



Boundary Spanning in Governance Networks

A study about the role of boundary spanners
and their effects on democratic throughput legitimacy
and performance of governance networks

Ingmar van Meerkerk

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nance networks*

Boundary Spanning in governance netwerken

*Een studie naar de rol van boundary spanners en hun effecten
op democratische throughput legitimiteit en prestaties van
governance netwerken*

Thesis

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PART I

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

The rise of governance
networks and the need for
boundary spanning

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The policy- and decision-making context has changed significantly in the last decades. In the contemporary age of late modernity, the classical modernistic institutions of policy- and decision making are increasingly facing difficulties in realizing legitimate and effective political responses by themselves (Beck et al., 2003; Dryzek, 1990; Hajer, 2003a). A number of transformations in contemporary societies can be identified as important factors in this diagnosis. Without having the ambition to be all-encompassing, one could at least mention two major changes of particular interest for this thesis. One major change concerns the increasing complexity of public issues accompanied by a highly fragmented institutional landscape. The second concerns a changing societal context in which traditional political authority is increasingly questioned and citizens often demand more direct forms of political engagement when their interests are at stake. These changes and their implications for traditional government are further elaborated in the next sections of this introductory chapter.

Partly in response to these challenges, network forms of governance have arisen in the last decades (e.g. Kickert et al., 1997; Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). Governance networks refer to a web of relationships between government, business, and civil society actors. Within governance networks, policy- and decision making become the subject of interactive processes between these actors. These network forms of governance are often born out of frustration with modernistic institutional practices (Hajer, 2003a, 2009) and growing mutual interdependencies in contemporary society (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). With the complexity of many contemporary public issues as the starting point, governance networks can be considered as a response to the limits of hierarchical-instrumental policymaking (Wagenaar, 2007). The rise of governance networks can be observed in a variety of policy domains (see for example Dryzek, 2010, for a short overview). In this thesis, governance networks in the fields of water management and urban development are subjected to empirical analyses (this research context is more elaborated in section 1.5).

With the rise of network forms of governance, scientific debates and research about their democratic implications and performance have also started. Although there is academic consensus that governance networks as an empirical phenomenon have gained a foothold in liberal democracies, empirical research on their democratic implications and their performance have only just begun (e.g. Dryzek, 2010; Edelenbos et al., 2010; Klijn et al., 2010a; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2011). Governance networks are considered to have potential in terms of efficacy in dealing with complex public issues. This is often an important reason for governments to engage in network forms of governance. They could mobilize additional resources, improve the quality of policy- and decision making in terms of a more integrated approach to these issues, develop more innovative solutions, and improve the coordination between interdependent actors (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). How-

ever, this is far from self-fulfilling. Reflecting on various studies on governance networks, Torfing et al. (2012: 126–127) note that the effectiveness of governance networks depends on the inclusion of relevant and affected actors, participants' willingness to exchange or pool resources, and the capacity to develop common conceptions of problems, solutions, and decision-making premises. Many things can go wrong in this respect. For example, relevant stakeholders may be excluded by social or cognitive closure of key actors in the policy arena, or opportunistic behavior between actors may foster defensive and non-cooperative strategies, and give rise to damaging conflicts (Ibid).

Furthermore, governance networks give rise to fundamental questions in terms of democratic legitimacy. According to the literature, they could undermine certain democratic values such as political accountability and political equality (e.g. Bogason & Musso, 2006; Dryzek, 2007). Governance networks do not make the role of government obsolete, but they clearly challenge hierarchical notions of steering and vertical accountability structures. In a network setting, it is much less clear who is accountable for what tasks than in a traditional hierarchical setting (Bekkers et al., 2007). On the other hand, they have democratic potential because a diversity of (affected) stakeholders, such as citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses, have more room for direct engagement (e.g. Edelenbos et al., 2010; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). In this respect, they offer new ways of connecting public policymaking to citizens and stakeholders, overcoming the constraints and limitations of representative democracy and party politics (Klijn and Skelcher, 2007). However, the question of what kind of legitimacy and how this legitimacy of governance networks can be achieved is still highly debated in the literature.

Besides the academic importance of further examining the democratic implications and performance of governance networks, various governments have turned their interest to stimulating and capturing the gains of governance networks in which civil society actors take a greater role in dealing with public issues. Particularly, the discourse of the so-called Participation Society in the Netherlands and the Big Society in the UK are clear examples in this respect (see Kisby, 2010; RMO, 2013; Rob, 2012). Stimulating network forms of governance in which society can take a greater role in the production of public value and dealing with public issues is an appealing strategy for governments in times of economic crisis and budget deficits. At the same time, this increases the importance of the question of what this means in terms of democratic legitimacy and performance, and how this could be enhanced.

The focus of this thesis: examining the role of boundary spanning

This thesis aims to contribute to the search for explanatory factors that could enhance the performance and democratic legitimacy of governance networks. My focus is on the management of interaction between governmental and non-governmental actors. More specifically, I use the concept of boundary spanning to examine the management of interac-

tion between public, private, and societal actors within governance networks. The research objective of this thesis is to describe the role of boundary spanners in these governance networks and to test their effects on the performance and democratic legitimacy. The question addressed in this thesis is: *In what way and with which effects do boundary-spanning activities impact upon the democratic legitimacy and performance of governance networks in the field of urban development and water governance?*

Boundary-spanning activities are addressed in the literature as an important factor in governance networks for building sustainable inter-organizational relationships (e.g. Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Williams, 2002), but empirical research on their effects on the performance and democratic legitimacy of governance networks is relatively scarce. This thesis aims to contribute to the literature on this topic in at least two important ways. Previous research has indicated the importance of boundary-spanning activities of network managers or meta-governors as a factor that enhances the performance of governance networks (e.g. Klijn et al., 2010a; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). However, the issue of democratic legitimacy is not addressed much in this relationship (Dryzek, 2010; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2011). According to several authors, a fundamental reason for this is that the nature of governance networks does not fit with the assumptions of traditional models of democracy, complicating empirical analyses in this respect (Dryzek, 2007; Sørensen, 2002; Torfing et al., 2012).

Furthermore, as policy- and decision-making processes in governance networks evolve at the boundaries of different public, private, and societal organizations, the boundary-spanning activities of a variety of individuals are likely to matter for the performance of governance networks. Although this is recognized in the literature, by far most of the attention goes to the role of (representatives of) central and/or governmental actors (e.g. lead organizations, network managers, politicians) (e.g. Cristofoli et al., 2014; Klijn et al., 2010a; Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Sørensen & Torfing 2009). There is a scarcity of empirical research with a broader focus, i.e. on formal and informal boundary spanners originating not only from official responsible organizations, but also from societal organizations, NGOs, and community organizations (cf. Van Hulst et al., 2012). Therefore, and in addition to much of the literature on network management, this research examines the influence of boundary spanners with various organizational backgrounds, especially non-governmental, to empirically examine their influence on the legitimacy and the performance of governance networks. This is specifically important if governance networks in which civil society actors are playing a more central role are increasing, such as those emerging around citizen initiatives. In this thesis, I therefore focus on two types of governance networks around water management projects and urban development projects: governance networks in which governmental actors have a more leading and initiating role, and governance networks that are the result of self-organizing citizens. This is further elaborated in section 1.6.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. In the following two sections, the changing policy- and decision-making context is further elaborated by focusing on the two above-

mentioned major changes. Their implications for modernistic forms of policy- and decision making are discussed in section 1.4. Section 1.5 discusses the rise of governance networks as a response to these changes, and section 1.6 elaborates the concept of governance networks and the way the concept is used in this thesis. Subsequently, indicators for measuring the democratic legitimacy of governance networks and governance network performance are introduced in section 1.7 and 1.8. Section 1.9 goes deeper into the concept of boundary spanning as an important factor to consider in relation to the democratic legitimacy and performance of governance networks. Section 1.10 closes this introductory chapter with an outline of this thesis, which is presented as a number of international peer-reviewed articles and a book chapter in an international edited volume. These are introduced in the last section of this chapter.

