THE GOVERNANCE OF SOCIAL COHESION: INNOVATIVE COORDINATION PRACTICES IN PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

COCOPS WORK PACKAGE 5 – DELIVERABLE 5.3

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About COCOPS

The COCOPS project (Coordinating for Cohesion in the Public Sector of the Future) seeks to comparatively and quantitatively assess the impact of New Public Management-style reforms in European countries, drawing on a team of European public administration scholars from 11 universities in 10 countries. It analyses the impact of reforms in public management and public services that address citizens' service needs and social cohesion in Europe. It is funded under the European Union's 7th Framework Programme as a Small or Medium-Scale Focused Research Project (2011-2014).

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Introduction

This report presents the main findings and policy implications of the COCOPS Work Package 5 (WP5) "The Governance of Social Cohesion: Innovative Coordination Practices in Public Management" (April 2012-May 2013). WP5 focused on searching and identifying innovative coordination practices and related steering instruments in public management in European public sectors, analysing their functioning and assessing their contribution to countering public-sector fragmentation and delivering public value. The WP was led by the University of Bergen (Professor Per Lægreid and Dr. Lise H. Rykkja) in close cooperation with Tallinn University of Technology (Professor Tiina Randma-Liiv and Dr. Külli Sarapuu). In total eleven COCOPS partners were engaged in WP5 (see Table 1). In addition, four non-COCOPS researchers working on the public sector coordination contributed to the study of emerging coordination practices.

Table 1. WP5 list of participants

Participant number	Participant	Country
1	Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR)	The Netherlands
2	Hertie School of Governance (HER)	Germany
3	University of Bergen (UiB)	Norway
4	Bocconi University (UB)	Italy
5	University of Cantabria (UC)	Spain
7	Corvinus University Budapest (COR)	Hungary
8	University of Exeter (EXE)	United Kingdom
9	University of Leuven (KUL)	Belgium
10	Tallinn University of Technology (TAL)	Estonia
11	Cardiff University (CU)	United Kingdom

In addition to several forthcoming academic publications, WP5 resulted in four main deliverables of interest for both public-sector practitioners and academics. The present research report gives an overview of the conceptual framework of WP5, introduces its empirical sources and methods and summarises the main findings and their policy implications. It provides results from the COCOPS survey regarding different coordinating issues and an outline of the 22 coordination practices investigated by the WP5 partners and published in the case-study catalogue. The report mainly has a descriptive purpose, giving an empirical overview of how the top civil servants perceived coordination challenges, and of emerging coordinating practices in public management in European countries. The scope and intensity of the coordinating practices are described as well as perceived effects and lessons learned. The report is complemented by the following deliverables:

- **An online community of practice**. The community of practice is a virtual solution giving practitioners the opportunity to read case-study examples of coordination instruments, to comment on them, to ask questions and respond to the general discussion on topics related to coordination within the public sector. The online community of practice was launched in cooperation with the *International Institute of Administrative Sciences* (www.iias-iisa.org) and can be found at: http://www.pa-knowledge.org/focus/focus-coordination-in-the-public-sector/

- **A case-study catalogue**. The case-study catalogue is a set of 22 novel coordination practices identified and analysed by the WP5 partners that feeds into the community of practice. The case-study catalogue presents a useful set of information from the participating countries, both for public-administration practitioners and researchers. The case-study catalogue is published on the COCOPS webpage: http://www.cocops.eu/work-packages/wp5-coordinating-social-cohesion/case-study-catalogue

- **A Policy Brief.** A practitioner-oriented policy brief was compiled based on the findings of WP5 presented in this report. The policy brief can be found at: http://www.cocops.eu/work-packages/wp5-coordinating-social-cohesion

Conceptual framework

The COCOPS project's Work Package 5 (WP5) focused on **emerging coordination practices** in public administrations in Europe. Specific attention was paid to the ways coordination arrangements contribute to the achievement of **social cohesion** through integrating the interests and beliefs of different actors engaged in the processes of policy-making and implementation. Green and Janmaat (2011, 18) define social cohesion as "the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion." The coordination practices explored in WP5 covered central government as well as health and employment sectors, which are particularly relevant for studying social cohesion.

In a public sector inter-organisational context coordination can be seen as the purposeful alignment of tasks and efforts of units in order to achieve a defined goal (Verhoest and Bouckaert 2005). The aim is to create greater coherence in policy and to reduce redundancy, lacunae and contradictions within and between policies (Peters 1998). We agree with Bouckaert, Peters and Verhoest (2010) in that coordination is a complex matter involving not only policy-making but also service delivery, management and the implementation of policies. Indeed, service provision rather than policy-making is the area where some of the most notable "joining-up" projects have taken place recently.

In the common usage, coordination has a number of synonyms, such as cooperation, coherence, collaboration and integration. Coordination can be seen both as a process and as an outcome. In terms of **outcome**, there are different levels of coordination – from independent decisions by organisations (very little coordination) to the development of government strategies encompassing all areas of the public sector (very much coordination) (Metcalfe 1976). Coordination as a **process** is brought about with the help of specific activities or structures – *coordination instruments* (Bouckaert et al. 2010), and this has been the main focus of WP5. Within WP5, these instruments are called "coordination practices". They can be identified as more formal structures and procedures designed to impose greater coordination among individuals and/or organisations, but may also include more informal and voluntary arrangements. Inter-organisational coordination can be predominantly vertical or horizontal and can be achieved by using hierarchical mechanisms, market incentives, contracts, network-like bargaining mechanisms and multi-level governance approaches (Thompson et al. 1991; Peters 1998; Bouckaert et al. 2010). Coordination can be voluntary and based on normative agreements/common norms, or the result of coercion (the use of hierarchical authority) or the use of incentives/sanctions. It can be directed towards specific policies and problems or at the policies and behaviour of and culture within the politico-administrative system more broadly. Coordination can furthermore focus on policy integration or service delivery and implementation or on administrative reform itself.

It is therefore activated within different spheres, i.e. the political sphere, the administrative sphere or, more specifically, within front-line services.

Attempts to coordinate government policy-making and service delivery across organisational boundaries are not a new phenomenon (Ling 2002; Hood 2005; Kavanagh and Richards 2001). However, particularly in recent years, coordination has been seen as a central effort within **reform movements** in the public sector. Traditionally, public-sector organisations have been concerned with achieving their own specific objectives, reflecting funding and responsibilities that they can directly control. This has sometimes resulted in agencies adopting an overly narrow "silo" approach that does not consider the trans-boundary challenges cutting across traditional responsibilities, such as long-term unemployment and social deprivation (Pollitt 2003). The "siloisation" or "pillarisation" of the public sector has been claimed to have increased in the **New Public Management** (NPM) era (Gregory 2006; Pollitt 2003). The principle of "single-purpose organisations", with many specialised and non-overlapping roles and functions, has produced fragmentation, self-centred authorities and a lack of cooperation and coordination, hence hampering effectiveness and efficiency (Boston and Eichbaum 2005, 21, Christensen and Lægreid 2007a, Verhoest and Bouckaert 2005). In addition, performance management – another feature of NPM – can reinforce the attitude of "my organisation always comes first" by encouraging rivalry rather than cooperation between public-sector organisations.

Consequently, states have developed new approaches intended to counter the **fragmentation** brought about by NPM and to integrate the public sectors (Osborne 2009; Wegrich 2010). The new coordination practices come in various shapes and with various names, such as integrated governance, outcome steering, joined-up government (Bogdanor 2005; Hood 2005), holistic governance (6 et al. 2002), new public governance (Osborne 2009), networked government, partnerships, connected government, cross-cutting policy, horizontal management, collaborative public management (Gregory 2003) or whole-of-government (OECD 2005; Christensen and Lægreid 2007a). For example, joined-up-government is defined by the British National Audit Office as "bringing together a number of public, private and voluntary sector bodies to work across organisational boundaries towards a common goal" (NAO 2001, 1). Joined-up-government was introduced by the Blair government in 1997 with the aspiration to achieve horizontal and vertical coordination in order to eliminate situations in which different policies undermine each other, so as to make better use of scarce resources, to create synergies by bringing together different stakeholders in a particular policy area, and to offer citizens seamless rather than fragmented access to services (Pollitt 2003). It overlaps to a great extent with the "Whole-of-Government" approach used in Australia (Christensen and Lægreid 2007a). Similar reform initiatives can be observed in France (*interministerialité*) and in the Netherlands (*Programma andere overhead*). "Holistic government", in turn, aims to establish clear and mutually reinforcing sets of objectives that are framed in terms of outcomes, and translated into

mutually reinforcing means and instruments (6 et al. 2002). Some authors also call the above-mentioned approaches "post-NPM initiatives" (Christensen and Lægreid 2010, 2011). Bouckaert et al. (2010) explore these different types of coordination within different countries and provide important insight that invites to conduct a broader comparison.

These post-NPM approaches, just like NPM itself, do not represent a coherent set of ideas and tools and can at best be seen as **an umbrella term** describing a group of responses to the problem of increased fragmentation of the public sector and public services and a wish to increase integration, coordination, and capacity, often accompanied by a desire to (re-) strengthen political and central control (see Baechler 2011; Christensen and Lægreid 2007a; Ling 2002). A common feature is the notion that working across organisational boundaries will enable more efficient and/or effective policy development, implementation and service delivery. The efficiency argument is also frequently supplemented or accompanied by an interest in better goal coherence, harmonisation, alignment and shared support for particular solutions.

The main motives for joining up are **a) to get a broader view**, so that ministries, agencies and local service centres make a better contribution to cross-cutting programmes for client groups; **b) to reduce conflicts** between different policies and to tackle intractable social issues by promoting programmes that are better interconnected and mutually supportive; **c) to create seamless services**, improving service delivery through "one-stop shops", call centres and accessible websites; **d) to promote innovation** by bringing together people with different backgrounds, professions and experiences; and **e) to make better use of resources** and improve cost-effectiveness by removing overlaps and realising economies of scale (Pollitt 2003, NAO 2001). A number of other goals can be identified, such as a motive to create additional support for policy implementation, to overcome wicked issues or problems and to overcome redundancy, lacunae and contradictions within the public sector.

