesting experiments in relation to strategic reflection and broader diffusion;
- provide consent for interviewing professionals and their managers directly involved in co-creation attempts.

These criteria were successfully met. The cases reflected a wide variety of co-creation attempts. There were four clusters of (partly overlapping) sectors represented in the set of cases: (1) social/housing/employment policy; (2) cultural/educational policy; (3) environmental policy, including urban planning, climate policy, agriculture, police, inspectorate, public space; and (4) digital co-creation). Different levels of government and organisational forms (public, public-private, NGOs) were represented in the set of 14 cases: central, regional (e.g. local authority/ commune) and city-based levels of government. Finally, the cases display interesting experiments to learn about crucial conditions for the implementation and broader diffusion of co-creation, even though some cases turned out to be problematic in terms of process and/or results.

We recommended the partners in Work package 6 to build on their earlier WP2 cases as these provide important background information on many facets of the wider organisation or network under study. The suggestion was to select a particular co-creation project within the broader case environment of WP2 cases that would allow for an in-depth investigation of the role of professionals and managers in co-creation.

- Four cases in WP6 build directly on WP2 cases and delivered a (complementary) bottom-up perspective on strategic renewal from the perspective of (frontline) professionals and managers (one in Denmark, two in the Netherlands, one in Croatia).

- Four cases also build on WP2 cases, but selected other policy fields in the same jurisdiction (e.g. the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia) or a similar policy field but a different local/regional area (Maastricht Hill Region and the Pijnacker-Nootdorp Municipality in the Netherlands).

- Six cases were selected in addition (in Denmark, France, Slovenia, England) to increase the empirical basis for Work package 6 or to substitute earlier cases that were withdrawn.

In general, the process of getting access to the cases for WP6, including to the former WP2 cases, took more time than planned, reinforced by Covid-19, and needed considerable perseverance. Even when access to cases was initially permitted, positive responses were

often delayed and some were later on cancelled (Slovenia, France, Denmark), implying that new cases had to be found within an increasing pressing time schedule for our COGOV project. As a COGOV team we are thus proud to present a summary and evaluation of:

In total 14 case reports, delivered across six countries, and based upon 15 focus group sessions with 107 professionals, and interviews with 26 public managers.

Focus group sessions and manager interviews

The cases followed the method guidelines for WP6. With the consent of respondents, the interviews and focus group sessions have been recorded with anonymity and confidentiality guaranteed. Focus group sessions were led by a discussion leader of the research team per country, and where possible one other team member was present to take notes. In a few cases there have been individual interviews and no (digital) focus group sessions (one case in Denmark, two in France), related to operational problems during Covid-19. For the other 11 cases, focus group sessions were carried out, with only three face to face sessions (two in the Netherlands, one in Denmark) and eight cases with sessions online, during covid-restrictions where people were working at home. Virtual meetings did not seem to diminish the quality of the conversation and the interaction. Focus group sessions took about 90 to 120 minutes in length and individual interviews about 45 to 60 minutes. Relevant documents were collected, in particular about the legal and strategic requirements, and evaluations - where available.

The interviews followed a shared interview guideline investigating the key objectives of WP6:

- Identifying the main legal and strategic requirements (policies, regulations, reforms) framing professional roles in public management reform initiatives
- Identifying mechanisms encouraging and impeding the involvement of professionals in the renewal of local government and public agencies
- Mapping motivations of professionals in implementing strategic renewal processes
- Identifying promising practices for professionals' engagement with other partners and civil society from their point of view
- Identifying required skills for public servants in co-creation with other parties
- Categorising how such innovative processes can be embedded in public administrations.

Within each focus group, respondents were encouraged to first reflect individually upon the topics being discussed and to make individual notes before responding. These notes were gathered by the research team after the focus group session. The notes taken by the research team member, the notes of the respondents and the recording served as input for a summary of each focus group meeting, structured along the lines of the focus group protocol. These summaries were analysed thematically by each research team. The result of

that analysis has been reported upon in a case report for which the structure is being provided, based on the Dutch pilot case study in WP6 (see D6.1).

The 14 case reports served as the empirical basis for an international comparison of professionals' motivations and conditions for their engagement in strategic renewal of public organisations across European countries. The following table 1 shows the range of sectors addressed and the COGOV national teams' effort (related to the allocated Person Months). For five original cases in WP6, access has been declined during Covid-19, leading to a renewed effort to find additional cases (in England, France, Slovenia, and Denmark). We are pleased that 14 cases, 15 focus group sessions with over 100 professionals and 26 interviews with their managers were secured - more than originally was expected during the pandemic.