1.2 COMPLEX PUBLIC ISSUES

Many contemporary policy challenges are characterized by complexity. Complexity refers to the compounded and boundary-crossing character of public issues. According to many public administration scholars, a major change in the last decades has been the increasing complexity of public issues (Hajer, 2003a; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Teisman et al., 2009; Wagenaar, 2007). These authors argue that complexity of public issues is not a new thing, but that it has become more severe due to an increasing interdependency of policy areas, policy levels, and policy actors (Torfing et al., 2012). Contemporary policy challenges in fields such as water management, urban development, healthcare, poverty reduction, employment policy, environmental protection, and crime prevention often do not fit the organizational boxes into which governments and policy analysts tend to place policies (e.g. Chisholm, 1989; Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011; Peters, 1998). They are interrelated with other issues and governmental fields of action.

Before proceeding, it is useful to be a bit more specific about the term complexity, as it could refer to many things. Building on one of the most famous works on complexity and complex systems coming from Simon (1996), Dryzek (1990: 59) paraphrases Simon and defines complexity as “nonsimple relationships among elements sufficient to render the properties of a system capable of apprehension only as something more than the sum of the system’s parts”. Complexity stresses the interactions and interrelationships between parts of systems. This makes the ‘whole’ system largely unpredictable. In this thesis, complexity stands for the compounded character of policy issues and the variety of interrelationships between actors in this respect. Complex public issues are hard to demarcate as they cross different boundaries, such as physical and geographical boundaries, administrative and institutional boundaries (e.g. governmental levels and sectors), and social boundaries (e.g. between social and economic groups).

Because of their cross-boundary character, elements of the ‘puzzle’ are always missing. For example, possible effects are unknown because of the unpredictable behavior of humans or of social-ecological systems in a broader sense. Gathering more information for scientific analysis is therefore not sufficient to come to the objectively best solution (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Furthermore, information about complex public issues is in itself often contested. Different actors often disagree about what certain information means, as this also depends on the perspective from which they approach this information. Complex public issues are therefore typified as unstructured: they are grounded in different value frameworks rather than arising from gaps in scientific knowledge (Hisschemöller & Hoppe, 1996). In this sense, proposed solutions for complex public issues are not true or false, but at best good or bad (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

The boundary-crossing nature of complex public issues implies that they cannot be understood and addressed in isolation (Head & Alford, forthcoming). For example, water management as a field of governmental action is strongly related to other fields of governmental and non-governmental action, such as agriculture, recreation, mining, ecology, environmental affairs, and urban and regional planning (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2013; Lubell & Lippert, 2011). These different parts are somehow connected with one another. Actions or events in one of these parts reverberate through the system in unforeseen ways, adding up to unpredictable and unintended outcomes (Wagenaar, 2007). The complexity of water governance issues and urban development issues, the context of this thesis, is further elaborated in section 1.5.

1.3 A CHANGING SOCIETAL CONTEXT

In addition to the increasing complexity of public issues, the societal context of policy- and decision making has changed significantly. Society has become far more characterized by plurality and horizontal relationships, and this presents challenges for the legitimacy of political representation and for hierarchical governmental steering. This is elaborated in this and the following section.

Increasing plurality and the rise of the assertive, emancipated citizen

It has become more or less common knowledge that contemporary Western societies are highly heterogeneous, characterized by increasing value pluralism (Castells, 1996). There is a plurality of societal groups, each joined around common interests and common value systems that differ from those of other groups. Furthermore, these interest groups tend to be more issue-oriented (Stolle & Hooghe, 2005) and have increasing capacities to challenge governmental action. Education levels, socio-economic resources, access to political information, and other ‘resources of citizenship’ have increased substantially over the past

several decades (Dalton, 2008). Citizens nowadays have, generally speaking, more time, money, and access to information and networks to influence public policy; and they demand more direct involvement when their interests are at stake. This has contributed to the horizontalization of society. As far back as the late 1970s, sociologist Abram de Swaan (1979) made the analysis that society was increasingly characterized by transformation from a so-called demand-household towards a negotiation-household. He noted that this transformation especially took place in modern welfare state arrangements in which citizens and employees increasingly obtained rights to participate in various sectors.

“Generation by generation, people are becoming less deferential to authority [...], are more interested in self-government; and [...] are keenly attentive to their powers over their own biographies,” as Mark Warren (2009: 7) put it. This is what the philosopher Gijs van Oenen calls the rise of the emancipated citizen (Van Oenen, 2011).¹ As a consequence, authority, in whatever sense that may be, is more questioned than ever before. With the rise of the emancipated and more assertive citizen, several authors note that contemporary challenges in relation to gaining legitimacy for policy- and decision making are not so much the result of democratic failure, but rather of democratic success (e.g. Dalton, 2004; Van Oenen, 2011; Warren, 2009). Arriving at legitimate decisions increasingly requires negotiation and deliberation between governmental actors and a plurality of societal interest groups. This causes tensions with the representative model, based on hierarchical steering (cf. Klijn & Skelcher, 2007; Rob, 2010).

Less participation and less trust in traditional institutions of representative democracy

There seems to be consensus among political scientists that there has been a decline in citizens' participation in the traditional forms of political engagement that have been part and parcel of the representative democratic system in the last decades (Bang, 2009; Dalton, 2008; Klingemann & Fuchs, 1995; Marien et al., 2010; Peters, 2010). This decline is mostly demonstrated by citizens' decreasing membership of political parties and by decreasing electoral participation; but other institutionalized forms of political engagement, such as participation in or membership of big-interest organizations, are also declining (Bang, 2009; Marien et al., 2010). The level of decline of course varies among countries, but, even

¹ Here, emancipation refers to the process in which man learns ‘to think for himself’; or, to put it somewhat differently: the process in which man increasingly, individually and collectively, comes to the belief that the act of thinking is not dependent on any external authority (Van Oenen, 2011). This means that man can develop and form himself by his own thinking. The human spirit becomes an instrument by which ‘truth’ can be distinguished from superstition and rationality from madness. According to the philosopher Gijs van Oenen, enlightenment could be approached as a process of emancipation (Van Oenen, 2011). Enlightenment and the related processes of modernization are about a way of thinking and of knowledge acquisition. This triggered a process of emancipation, as it released man from restrictions of ignorance and immaturity. This process started in the 17th century and could be argued to be ‘fulfilled’ in philosophical terms at the end of the 18th century, and, in societal terms, ‘realized’ in the ‘60s and ‘70s of the 20th century.

in political systems such as the Nordic European countries that have long histories of active voting and other forms of political participation, there has been a drop (Peters, 2010; Warren, 2009).

The decline in traditional forms of political engagement could be largely explained by the abovementioned processes of individualization, increasing value pluralism, and an erosion of traditional social boundaries. Because of these processes, it is becoming more difficult for political parties to represent (parts of) the population (Dalton, 2008). In addition, several political scientists argue that many political parties are increasingly focused on governing and are de-emphasizing their representative role (Peters, 2010). They could increasingly be characterized as ‘cartel parties’ (Katz & Mair, 1995), who try to maintain their place in the cartel of governing structures rather than relating directly to the public.

There is also substantial empirical evidence of citizens’ increased distrust of political authorities (politicians, political parties, officeholders) in many Western democracies (Dalton, 2004). This could also affect trust in the political system (its institutions). Summarizing the findings of extensive cross-country comparative research, Dalton (2004: 46) noted: “affective attachments to political parties are weakening in almost all contemporary democracies, and confidence in political parties as institutions is also declining. Moreover, these sentiments are carried over to parliaments and the institutions of representative democracy more generally.” The same goes for the Netherlands. There is a decrease in citizens’ trust in political authorities, although a substantial decrease in trust in the political system is not that clear (Rob, 2010).²

Although citizens seem more reluctant to engage in traditional institutions of representative democracy, this does not directly mean that citizens are less politically active. Instead, several authors argue that new forms of civic engagement are on the rise in most liberal democracies (Dalton, 2008; Marien et al., 2010; Stolle & Hooghe, 2005). One of these forms is not so much focused on influencing traditional institutions of representative democracy, but on self-organization of citizens to deal with public issues which are of their direct concern. In a break from traditional forms of citizen engagement that existed within – and were largely shaped by and focused on influencing – traditional institutions of representative democracy, active citizens increasingly want to engage in informal and loosely structured organizations to advance their policy agendas.

² This decreasing trust does certainly not mean that citizens have lost faith in democracy per se. As Dalton noted (2004: 47): “Even though contemporary publics express decreasing confidence in democratic politicians, parties, and parliaments, these sentiments have not carried over to the democratic principles and goals of these regimes.” On the contrary, ideals central to democracy, such as equality, transparency, and tolerance of diverse perspectives, have increased. This is an important difference from previous periods of political dissatisfaction, for example during the interwar period and the anti-system assaults following the Second World War.