From the perspective of the COCOPS project, it is important to note that the emphasis on coordination and joined-up solutions results from an increased recognition that the existing specialisation in the public-sector apparatus is not fit to handle complex societal challenges such as social cohesion. There seems to be a mismatch between the problem structures and the organisational structures. Important tasks cut across organisational borders. Examples of such "wicked problems" (Rittel and Webber 1973) for which there are no obvious, easily defined or found solutions, include, next to social cohesion, consequences of climate change, unemployment, internal security, crime, homelessness, sustainable healthcare, immigration, and anti-drug policies. The wicked issues challenge existing patterns of organisation and management – they do not fit easily into the established organisational context – and are constantly framed and reframed. These problems typically transcend organisational borders and can only be solved by working across them (Clark and Steward 2003).

Drawing on the nature of the problems being handled, Richards (2001) distinguishes between three groups of problems and three corresponding types of joining up: First, **intractable or "wicked" policy problems** in which both the problem and the solution have a situational character and where more general arrangements will not be applicable. Such problems typically cut across administrative levels as well as agency boundaries and are deeply rooted in the cultural and economic structures of society (Hodges 2012). A typical "wicked problem" transcends political-administrative levels, ministerial areas and public organisations (Harmon and Mayer 1986, Head 2008). The second group are **tame problems**, in which solutions are known or where it is possible to find evidence-based answers. These problems are often client-specific rather than situational. The third group of problems listed by Richards (2001) where joined up solutions can be an answer, concern **seamless services**. Achieving seamless services between, for example, healthcare and social services or the police and social services is a challenge faced by many governments. Recent advancements in ICT technology can provide for better service access and delivery through new developments such as call centres and Internet services. However, getting professions to work together takes a lot more than mere technical solutions. While the first two types of problems focus on outcome-based performance, the last one is more output-related. This differentiated approach to joining up presents joined-up government as a rather broad umbrella concept that addresses different sets of problems that require different approaches (Richards 2001).

When discussing joined-up-government from an organisational design perspective, two issues are particularly relevant: The **intensity** and the **scope** of working together (Boston and Gill 2011). The *scope* of joined-up government can be analysed along several dimensions and considers the timing, different phases in terms of implementation, types of actors and their relation. One can distinguish between temporary and permanent arrangements, between policy-making implementation and between horizontal linkages and vertical linkages. Moreover, the targets for joined-up-government initiatives can be a group, a locality or a policy sector (Pollitt 2003). Joined-up-government activities may span any or all levels of government and also involve organisations and groups outside government. It is about joining up at the top, but also about joining up at the base, enhancing local-level integration and involving public-private partnerships.

Regarding *intensity*, joined-up-government can take many forms such as realigning organisational boundaries by merging two or more organisations, creating formal partnerships governed by contracts or framework agreements or engaging in informal partnerships that work on the basis of consultation or unwritten mutual agreement (NAO 2001). It is generally about types of instruments. Boston and Gill (2011) distinguish between the following forms of inter-governmental integration along a formal/high intensity-informal/low intensity dimension: Collaboration (shared responsibilities), coordination

(shared work), cooperation (shared resources), communication (shared information) and coexistence (self-reliance). Normally higher intensity implies more shared accountability relations and more complicated and ambiguous accountability challenges (ibid.). WP5 explored both the scope and the intensity of certain coordination practices in European countries.

Taking account of the recent developments and the central issues in the international public-administration discourse, the main research questions of WP5 were:

- What kind of coordination practices have emerged in the countries we studied?
- What were the reasons for these new practices to appear?
- What constraining and enabling factors influenced the functioning of these practices?
- What were the perceived effects and implications?

WP5 concentrated mostly on coordination as a process and took interest in the emerging instruments for achieving coordination and countering fragmentation. Although the main attention was on cooperation between government agencies, joined-up governance in the wider meaning was also addressed by covering cooperation with civil society and private-sector partners (Boston and Gill 2011). WP5 examined coordination in a rather broad scope – from both a policy-making and a policy-implementation perspective and on the vertical and horizontal dimensions. It mainly covered central government, although the local and regional level was included within the focus on health and employment.

This report aims to summarise findings from an executive survey and case studies on different coordination practices in Europe. The report mainly has a descriptive purpose giving an empirical overview of executives' perceptions about coordination instruments and challenges as well as of emerging coordinating arrangements and how they work in practice in public management in European countries. This conceptual framework is only the start of further theory-building exercises in forthcoming academic publications spurting from the empirical findings of WP5.

Empirical sources and methods

Analysis in WP5 was based on two main sources: First, a cross-sectional questionnaire to executives in ten European countries conducted within the COCOPS Work Package 3 (Hammerschmid et al. 2013a and b), and second, a selection of short case studies of emerging coordination practices in 11 European countries provided by the COCOPS partners and affiliated participants.

The survey

In 2012 a web-based questionnaire was sent to administrative executives in central government and also outside central government in the fields of employment and health. The main aim of the survey was to examine public managers' experience and perceptions of the effects and lessons of NPM-style reforms, but also post-NPM reforms focusing on the "whole-of government" and "joined-up government" reform measures. The following countries participated in the survey: Austria, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom. A total of 4780 administrative executives answered the questionnaire, ranging from 1193 in France to 293 in the Netherlands. The overall response rate was 24%, ranging from 36% in Austria, 35% in Estonia and 34% in Norway to 18% in Spain, and 11% in the UK. Although it is difficult to make representative conclusions because of the low response rate in some countries, the overall response rate is rather consistent with other existing executives' surveys in public administration. It is based on a full census of the target population defined, and represents the largest existing dataset of this kind for European public administrations. The distribution of respondents with regard to central criteria such as policy field, hierarchical level and organisation type rather closely matches the distribution in the full target population.

This report addresses the issues of inter-organisational coordination arrangements, holistic and integrated reform measures and cross-border collaboration and cooperation arrangements across the European countries included in the survey. These issues were covered in several survey questions, which are presented below.

The coordination practices

All COCOPS partners and affiliated researchers working on public-sector coordination were invited to identify and choose at least one novel or emerging coordination practice from their national context to investigate in a joint analytical framework. The general aim of the exercise was to provide a collection of emerging coordination practices within public administrations in Europe. The examples could include both positive and negative lessons. The partners were asked to choose a coordination practice from one of the three areas: central government, health or employment services based on a template provided by the WP5 coordinators (see Annex I). The selection of cases was limited to emerging coordination practices over the last 10 years. The cases were to have relevance for the state's public administration and its functioning and could concern both coordination of administrative policy (for example, civil service) and the content of public policies and service delivery (for example, provision of employment services). The selected coordination practices could be the result of conscious reforms, or they could have emerged on the basis of bottom-up activities or participation. Coordination practices linking up different policy areas were seen as particularly relevant.

Consequently, WP5 looked at coordination in a broad sense, encompassing coordination of policy design, policy implementation and management. The purpose was to study both **horizontal coordination** (within levels of government, between ministerial areas) and **vertical coordination** (between levels of government, within ministerial areas). Hence, WP5 covered both intra- and inter-organisational coordination. The focus was also on **positive coordination**, meaning coordination that purposively aimed at building coherence. This is in contrast to what has been called **negative coordination**, meaning alignment or just plain agreement to avoid conflict (Scharpf 1994).

WP5 primarily covered coordination within the public sector. Coordination between the public and private or non-profit sector was also seen as relevant, for example, in relation to the co-production of public services (Brandsen and Pestoff 2006). The coordination practices could involve both formal and informal aspects. The descriptions of the practices were based on combinations of different sources of data – official documents (green and white papers, discussion documents, evaluation reports, and government audits), interviews, government databases, secondary data etc.

The following examples of relevant coordination practices were provided to the partners at the early stage of research. The list is not exhaustive, but was intended to offer examples of what the partners could choose to focus on in their case studies.

Table 2. The list of examples of coordination practices provided to the partners.

Coordination practices
One-stop shops
(Inter-/intra-organisational) networks
New/restructured ministries or agencies
Common/shared objectives, procedures or strategies
Systems for exchange of information
Specific management instruments/procedures aiming at coordination or integration
Horizontal management arrangements, partnerships, network(s)
Joint planning/working groups (temporary, long-term, permanent)
Specific joint entities (advisory, executive or regulatory)
Special positions/appointments with coordination responsibilities, tsars
Strategic units, reviews, inter-agency collaboration units, intergovernmental councils, circuit-breaker teams, task forces, lead-agency approach
Cross-cutting policy arrangements
Cross-sectorial policy programmes
Digital-era governance solutions
Specific budgeting tools that encourage the achievement of common goals

Bouckaert et al. (2010) and Askim et al. (2011) were given as examples of in-depth country and case studies to follow as the WP5 made use of some of the approaches these authors have developed.

Central government

Within central government, WP5 concentrated on horizontal coordination and took interest in novel coordination practices and reforms within cabinets, central ministries and semi-autonomous agencies. The partners were invited to investigate coordination arrangements that either covered the entire public administration (or at least most of it), or addressed particular "wicked problems". In the call, more specific options were listed for the partners' orientation:

Table 3. Options for choosing coordination practices within central government.

Coordination practices within central government
Coordination through the Prime Minister's Office
Coordination of "wicked issues" (e.g. internal security, climate change, social problems)
Coordination between the public, private and/or non-profit sectors
Coordination through special units (e.g. the Social Exclusion Unit (UK), Cabinet Implementation Unit (Australia))
Special positions/appointments with coordination responsibilities, tsars (e.g. the appointment of a Coordination Minister (Norway))
Budgeting tools
Inter-ministerial and inter-agency collaboration units
Super-networks
Inter-governmental councils
Lead-agency approach
Circuit-breaker teams, task forces
Cross-sectorial programmes

Partners were invited to also propose other relevant coordination practices within central government, for instance the creation of unified senior civil service to enhance a shared culture and *esprit de corps*, that go beyond individual ministries.

Health

With regard to the health sector, WP5 focused on public-sector arrangements concerned with the provision, distribution and consumption of health-care services as well as systems related to health-care policy-making. It also included arrangements for promoting and ensuring citizens' health. WP5 included primary care as well as secondary care and hospitals, and coordination practices emerging both from administrative reforms (structural changes) and reforms of health policies.

Table 4. Options for choosing coordination practices within the health sector.