Table 1 - Overview of cases and data sources in public agencies or third sector organisations

Country	Case	Level	Policy	Focus groups	Managers	Professionals
UK	Tyne housing association, Newcastle (NGO)	Regional	Housing, social policy, employment	1	1	6
Denmark	Inspiratorium (INSP), Roskilde (NGO)	Local	Social policy, cultural policy, employment	1	2	3
	Climate change collaborative, City of Copenhagen	Local	Climate policy, water regulation	-	1	2
	Slagelse municipality	Local	Public space, local development plans	2	2	9
	Holbæk municipality, Knabstrup village	Local	Rural and social development	1	2	3
Slovenia	Municipality of Ljubljana (MoL)	Local	Urban planning, police, real estate, HRM, inspectorate	1	1	4
	Ministry of Public Administration	National	Digital co-creation	1	1	7
Netherlands	Maastricht Hill region	Regional	Social policy, housing, employment	1	2	7
	Drechtsteden Municipalities	Regional	Social policy, employment	1	1	10
	Pijnacker-Nootdorp municipality	Local	Social policy, employment	1	1	10
		National	Climate, energy transition	1	2	6

	The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (executive agency)	National	Agriculture, manure enforcement	1	2	6
Croatia	City of Rijeka, Rijeka Local Partnership Program (RLPP)	Local	Public space, health, sports and culture	3	4	25
France	City of Velaux, Nova Velaux Space	Local	Cultural policy	-	2	3
	University of Aix- Marseille (NGO)	Regional	Education policy	-	2	6
TOTAL	14 cases		15 focus group sessions		26	107

Data analysis in each of the 14 case reports was based on the six objectives of Work package 6 (see above), and the related questionnaires (see WP6 D.1 Appendix). The overall data analysis of the 14 case reports included five steps, and was carried out by the WP6 leader:

- Reading and summarizing each case and composing short reports of key findings per case.
- Analysing similarities and differences between cases; on the basis of the WP6 objectives.
- Identifying conditions, practices, and skills that can help to create and embed co-production and co-governance in practices of public professionals;
- Using feedback from the WP6 partners on the concept evaluation and summary to finalize this report.

A guide for public leaders in the strategic engagement of professionals in the organisation or policy network they run (WP6 D2 and M5, main document) is developed on the basis of this evaluation and summary report and the systematic literature review in Work package 6 (D1).

Summary of Key Findings

The next sections will highlight and discuss key findings across all 14 cases from the sections of our original case study template for WP6.

Key findings include:

- legal and strategic requirements and role expectations

Legal and strategic requirements: The New Public Governance (NPG) model and co-creation are recognized as guiding practices in all cases; however Traditional public administration (TPA) and New Public Management principles are also present and often tend to dominate.

Role expectations: Professionals should carry out co-creation next to – rather than replacing former roles in TPA and NPM; tensions between hierarchy and collaborative roles are

imposed on frontline professionals and managers rather than resolved at the strategic levels (explained below).

- encouraging or impeding professional involvement in co-creation

Encouraging: most prominently is the need for political support from the top. Some cases have ambitious Mayors and/or Councils, combined with (inter)national attention. Most cases have not. The role of politics here is often detached, non-supportive or contra-productive, e.g. by instability. So overall there is not much encouragement.

Impeding: the internal vertical organisation of public organisations. Professionals suffer from a mismatch between co-creation projects and the vertically organised implementation of rules and funding within government. All cases experience NPM/austerity, implying limited resources for co-creation, at the expense of investments in relationships and outcomes.

- motivations of professionals in implementing co-creation

Positive: Overall, professionals in the cases in this study were highly motivated for co-creation. Their main motivation is personal engagement, the feeling of being more meaningful, to contribute to the life of citizens and to societal/sustainability goals. They point to the energizing contact with citizens and other stakeholders (if co-creation works).

Critical: Although the professionals in our study are in favour of co-creation/collaboration, they wonder if citizens and non-state stakeholders are fully capable for co-creation, due to their limited knowledge of government and policies and their individual - rather than wider interests. They also wonder if and how professional expert knowledge is still valuable, and some are worried if the general public interests are protected well enough.

- promising practices from professionals' viewpoint

See the overview of examples in Table 2.

- required skills for public servants in co-creation

Three areas of skills are most frequently mentioned:

- Communication: Being a good listener, having patience, being clear about (own) roles and responsibilities from the start, using the right tone (not top-down), able to mobilize citizens and other stakeholders that represent (local) society.
- To act in a context of multiple Public management models, and to cope with their tensions. Ability to switch between roles of public guardian, service provider, and co-creator, and to guide the collaborative process but to intervene where necessary.
- Capable to use and navigate between different fields of (expert) knowledge; to provide services to a broader target group than before, and to develop new and systematic ways of working (a 'co-creation method').

So far, professionals feel they have to fend for themselves. In all cases, professionals call for more guidance, for training and education in co-creation and its consequences for (expert) knowledge and project management.

- embedding co-creation in public administration;

Political and management support: Political support from the top is often absent. Input from (frontline) professionals, citizens and non-state actors is needed 'to feed politicians with bottom-up information'. Funding and resources (staff capacity) supporting implementation of co-creation is below level while co-creation needs more time and resources rather than less.

Other conditions: Citizens and other stakeholders need realistic, factual information, to improve their understanding of legal rules and the internal workings of government in order to prevent disappointment by co-creation. Managers and professionals: team peer-review, where managers could learn and benefit from professionals' experiences and vice versa (which currently is in an early stage). Specialized units in government with high level expert knowledge should combine data, exchange information and support shared actions and solutions.