Self-organization by citizens as a new form of political engagement

In the words of Bang (2009: 126): “citizens no longer primarily get their political identity from their identification with political parties.” Active citizens and social groups increasingly show their self-organizing ability to challenge governmental action and to develop well-founded plans through citizens’ initiatives (Bakker et al., 2012; Hurenkamp et al., 2006; Marien et al., 2010). Whereas various scholars, of whom Putnam (2000) is probably the most famous, have argued that there has been a decline in civic engagement (more or less since the 1960s), more recent studies have noted that it is rather the form of civic engagement that is changing (Marien et al., 2010; Stolle & Hooghe, 2005). In these new forms of civic engagement, citizens organize themselves through informal and loosely structured organizations that tend to be more issue-oriented (Bang, 2009; Hurenkamp et al., 2006; SCP, 2011; Stolle & Hooghe, 2005). Initiators of these self-organizing initiatives are driven by personal experiences or an interest in taking care of their own neighborhood or community, often in reaction to a (new) governmental intervention or a societal event. Hajer (2003b) used the metaphor of ‘citizens on stand-by’: citizens are generally relatively passive, but, when policy interventions interfere in their personal life sphere or living environment, then they become active and politically engaged. In these circumstances, they are triggered to become involved. They are emerging in different domains, for example in the realm of neighborhood or community governance (e.g. Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Van de Wijdeven, 2012), healthcare (e.g. Hurenkamp et al., 2006), and the energy sector (Seyfang et al., 2013).

In this thesis, self-organization of citizens refers to *bottom up initiatives which are citizen or community driven, which aim to deal with a specific set of public issues and which have the ambition to set up sustainable cooperation among citizens in this respect* (cf. De Moor, 2013). These so-called local stakeholder or citizen initiatives are interesting for dealing with complex public issues. Take for example community initiatives in the field of urban regeneration. Such initiatives bring about development that starts from within the urban area itself, enhancing the chance of the regeneration fitting local needs and circumstances, and enhancing the commitment of the involved local stakeholders and therefore the implementation of visions and plans (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Wagenaar, 2007). However, the difficulty of putting local initiatives by non-state actors into practice is also well noted in the literature, for example because of these actors’ lack of resources and power (e.g. Chaskin & Garg, 1997) or the difficulty of making effective connections with governmental institutions to guarantee implementation (e.g. Edelenbos, 2005; Healey, 2006).

1.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR MODERNISTIC GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

Several authors have concluded that the abovementioned challenges in relation to the increasing complexity of public issues and the changing characteristics of society lead to

pressures on our modernistic governmental institutions, in terms both of their performance and of their legitimacy (Dryzek, 1990; Hajer, 2003a; Wagenaar, 2007; Head & Alford, forthcoming). This diagnosis is based on the mismatch between some fundamental steering principles of modernistic governmental institutions on the one hand, and the nature of complex public issues and characteristics of contemporary society on the other. These steering principles could be characterized as a logic of hierarchical–instrumental policymaking and functional differentiation rooted in the modern conception of rationality (e.g. Beck et al., 2003; Dryzek, 1990; Wagenaar, 2007). Although these principles are nuanced in reality and do not provide an actual description of how governmental organizations behave, they still largely structure the actions of civil servants as they are part and parcel of the institutional logic of governmental organizations (Hajer, 2003a; Torfing et al., 2012).

Pressures on the principle of the primacy of politics

A first steering principle of Western liberal democracies is that of representative democracy and the primacy of politics. Elected officials make decisions about collective goals, leaving implementation to administrators or to decentralized or privatized actors. For governmental organizations, this means that administrators are – in the end – always accountable to a political principal. This is reflected in the hierarchical structure of governmental organizations. A pre-given public selects its leaders who will ensure that its ideas, interests, and value preferences are represented in the councils of representative democracy. The notion of a pre-given public means that defining this public is not in itself the outcome of a political process (Sørensen, 2002). “The concept of representation is the means by which the abstract notion of a sovereign people is transformed into a concrete sovereign capable of governing society” (Sørensen, 2002: 695). Or, as Hoppe (2011: 167) put it: the core of liberal representative democracy is “the non-violent, legible, controllable and reversible transformation of the manifold and inconsistent needs, problems, beliefs, emotions and volitions of individuals and groups in society into authoritative and legitimate expressions of collective will.”

Because complex public issues often cross different territorial scales or governmental layers, this principle comes under pressure. It is challenged when public issues do not fit within demarcated territorial scales or layers of government. As Hajer aptly put it (2009: 30): “the primacy of the politics presupposes that the council of elected representatives confers legitimacy on the decisions it takes. Yet when policy problems do not respect the territorial scales, this system breaks down.” In short, the institutional structure of representative democracy does not match with the boundary-crossing nature of complex public issues.

Furthermore, as every complex public issue mobilizes its own variety of ‘publics’ (more or less mobilized groups of affected stakeholders, shareholders, and experts), the legitimacy generated by electoral democracy does not automatically carry over to these ‘issue-segmented constituencies’ (Warren, 2009). The rise of network forms of governance could in this sense be seen as the “intellectual and practical reflection of a trend towards problem-

specific, pragmatic arrangements for social and political decision-making” (Hoppe, 2011: 167). Governance networks are polycentric, and the relevant *demos* for decision making then consists of those affected by the complex issue(s) at stake (Dryzek, 2007). In this sense, there is no one single all-purpose *demos*, but rather multiple *demoi* that could exist at different levels, below, above, and across the state.

Instrumental rationality and hierarchical–instrumental policymaking versus complex public issues

A second steering principle is that of instrumental policymaking, which is based on the modern conception of rationality. According to several sociologists and political scientists, this modern conception of rationality is part of the existing institutional order of policymaking in the postwar era in Western societies (e.g. Beck et al., 2003; Dryzek, 1990; Hajer, 2003a). This does not mean that this conception of rationality determines institutional structures, but it plays an important role in legitimating and justifying particular practices, such as determining what (policy) expert knowledge is. This modern conception of rationality is concerned with ordering and systematizing reality in order to make it more predictable and controllable. According to Dryzek (1990), this modern conception of rationality demands two things: firstly, instrumental rationality, which may be defined “in terms of the capacity to devise, select, and effect good means to clarified ends” (Dryzek, 1990: 3–4). Instrumental rationality, or goal-instrumental action, emphasizes efficiency. The second requirement is the idea of rational choice: choices should be made “through reference to a set of objective standards” (*idem*).

This instrumental rationality plays an important role in the way governmental organizations are structured and legitimize their actions. In this line, Max Weber argued that instrumental rationality provided the justification and organizing principles for bureaucracy, the typical form of governmental organizations. He discovered that bureaucratic organizations standardize and structure the working process by focusing on a functional division of labor, hierarchical supervision, and the formulation of explicit, stable rules and norms to guide organizational activities (Morgan, 1997). In terms of management, this instrumental rationality is reflected in a rational–technical approach to making decisions and dealing with complexity by analytical problem disaggregation (Dryzek, 1990). It is aimed at breaking down a complex phenomenon into components in order to control it and to be able to deal with it efficiently. Simon’s decomposition–coordination thesis is a famous elaboration of this strategy. Divide the totality of tasks into parts and make an organization responsible for specific task performance. The relations between the parts can be managed by some coordination from the top. Decomposing and analyzing public issues with the help of a so-called ‘policy tree’ is a famous example. An overall solution to the policy issue is assumed to be achieved by devising a solution for each subset and aggregating these partial solutions. This strategy can be effective for well-bounded problems and under conditions of a stable environment. Simon (1996) calls these problems ‘near-decomposable’, meaning that the in-

interactions among the parts are weak but not negligible. Each organization or organizational unit can concentrate and specialize on solving one particular part.

However, when confronted with complex public issues, such a strategy can become counterproductive. As Dryzek (1990: 62) aptly noted: “growing complexity can frustrate the decomposition strategy, for interactions across the boundaries of sets and subsets become too rich, irrespective of the quality and veracity of the theory informing decomposition and the intelligence with which the tree is drawn.” Complex public issues are characterized by significant relationships across boundaries, the difficulty of bounding these issues, and the political character of this process. Any intervention on the basis of a disaggregation strategy, by one of the parts, may merely displace (sub-)problems across set boundaries.