Coordination practices within health
Vertical coordination between central – regional – local levels
Horizontal coordination within central – regional – local levels
Coordination between the public, private and/or non-profit sector where relevant
Policy-making systems
Coordination of service-delivery organisations (hospital reform, health insurance)
Primary and secondary care

Employment services

Within the employment sector, WP5 focused on public-sector arrangements to ensure the coherence in the fields of employment, social security and social inclusion. New coordination practices could emerge both from administrative reforms (structural changes) and reforms of welfare policies.

Table 5. Options for choosing coordination practices within employment.

Coordination practices within employment
Vertical coordination (between central – regional – local levels)
Horizontal coordination (within central – regional – local levels)
Coordination between the public and private sectors where relevant
Partnerships (public-private or state-municipality)
One-stop shops

Classification

In order to synthesise the main findings from the different cases, a *classification sheet* was developed and sent to the participating partners after they had completed their studies. The partners were asked to indicate the main goal orientation of the practice in question, the autonomy of participants, scope, robustness and task portfolio. They specified the participant structure and proximity to citizens, types of instruments, the intensity of the practice and conflicts or political salience. They were also asked about the central actors behind the introduction of the arrangements. Lastly the partners indicated if there were, according to their assessment, any positive, negative or prominent side-effects related to the coordination arrangements, considering main goals, input and processes, output and activity, outcome, and societal effects. The classification sheets were transformed to a SPSS file and analysed trying to synthesise the findings and to reveal patterns. This report is partly based on this analysis.

The main findings

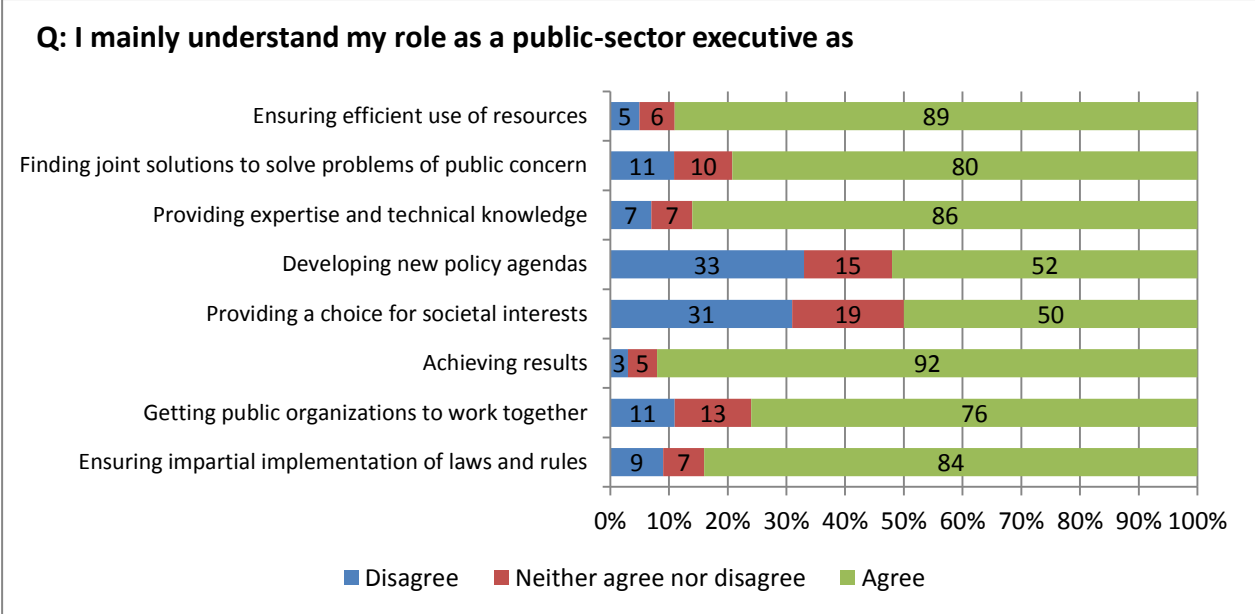## *Survey of public managers*

WP3 of the COCOPS project carried out a large-scale survey of top-level public managers, examining their experience and perceptions of the effects and lessons from NPM-style reforms and post-NPM reforms.[1] Relevant for the WP5 is that the executives were asked to characterise coordination on different dimensions. The following section reports some of the main findings and variations across different countries on these questions, with a focus on *role perceptions* among administrative executives, on their assessment of *coordination quality* along different dimensions and on the *performance* of public administration in terms of coordination.

In the COCOPS survey, the top executives were asked to indicate the importance of certain dimensions relevant to their self-understanding as public-sector executives. Figure 1 reports the findings on this question. The top civil servants had multiple role expectations. The most important dimensions were achieving results, ensuring efficient use of resources and providing expertise and technical knowledge. However, more coordination-related roles, such as getting public-sector organisations to work together, was considered important by three-quarters of the administrative executives, and finding joint solutions for problems of public concern was approved by 80% (Figure 1). Looking at the comparative data, making public organisations work together was a strong role commitment in the Netherlands (85%) and Italy (85%), but considerably weaker in countries like Germany (66%) and the UK (67%).

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[1] The survey was carried out in 11 European countries, targeting civil servants at the two top administrative levels within central government, the employment and health administration. For more details on the survey and findings, please confer Hammerschmid, Oprisor and Stimac 2013.

Figure 1. How the administrative executives understand their role as public-sector executive.[2]

Q: I mainly understand my role as a public-sector executive as

	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
Ensuring efficient use of resources	5	6	89
Finding joint solutions to solve problems of public concern	11	10	80
Providing expertise and technical knowledge	7	7	86
Developing new policy agendas	33	15	52
Providing a choice for societal interests	31	19	50
Achieving results	3	5	92
Getting public organizations to work together	11	13	76
Ensuring impartial implementation of laws and rules	9	7	84

1-3 = Disagree; 4 = Neither agree nor disagree; 5-7 = Agree

The executives were also asked how they thought public administration had performed in their own policy area over the last five years along different dimensions (Table 6). Although the respondents recognised the need for reforms to address coordination, they had an ambivalent and varied view of the actual policy coherence and coordination in their respective countries. One-third reported that policy coherence and coordination had declined in their own policy area over the past five years. Another third saw no significant changes, while the remaining third reported improvements. This reveals that coordination remains a great challenge in many European countries. The most improvement along this dimension was reported from the Netherlands (54%), the UK (47%) and Norway (42%), the least from Germany (25%) and Austria (22%).

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[2] The questions referred to in this section were answered on a seven-point scale. In the tables these are converted into three categories: 1-3, 4 and 5-7.

Table 6. Assessment of the performance of public administration in own policy area over the last five years.

	Deteriorated	No significant changes	Improved	mean
Policy coherence and coordination	31	33	35	4.01

Although the executives generally valued coordination, they were rather critical of the actual state of affairs in this regard. Table 7 shows that the inter-organisational horizontal coordination (coordination among national government bodies from different policy areas) was considered the poorest, while vertical coordination (coordination with local/regional government bodies or supra-national bodies/international organisations) was perceived as somewhat more developed. Almost half of the administrative executives characterised the coordination with national government bodies from other policy areas as *poor*, and only 28% said that it was *good*. Together with coordination with supra-national and international organisations, this was the most important coordination challenge for administrative executives in central government. There were, however, large national differences. Horizontal coordination problems across policy areas were dominantly reported from Spain (62%) and France (59%). They were the least important in Austria (29%), Norway (31%) and Hungary (39%).

Table 7: Assessment of coordination within own policy field along different dimensions.

	Poor	Neither poor nor good	Good	Mean
Coordination among national bodies within the same coordinating area	28	23	49	4.34
Coordination among national government bodies from different policy areas	49	24	28	3.55
Coordination with local/regional government bodies	37	24	40	4.03
Coordination with supra-national bodies/international organisations	46	18	36	3.64
Coordination with private-sector stakeholders, interest organisations, user groups, civil-society organisations	31	21	48	4.24

1-3 = Poor; 4 = Neither poor nor good; 5-7 = Good

When asked to identify the importance of different reform trends in their own policy field, improving *collaboration and cooperation among different public-sector organisations* was assessed as important within their own policy area among two thirds of the administrative executives (Figure 2). Along with public-sector downsizing and the development of e-government it was seen as the most important reform trend in European countries during

the past years, reflecting the relevance of post-NPM reform initiatives. Inter-organisational collaboration and cooperation among different public-sector actors gained the most attention in Estonia (88%), the Netherlands (86%) and Austria (77%) and the least attention in Spain (56%), France (57%) and Hungary (59%).