Thus, recommendations include:

To politicians and managers:

- co-creation needs political support beyond detachment or decentralization of responsibilities and subsidies: shifting responsibilities 'downwards' should imply shifting resources.
- politicians and managers should adapt the internal, traditional way of organizing; a vertical organisational structure and culture is an important barrier for co-creation.
- government agencies should (first) cooperate with other public agencies, in order to collaborate with non-state stakeholders effectively.
- co-creation should be more tailormade; it seems more appropriate in welfare, education, community building, projects in neighbourhoods; and more difficult in technical areas, or areas where the government has a legal monopoly (e.g. police).
- politicians and managers should be aware of the necessity of funding and staff capacity when beginning a co-creative or co-productive project or service, in particular when it concerns a program rather than a single project (see also WP2).

To professionals and (lead) managers:

- co-creation needs more development as a method, and expert knowledge should be better integrated. Co-creation currently has the risk of de-professionalizing services.
- the individual professional should be better prepared and facilitated for co-creation since co-creation is largely dependent on individual attitudes and competences.

- managers should set aside time and resources for training professionals in multiple roles and for a broader target group, using different expertise and communication.
- managers and professionals need good communication skills to collaborate with citizens and stakeholders, which is different from addressing individual interests.
- professionals need more leeway and less administrative burden to allow for co-creation, especially while their workload is often increased by co-creation.
- co-creation requires professionals to be a good listener, patient, clear about (own) roles and responsibilities from the start, using the right tone (not top-down), and able to mobilize citizens and other stakeholders that represent (local) society.
- professionals need to navigate through a governance landscape with traditional, NPM and NPG elements. They should be able to easily switch roles, e.g. to guide the collaborative process but intervene when necessary.
- professional skills should be developed to use different (expert) knowledge and to deal with a broader target group.

To citizens and external stakeholders:

- citizens and other private and non-profit stakeholders need more insight in legal demands and the workings of government to avoid dissatisfaction and distrust.
- citizens and external stakeholders still expect TPA/NPM role of professionals in co-creation: providing money, services, solving problems; they need support in developing co-creation roles and their role should be more clearly defined.
- citizens need more technical expertise to discuss technical solutions, and highly technical tasks (key infrastructures for services) seem less appropriate for co-creation.
- citizens and other partners need more openness to 'the broader picture' (beyond individual or organisational interests) to become more equal partners in co-creation.

Below a more in-depth analysis of the key findings and themes, as well as an overview of the case studies can be found.

Legal and strategic context and professional role expectations

Legal and strategic requirements: The New Public Governance (NPG) model and co-creation is recognized as guiding practices in all cases; however Traditional public administration (TPA) and New Public Management principles are also present and often tend to dominate. A main change in many cases is decentralisation to local or regional levels but with reduced budgets, implying loss of staff and expertise. Also, changes in line with NPM have often been reported; they led to higher competition and accountability demands that

discourage greater cooperation. NGOs and executive agencies struggle in co-creation attempts with the NPM type of policy and performance measurement of the governments that offer no room for qualitative outcomes in terms of individual or public value, like in social policy 'more ownership over your own process', being 'less depressive', and 'closer to the job market' (INSP, DK) or sustainability impact (RVO, NL). In some cases (Tyne Housing, UK; Maastricht Hill Region, NL) professionals struggle with the new legal rules for privacy, IT security and safety compliance of buildings. These new rules led to quick changes, with little time to implement, and an overflow of diverse information. Moreover, the legal restrictions to share information for privacy reasons conflict with the aim for sharing information in co-creation attempts, for example when households have various problems (family, health, education, debts, criminality, housing, etc.) that are addressed by different public agencies.

Role expectations: In most cases, professionals should carry out co-creation next to – rather than replacing former roles in TPA and NPM; tensions between hierarchical - and collaborative roles are imposed on frontline professionals and managers rather than being resolved at the strategic levels. Professional roles are more demanding: combining NPM type work (competing for contracts) and NPG type work (collaboration externally is required to meet policy demands and organisational mission). Administration and managerial work takes up more time, implying less time for service users. This is opposed to co-creation (e.g. Tyne Housing, UK; AMU, France). Professionals say they need additional (expert) knowledge to cope with the issues in co-creation: they are expected to be familiar with a broader range of laws, rules, external actors and target groups in collaborative settings. But they have to find this information each on their own (Tyne Housing, UK, Maastricht Hill Region, NL). In a few cases, professionals prefer to keep their traditional role (Copenhagen, DK; Municipality of Ljubljana, SL). This preference seems related to their specific task and department, e.g. energy and water expert, police officer, inspector, etc.), suggesting that co-creation might be more appropriate or easier to apply in some policy areas (welfare, education, social policy, including employment services and housing) than others.

Encouraging and impeding professional engagement in co-creation

Encouraging: as the most important factor that would encourage co-creation, professionals and managers reveal the political support from the top. Some cases have ambitious Mayors and/or Councils, combined with (inter)national attention (Rijeka, Croatia; Holbæk municipality, Denmark) that support the start of a co-creation project or program. But the role of politics in many cases is detached, non-supportive or even contra-productive, for example by instability (e.g. Ministry, Slovenia; Copenhagen, Denmark; Maastricht Hill Region, Netherlands). So professionals in public organizations in our study experience not much encouragement in implementing co-creation. Also NGOs, for example INSP (Denmark), say that political support is reluctant, and when political parties are interested they often tend to claim the project. In the Slovenian case on digitalisation, it is said that politicians talk about co-creation and digitalisation, but do not shape conditions and even disturb implementation of co-creation projects, by one-sided decisions. Also the Netherlands

Enterprise Agency, an executive body of national government that has adopted a public value strategy, shows that implementation is hampered if political ‘principals’ do not provide integrated assignments for sustainable development goals. So we see decentral actors aiming for co-creation, but so far, political support seems limited, with some local exceptions.