Furthermore, the environment of organizations dealing with complex public issues is often dynamic, as a variety of actors are involved and the behavior of these actors is not that predictable. A further limit to the disaggregation strategy “arises with its need for clear, simple, and uncontroversial goals, for dissensus on such goals will mean like dissensus in problem definition, problem disaggregation, and the direction of problem solving in the various subsets” (Dryzek, 1990: 62). Setting goals for complex public issues in contemporary society has become more difficult given the high value pluralism.

Functional differentiation and specialization versus complex public issues

Furthermore, as ‘products’ of modern society, governmental organizations are characterized by functional differentiation and specialization (Beck et al., 2003; Luhmann, 1977).³ They are organized into different segments of partial responsibility such as finance, the economy, social welfare, infrastructure, and urban and landscape planning. In this way, organizations and structures have evolved in which tasks and functions are clearly demarcated and defined, and organized hierarchically through clear lines of responsibility (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011). This is also in line with the strategy of the rational–technical approach to dealing with complexity by analytical problem disaggregation and equipping specific organizations with a specialized task for which they are accountable.

At the beginning of the 20th century, different management theories – classical management and scientific management – emphasized the efficient functioning of organizations. In contrast to Weber, theorists and practitioners of these movements (Fayol, Mooney, Urwick,

³ According to many sociologists, modern societies are characterized by functional differentiation into relatively autonomous, but interdependent subsystems (Luhmann, 1977; Beck et al., 2003). This notion of functional differentiation is a useful heuristic tool to analyze the transition from the early modern to modern society. In contrast to traditional societies, structured by stratification, modern societies are rather structured by a specialization into different functions. In this process of specialization, different social entities, called subsystems, focus on specific activities by which they develop their own methods, procedures, behavioral structures, and so forth. In this way, and in a very broad sense, one can distinguish for example the political system, the economy, and the law system. Functional differentiation as a main organizing principle can be observed not only at society level, but also at the level of governmental organizations (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011).

Taylor) were firm advocates of bureaucratization. It is through the ideas of these theorists that so many mechanistic principles of organization have become dominant in our everyday thinking (see Morgan, 1997). Within these theories, management is conceptualized as a process of planning, organization, command, control, and coordination. “By giving detailed attention to patterns of authority and to the general process of direction, discipline, and subordination of individual to general interest, the classical theorists sought to ensure that when commands were issued from the top of the organization they would travel throughout the organization in a precisely determined way to create a precisely determined effect” (Morgan, 1997: 20–21). Scientific management theory, introduced by Taylor, approached organizations scientifically in order to make them function more efficiently. Scientific analysis of the organizational working processes led to work becoming specialized and standardized to perform tasks as quickly as possible in order to shorten the entire working process. The principle of separating the planning and design of work from its execution is one of the most far-reaching elements of Taylorism, as it ‘splits’ the worker, advocating the separation of hand and brain. One of the great attractions of Taylorism rests in the power it confers to those in control.

Although not so radically applied as the scientific management theorists prescribed, the division of labor and the specialization of tasks continue to be basic organizing principles, including within governmental organizations. Around the turn of the century, many Western countries adopted approaches – labeled as New Public Management (NPM) (Pollit & Bouckaert, 2004) – largely to realize savings in public expenditure and to make the operations of government more efficient and effective. NPM reforms are also imbued with the notion of functional differentiation and specialization (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011): they focus on vertical specialization or devolution and on horizontal differentiation based on the principles of disaggregation and (thus) single-purpose organizations (Christensen & Lægreid, 2007). NPM includes a shift towards more measurement and quantification, for example in the form of performance indicators and/or explicit standards, and a preference for more specialized and autonomous organization units rather than large bureaucracies. “In the NPM school, complexity, uncertainty and risk are coped with through the use of top-down control (at arm’s length) with a strong emphasis on specifying goals and output indicators, formal accountability, data collection and transparency” (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011: 14).

According to several authors, NPM has reinforced fragmentation in the public sector, and NPM practices have been ill-suited to deal with complex public issues (Christensen & Lægreid, 2007; Head & Alford, forthcoming) – firstly, because NPM stresses a rational-technical approach as described above. Such a model assumes that each public organization has settled goals, a supportive political environment, and control over the resources and capabilities necessary to deliver on the goals (Head & Alford, forthcoming). Such assumptions certainly do not necessarily apply in the presence of complex public issues. Next, to the

extent that such practices hold “managers responsible for a specific set of programs or for serving a specific set of clients, [...] they tend to isolate from each other those programs that may actually have subterranean connections in respect of certain wicked problems. This fragmentation manifests itself in tensions between program-based subcultures, competing policy priorities, and, at worst, turf wars within and between agencies” (Head & Alford, forthcoming: 10).

A functionally differentiated setting of specialized organizations with demarcated tasks and responsibilities delivers a big challenge for developing effective responses in reaction to public issues that cross these specialized boundaries. Separate actions guided by sub-goals, individual timeframes, and action schemes may become rather dysfunctional on a larger system level aiming to solve public issues. A side effect of relative autonomy for differentiated and specialized sub-parts is the evolution of local norms, values, and languages tailored to the requirements of the unit’s work (Leifer & Delbecq, 1978). This could act as a barrier to cooperation, communication, and coordination across boundaries. As Edelenbos and Teisman (2011: 13) noted: “Functional specialization creates a structure that is supposed to be a system of cooperation but often turns out to be a system of competition. The governance capacity of the public system full of specialized units on different levels of government and dealing with different parts of the public interest is called into question.”

Legitimacy ‘pressures,’ not so much legitimacy ‘crisis’

Do the above-described changes add up to some general legitimacy crisis of modernistic political institutions, as was famously predicted by Crozier et al. (1975) reporting for the Trilateral Commission in the 1970s? Although there are clearly improvements to be made, such a claim goes too far. Governments, civil society, and businesses have been creative in experimenting and participating with new forms of participatory governance. Legitimacy pressures show up particularly in response to specific complex public issues. As Warren (2009: 7) aptly put it:

The reason is that there are many points of adjustment and deflection in the developed democracies, so the broad legitimization pressures show up not as a general system crisis, but rather issue by issue and policy by policy, in protests over airport expansion, medical coverage, poverty issues, changes in regulation of genetically modified organisms, forest management, struggles over neighborhood development, energy pricing, and so on.

As further described below, I particularly focus on complex issues in the field of water management and urban development. In line with other authors (e.g. Beck et al., 2003), Warren (2009: 7) therefore suggests that we have “something like pluralized ungovernability,” rather than a general system crisis. This pluralized ungovernability is driven by the abovementioned

tioned developments of increased complexity of public issues, increased fragmentation of the state apparatus, and rising demands for empowered participation.

1.5 THE EMERGENCE OF NETWORK FORMS OF GOVERNANCE AS A RESPONSE

As a reaction to the abovementioned challenges of boundary-crossing issues, fragmentation, and rising demands for empowered participation, we have witnessed the emergence of governance networks in the last decades (e.g. Kickert et al., 1997; Kooiman, 2003; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). Governance networks emerge as a result of interdependency between relatively autonomous actors around complex issues. In governance networks, policy- and decision making become the subject of interactive processes between governmental and non-governmental actors, such as citizen groups, private business, and societal interest groups. Governance network scholars tend to regard governance networks as being grounded in a specific mode of coordination and communication that distinguishes them from hierarchies and markets (see for example Kooiman, 2003; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). In the words of Dryzek (2010: 121): “They differ from hierarchies in being relatively flat and in their lack of clear relations of domination and subordination (though they can feature substantial political inequalities).” They differ from markets in that relationships between actors are more focused on explicit coordination and “generally include a mix of collaboration, negotiation, persuasion, and mutual adjustment, rather than competition” (ibid).

This is not to say that the role of the state is becoming obsolete. From an empirical perspective, governance networks exist beside traditional forms of government (Torfing et al., 2012). They challenge, but also supplement, traditional forms of government in realizing legitimate and more effective policy- and decision making (e.g. Klijn & Skelcher, 2007). As Torfing et al. put it: interactive forms of governance are not so much replacing government, but adding “a new layer on top of the old layer of hierarchical government and the recently added layer of competition-based market regulation and managerialism associated with New Public Management reforms” (pp. 11–12).