Figure 2: How important are the following reform trends in your policy area? Percentages indicating "To a large extent".
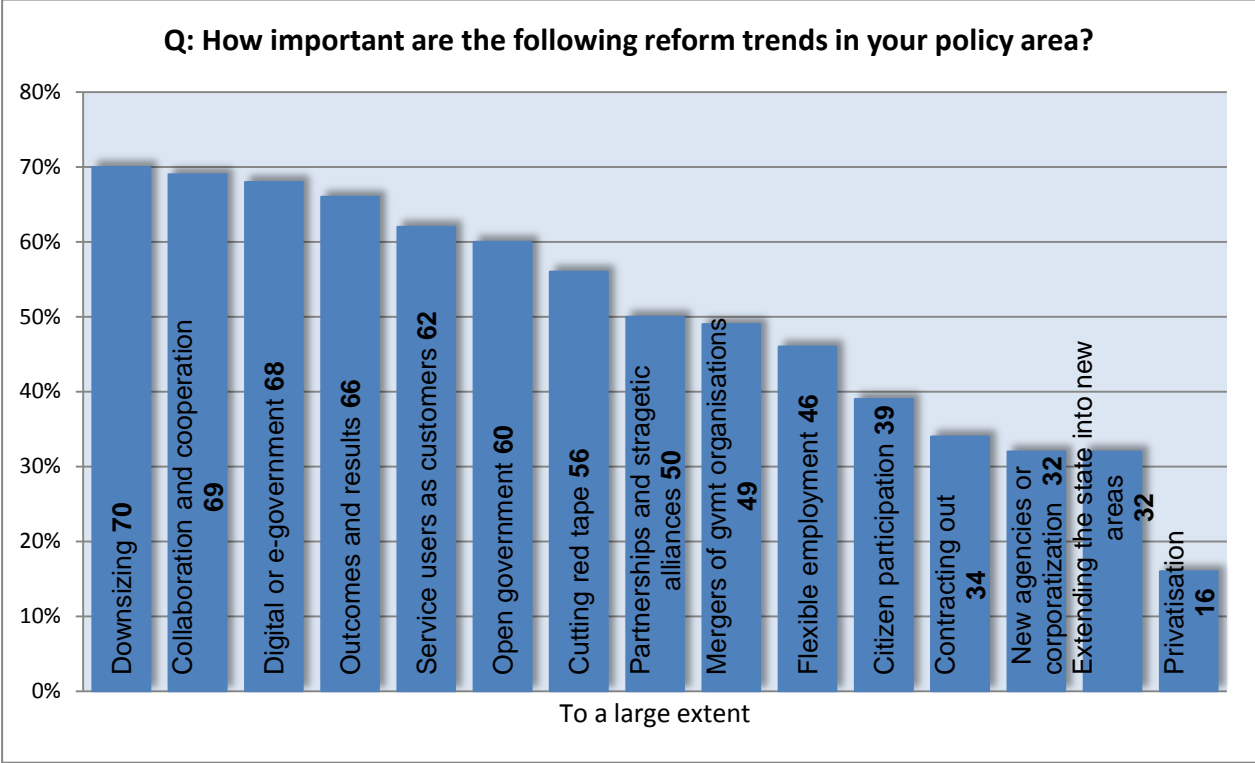
Regarding mechanisms to handle coordination problems, the administrative executives were also asked what their organisation typically does when the organisations' responsibility or interests conflict or overlap with that of other organisations. Interestingly, Figure 3 shows that despite the growing popularity of networks in the past decades and the recent strong attention towards coordination and joining-up of public services, *hierarchy* was considered the most relevant coordination mechanism, also in addressing cross-cutting problems. Two-thirds of the executives typically referred the issue upwards in the hierarchy when they faced overlapping responsibilities or conflicts with other organisations. Hierarchy was perceived as particularly important in France (85%) and Spain (78%) and as less important in the UK (44%), the Netherlands (49%), Estonia (52%) and Norway (55%). Yet, solutions based on network and partnership, such as setting up temporary and ad-hoc cross-cutting work or project groups were also considered important. Almost half of the administrative executives agreed that this was a typical way to handle coordination problems. Network-based arrangements were the most popular in the Netherlands (60%), the UK (58%) and Norway (53%). They were considered less relevant in Spain (22%), Italy (30%) and Hungary (35%).

Deciding upon one particular lead organisation or setting up cross-cutting policy arrangements or programmes happened under some circumstances, while putting up more permanent special purpose bodies was considered rather seldom. The differences between the countries might be linked to cultural differences between countries, such as differences in power distance and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede 2001)

Figure 3. How the administrative executives handle coordination problems when working with other organisations.
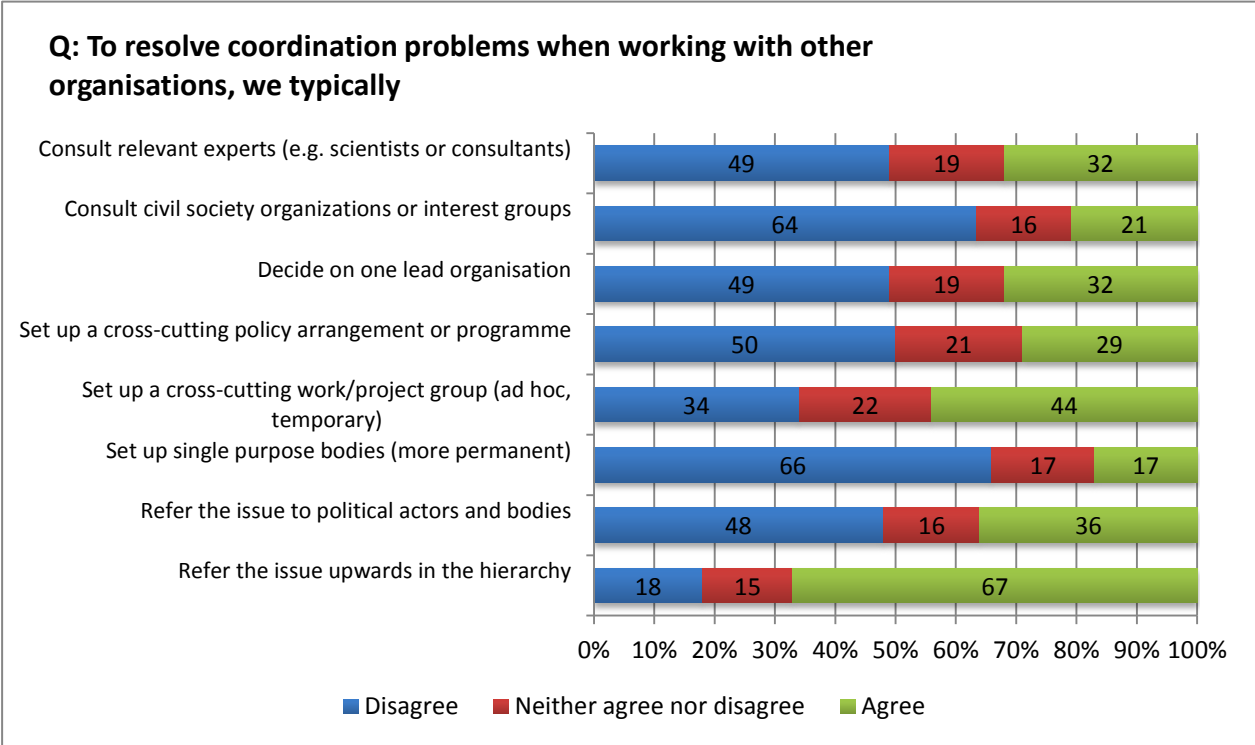
To sum up, the survey demonstrated that collaboration and cooperation among different public-sector organisations has been an important reform trend over the past five years. Nevertheless, it is difficult to assess its actual effect on policy coherence and coordination. Coordination issues are important in the administrative executives' understanding of their own role, and they are also high on the reform agenda. Many executives face important coordination challenges, and novel coordination mechanisms are sought to address these problems. However, the effects of the different reform measures on coordination remain contested.

The survey reveals that public-sector executives face challenges, especially regarding *horizontal coordination*, i.e. coordination among national bodies from different policy areas. At the same time, they mainly try to solve inter-organisational coordination problems by referring such issues upwards in the hierarchy. However, this is not likely to be a sufficient coordination mechanism for handling cross-boundary problems. Another (or complementary) strategy would be setting up cross-cutting work and project groups on an

ad hoc basis. The survey data show that these are also rather important instruments to resolve coordination problems.

There were significant variations among the countries on how they assessed coordination problems, what coordinating arrangements they applied and what the perceived effects were. According to the survey, horizontal coordination problems across policy areas were present especially in Spain and France. In these two countries, hierarchy was seen as a dominant coordination mechanism. Also collaboration and cooperation among different public-sector organisations was a less important reform trend in these two countries than in the other countries. In contrast, Norway, together with the Netherlands and the UK, reported fewer coordination problems compared to other countries. These three countries also reported the most improvement regarding policy coherence and coordination over the past five years. These conclusions are, however, inconclusive, and some of the countries mentioned did not show a consistent pattern.

The coordination practices

The case-study catalogue compiled for WP5 includes 22 coordinating practices from 11 countries. The individual cases can be downloaded from the case-study catalogue at the COCOPS website: http://www.cocops.eu/work-packages/wp5-coordinating-social-cohesion.

The case-study catalogue includes three coordination practices each from Estonia, Germany and the Netherlands, two each from Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom, and one each from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Spain. Twelve coordination practices address central government, six focus on the hospital and health sector, while three target the labour and employment sector.

The coordination practices represent a mix of different arrangements and reflect the open nature of the call to the partners to identify and investigate novel coordination instruments in their national contexts. They represent a collection of individual cases chosen by the participating partners in the different countries based on their own interest and preferences. As such, they are not a representative collection of cases, but each in their own way give important insights and lessons learned in the individual cases. Table 8 gives an overview of the coordination practices included in the case-study catalogue. A short description of the cases provided by the partners is listed in Annex II. Some general characteristics are presented in the next section.

Table 8. Overview of the case-study catalogue.

Central government		
Title	Country	Author(s)
Coordinating for Internal Security and Safety in Norway	Norway	Per Lægreid and Lise H. Rykkja, University of Bergen
Development of the Estonian Top Civil Service	Estonia	Annika Uudelepp, Tiina Randma-Liiv and Külli Sarapuu, Tallinn University of Technology
Consolidation of Support Services in Estonia	Estonia	Kaide Tammel, Tallinn University of Technology
Organising Government around Problems: Interdepartmental Programme Randstad Urgent	The Netherlands	Mark van Twist, Erasmus University of Rotterdam; Arno van Wijk and Martijn van der Steen, Netherlands School of Public Administration
Coordinating Innovation and Innovation Policy: The Innovation Platform in the Netherlands	The Netherlands	Mark van Twist, Martijn van der Steen and Arno van Wijk, Erasmus University of Rotterdam
The Coordination of Government-wide, Cross-cutting Programmes: The Case of Flanders in Action	Belgium (Flanders)	Koen Verhoest, University of Antwerpen, Astrid Molenveld and Dorien Buttiens, University of Leuven
The Spanish Agency for the Evaluation of Public Policies	Spain	Judith Clifton and Jose Manuel Alonso Alonso, University of Cantabria
Széll Kálmán Working Group	Hungary	György Hajnal, Corvinus University Budapest
"Government Windows": One-Stop Shops for Administrative Services in Hungary	Hungary	György Hajnal and Eva Kovacs, Corvinus University Budapest
The Coordination of Homeland Security Policy in Germany	Germany	Julia Fleischer, German Research Institute for Public Administration Speyer
Departmentalism in Climate Adaptation Policies in Germany	Germany	Thurid Hustedt, University of Potsdam
E-government in the Czech Republic	The Czech Republic	David Špaček, Mazaryk University
Health		
Contracting with Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Service Providers in Estonia	Estonia	Veiko Lember and Külli Sarapuu, Tallinn University of Technology
Intervention Teams and the Collaborative Approach: Enforcement Property and Person in the City of Rotterdam	The Netherlands	Arie van Sluis and Peter Marks, Erasmus University Rotterdam; David Berg, Directorate Safety Rotterdam
Integrated Youth Care in Belgium	Belgium	Koen Verhoest, University of Antwerpen; Astrid Molenveld, University of Leuven; Joris Voets, University of Ghent
Regional Electronic Patient Record in Lombardy	Italy	Greta Nasi and Maria Cucciniello, Bocconi University; Edoardo Ongaro, Northumbria University; Davide Galli and Claudia Guerrazzi, University of Bocconi
Introduction of a Regional Health Information System in Veneto Region	Italy	Greta Nasi and Maria Cucciniello, Bocconi University; Edoardo Ongaro, Northumbria University; Davide Galli and Claudia Guerrazzi, University of Bocconi
Minimum Network of Providing In-Patient Health Care in Slovakia	Slovakia	Juraj Nemec, Matej Bel University
Employment		
Public Service Agreements as a Tool of Coordination in UK Central Government: The Case of Employment	UK	Oliver James and Ayako Nakamura, University of Exeter
Coordinating Norwegian Welfare: The NAV Reform	Norway	Lise H. Rykkja and Per Lægreid, University of Bergen
Coordination Practices in German Employment Services: The Case of Jobcentres	Germany	Kai Wegrich, Gerhard Hammerschmid and Anca Oprisor, Hertie School of Governance
Local government		
Local Service Boards in Wales	Wales	Valeria Guarneros-Meza, Steve Martin and James Downe, Cardiff Business School