Impeding: the internal vertical organisation of public organisations. All cases are still operating in a context of traditional hierarchy, this is strongest in France, Slovenia, and Croatia, but also present in the Netherlands, Denmark and England. In the last three countries, also NPM-based changes have a strong impact on the cases (competitive tenders, contracting, top-down performance indicators), considered by professionals and their managers at odds with collaborative attempts. Professionals thus suffer from a mismatch between co-creation projects and the vertically organised implementation of rules and funding within government. All cases experience NPM/austerity implying limited resources for co-creation, at the expense of investments in collaborative relationships and outcomes (e.g. Municipality of Velaux, France; Tyne Housing, UK). NGOs and executive agencies experience a lack of integrated payment from the local and national government. For example: INSP is financed from two municipal departments, each paying for a different goal (unemployment or social psychiatry) and operating as silos. Professionals feel it as a balancing act to collaborate with colleagues in other departments. Public professionals from different departments and with different expertise do not easily merge agendas (Slagelse, Denmark; Maastricht Hill Region and PERSPECT in Drechtsteden, the Netherlands; the Ministry of Public Administration, Slovenia). Involving a colleague from another department in a co-creation project leaves the question – which department should pay? Thus, our cases demonstrate that the vertical organisation of government is a strong barrier to co-creation. Public managers should spend sufficient time and resources to solve internal government barriers and to the creation of meaning and motivation of professionals, also the ones not directly involved in a co-creation project.

Motivations of professionals in implementing strategic renewal

Positive points: Overall, professionals in this study are highly motivated for co-creation. Their main motivation is personal engagement, the feeling of being more meaningful, by contributing to the life of citizens and to societal/sustainability goals. Some professionals point to the energizing contact with citizens and other stakeholders (if the co-creation works). In a few cases co-creation is interpreted as primarily a process of informed decision-making (Copenhagen case, Denmark) or internal cooperation within government (Ministry, Slovenia). In countries with a strong hierarchical tradition, like Slovenia, Croatia and France, professionals feel more hesitant to take initiative in co-creation without legal/political backing. But generally, professionals in our study are motivated for co-creation, in order to develop better services, and to stimulate external ideas, capacity and resources to solve (future) public problems.

Critical remarks: Although most professionals in our study thus are in favour of co-creation/collaboration with non-state actors, they wonder if citizens and other stakeholders are fully capable for co-creation, due to their limited knowledge of government and policies and their individual/organisational - rather than wider interests. Some professionals and managers also wonder if and how professional expert knowledge is still valuable in co-creation, and they are worried if the general public interests are protected well enough. Another quite strong critical note is that professionals feel they are more on their own now, forced to take more decisions without mandate and without alignment and acceptance from the hierarchy. Although professionals are positive and motivated for co-creation, ‘everything is still new and quite unclear’ (Slagelse, Denmark, case report p.10).

Promising practices

In the 14 co-creation cases, promising practices have been mentioned, summarized below.

Table 2 An overview of promising practices in the 14 cases

Case/country	Promising practices
Tyne Housing – Newcastle (UK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tyne Housings’ residency consultation group, a co-production of managers and service users, developed five priorities (Fab-5) presented by a group of service users to the board of trustees. The priorities were adopted in the organisation’ strategic plans. - Plan for a partnership hub to enable partner organisations (e.g. the NHS) to deliver a wider range of services to vulnerable people
Inspiratorium (INSP) in Roskilde (DK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neighbourhood hosts: young people that build relationships with homeless people and help them settle in their new apartment, in collaboration with the municipality. - The project ‘Unemployed with drive’, a network of a varied group of unemployed people that help each other to find a job, new education or improved quality of life. Without control or demands (since 2012).
Climate change Collaborative, Copenhagen (DK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This case is viewed a failure case of co-creation. The recommendation is to either find professionals who combine communicative skills with technical skills, or to appoint two complementary project leaders, to generate a successful outcome.
Co-creation in Slagelse (DK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local development plans (LDPs) for ‘citizen-driven innovation’, a platform for ideas from citizens in all districts within the municipality. - an example of a local development plan: the LDP of Boeslunde (developed since 2016), including 12 concrete local project ideas.
Cocreation in Holbæk, Knabstrup village (DK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Holbæk ‘model’, where local coordinators who represent citizens collaborate with professional sparring partners, politicians, and community creators. - A shared housing project in Knabstrup, financed by the municipality. - Herbal gardens in Knabstrup, established in favour of citizens’ wishes. - A ‘learning process project’ of citizens, professionals and politicians to obtain tools to enhance local development and co-creation.
Municipality of Ljubljana (SL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the policy areas under study (police, real estate, inspectorate, HRM) there is no co-creation with citizens and external stakeholders. - In some other areas, e.g. in the ‘Green European Capital’ project of the municipality, external stakeholders are more involved.