The increasing attention on network forms of governance in the last decades does not mean that non-governmental actors previously did not have an active role in policy- and decision-making processes. Policy- and political decision making have probably never been the exclusive and closed domain of governments, as for example in the pluralistic and corporatist models of policy- and decision making already addressed. However, these models were still grounded in the assumption of a clear separation between the public and the private realm and imbued with a notion of top-down steering (Torfing et al., 2012). Governance networks often include state actors, but they do not necessarily provide governmental actors a central network position. Further, within governance networks, the boundaries

between the public, private, and societal domain become more blurred, and governing becomes a result of negotiated interaction between governmental organizations, societal organizations, citizen groups, and/or private businesses. The plurality of interconnected policy arenas and the multiple actors engaged in policy- and decision making is far more stressed by governance network scholars, as is the more horizontal interaction between interdependent governmental and non-governmental actors (e.g. Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). Furthermore, the self-organizing capabilities of societal actors are more emphasized within the governance network paradigm. On the one hand, governments have become more dependent on self-organizing user groups, private businesses, and societal interest groups to implement their decisions. At the same time, citizens and societal interest groups increasingly show their self-organizing ability to develop policy alternatives and mobilize political support for their views (Marien et al., 2010; Warren, 2009).

The emergence of network forms of governance within the field of water management and urban development

This thesis focuses on complex public issues in the field of water governance and urban development. These are perfect fields of research for studying the main question of this thesis concerning the way and the extent to which boundary-spanning activities contribute to the democratic legitimacy and performance of governance networks. Both fields contain complex public issues that are increasingly addressed by network forms of governance.

Many contemporary water issues are characterized by significant complexity because of their boundary-crossing nature (Bressers & Lulofs, 2010). Water has multiple manifestations, multiple functions, and multiple values. This makes water projects complex and hard to manage, touching upon the interests of many stakeholders. As a consequence, the rise of network forms of governance has been observed in the Dutch water sector – a sector traditionally characterized by a dominance of technocratic experts coupled with a top-down governmental approach (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2013; Kuks, 2004; Van Buuren et al., 2012; Van der Brugge et al., 2005; Wolsink, 2006). This change in the water management regime has been induced by the changing nature and scope of water problems on the one hand, and the professionalization of interest groups, the expanded role of provinces and municipalities in water management, and the emancipation and activation of citizens on the other. Van der Brugge et al. (2005: 164–165) make the following analysis about this growing complexity and the consequences for the involvement of a variety of stakeholders in many contemporary water projects (cf. Edelenbos et al., 2013; Van Buuren et al., 2012). Because of increasing spatial claims from agriculture, industry, traffic, housing, and infrastructure as a result of growing economic development, increased population density, and changing lifestyles, water managers can no longer optimize one particular utility function but have to manage across multiple utilities and multiple stakeholders. At the same time, the continuous subsidence of soil, the rising sea level, and the land's decreasing capacity to retain water due to loss of nature areas have resulted in pressure from water on land. In

this changing landscape, it becomes increasingly clear that conventional water-management strategies, such as the fast drainage of redundant water, canalizing rivers, and the construction of dams and dikes, are not solely effective anymore and are also confronted with serious implementation barriers resulting from increasing interdependencies between a variety of actors with different perspectives on water problems. As a result, contemporary water projects, developed in response to compounded water problems, are increasingly embedded in governance networks.

Within the field of urban development, comparable transitions towards network forms of governance have been observed (e.g. Healey, 2006; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). Just like water management, urban developments, such as urban regeneration initiatives, touch upon various utility functions and stakeholders. Urban development projects are boundary-crossing public issues, often including a mix of spatial functions such as infrastructure, housing, social facilities (schools, sports facilities), business areas, commercial strips, and green/recreational areas. They often involve a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as housing associations, private developers, societal interest groups, and different governmental organizations (e.g. local government, water boards, regional government, executive road agency). According to the literature on urban governance, urban development projects are nowadays embedded in dynamic network environments, in which different governmental agencies, commercial actors, not-for-profit organizations, and residents reshape urban areas and are dependent on one another. As Häikiö (2007: 2148) put it: “In the face of increasing complexity, conflict and social change, networking can be seen as an empowering strategy for local governments [...]. They are pooling their resources and skills and co-ordinating their objectives with business companies, NGOs and local citizens to achieve the required policy outcomes.” According to Lowndes and Skelcher (1998), the emergence of these networks around urban development projects, besides increasing resource interdependencies, are often driven by a demand to provide integrative responses to complex urban issues within an increasingly fragmented organizational landscape.

1.6 GOVERNANCE NETWORKS IN THIS THESIS

Two types of governance networks

As in the case of water management or urban development projects, governmental actors often need to engage other governmental actors, civil society actors, and businesses in order to achieve certain policy outcomes, resulting in network forms of governance. However, as described in section 1.3, governance networks could also emerge on the initiative of civil society actors or private businesses. In these networks, driven by self-organizing citizens, governments play a less dominant role. In this respect, Bogason and Musso (2006) spoke of governance networks as spanning a continuum from those with a genesis in the state to

those that are progeny of civil society organizations. At the same time, as they also admitted, this distinction should not be overblown as the development of governance networks (concerning both the network itself and the governance process) is often the result of push–pull processes between governmental and non-governmental actors.

In this thesis, I focus on two types of governance networks around water management projects and urban development projects: networks in which governmental actors have a more leading and initiating role and networks which are the result of self-organizing citizens. In this latter type, citizens and/or private businesses have a more leading role. To examine the boundary-spanning activities of non-governmental actors, this latter type of governance networks could be expected to provide more in-depth knowledge in this respect. The first type of governance networks is expected to provide more knowledge concerning the boundary-spanning behavior of public managers. Because there is already substantial literature on the connective activities of public managers, quantitative research is used to test hypotheses in this field of research. In section 1.10, the different methods used in this study are further elaborated.

The concept of governance networks in this thesis

The term governance alone has many different connotations, such as corporate or good governance, governance as new public management, and governance as multi-level governance (Klijn, 2008; Rhodes, 1996). In this thesis, governance networks are defined as *more or less stable patterns of social relations between mutually dependent actors, which form around public issues, and which are formed, maintained, and changed through interactions between the actors involved* (based on Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; cf. Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). This definition stresses the network character of governance processes. Although governance networks often strive towards the formulation and promotion of common objectives, goals and interests of actors often strongly differ.

The above definition of governance networks does not say anything about the degree and the quality of interaction and the level at which common objectives are formulated, let alone achieved. This distinguishes this conceptualization from the literature on policy implementation networks around public services (Klijn, 2008). These policy implementation networks have – usually – a clearer goal and are often characterized by high-density groups of actors (e.g. Meier & O'Toole 2007; Provan & Kenis, 2008). The interrelationships between the different organizations in the networks that are part of this thesis are more loosely coupled. They are issue-specific networks (cf. Dryzek, 2010; Warren, 2009) because they emerge around specific urban development projects or specific water issues, where for example city representatives, private project developers, and residents form a temporary actor network to develop and implement the project.

In addition to the more horizontal character of interaction between governance network actors, this issue-specific character is another crucial difference compared with the institu-

tional logic of representative democracy. The actors or ‘the people’ involved in governance networks are less bound and more dynamic. Warren put this as follows (2009: 8): “In electoral democracy, ‘the people’ are those who live within the boundaries of a state, and they are represented (typically) through territorial constituencies. ‘Peoples’ [in governance networks], are in effect, brought into existence in response to issues, and often dissolve when issues are resolved.” Governance networks are thus more dynamic. They have more potential for dealing with complex public issues in a more tailor-made fashion. They are potentially “more adaptable to the ‘all affected’ principle of democracy” (ibid).

If governance networks are a response to the shortcomings of representative democracy and its hierarchical-instrumental notion of policymaking, how then can their democratic legitimacy be assessed? And since many different actors with different interests and thus different preferences or policy goals are included, how then can their performance be assessed? In the next two sections, the way in which the democratic legitimacy of governance networks and the way in which governance network performance is approached and measured are addressed. The individual chapters, when necessary, also address these issues.