General Characteristics

According to the authors of the case studies, the coordination practices were generally characterised by mixed goals. **Output and activity goals** were the most common: this was the main focus of six practices in the case-study catalogue. Four were input and process-oriented, while two had mainly output-related goals. Eight coordination practices had multiple goals related to combinations of input and processes, output and activity and outcome. The complex goal structure reflects the multi-dimensional character of public administration, which is a system feature in public management that the organisations have to live with.

The central **actors** behind the introduction of the coordination practices were mainly politicians. This was the case of eight coordination practices. Six of them were dominantly introduced by managers or civil servants. Seven practices involved both political and administrative executives as central actors. None of the partners listed consultants or other participants than politicians, civil servants or managers as central actors behind the introduction of the new coordinating arrangements.

Participation in the coordination practices was mostly mandatory, but there were also some which combined mandatory and voluntary participation. A minority of four had only voluntary participation. The majority of the coordinating practices were formal, only five were informal and three were hybrids with both formal and informal features. The discretion regarding budgets and management varied. Seven coordination practices had little discretion, five had high discretion and eight were in between.

Regarding the **scope**, the majority of the coordinating practices dealt with policy implementation. Only five aimed at policy-making, while three addressed both policy-making and policy implementation. Eleven coordination practices mainly addressed horizontal linkages. Three had a primarily vertical focus, while three handled both vertical and horizontal linkages. Regarding the **permanence** of the coordination practices, they split in half, 10 were permanent and 11 temporary or time-limited. The majority joined up at the top, and only four addressed the base of an organisation. Two joined up both at the central and the local levels. This being said, most of the coordination practices covered several levels of government, and only five were limited to one level of government. The majority had only public partners, although seven also included private partners. Most of the coordinating arrangements addressed a specific group, but not a specific area. Eight did not, however, address a specific group, and six were targeted towards a specific geographic area. The majority of the coordination practices were considered unstable, flexible and changing, while seven were seen as more robust and stable.

Concerning **task portfolio**, the coordination practices were split in half – one group of arrangements covered a broad task portfolio and several policy areas, while the other group

had a more narrow focus on one or only a few policy areas. The majority of the coordination practices addressed "wicked problems". Five focused on seamless services, while two aimed at "tame" problems. The majority had a deep and comprehensive task portfolio including advice, consultancy, assistance and decision-making, while a minority of four had a shallow task portfolio focusing mainly on information.

In most cases there was a complex **participation structure** covering many agencies and multiple organisations. Four had a simple participation structure, while two included only a few agencies. The proximity to citizens varied across the coordinating arrangements. 12 were rather distant from the citizens, while nine were more close, often locally based, including neighbourhood arrangements and virtual services. Regarding the instruments used, one-half of the coordinating arrangements had a low to medium integration of instruments focusing on co-location and separately managed services, while the other half had medium to high integration involving joint management, joint budgets and joint recruitment.

Considering the **intensity** of the integration, 12 practices had a rather high intensity involving collaboration (shared responsibility), coordination (shared work) and cooperation (shared resources). Eight had a lower intensity in their work, limited to communication (shared information) and co-existence (self-realisation). A majority of the coordinating arrangements were characterised by a high level of conflicts, political salience and were controversial and contested. Seven had a lower conflict level by addressing more non-controversial and consensus-related arrangements.

Regarding the **effects** of the coordination practices, most of them were reported to have at least some positive effects on the main goal. However, only three can be said to have rather strong positive effects. The effects were most positive when it came to input and processes. Eight coordination practices had clear positive effects, and six some positive effects on inputs and processes. There were also some positive effects on output and activity (two clearly positive and 11 somewhat positive effects). Regarding effects on outcome and societal impacts, the effects were more uncertain. Only one arrangement reported clearly positive effects. Five had some positive effects on outcomes. There were also some negative as well as positive side effects of the coordination practices. Regarding the overall effects of the coordination practices, they were generally on the positive side. Ten can be said to be partly positive and five mainly positive. Two were partly negative while the overall assessment was uncertain for four arrangements.

Summing up, the coordinating practices did not represent a coherent set of ideas and tools. Because the high variation, and also due to our selection method, it has not been possible to identify a typical coordination practice, nor generalise in a statistical sense from the case studies. However, it is possible to detect qualitatively positive, negative as well as

unintended effects of coordination practices, and to draw lessons from the recently emerged coordination practices. One puzzle is that although coordination was deemed important in different countries and new instruments were introduced, their results tended to be mixed. It appears that the task of bringing different public-sector actors together was not an easy task and presented high demands on administrative executives. This finding is supported by the survey results. On the one hand joint working, getting public organisations to work together and collaboration and cooperation reforms was listed among the most important role perceptions and reform trends. On the other hand the evaluation of the state of affairs regarding coordination was much more differentiated. Despite considerable attention to the coordination issues, only 35% of the responding executives found that policy coherence and coordination in their own policy area had actually improved over the last five years. As much as 31% stated that coordination had in fact deteriorated.

Policy implications

The coordination practices identified by the partners within the COCOPS WP5 indicate high variation and multi-dimensionality of the novel instruments used in European states for integrating their public sectors and organisations. They vary from "soft", voluntary, bottom-up, informal arrangements to "hard", compulsory top-down and formal instruments. Different combinations of these basic attributes characterise the coordination practices. The coordination arrangements are found to be fluid and their characteristics change over time reflecting complex processes of layering, conversion and drift (Streek and Thelen 2005). This variety reflects three aspects of the emergence of the new coordination practices. First, they are usually introduced as a reaction to certain problems perceived by key politico-administrative actors. Often, they are initiated by politicians and the definition of problems is political which might challenge the need for a multi-actor setting to handle the wicked issues that need to integrate multiple definitions and solutions. Second, the choice of coordination arrangements often happens in a rather *ad hoc* and pragmatic way. The introduction of new practices is rather seldom related to a systematic analysis of the existing administrative arrangements, their strengths, weaknesses and interaction. Third, the existing institutional structures, resources available to different actors, and politico-administrative relationships have a strong influence on the way the arrangements emerge, develop and how they function. Thus, context is a very important factor to understand why and how different practices are set up, how they are received and how they develop. This corresponds to the findings of COCOPS WP1, where a meta-analysis of NPM impacts was carried out. This exercise revealed that contextual factors were crucial in many country studies in assessing the impact of NPM (Pollitt and Dan 2011, 2013).

Performance of coordination arrangements

The WP5 collection of case studies demonstrates that it is difficult to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the coordination arrangements. Hard facts are missing, and most of the information is based on perceived expert assessments. There is also an attribution problem, meaning that it is difficult to isolate the effects of the coordination arrangements from other on-going reforms and changes in public administration (Pollitt and Dan 2011). Adding to this, many of the practices are in an early phase of development. The observed effects can be affected by the uncertainty, resistance and confusion that are normally higher in the adaptation phase than in a more established operational phase. Thus, the knowledge about their performance is patchy and the main results are reported on processes and activities rather than on results and outcomes.

The perceived performance varies across coordination practices, and it appears often quite hard to fulfil their main goals. There are several aspects to this observation. First of all, public-sector coordination does not only address efficiency and effectiveness but also wider issues of participation, legitimacy, trust, power and political control. Certain coordination

instruments may be efficient in terms of resource use or speed of achieving results, but unsatisfactory from the perspective of stakeholder inclusion and legitimacy. Often it is difficult to achieve all such positive results with one arrangement, and normally one has to make trade-offs. Second, many of the coordination practices address so-called "wicked problems" that are by definition difficult to resolve because presumed changes in the social behaviour are not under control of public-sector institutions. This makes the evaluation of the success of the related coordination instruments very difficult. Third, the coordination instruments seem to look much better on ex-ante than ex-post analysis. This means that there is a gap between expectations and the real performance. One reason for this is that the reformers tend to oversell the promised effects of the coordinating arrangements. Furthermore, although the introduction of new coordination practices sometimes starts from simple ideas, they might result in rather complex arrangements and unintended consequences in practice. One example of this is the case of Jobcentres in Germany. Often the devil is in the details: by solving one problem, new ones are created. Thus, coordination practices often represent complicated trade-offs rather than clear-cut success or failure cases.