Ministry of Public Administration, Digitalisation (SL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The 'Stop the Bureaucracy' portal, established in 2005. One promising practice is the E-farms co-creation project with farmers to reduce double or triple data requirements from different state organisations. - E-sick leave, providing an alternative 'e-solution' to the traditional sick leave document, in collaboration with Employment and Health agencies
PERSPECT, social policy Drechtsteden (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A co-creation approach for people in social assistance, starting from their needs and views rather than from rules, control and sanctions. - The 'Retail learning pathway', a long term collaboration between the Social service department and employers to provide training and jobs to people in social assistance.
Maastricht Hill Region, social policy (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new approach of citizens in social assistance where citizens' needs are central to the work of the professionals and professional teams should collaborate across social services, housing and employment. - A training session for professionals to deliver more tailor-made services is identified as a promising practice.
Pijnacker-Nootdorp municipality (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term investments in citizens who are dependent on social assistance, by co-creation and teamwork of professionals. An element is a project, where 150 'hard to place' unemployed citizens will receive training and coaching to detect their ambitions and develop a plan. - Personal and frequent conversations to increase job opportunities.
Netherlands Enterprise Agency (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-creation project for area development in which 40.000 houses in the so-called Clean Tech Region are renovated energy neutrally. - Combining three national programs for local use: the Regional Energy Strategy, the Heat Expertise Centre and the pilot for Natural gas-free neighbourhoods. - Monitoring farmers' fields with satellite data; farmers can be warned if they break the rules, they can adapt practices and may avoid a fine. - The North Sea coalition and agreement by fishery, energy companies, and organisations like Greenpeace, coordinated by the agency.
Croatian pilot case – City of Rijeka (CR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The local partnership program of Rijeka (RPLP) enables citizens, associations and local boards, together with the City of Rijeka, to revive smaller public spaces (playgrounds, green areas etc.), since 2005. - The Youth program were young citizens, youth organisations and the Youth council of Rijeka were actively involved in its development. - Civic education in Rijeka's primary schools to promote human rights in civil society (tolerance, solidarity, diversity, non-violence, inclusion). - The Startup incubator, a collaboration with diverse educational institutes to support individuals with entrepreneurial ideas. - Diverse online projects: a Web portal for elderly, and a website for free psychological help for young people online; all co-creation networks.
Nova Velaux Space (FR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The cultural place Nova Velaux Space that became a community care centre (a 'NoV hospital') for medical care during the pandemic - Municipal workers at Nova Velaux Space who did together with school teachers an inventory of cultural education in primary education - A plan for a 'citizen factory' to allow for citizen participation - Digital cultural services provided during the Covid pandemic
Aix-Marseille University (FR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly virtual meetings at Friday lunchtime from professionals and students, to exchange information, answer questions and have a collective reflection on solutions (during the pandemic).

Skills

Crucial skills for professionals in co-creation can be divided in three categories. First is communication: professionals should be good listeners instead of mainly giving information. They also need patience, because the pace of co-creation projects is often slower than their professional targets. Professionals should be clear about their own roles and responsibilities from the start, and use the right tone (not top-down). They should be able by their communication to mobilize citizens and other stakeholders that represent (local) society, instead of merely the ones that are easily accessible (e.g. students, see the AMU case).

A second category of crucial skills is the ability to act in a context of multiple Public management models, and to cope with their tensions. This includes skills for internal collaboration; it is often mentioned that the success of co-creation depends on the ability of professionals to navigate in a traditional top-down hierarchy (Slagelse DK, Drechtsteden NL; AMU, FR), often even more challenging than external collaboration. Professionals are expected to be able to switch between roles of public guardian, service provider, and co-creator, and to guide the collaborative process but to intervene where necessary.

A third skills category is about professionals being capable to use and navigate between different fields of (expert) knowledge; to provide services to a broader target group than before, and to develop new and systematic ways of working (a 'co-creation method'). Also project management (the role of network manager, connecting external and internal actors and interests) is mentioned a new and valuable skill for professionals (AMU, FR; National Ministry, SL; Netherlands Enterprise Agency, NL; Tyne Housing, UK).

So far, professionals feel they have to fend for themselves. In all cases, professionals call for more guidance, for training and education in co-creation, for using (expert) knowledge beyond their traditional area and to carry out project management. Professionals currently feel like conducting co-creation without having any recipes and support to do so. They feel they are not well-prepared, but have to find out for themselves through 'trial and error.' As a remedy, managers and professionals can start with team peer-review, where managers could learn and benefit from professionals' experiences and vice versa; this currently is in an early stage.

Embedding innovation

There is a huge difference in the stage of development between our 14 cases. One group of cases has a longer history (about 10-15 years) and their co-creation approach is already more established (Rijeka, CR; Holbæk, DK; Ministry, SL; INSP, DK; Slagelse, DK). In another group of cases, co-creation attempts are relatively recent (the Dutch cases; Tyne Housing, UK; Nova Veloux Space, FR), and so far less embedded. A few cases might be set up – or understood by participants - as co-creation attempts but are in fact traditional practices

(Climate change collaborative, DK; City of Ljubljana, SL). In the French case of AMU, Covid-19 is a trigger for alternative communication, but in a 'hyperspecialized' and hierarchical structure.