1.7 DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY IN THIS THESIS: FOCUS ON DEMOCRATIC THROUGHPUT LEGITIMACY

How can the democratic legitimacy of the policy- and decision-making processes that evolve in governance networks be measured? How one assesses the democratic performance of governance networks depends largely on the democratic model one picks and the way one approaches governance networks in relation to the dominant liberal representative model of democracy. It is clear from the outset that traditional models of democracy tied to state sovereignty and electoral authorization and accountability fare badly when applied to governance networks (Dryzek, 2010). In the words of Dryzek (2010: 123): “Networks do not hold elections; they do not have an electorate, an opposition, or any obvious alternative set of power holders.” In governance networks, there are no clear constitutional rules and norms that determine what a legitimate decision is (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Mathur & Skelcher, 2007).

As argued above, governance networks could be considered as a response to the limits of representative democracy and its hierarchical-instrumental notion of policymaking. It is precisely their flexibility and un-predetermined structure that make governance networks potentially valuable for dealing with complex issues and generating democratic legitimacy according to other standards. They can supplement representative democracy to the extent that they are more capable of providing influence to those who are particularly affected by certain decisions (e.g. Dryzek, 2007; Klijn & Skelcher, 2007; Warren, 2009). We have to stress the adverb *potentially* here, as it follows from the outset (because of their context-

specific character) that governance networks differ tremendously in their relative level of democratic legitimacy or performance, no matter what model is taken as the normative basis. In line with other scholars, I therefore do not approach governance networks as an alternative to representative democracy, but as an important supplement (cf. Chambers, 2003; Torfing et al., 2012). They are a response to the limits of representative democracy, especially when it comes to dealing with complex public issues; but this requires other criteria to assess their democratic legitimacy.

In chapter 3, it is argued that the deliberative model of democracy is relatively well suited to evaluate the democratic legitimacy of governance networks as a supplement to representative democracy. Deliberative democracy is not usually thought of as an alternative to representative democracy, but rather as an expansion of it (Chamber, 2003). Deliberative models of democracy are grounded on the idea that democratic decision making should be based on mutual exchange of argumentation and not on the aggregation of predetermined preferences. They focus on the communication processes of opinion and will-formation that precede voting. This means that deliberative democratic models assume that individuals' preferences are not fixed but can change in debate and political dialogue (Held, 2006). This distinguishes deliberative models of democracy fundamentally from aggregative models of democracy, which generally take preferences as given, defined prior to political action (Dryzek, 2007).

Building on this deliberative democracy point of view, I use the concept of throughput legitimacy to assess the democratic legitimacy of governance network processes. In contrast to input legitimacy – which refers to the extent and traditional representativeness of citizen influence on policy formulation ('government *by* the people') – and output legitimacy – which refers to the effectiveness of policy- and decision-making to achieving specified goals ('government *for* the people') (Scharpf, 1998), the notion of throughput legitimacy focuses on the democratic and participatory quality of the decision-making process (Bekkers and Edwards, 2007; Risse and Kleine, 2007).⁴ It is based on the interactions of the actors in the governance network and the extent to which affected stakeholders are directly included in the decision- and policy-making process ('governing *with* the people').

It is the process of deliberation itself and the conditions of the process that are important for generating throughput legitimacy. As Manin noted (1987: 351–352): "the source of legitimacy is not the predetermined will of individuals, but rather the process of its formation, that is, deliberation itself." This deliberation and argumentation process generates more or less support for certain measures. Furthermore, for this deliberation process to be successful, the communication process between actors in governance networks has to be open and

4 The phrases 'government by the people' and 'government for the people' are the famous words of the U.S. president Abraham Lincoln. He used the phrase 'government of the people, by the people, for the people' in his Gettysburg Address in 1863.

transparent, or at least conform to a number of rules and practices that are all connected to the process of discussion, information, plurality of values, and so forth. Besides transparency, the inclusiveness of the process is an important consideration. According to Dryzek (2007), a deliberative model views a decision as legitimate to the degree that all affected by it have the right, opportunity, or capacity to participate in deliberation about the decision in question (see also for example Cohen, 1989; Manin, 1987). And Dryzek (2007: 268) continued: “While there can be problems in operationalizing this ideal [...], as a criterion it can be applied as a matter of degree.” To empirically examine the democratic legitimacy of governance networks around complex water or urban projects, I focus on democratic throughput legitimacy. Due deliberation, the transparency of the decision-making process, and the degree of inclusion of affected stakeholders are important indicators in this respect.

1.8 NETWORK PERFORMANCE IN THIS THESIS

There has been much discussion in the governance literature on how to measure the performance of governance networks. There is no particular best approach (e.g. Provan & Milward, 2001). In dealing with complex public issues, actors have different goals, and it is thus difficult to pick a single goal by which to measure the policy solutions and decisions emerging from governance network processes. Furthermore, measuring performance is problematic because decision-making processes are often lengthy, and actors’ goals can change over time. Goal displacement is the negative term for this phenomenon, and learning is the positive term (see Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). In short, there are no objective standards against which to evaluate or score the performance of governance networks.

One way to deal with this measurement problem is to measure the ex-post satisfaction of networked policy solutions and formal decisions. This is a relatively simple and frequently chosen solution (Torfing et al., 2012). Key individuals in the network are asked to evaluate the outcomes on various dimensions. In the survey-based articles of this thesis, this approach is used. I use Klijn et al.’s (2010) previously tested scale. They used perceived network performance as a proxy for measuring network performance (see also, for example, Hasnain-Wynia et al., 2003). This scale consists of multiple criteria. As policy problems in networks are complex and require innovative and integrative solutions, these are two indicators of network performance (cf. Sandström & Carlsson, 2008). Integrative in this sense means that different spatial functions/utilities are included in the policy solutions. Other indicators of this scale address whether the outcome solves relevant policy problems: the problem-solving capacity and robustness of the solution (Provan & Milward, 2001) and the impact of stakeholder involvement on the project results (‘recognizable contribution’) (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Lastly, the relation between costs and benefits is a feature of performance that is often applied (Klijn et al., 2010a).

Hence, the term network performance in this thesis refers to this multi-criteria scale. This scale includes the effectiveness, the innovative character, the integrative nature, and the robustness of policy solutions.

1.9 BOUNDARY-SPANNING ACTIVITIES WITHIN GOVERNANCE NETWORKS AS A CRUCIAL VARIABLE

According to the literature, governance networks could be an interesting way to develop effective responses to complex societal issues, but this depends largely on the quality of interaction between the different stakeholders on the one hand, and the interaction between network processes and governmental institutions on the other (e.g. Edelenbos, 2005; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Good network performance in terms of problem-solving capacity, broad societal acceptance, and innovative and integrative policy solutions to complex public issues are less likely to emerge if interactions are characterized by hard-nosed bargaining, deadlocks, and conflicts about knowledge. For good outcomes to emerge, governance networks require the inclusion of relevant and affected actors, the willingness of the participants to exchange or pool resources, and the development of common conceptions of problems, solutions, and decision-making premises (Torfing et al., 2012). The boundary-spanning activities of public managers could play an important role in this respect (e.g. Feldman & Khademian, 2007; Williams, 2002). These boundary-spanning activities include the building of sustainable relationships, mutual exchange of information, and coordination across organizational boundaries (see below).

Alongside the interactions between actors in the network, the difference in institutional logic between governance network processes and traditional governmental institutions gives rise to challenges in terms of mutual alignment and coordination. Proposed policy solutions produced in governance networks, characterized by more informal interaction between a variety of stakeholders, could easily change or even evaporate when they have to pass through formal policy- and decision-making structures and arenas (Edelenbos, 2005; Healey, 2006). For example, deliberated policy solutions and/or the variety of policy directions created by governance network processes – one of the potential strengths of the network mode of governance – could be endangered by cherry-picking behavior on the part of decision makers. Furthermore, integrative policy solutions to complex public issues emerging in governance networks could be endangered by sector-based approaches within governmental organizations. On the other hand, negotiated targets or proposed policy solutions could undermine or challenge existing governmental policies and/or governmental routines and roles (e.g. Termeer, 2009).

These tensions arising from a misfit between the institutional logic of governmental organizations and that of a governance network mode require mutual translation, coordination,

and alignment between these different spheres. This could contribute to the democratic anchorage of governance network processes within traditional institutions of representative democracy (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). This could also improve the chance of proposed policy solutions and strategies developed in governance networks being accepted and implemented. In addition to connecting different actors from the realm of government, society, and business, translation of policy processes across governmental and non-governmental organizational boundaries and connecting governmental procedures with network processes are important boundary-spanning activities that could enhance the performance and legitimacy of governance networks. Boundary spanners could play a key role in this respect.