Positive effects

Regardless of the difficulties in evaluating the performance of novel coordination arrangements, several positive effects were reported in the case studies. Most of the coordination practices demonstrated at least some positive effects compared to their main goals. However, the effects were perceived to be more positive when it came to inputs and processes, and more uncertain with regard to the outputs and outcomes. Again, this is very similar to the findings of WP1 (Pollitt and Dan 2011). In many cases, coordination instruments granted more capacity to act for central administrative or political leaders. They provided for competence and expertise and created additional room for steering and decision-making through new combinations of knowledge, technical equipment and physical arrangements. This is particularly important when states face crises, as seen in the Norwegian and German coordination of internal security, for instance. New IT solutions can encourage joint working through sharing of information and assets as shown in the case of the Italian Patient Record. The case of introducing e-government in the Czech Republic showed that although the general results of the arrangement regarding the expected capacity improvements were uncertain, somewhat increased trust from involved institutions and citizens could be reported. Multi-disciplinary teams, virtual teams and the pooling of budgets can create more room to manoeuvre and result in better cross-sectoral collaboration as exemplified by the case of Local Service Boards in Wales. Public Service Agreements in the UK showed mixed results with regard to coordination, but proved to be a useful tool for coordinating spending across policy areas and reducing fragmentation in performance assessment systems. Jobcentres in Germany improved the coordination, but the strength of the institutional structure was closely linked to previous tasks. The success of

services seems to depend more on the quality and intensity of support and the degree of managerial integration than on institutional arrangements.

The following coordination practices are reported to have mainly positive effects in terms of intended positive coordination: *The Development of the Estonian Top Civil Service*, which enhanced the recognition of top civil servants as a coherent group; *Regional Electronic Patient Record in Lombardy*, which is an interesting mix of hierarchy-type and market-type coordination mechanisms leading to successful and focused implementation of a large-scale project; *Organizing Government Around Problems: Interdepartmental Program Randstad Urgent*, which is a case of successful and speedy implementation; *and Szell Kalman Working Group*, which is considered successful from a technical perspective by managing to get through a large number of harsh austerity measures within a short period of time.

Negative and unexpected effects

At the same time, the case studies published in the catalogue signal that the coordination instruments seldom work entirely as expected. In many cases, new coordination instruments were introduced without a general master plan. This indicates reform trajectories operating more in a "trial and error" fashion. Both negative and unexpected effects were reported. The establishment of new coordinating structures did not always result in better coordination. This was the case, for example, with the Spanish agency for the evaluation of public policies, which was not able to improve the coordination between central and regional levels. Also, contracting with pre-hospital emergency medical service providers in Estonia represents a case of failed competitive bidding. In the case of climate adaptation policy in Germany, the establishment of the inter-ministerial working group was not able to overcome departmental conflicts and interests. The NAV reform in Norway demonstrated the difficulty of creating a new shared cultural identity based on three different sectoral cultures. In the case of more informal practices, a high degree of informality and non-binding instruments may result in uneven practices and implementation, as was observed in the case of the Estonian Top Civil Service. The latter also demonstrated that a project-based character of a coordination instrument may result in challenges related to the sustainability of a new practice. In some cases, like the one on public service agreements in the UK, performance-management systems were considered too rigid and top-down, leading to local service-delivery units struggling to manage excessive burdens of performance targets and indicators. A general problem is that many coordinating arrangements lack authority and resources as well as powerful steering instruments. They tend to be virtual organisations operating in the shadow of the hierarchy, cross-cutting vertical arrangements but lacking necessary support and means to secure horizontal coordination. This was the case with the arrangements for internal security in Norway.

Lessons learned

Altogether, some key issues arise from the case studies. These concern mostly value and interest conflicts and accountability issues. First, the coordination arrangements are often a

loose collection of tools involving partly contradictory forces. They attempt to join up both at the top and at the bottom, have multiple goals, different scopes and intensities. This has a potential to produce conflicts and tensions. For example, decentralised institutional environment poses challenges to the initiatives oriented at standardisation and increasing central control. This was the case with the Spanish evaluation agency and the Estonian project of consolidating the support services. From the policy field of health, both the Estonian case of contracting emergency medical services as well as the Slovakian case of reforming the minimum network of health-care providers demonstrated the significance of the regional-level political interests and the (missing) incentives to contribute to the implementation of centrally devised reform plans. At the same time, the studies show that a strong partnership ethos can sustain consensus over abstract goals and legitimise the avoidance of political value conflicts (see also Christensen et al. 2013). Partnership culture can support inter-organisational cooperation, but it can also cause a displacement of value conflicts and avoidance of difficult issues, which in turn may enhance silo practices and fragmented governance.

Second, the new ways of joint working pose new challenges with regard to accountability. As already noted in the earlier studies, the accountability relationships become increasingly complex and hybrid in situations where the government acquires a more horizontal and multi-level character (Michels and Meijer 2008). Joined-up-government normally implies diffused or shared accountability relations among a number of actors. This is especially the case when the tasks or outputs are difficult to separate, are highly interdependent and designed to handle wicked problems in which the problem structure does not follow the organisational structure (Boston and Gill 2011). Blurred accountability relations are common in Jobcentre arrangements and organising for internal security in Germany and Norway and also in the case of organising for climate change in Germany. The legitimacy of coordinating arrangements and the accountability for joint results is a matter of importance both for the arrangements themselves and for the government at large. However, horizontal coordination practices especially tend to face "the problem of many eyes" (Bovens 2007). There are multiple forums to which the participants in the arrangements have to report. This means that practices for joint working tend to make accountability relations more blurred. This was the case with the Belgian programme of Integrated Youth Care and also the NAV reform in Norway, for instance.

In addition to the accountability problems and institutional conflicts, there are also other issues that the potential reformers of coordination arrangements have to consider. On the one hand, there is the question of choosing the most suitable mix of coordination mechanisms – either through hierarchical authority, cooperation in networks or by the use of incentives to the participants. This question concerns the *capacity* of governments to design and implement coherent public policies, alias their *policy capacity* (see Painter and Pierre 2005). On the other hand, the case studies show that the *administrative capacity* of

governments to design and implement reforms is also of crucial importance for joined-up working. Although these capacities can be considered as two sides of the same coin, there are still some issues specifically touching one or the other.

First, with regard to the policy capacity of governments, the case studies demonstrate that one of the central questions with regard to coordination is the potential value of favouring networks and/or (market) incentives over the more traditional hierarchy and authority. For example, the Italian case of the Electronic Patient Record and the Estonian case of developing top civil service directed attention to the relationship between the politico-administrative context and the choice of basic coordination mechanism. The case of Public Service Agreements in the UK indicated that the Agreements were insufficient in dealing with in-depth coordination, where major structural changes were more effective. The Belgian cases (Flanders in Action and Integrated Youth Care) demonstrated the relevance of hierarchy for overcoming policy silos and implementing complex government-wide programs. The steering and support of the government as well as political support was essential in most cases. This fits with Peters' (1998) argument that integrated policy-making requires the strengthening of the centre of government and the use of political power of these central actors.

Generally, the horizontal inter-organisational and collegial coordinating arrangements seem to operate in the shadow of hierarchy and seem to supplement rather than replace traditional hierarchical coordination in the European states. The silo mentality that characterises many of the European countries may have existed for good reasons (Page 2005). The division of labour and specialisation by purpose or sector worked well as long as the problems or issues followed the borders of the silos and did not cross-cut them. Nevertheless, more network-based horizontal coordination strategies have a potential to improve integration between administrative silos, organisations and administrative levels. Both the survey data and the cases explored within WP5 reveal that traditional mandatory, hierarchical and vertical coordination needs to be supplemented by more voluntary and mission-based horizontal coordinating arrangements in order to cover cross-cutting issues and activities transcending organisational borders. The coordination instruments have to comply with the nature of the problems that they are supposed to address. Complex problems seem to need complex solutions.

However, that alone is not enough. Coordination instruments have to interact with and be supported also by dominating ideas and values in the system in order to achieve the desired effect. Organisation culture is critical – whether it supports cross-border coordination or not, as argued by several of the cases. Furthermore, the collected cases reported tensions between performance management systems for semi-independent single-purpose organisations with their own organisation-specific targets and performance indicators on the one hand and the multi-organisational goals and targets that were needed to handle cross-

boundary challenges on the other. This illustrates that unless cross-border targets get the same focus and status as organisation-specific targets, inter-organisational coordinating arrangements face the risk of operating in the shadow of vertical hierarchical steering and accountability (Pollitt 2003).

Second, policy lessons related to the introduction of novel coordination instruments often touch upon the administrative capacity of governments to manage change. As already concluded by Pollitt (2009), there seems to be much more abundant information around on the processes of administrative reorganisations than on their results or performance. In a similar vein, the case studies on the emerging coordination practices offer a considerable amount of lessons on the management of administrative reforms. First of all, high motivation and personal commitment of leaders as well as other stakeholders is vital for the implementation of coordination practices. This observation goes beyond the rhetoric of participation and symbolic engagement of stakeholders and emphasises the need for real joint working for better public policies (see for instance the AEVAL case in Spain). In practice, it often necessitates a choice between expertise and representativeness and finding the right balance between them, as seen in the case of the innovation platform in the Netherlands.

Third, coordination is resource-demanding, and the availability of (financial and human) resources is critical for the success of coordination arrangements. In some cases, the availability of EU structural funds has been a key prerequisite in developing coordination (see, for example, the Estonian case of top civil-service development or the Wales case of Local Service Boards).

Fourth, technical problems cannot be underestimated in the current ICT-dependent public administration. As argued in the studies on the NAV reform in Norway and the consolidation of support services in Estonia, the costs and difficulties with the introduction of new ICT systems may determine the success of coordination arrangements, and adequate technical solutions and support are necessary.

Fifth, steering and control of network-type coordination arrangements require new skills and competences that fit with more horizontal relationships.

Furthermore, unexpected conditions or events can change the timing and implementation of coordination reforms, as demonstrated by the cases of the Government Window in Hungary and of the intervention teams in Rotterdam. It means that flexibility and openness are needed – the development of new coordination practices is often a moving target which requires adaptability of participants and consistent steering by leaders. Administrative systems have to be open to learning and adjusting the coordination arrangements as they go along.

Last but not least, the new coordination arrangements are often contested, especially in the introductory phase. They need continued political and top-executive commitment and support in order to succeed. This last observation was strongly emphasised by several of the studies – from the case of Electronic Patient Records in Italy and Randstad Urgent in the Netherlands to Flanders in Action in Belgium and the Government Window in Hungary. Novel coordination arrangements cannot thrive without committed ownership.