Even in the cases where co-creation clearly led to a different approach of collaboration with citizens and external stakeholders, this was on the basis of a project or even a program, but not an all-encompassing change of the public policy or organisation. It seems that the traditional vertical organisation is still the main way of organizing public services. The New Public Management approach, together with austerity, is dominant in many cases, with some exceptions (e.g. Holbæk, DK; Rijeka, CR). Based on the majority of our cases, we may thus view co-creation as an additional and subordinate – rather than a dominant model or paradigm in the strategic renewal of public organisations.

To increase the use and impact of the co-creation approach, political support from the top is a priority according to our respondents. Our study shows that where this support is more prominent and more stable, co-creation seems more successful in terms of output and in- and external satisfaction. Funding and resources (staff capacity) supporting implementation of co-creation are other important conditions to embed innovation while co-creation often needs more time and resources rather than less (as wrongly supposed in many 'downwards' moves by governments). A strong barrier to embed co-creation innovations is the traditional vertical organisation of government at all levels and a lack of internal cooperation. This barrier is mentioned prominently in almost all cases, and input from (frontline) professionals, citizens and non-state actors seems needed to allow for a design of more integrated services. Specialized units in government with high level expert knowledge should combine data, exchange information and support shared actions.

Also, embedding innovation needs far more investment in – and from citizens and other stakeholders. They often have limited knowledge of the rules, structures and functioning of government, and disappointment and distrust by co-creation is a serious risk if expectations are not better managed. Especially citizens have no idea of the complexity of government, including legal requirements. Citizens and external stakeholders also still expect traditional roles of public professionals and managers next to co-creation: providing money, services, solving problems. From the non-state actors' viewpoint, they may believe it is not their task to carry out public services (like homeowner associations in Copenhagen do not believe it is up to them to learn to handle GIS software). So, striving for two-sided collaboration requires investments from government in political support from the top and internal collaboration but also investments from citizens and other stakeholders in wider than individual interests.

Final Remarks

This analysis has highlighted key findings and practical implications as well as areas that necessitate further policy development and research. Case authors have provided their analysis of co-creation attempts across a wide variety of countries, sectors, projects, and

services. We hope that this document is supporting public professionals, managers and politicians in their own attempts for collaboration, internally and externally. For an academic audience, we hope this document inspires further practical research on strategic renewal of public agencies and services, to support innovative solutions to individual and societal problems. Below, a short description of the cases can be found.

Overview of the Cases

1 Tyne Housing Association, Newcastle upon Tyne - England (UK) Jill Dixon and Andreja Pegan

Problem Providing housing to people who are homeless because they are excluded from traditional housing options due to problems with mental health, drug and alcohol misuse, offending history or difficulties in managing finances.

Case Tyne Housing is a housing association, a registered charity (NGO). Housing associations like Tyne provide a similar type of housing as local authorities. The mission is to provide housing and social welfare and opportunities for personal development to people who are homeless or at risk to becoming homeless; and to help people with complex needs to live independent lives (p.1). The case organisation has 108 staff, 400 residents, and annually supports more than 1000 vulnerable people. It is financed by rents paid through welfare benefits, and contractual grants from local authorities, the NHS and the Ministry of Housing. <https://www.tynehousing.org.uk/>.

2 Cocreation in INSP in Roskilde municipality (Denmark) Peter Aagaard

Problem Vulnerable young people who lack autonomy, occupation, education, and work and are not integrated in societal activities.

Case INSP is a NGO, started in 2011. INSP is short for Inspiratorium. An organisation located in Roskilde, owned by a new association since 2018. INSP provides a café, dinner clubs, a cultural and social entrepreneurial environment, and workshops for carpentry and metal craftsmanship. The goal of INSP is to promote active citizenship of vulnerable young people. Additional projects of INSP are: the Food project for Ethnic Women, Community building Neighbourhood, the invitation to High School students, Culture and Music. In FTEs, INSP has 6-7 employees, part timers. INSP is financed by a basic grant from Roskilde municipality, by private donations, by earnings from own activities and contracts with municipalities for assistance in social work. INSP is aimed at co-creation in the form of support to youngsters for self-help. INSP has a hybrid nature as both a cultural place and a sub-contractor for municipalities in social work. <https://www.insp.dk/>

3 The climate change collaborative in the City of Copenhagen (Denmark) Karsten Brun Hansen

Problem: in summer 2011, heavy rainfall with severe cloud bursts caused floods that led to the order to all Danish municipalities to develop adaptation plans before the end of 2013.

Case The network in this case is called the Collaboratorium, or the Climate Change Collaborative. Another network, named the Climate adaptation living lab (CALL) of Greater Copenhagen leads the Climate Change Collaborative network as a project leader. The Collaborative is mainly financed by HOFOR (a utility that is largely owned by the City of Copenhagen). Another financier is DANVA, a non-profit national association 'for all working professionally with water and wastewater'. CALL is a network with the aim of demonstrating and communicating climate adaptation solutions in Greater Copenhagen. CALL includes partners such as municipalities, utilities, companies and universities. To conduct experimental co-creation with home owner associations, an organisation called ENERGY & WATER (from HOFOR and the City of Copenhagen) was appointed as process facilitator.