Boundary spanners and boundary-spanning activities

Boundary spanners are specialized in negotiating the interactions between the organization and its environment in order to realize a better 'fit.' The concept of boundary spanners has its roots in organizational literature, according to which boundary spanners play a key role in the communication and coordination across intra-organizational boundaries that are needed because of functional task differentiation and specialization (e.g. Leifer & Delbecq, 1978; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). With the advent of contingency approaches to organizations, the importance of boundary spanners in the adaptation of organizations towards their environment became a vital subject of interest for organization scholars (Baker, 2008). By representing the organization towards the environment, but also by representing the environment within the organization, boundary spanners could provide the necessary information by which the organization could adapt to its environment. In this transfer of information or resources, environmental scanning and information filtration play an important role. In these conceptualizations of boundary spanners, the notion of boundary spanners' internal and external linkage is stressed, so that they can both gather and transfer information from outside their sub-units (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). To effectively accomplish a better fit between organization and environment, boundary spanners are engaged in three main (and interrelated) activities: 1) connecting or linking different people and processes across organizational boundaries, 2) selecting relevant information on both sides of the boundary, and 3) translating this information to the other side of the boundary.

In the literature on inter-organizational relationships and governance networks, the management of inter-organizational relationships as a boundary-spanning activity is further stressed (e.g. Baker, 2008; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Williams, 2002). Interdependency accounts of governance networks suggest that boundary spanners play a key role in the creation and maintenance of successful inter-organizational relations in order to manage interdependency (Baker, 2008). In this respect, boundary spanners could enhance trust between organizations; this in turn could enhance the performance of inter-organizational relationships (e.g. Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010b).

In this thesis, boundary spanning is understood as a combination of interrelated activities concerned with connecting different actors from the realm of government, society, and business, building sustainable relationships between these actors, and connecting governance network processes with intra-organizational processes. Boundary spanners are skilled networkers, who have the ability to recognize and exploit opportunities to develop inter-organizational relationships (Baker, 2008; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Williams, 2002). This means that they are able to empathize with others and that they have a feeling for the social construction of other actors. According to Tushman and Scanlan (1981: 291–292), boundaries “can be spanned effectively only by individuals who understand the coding schemes and are attuned to the contextual information on both sides of the boundary, enabling them to search out relevant information on one side and disseminate it on the other.” Boundary spanners understand other actors’ needs (Ferguson et al., 2005); this enables them to search for shared meanings (Levina & Vaast, 2005). In this way, sustainable relationships with actors from different organizational backgrounds could be developed and maintained. Besides their interpersonal and inter-organizational skills, boundary spanners are considered to be entrepreneurs and innovators in the sense that they try to link different policy issues and policy streams across boundaries (Williams, 2002; cf. Kingdon, 1984).

Which boundary spanners?

There is a lot of ambiguity in the literature about who boundary spanners are. Some scholars approach boundary spanners as those organizational members who have an explicit boundary-spanning role. Such people occupy a dedicated boundary-spanning role within the organizational structure, such as organizational members with a representational communication role or so-called organizational gate-keepers, ‘protecting’ the organization from environmental turbulence. These organizational members are often involved in a one-step information flow and perform a more routine transacting organizational task (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). Such a structural organizational role does not say anything about the way boundary-spanning activities are actually performed. In line with more network-oriented interdependency approaches (see Baker, 2008), I focus on *boundary spanners-in-practice*, as Levina and Vaast (2005) call them. These boundary spanners actively connect with other organizations and processes, build relationships between actors, acquire and select external information, and transmit/translate this internally and vice versa (a two-step information flow in the words of Tushman and Scanlan, 1981). Hence, in this thesis, I focus on individuals who are practicing high boundary-spanning activities.

The boundary-spanning activities of both governmental and non-governmental actors are examined in this thesis. The emphasis in the different chapters differs though. In part II, the boundary-spanning activities of public managers are the main focus. As policymakers, public managers are directly confronted with the functional limits of representative democracy and with assertive stakeholders in dealing with complex public issues (e.g. Peters, 2010;

Warren, 2009). Furthermore, their boundary-spanning activities are likely to be related to the performance and democratic legitimacy of the networks in which they are engaged (e.g. Feldman & Khademian, 2007; Williams, 2002). The literature on network management provides useful insights into this matter. In the literature on network management around complex spatial or environmental projects, four different categories of network management strategies can be distinguished (see Klijn et al., 2010a): (1) exploring content (creating more variety, organizing research, exploring the perceptions of different actors, and so forth); (2) arranging the structure of the interaction (securing a temporary organizational arrangement for interactions); (3) establishing process rules (designing temporary agreements and rules to govern interactions); and (4) connecting (to actors, scales, developments, opportunities, and so forth). Although not so clearly distinguishable, the fourth management strategy particularly includes boundary-spanning activities. In chapter 3, this fourth boundary-spanning management strategy is further conceptualized as a *connective management style*.

In the case of governance networks in which citizens take a more leading role (part III), the role of non-governmental actors' boundary-spanning activities is considered. Their impact upon the establishment and performance of these networks is examined. In the last chapter of part III, the effects of boundary-spanning activities of both governmental and non-governmental actors on the performance of governance networks are examined.

The effects of boundary spanners on democratic legitimacy and network performance examined

Especially within issue-specific governance networks based on more loosely coupled interrelationships between actors, the connective and coordinating activities of boundary spanners could be a crucial variable with regard to network performance or democratic throughput legitimacy. As argued in the previous sections, governance networks have democratic potential because citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses have more room for direct engagement. In order to make this potential manifest, it is important that the diversity of stakeholders become included and connected to the processes of governance networks. As described in section 1.7, democratic throughput legitimacy is about the level of inclusion of stakeholders, the quality of the argumentation process, the opportunities for deliberation, the transparency of the decision-making process, and the transparency of information. The boundary-spanning activities of public managers could play a key role in this respect (Feldman & Khademian, 2007; Torfing et al., 2012). They could bring stakeholders together in a constructive manner. They have a feel for the diversity of interests, for what is relevant for the different involved stakeholders and can provide opportunities for these stakeholders to engage. Moreover, boundary-spanning public managers take responsibility for connecting this debate and communication in informal governance networks' throughput to formal decision-making structures and policy processes.

Dealing effectively with complex public issues requires a high flow of information between involved actors, coordination, and mutual alignment of a diversity of stakeholders (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Torfing et al., 2012; Wagenaar, 2007). With their role in increasing the flow of information, and translating information and connecting individuals and processes across organizational boundaries, boundary spanners could positively affect the performance of governance networks. Although the effects of boundary spanning on individual organizational performance and inter-organizational collaboration and trust are (to some extent) reported in the literature (e.g. Ahearne et al., 2005; Leifer & Delbecq, 1978; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981; Seabright et al., 1992), there is a lack of empirical studies, especially quantitative research, focusing on the functioning and presence of competent boundary spanners on the one hand, and governance network performance within these networks on the other. Furthermore, much of the attention is directed at the boundary-spanning activities of (representatives of) central actors (e.g. lead organizations, network managers, politicians) (e.g. Cristofoli et al., 2014; Klijn et al., 2010a; Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). There is a dearth of empirical research with a broader focus, i.e. formal and informal boundary spanners originating not only from official organizations, but also from societal and community organizations and NGOs (cf. Van Hulst et al., 2012).

1.10 OUTLINE OF THIS THESIS: STRUCTURE OF ARTICLES AND METHODS

This thesis is presented in the form of a number of international peer-reviewed articles and a book chapter in an international edited volume. Four articles have been published or are currently in press: in *Policy Sciences*, *Environment and Planning C*, *Water Resources Management*, and *European Planning Studies*. The book chapter is published in a volume on interactive governance edited by Jacob Torfing and Peter Triantafyllou (ECPR Press). These articles and the book chapter stand alone and can be read without the other chapters. Therefore there is sometimes a small overlap between them. The main differences relate to the methods (both qualitative and quantitative methods are used), the cases they analyze, and the emphasis on different bodies of knowledge (theories).