The theoretical implications of these findings are that we are facing complex and compounded public-administrative systems that are multi-dimensional and represent a mixed order of supplementing organisational models and structural arrangements that coexist and balance different values and interests (Verhoest and Lægreid 2010, Olsen 2007). Thus a complementary approach to administrative reforms is more appropriate than "either-or" reforms in which one reform simply replaces the other. What we face is a layering process in which new organisational arrangements supplement old ones (Streek and Thelen 2005). What we observe are an increased complexity and hybrid organisational forms combining old public administration (hierarchy), New Public Management and whole-of-government/joined-up government/New Public Governance.

Single-factor explanations face considerable problems when their claims are confronted with empirical data. A transformative approach seems more fruitful to understand the emerging pattern (Christensen and Lægreid 2001, 2007b). Instrumental and deliberate design by political and administrative executives is constrained by cultural factors and historical-institutional traditions as well as polity features and environmental factors both from the technical environment (such as financial crisis) and from the institutional environment (such as dominating doctrines and reform ideas, first from NPM and later from New Public Governance). It is beyond this report to analyse the strength and relevance of such driving forces, but this will be done in further academic publications.

Main recommendations

- Public sector coordination is always political. Although simple solutions appear highly attractive they seldom result in simple arrangements in practice. Public-sector coordination instruments are not only value-free exercises involving technical, managerial and "neutral" organisational tools, but they are often highly political and usually assessed by different stakeholders. Take the political context and the aspects of legitimacy and trust into account when designing coordination reforms. Support from key stakeholders is necessary, and a balance of expertise and representativeness is important.

- Context matters. Coordination practices cannot be taken by their face value or on their formal characteristics. They are deeply related to the surrounding environment and there is no "best model" that would work everywhere. It is not possible to copy successful coordination practices straightforwardly. Be critical in drawing lessons and adapt your coordination instrument to the local context. Relevant contexts might include tasks, time, scale and direction (Pollitt and Dan 2011, Christensen and Lægreid 2013), and the challenge is to relate specific coordinating issues to specific types of context.

- Coordination arrangements are not a universal panacea or a quick fix. Networks and partnerships should not necessarily replace hierarchy, but rather supplement it. Too much focus on network coordination will most likely not overcome policy silos and powerful interests. A combination of hierarchical and network coordination is therefore often necessary. Keep in mind that coordination arrangements often run into implementation problems and do not work in the way they were expected to and tend to show mixed results. Collaboration between central and local government is often complicated. New coordination instruments can boost hidden organisational conflicts and result in unexpected complexity or even negative consequences. Patience and a long-term approach are often necessary.

- Coordination practices should be carefully designed. Develop realistic goals and expectations. Successful coordination requires a joint problem and salience perception. Try to figure out the details of introducing a new coordination arrangement before its implementation and be ready to adjust as you go along. A gradual and stepwise introduction of new initiatives might be a key to success.

- Secure feedback mechanisms and mutual experiential learning arrangements. There is a lack of reliable knowledge of effects and implication of different coordinating arrangements and thus a need for more evidence-based knowledge on and evaluation of the functioning and effects of emerging coordinating practices. Review periodically the compatibility of formal arrangements with actual practice of coordinating arrangements in order to better align these and to find a good trade-off between flexibility and formal procedures and regulations. Study and evaluate the performance of coordinating arrangements, not only on a case-by-case basis but also on a government-wide basis.

- Accountability for joint results is a key issue. Different accountability relationships and their combination in practice have to be considered when designing arrangements for joint working. Usually it is necessary to go beyond traditional hierarchical accountability relationships and to allow for more horizontal accountability relations to enter the scene. Otherwise it may happen that the participants do not have enough incentives to work together.

- <u>Wicked issues demand horizontal coordination arrangements</u>. Inter-organisational coordination arrangements are needed the most when the problems transcend administrative levels and organisations and cannot be solved unless there is inter-organisational collaboration. Inter-organisational coordinating arrangements are different depending on whether they are supposed to handle wicked problems, seamless services or tame problems. Start from problems, not from solutions. Invest in better coordination by improving the connection between policy and implementation and create cross-cutting targets between organisations in different policy areas and at different administrative levels. Invest in models involving dialogue and trust-based relationships.

- <u>Cross-border coordination feeds on trust and commitment.</u> It is generally difficult to join distinctive cultures. Shared culture and common interests make coordination easier. Motivation and strong commitment over time is needed. An administrative culture oriented towards coordination and collaboration is important.

- <u>Coordination across organisations is a resource-demanding process.</u> Beware of costs of coordination arrangements. Do not urge for collaboration and extensive coordination between organisations unless this is absolutely necessary. Consider more carefully the combination between different kinds of scope and intensity which are given to a specific coordination arrangement. Successful coordinating arrangements need authority, powerful steering instruments and capacity.

- <u>General change management lessons apply also to the development of coordination arrangements.</u> The introduction of new coordination instruments needs smart management. Go through the change process – make an action plan, build internal and external support, ensure commitment from the political and administrative executives and deal with resistance at the bottom, communicate the change and ensure enough resources. Ownership and involvement from managers throughout the process is equally important. Changes in practice cannot be based on top-down mechanisms alone. Create good communication and transparency of types and models of coordination arrangement. Explain why different organisational forms have been granted to specific coordination arrangements. Ensure commitment and sustainable leadership of the change process.

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Annex I

Template for coordination practice(s)

Please consider the following guiding questions carefully and fill out the form as thoroughly as you can and in a coherent text. Consider the listed questions as a guide. Not all questions may be relevant in each case. Bear in mind that the main target group for the case-study catalogue are the practitioners.

1. THE COORDINATION LANDSCAPE	
Main country characteristics Provide background information on the general features of your country, and central characteristics of the relevant policy area(s); central government, employment services and/or health. Max 2-3 pages.	
General political-administrative structure	Provide general background information on the general political-administrative system of your country that is relevant to readers not so familiar with your country - General state structure (e.g. unitary state, federal state, parliamentary system, centralised or decentralised, etc.) - General administrative structure (e.g. administrative levels and competencies, agency structure) - Typical coordination practices (e.g. vertical arrangements, horizontal arrangements, relations between them) - Major and relevant public-sector reforms over the last 20-30 years - Other important political-administrative features you think might be relevant, in particular features that distinguishes your country from other European or Western models
Coordination discourse	What characterises the recent debates and developments on themes like joined-up government, whole-of-government, post-NPM developments and coordination in your country? To what extent is there a debate on such issues? What are the main positions in the debate? What policy areas and/or institutional arrangements are discussed?
Context: policy area	Provide general background information on the policy area that your chosen coordination practice falls within, either central government/health/employment sector.

	(If you provide more than one example and they fall within different areas, please give background information on all relevant policy areas by inserting new cells below this one).
	- Main political-administrative structure within the policy area in question (responsible ministries, agencies, local authorities
	- Private-sector responsibilities within the policy area (if relevant)
	- Legal framework
	- Main types of coordination practices
	- Major structural or policy reforms over the last 10 years relevant to the policy area in question
	- Other features of the policy area that you think might be relevant to the readers not so familiar with your country

2. COORDINATION PRACTICE: NAME	
2.1. Substance (what)	
Country	
Area	Does the practice concern central government, health or employment?
Main characteristics of the practice	State the main characteristics of the coordination practice - What does it concern, what problem does it seek to solve? - Which organisation or part of an organisation does the coordination practice concern? - What are the main stated goals and/or targets of the coordination practice?
Background and initiation of the practice	Provide relevant information concerning the background of the coordination practice, especially concerning its initiation - Why was the coordination practice initiated? - What characterised the initiation process (salience, conflict and consensus)? - Was the coordination practice part of a larger reform? If so, please state the main features of this reform and how it influenced the coordination practice in question - Indicate the main legal instruments (if any) the coordination practice builds on

Time frame	When was the coordination practice initiated?
	When was it implemented?
	Is it a permanent or a temporary arrangement? If it is temporary, what is/was the time frame for the arrangement?
	To what degree is the practice implemented (partly/whole)? Describe.

2.2.	Structure and actors (how/who)

Basic features	Describe the main features and characteristics of the coordination practice in terms of organisational structure and main actors involved
	- Have new organisations and structures been established? If so, provide a short description.
	- Does it concern a special group of users or clients?
	- Does it concern a special geographical area or locality?
	- Does it imply policy design from the top or coordination at the bottom (through administrative process)?
	- What kind of legal instruments are involved, are they mandatory or voluntary? Is there any degree of discretion?)
Main tools/ instruments	What are the main tools for implementing the practice?
	Is it mainly formal or informal?
	Is participant autonomy low (compulsory participation, little discretion) or high (voluntary, high discretion)?
	If the practice concerns a public service, is proximity to citizens distant (regionally/centrally based) or close (locally based, virtual accessible)
	Are technological solutions central to the implementation/operation of the practice?
	What kind of resources accompany the practice (Budgets, personnel etc.?)
Main actors	Who initiated/designed and planned the practice?
	Who does the practice concern, and what are the roles/functions of those involved?
	- Does it involve politicians or is it an administrative issue only?
	- Does it involve the private sector or imply collaboration between the private and the public sector?
	Describe the type of relationship between the involved actors
	- Hierarchical, market-like or network structure?
	- Formal or informal structure?
	- Describe the degree of conflicts, negotiations, bargaining, political salience

2.3.	**Impacts/effects**

	Describe main results, impacts and effects of the practice.
	Are the results positive, negative, uncertain, as intended?
	Have unintended impacts/consequences appeared?
	How has the practice affected, for instance:
	- Service quality/output quality?
	- Quantity of output?
	- Performance/effectiveness/outcome?
	- Process or activity?
	- Efficiency or productivity?
	- Equity, fairness or impartiality?
	- Transparency?
	- Steering, control or accountability?
	- Public opinion, user satisfaction or trust in government?
	Has the practice resulted in more capacity to act for political and/or administrative leaders? How?
	Has the practice resulted in more coordination, collaboration and integration among public (and, if relevant private) actors and/or organisations? How?
	Has the practice affected social cohesion within your country? How?
	Are these effects measured or documented in some way (evaluations, research)?