<https://energiogvand.dk/en/frontpage/>

4 Co-creation and self-governance in Slagelse municipality (Denmark) Karsten Brun Hansen

Problem Growing social inequality, rising welfare expectations and reduced budgets. How to re-vitalise public welfare services, creating more external and internal collaboration in a context of austerity?

Case Municipality of Slagelse, in the Region Zealand, Denmark. Slagelse has about 79.000 inhabitants. The particular case is focused on the Commissorium (2018) that was initiated for a comprehensive shift in culture and structure, to develop a less hierarchical organisation with fewer levels and more decentralised self-governance among front-end employees. The ambition is to develop a re-vitalized viable Danish welfare model, through collaboration and co-creation rather than NPM. The change is perceived a bottom up process where professionals are encouraged to carry out 'trial-and-error-acts' in Local Development Plans that develop community support (child nursery, fibernet in villages, maintenance of the local supermarket and bus services). <https://www.slagelse.dk/politik>

5 Cocreation in Holbæk municipality, the case of Knabstrup village (Denmark) - Peter Aagaard

Problem Knabstrup is a small village (1000 inhabitants) in the greater municipality of Holbæk (70.000 inhabitants) in the region of Sealand, Denmark. Prognoses show demographic changes that threaten the level of public services for employment, culture, social and environmental issues.

Case In 2007, there has been a merger between Holbæk town and four small municipalities, one being Knabstrup village. The project "Knabstrup sets course" is a test case for the co-creation strategy of Holbæk (2018) to involve all relevant actors to enhance conditions for life and livelihood in the villages. Co-creation is seen as a tool, not a goal in itself. The goal is to achieve better solutions to challenges that cannot be dealt with by traditional means or by the municipality alone.

<https://holbaek.dk/>

6 Municipality of Ljubljana: Perspectives of Professionals (Slovenia) Sanja Vrbek and Tina Jukić

Problem The MoL aims for more digital contact with the citizens, especially by the 'Service for citizens' project; this case takes a perspective on co-creation from other city departments.

Case The municipality of Ljubljana (MoL) has a Mayor being in charge since 2006 (like the City of Rijeka). MoL has a City Council and 17 district authorities with district councils that are viewed key in local democracy. MoL has a municipal administration with many departments and offices, covering policy areas in welfare, education, infrastructure, culture, sports, housing and police. MoL aims for more digital contact with the citizens, especially by the 'Service for citizens' project, a web portal to communicate and access for citizens' initiatives for solution of local problems under municipal authority (see WP2). In this case a broader perspective on co-creation is taken from different departments, e.g. the police, the inspectorate, urban planning and real estate.

<https://www.ljubljana.si/en/>

7 Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia – Perspectives of Professionals on Digitalisation (Slovenia) Sanja Vrbek and Tina Jukić

Problem Digitalisation is perceived necessary to improve all areas of social life and public services, both for better informed decision-making by politics and by portals for external users.

Case This case is about the Information Society and Informatics Directorate, an atypical department of the Ministry of Public Administration: where the Ministry is strongly influenced by TPA and NPM, the Directorate adopted a discourse of NPG and co-creation. The Directorate was established in 2018 as a merger between two departments, but horizontal coordination turned out being problematic and there is a proposal to split again. In a politically turbulent environment (five governments in about a decade), especially the Covid-19 crisis stimulated the Ministry to focus on service improvement and online communication. Professionals point to a lack of IT resources to co-create, due to linear rather than strategic budget cuts. <https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-public-administration/about-the-ministry/informatics-directorate/>

8 Maastricht Hill Region: Social policy, housing and employment (The Netherlands) Marlot Kuiper and Nicolette van Gestel

Problem The rationale behind the co-creation attempt is to get rid of the silos where (vulnerable) citizens should interact with multiple professionals from various organizations.

Case The case under study is Maastricht Heuvelland (Maastricht Hill Region), a collaboration of six municipalities in the south of the Netherlands: Maastricht, a large (urban) municipality with about 120.000 inhabitants (2020), and 5 smaller (rural) municipalities (Eijsden-Margraten, Gulpen-Wittem, Meerssen, Vaals en Valkenburg aan de Geul). Focus on social policy, housing policy and employment services for residents of these 6 municipalities that depend on social assistance or belong to lower

income groups (including refugees with a status to remain). Recently, Maastricht Hill Region opted for co-creation with clients. So, clients are in charge and their preferences are central to the work of the professionals. Professional teams should provide joint services and work in an integral way.

<https://www.sociaaldomein-maastricht-heuvelland.nl/>

9 Reforms in Social policy: professionals in PERSPCT, Drechtsteden (The Netherlands) Marlot Kuiper and Nicolette van Gestel

Problem Despite a relatively low unemployment rate, people with social assistance are hard to place at the labour market, they often have other problems (health, debts, etc.) and loose confidence.

Case The case under study is the Sociale Dienst Drechtsteden (SDD), a regional partnership that delivers social services for the inhabitants of the municipalities of Alblasterdam, Dordrecht, Hardinxveld-Giessendam, Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht, Papendrecht, Sliedrecht and Zwijndrecht. The SDD offers social assistance to residents who need help with, for example, financial problems or being unemployed. This partnership was established in 2012, and developed the project "Baanbrekend", in which the SDD collaborates with the Employee Insurance Agency and a private employment agency to help citizens finding a job. Taking into consideration a group with larger distance from the labour market and a broader regional cooperation, a new vision on social policy was established within Drechtsteden on 1 October 2019. The initiative central in this case is PERSPCT; a "work experience routing" to make welfare recipients "work fit", to increase their labour market value, in order to help them find work. PERSPCT is a collaboration between the SDD, Drechtwerk (the Social Work company) and various apprenticeship companies. <https://www.perspct.nl/>

10 Case report on Social policy – Pijnacker-Nootdorp municipality (The Netherlands) Nicolette van Gestel and Marlot Kuiper

Problem Despite a low percentage of households with social assistance in this municipality, it aims to further reduce the number of people on welfare support in the coming years by a change from a 'control- and rule-based' system toward co-creation, and from outsourcing to integrated services

Case The case is the social policy of a medium-large municipality with 54.331 inhabitants (2019), located in the urban west of the Netherlands. Social policy is focused on the citizens who are dependent on social assistance. Recently, the municipal social service opted for a new, more personalized approach of their clients. Professionals in social policy are encouraged to discuss tailor-made solutions with their clients, share knowledge with other professionals, and collaborate with stakeholders outside local government, e.g. organisations for care, schools, and housing corporations. Professionals should also develop further contacts with employers to (re-)integrate citizens at the labour market. With the new approach, the municipality aims to strengthen the policy focus on 'participation', in particular of vulnerable people, and preferably through paid work.

<https://www.pijnacker-nootdorp.nl/direct-regelen/werken-inkomen-en-schulden/>

11 Engaging professionals in a Public Value strategy, The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (The Netherlands) Sanne Grotenbreg and Nicolette van Gestel

Problem New societal challenges (climate, energy, agriculture, circular economy) require a more coherent, holistic approach from the agency rather than individual projects or tasks. An NPM approach did not inspire staff, more difficult to attract young employees, need to improve flexibility.

Case The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy. The agency aims to support entrepreneurs and citizens with about 700 products, services and subsidies, to achieve a more innovative and sustainable economy and society. In 2018, RVO adopted a new strategy, called 'Agenda 2022', to respond to societal challenges, such as climate change and energy transition, and to develop integral services to clients, attracting qualified (young) employees and improving data-driven support to stakeholders. Professionals are expected to collaborate beyond vertical borders and act as network manager and boundary spanner, to connect different programs and projects. Professionals also should function as a 'linking pin' between different principals (national ministries, European Union) and citizens, businesses, and municipalities. Internally, they should look for new collaborations with professionals from other departments and share ideas and relevant knowledge. In this case, the focus is on environmental policy (climate/energy transition and agricultural policy). <https://english.rvo.nl/>

12 The Rijeka Local Partnership Program, City of Rijeka (Croatia) Josipa Cvelić, Tatjana Perse

Problem The citizens' trust in government, administration, and institutions was weak and education on the organized civic society absent. The city of Rijeka sought for a model of citizens' inclusion in reaching public decisions that concern them, to meet citizens' needs.

Case The Rijeka Local Partnership Program (RLPP) in the City of Rijeka, Croatia. Initiative in 2005 from the City Council to fund RLPP with the aim to develop a partnership and co-responsible relationship between the citizens and the City of Rijeka. Enabling citizens to resolve part of their needs faster and more cost effectively, by transforming public spaces (playgrounds, tree-lined avenues, not cultivated green areas, flowerbeds and other projects for public spaces). Program is run by the Department of Local Self-Government and Administration. Projects also involve volunteers, local communities, private contractors, sponsors and media representatives. RLPP is a network, with the local government as lead organisation. <https://www.rijeka.hr/en/themes-for-citizens/active-citizenship/participatory-budgeting/the-local-partnership-programme-of-rijeka/>

13 The cultural service of the town of Velaux: the case of Nova Velaux space (France) Djelloul Arezki and Edina Soldo

Problem There is a transformation of cultural activity and work in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, and the challenge 'to do as much activity with a reduced budget'.

Case Nova Velaux Space is a municipal auditorium. The hall can seat 500 people and have 1200 people standing, offering theatre, circus, dance, music and shows for young audiences plus areas for exhibitions and public reception. Nova Velaux also hosts a citizen café and products come from local organic production. The team is composed of municipal agents (40 people at evenings of performance), together with students (as hosts), volunteers and temporary workers. They offer Artistic and Cultural Education (ACE) through course for a young audience, engaging them to cultural activities. The case is viewed a-typical for the French local authorities that are characterized as rigid bureaucratic structures. <https://www.velaux.fr/culture-et-loisirs/espace-nova-velaux/>

14 Professionals from a faculty of Aix-Marseille University facing Covid-19 (France) Edina Soldo and Djelloul Arezki

Problem In a context of competitive bidding for research projects and new administrative tasks for project management, the Covid-19 pandemic added an intensification and transformation of academic research and teaching.

Case A faculty at the Aix-Marseille University (AMU) where professionals are challenged to collaborate in project management, in a changed context: NPM-type measures for performance, administrative tasks that go beyond professional expertise, and the Covid-19 measures to work and teach at a distance. Professionals set up weekly collaborative meetings together with students.

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