2.4.	**Lessons learned and policy recommendations**

	What have been the lessons learned concerning this practice in your country? The lessons may be based on policy discussions, documents or your expert opinion.
	What are the lessons with regard to:
	- Intended and unintended consequences of the reform?
	- Importance and influence of the organisational environment?
	- Constraining and enabling factors that influence how the practice has worked?
	What policy recommendations are, in your expert opinion important?
	- Are the lessons learned useful for other policy areas? If so, how?
	- Are the lessons learned useful for other countries? If so, how?

2.5.	**Further information**

Data/references	Provide information on the data your information is based on. Mainly documents or interviews? What kind of documents, what kind and how many interviews, with whom? Please list any relevant key documents, preferably available in English or German. Insert the hyperlink to the website, if available (with a date when it was last accessible).
Contact	Please provide your contact details for possible further questions from the practitioners regarding this coordination practice

Annex II

COCOPS WP5 COORDINATION PRACTICES

The following overview gives a short description of the cases provided. The full case descriptions can be accessed in the case-study catalogue published on the COCOPS website: http://www.cocops.eu/work-packages/wp5-coordinating-social-cohesion/case-study-catalogue

Central government:

Coordination for Internal Security and Safety in Norway: This coordination practice describes the main structure and function of central coordinative arrangements for crisis management in Norway and includes facts on changes in this structure over the last ten years. It particularly emphasises organisational changes in central-government arrangements for crisis management after the terrorist attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011 and addresses the importance of coordinating arrangements within the policy field of internal security and crisis management.

Development of the Estonian Top Civil Service: Until 2004, the development of Estonian top civil servants was addressed in a highly decentralised way. A joint development programme for top civil servants was introduced to increase cohesion in the top civil service and advance cooperation between public-sector organisations and to contribute to the development of common values and administrative culture. The coordination practice addresses structural, legal, financial and administrative issues related to the establishment and sustainability of this initiative.

Consolidation of Support Services in Estonia: This coordination practice addresses an initiative to consolidate financial and payroll accounting and personnel records (support services) after the financial crisis. The crisis showed the importance of a real-time overview of state finances and urged the Government to reduce costs. In addition to technological change the project brought along an important structural change – support services were to be consolidated up to a ministerial level, making the ministries "service providers" and their subordinate agencies "clients".

Organising Government around Problems: Interdepartmental Programme Randstad Urgent: The coordination practice explores a horizontal collaboration (interdepartmental programme) in which the central government, provinces, municipalities and urban regions collaborate to address problems in an urban agglomeration. The findings emphasise the need for an explicit decoupling from existing line organisations, advanced thinking about accountability relations, and the importance of well functioning facility systems that are integrated into the general system of Ministries.

Coordinating Innovation and Innovation Policy: The Innovation Platform in the Netherlands: The innovation Platform is a taskforce-like structure set up to create conditions, connections and a vision to boost innovation. With a network-style structure and supported by a project office, experts and representatives from relevant sectors have been involved in various project teams. The case exemplifies the function of a mainly informal cross-sectoral organisation.

The Coordination of Government-wide, Cross-cutting Programmes: The Case of Flanders in Action: This coordination practice addresses a major cross-cutting policy programme of the Flemish government and its coordination dynamics and offers insights into the challenges of managing long-term horizontal policy projects.

The Spanish Agency for the Evaluation of Public Policies: The agency was established in order to promote the rational use of public resources, coordination among different government levels, improve the quality of public services and encourage accountability to citizens. This short case study presents the Agency, its organisation and functions, and its main working lines, focusing on its role on inter-territorial coordination.

Széll Kálmán Working Group: The Széll Kálmán Working Group (SKWG) was a committee with representatives from all ministries within the Hungarian central government with an aim to coordinate the implementation of a range of austerity measures taken in order to decrease Hungary's public budget deficit. It included measures ranging from the re-design of social benefits to decreasing the number of MPs. The coordination practice investigates the function and success of the working group and the implementation of the relevant coordinating measures.

"Government Windows": One-Stop Shops for Administrative Services in Hungary: This coordination practice reviews the context, process and immediate results of a Structural Reform Program that established Government Offices or One-Stop Shops in Budapest City and the 19 counties of Hungary. The Government Offices were strictly controlled by the central government and integrated a diverse set of special and general administration services as an effort to supersede sectoral lines of authority and accountability and intended to reinforce hierarchical control by the executive centre. The task portfolio of the Government Windows is broad but shallow and embraces almost the entire public sector.

The Coordination of Homeland Security Policy in Germany: This case explores existing coordination practices in homeland security policy in Germany. The key coordination principle is the separation principle, separating the offices responsible for intelligence and for police work. Next to the general high specialisation of public authorities in this policy area, this principle contributes to rather strong siloism and represents an obstacle to coordination within the policy field. The case explores current reforms that aim towards more exchange of information and coordination.

Departmentalism in Climate Adaptation Policies in Germany: This case explores the establishment of a distinct inter-ministerial working group intended to cope with the complexity of climate adaption and to coordinate adjoined policy. The case shows that the working group largely failed to agree on wide-ranging measures to implement adaptation policies, mainly due to a lack of a joint problem perception reflecting strong departmentalism in the German federal government.

E-government in the Czech Republic: This study summarises coordination practices in the area of e-government and highlights problems related to a rather strict top-down approach which was not followed by sufficient evaluation, suffered from an unstable political leadership, a high level of secrecy and almost no transparency.

Health:

Contracting with Pre-hospital Emergency Medical Health: The practice concerns a reform of an under-regulated and poorly administered pre-hospital emergency medical service into a semi-market system. The intention was to subject all service providers to competitive selection and legally enforceable contracts. After six years of experiment the government abolished the competitive contracting system on the grounds of its unsuitability for the country's delivery mechanism. Instead, strong elements of hierarchy- and network-type mechanisms were inserted. The process engaged different stakeholders, and the practice revolves around the will and capacity of different stakeholders to influence the administrative policy process.

Intervention Teams and the Collaborative Approach: Enforcement Property and Person in the City of Rotterdam: This case describes the functioning of so-called intervention teams in the city of Rotterdam aiming to contribute to public safety. The integrated approach combines enforcement with offering care. The teams operated within structure established to improve coordination between themselves and between the teams and other city services that had to follow up on the information provided by the teams.

Integrated Youth Care in Belgium: This coordination practice addresses a cross-sectoral policy programme of the Flemish government aiming to achieve a coordinated approach to help troubled young people and their next of kin. The clients typically face multi-problem situations that require a multi-faceted care strategy. The institutional make-up of the care (health, welfare, education) landscape in Flanders, Belgium, however, is relatively fragmented and characterised by strong (sub-) sectors. The governance of IYC describes a mixed horizontal and vertical coordination strategy to unite actors from multiple policy sectors – i.e. to achieve joined-up government within parts of government.

Regional Electronic Patient Record in Lombardy: This case study illustrates, analyses in terms of coordination practices and discusses the introduction of a regional health information system supporting the creation of the electronic patient record (EPR) in the Italian region of Lombardy. The EPR is a longitudinal electronic record of a patient's health history. This is in itself a

coordinating tool for health-care providers. Whilst the ultimate impact of an EPR may be disputable, it may prove highly beneficial for the improvement of health services in terms of quality, effectiveness and possibly efficiency. The objective of this case study is to examine the coordination practice put in place in the course of the project that led to setting up the EPR.

Introduction of a Regional Health Information System in the Veneto Region: This case study discusses the introduction of a regional health information system supporting the creation of the electronic patient record (EPR) in the Italian region of Veneto; a longitudinal electronic record of a patient's health history. This is in itself a coordinating tool for health-care providers. Whilst the ultimate impact the EPR may be disputable, it may prove highly beneficial for the improvement of health services in terms of quality, effectiveness, and possibly efficiency.

Minimum Network of Providing In-patient Health Care in Slovakia: This coordination practice deals with the issue of the physical access of patients to health services in Slovakia, where most of the health-care providers are privately owned establishments. Most of the health-care finances are in the hands of a network of competing public and private health-insurance companies. It shows that the guarantee of physical access can be achieved only by high-quality coordination activities of state bodies on all levels. The issue of minimum physical access is to a large extent based on a "minimum network of providers". The study investigates how such a minimum network is defined from the central level and how its existence is achieved on the level of self-governing regions.

Employment:

Public Service Agreements as a Tool of Coordination in UK Central Government: The case addresses the introduction of Public Service Agreements in the UK to improve coordination exemplified by the case of employment policy. It shows that PSAs helped to coordinate spending plans and policy-making processes across departments and improved top-down policy delivery processes, including through the development of consistent performance-assessment systems. However, joint targets' effects were limited by the separate departmental structures for resourcing and ministers and civil servants' accountability. The PSAs also became a stage on a move towards more fundamental organisational mergers intended to incentivise the coordination of employment systems.

Coordinating Norwegian Welfare: The NAV Reform: This coordination practice focuses on the establishment of a new welfare administration and one-stop shops for welfare and employment services in Norway. The reform was one of the largest public-sector reforms in recent Norwegian history. It merged the employment and national insurance administrations and implied a more formal collaboration between the new state administration and the local-government social-services administration through the establishment of partnership arrangements. The aim of the reform was to create more jobs, to make the administration more user-friendly, holistic and more efficient.

Coordination Practices in German Employment Services: The Case of Jobcentres: This study addresses the reform of the German labour-market administration that established cooperation between different levels of government in a joint agency, the so-called Jobcentres jointly administered by the Federal Agency for Labour and the respective local government seeking to introduce modes of output control and accountability. While available evidence suggests that the integration of (formally fragmented) benefit and service systems improves service quality, coordination problems prevail due to the complexity of the institutional architecture of the Jobcentres.

Local Government:

Local Service Boards in Wales: Local Service Boards (LSBs) is an example of a network-based coordination practice combining horizontal and vertical collaborative arrangements providing joined-up leadership to help overcome recurrent and difficult problems that can only be tackled through partnership working. The policy projects agreed upon by LSBs were held under voluntary understandings between local partners and national and local tiers of governments. The projects were mainly defined by the local needs of the area in which the LSB partners have a direct geographical concern. The vertical arrangements are found in the relationship between the local partners of the LSB and a senior civil servant from the Welsh Government, whose expertise and knowledge helped local partners identify and share innovative ideas and who communicates government policies to the LSB and on-the-ground experiences to ministers.