The articles and the book chapter are clustered in two parts (part II and part III). Part II focuses on the boundary-spanning activities of public managers within water governance networks and their effects on democratic legitimacy and network performance. In the first chapter of part II (chapter 2), a highly contested complex water issue is examined from a management perspective. The degree to which the managers engaged in boundary-spanning activities is discussed. This may provide insight into how boundary-spanning activities, or a lack thereof, relate to the legitimacy and performance of water governance networks. The second chapter of part II (chapter 3), using quantitative research, tests the relationship between boundary-spanning management, democratic throughput legitimacy, and network

performance. As the literature on public managers' boundary-spanning activities is quite elaborate, this justifies the approach of testing theoretically induced hypotheses within this field of research.

Part III goes deeper into the boundary-spanning activities of non-governmental actors in governance networks. These boundary-spanning activities are less elaborated in the literature. Qualitative methods have been used to study the specific activities of these boundary spanners. One single in-depth case study (chapter 4) and one comparative case study (chapter 5) have been conducted in this respect. These case studies were also used to study the evolution of the interaction process between the self-organizing citizen groups and the governmental institutions, and the role of boundary spanners therein. Part III closes with a quantitative study (chapter 6), testing the effects of both governmental and non-governmental boundary spanners on trust and network performance within urban governance networks. The individual chapters go deeper into the specific methodological choices and techniques applied.

Part IV contains the concluding chapter (chapter 7) of this thesis in which the findings of all the studies are combined in order to answer the main research question. Furthermore, the results are reflected upon, and specific recommendations are made for future research.

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PART II

The need for boundary spanning by public managers in governance networks

As described in the introduction of this thesis, water managers often can no longer optimize one particular utility function, but have to manage across multiple utilities and multiple stakeholders due to increasing spatial claims from agriculture, industry, traffic, housing and infrastructure. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth case study about how public managers, confronted with a complex water issue, demarcate their project and whether they engage in boundary-spanning activities. The case was selected because of its contested nature. The case is about a governmental initiative to change the management of the water regime concerning the Haringvliet water basin in reaction to negative ecological and natural developments. However after more than 20 years no actual change in the water management has been implemented. As will be further elaborated in this chapter, conflicts between different governmental levels and between different stakeholders have been an important factor in this respect. This raises the question how the project has been managed: how did the public managers deal with the complexity of the water management issue, to what extent did the managers spanned the boundaries between their project and the environment and what can we learn from this?

In the subsequent chapter (chapter 3), the relationship between connective management, democratic throughput legitimacy and governance network performance will be put to the test. The literature suggests that a management style which is based on a boundary-spanning strategy will enhance democratic throughput legitimacy, which in turn could positively influence the performance of policy- and decision-making concerning complex public issues. This will empirically be tested in this chapter. In this chapter, the term 'connective management' will be used for a management style which is based on a boundary-spanning strategy, as this term connects better with the network management literature. Before the empirical test I will go deeper into the issue of democratic legitimacy of governance networks, as this is a highly debated issue in the governance network literature.

CHAPTER 2

A contested complex water issue and a lack of boundary spanning

This chapter has been published in the Journal *Water Resources Management* as:

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we explore how managing actors' boundary judgments influence the adaptability of water governance. We approach this question by examining the relationship between the way water managers frame, and act in, complex water issues on the one hand and develop adaptive water governance strategies on the other. We define four categories of boundary judgments made by water managers in order to deal with the complexities in water governance issues. An in-depth case study analysis of an attempt to adjust the management of the water regime in the south-west Delta of the Netherlands is provided in order to reconstruct the water managers' boundary judgments and their impact upon governance strategies used. We found that, most of the time, the water managers involved predominantly made tight boundary judgments. These tight boundary judgments seemed to hamper the mutual learning process among a variety of stakeholders that is needed to realize adaptive water governance. We argue that wide boundary judgments enhance the chance of realizing adaptive practices and build upon exploration, learning, and connection.

1. INTRODUCTION

Management of complex water issues is highly challenging, as managers have to deal with both the unpredictability of ecosystems and the complexity of social systems (Huitema et al., 2009). Furthermore, water issues often cross different kinds of boundaries, such as physical and geographical boundaries (e.g. surface and ground water), different administrative and institutional boundaries (e.g. governmental levels and sectors), and social boundaries (e.g. between social and economic groups) (Mostert et al., 2008). In the literature on water management, it is therefore stated that actors have to use adaptive strategies to deal with both the uncertainty of ecosystem dynamics and the social system's complexity (Olsson et al., 2006). Accepting unpredictability, adaptive governance emphasizes learning and flexibility (Foxon et al., 2009).

However, many questions still remain about why certain water governance systems are able to bring such approaches into practice, whereas others are not (e.g. Mostert et al., 2008; Olsson et al., 2006). Reflecting on the realization of adaptive water governance in practice, Pahl-Wostl et al., (2011) note that there is a lacuna in the translation of political rhetoric into change at the operational level. Moreover, Huitema et al. (2009) make the case that "despite its obvious attractiveness as an idea, [adaptive (co-)management] is very hard to introduce and sustain in practice". It seems difficult to implement or manage a transition towards adaptive water governance. The literature on adaptive governance, addressing the political dimension, pays attention to institutional factors, power relationships, and process conditions in this matter (e.g. Folke et al., 2005; Huitema et al., 2009; Olsson et al., 2006). As changes in water system management regimes touch upon the interests of many actors, this literature shows that, for adaptive water governance, public participation, social learning, and knowledge building among a variety of involved stakeholders are important; thus also addressing questions of legitimacy. This emphasizes both the importance, and the fragility and political character of actors' cross-boundary interaction (Mostert et al., 2008; Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011).

Less attention is paid to the way water managers demarcate the complex social-ecological system with which they deal and how they interpret the relevance and impact of the interdependencies they encounter. This is an important aspect to consider, as it influence the process of cross-boundary interaction that emerges in practice (cf. Mostert et al., 2008; Pel & Boons, 2010; Pahl-Wostl et al., 2011). In this paper, we elaborate such an analysis with the help of the concept of boundary judgments. This concept emphasizes the unavoidable need and act of actors to draw boundaries around their system of action. It focuses on the way in which actors cope with the complexities of everyday reality by demarcating and making sense of their surroundings (Luhmann, 1995). We approach adaptive governance as the way actors respond to dynamics and complexity regarding social-ecological issues (cf. Pahl-Wostl et al., 2007). We focus on the governance process and how managing actors deal

in an adaptive way with the dynamics resulting from the unpredictability and complexity of social-ecological systems. The “adaptive” part of the concept recognizes that water management is a complex system that changes over time, such that policies must adjust to new information and insights about dynamic social and ecological processes (Medema, 2008).

In the next two sections, we elaborate the concept of boundary judgments. We then use the resulting analytical framework to analyze a case in which water managers tried to change the existing water governance regime in order to give ecological values more weight. However, during the implementation they are confronted with several difficulties, and after more than 20 years a new water governance regime has still not been realized.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: BOUNDARY JUDGMENTS AND ADAPTIVE WATER GOVERNANCE

2.1 Boundary judgments: coping with complexity

The concept of boundary judgments has been developed within critical system thinking, and it refers to the assumptions about what should belong to the system in question and what should belong to its environment (Ulrich, 1987). As Pel and Boons (2010: 1251) put it: “Behind any apparently self-evident identification of systems there is judgment, and to be critical means to account for these constitutive ‘boundary judgments.’” According to Luhmann (1995), drawing boundaries is a way of coping with the complexity of everyday reality, and through these boundary judgments actors are able to make sense of their surroundings. Boundary judgments determine “what is in view and might be taken into account at the moment and what is out of view and thus excluded from consideration” (Flood, 1999: 92).

Actors make boundary judgments in order to cope with the complexities in their surroundings, by demarcating what is included or excluded. In the literature on management within complex systems, a distinction is made between complexity reducing behavior versus complexity embracing behavior (Ashmos et al., 2000; Teisman, 2005; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007; Edelenbos et al., 2012). Tight (or exclusive) boundary judgments focus on reducing or controlling complexity, whereby complexity is decomposed in isolated parts, and problems in those parts are first resolved in isolation and subsequently integrated with other problem fields (Axelrod & Cohen, 1999). It “...helps a manager to restrict his/her actions and attentions to a [...] system that can be known and controlled better” (Boons et al., 2009: 248). This means that internal or external dynamics of governance processes should be avoided, because it leads away from initially designed solutions. However, water issues cross all kinds of system boundaries, and tight boundary judgments could prevent the learning and joint knowledge building needed among a variety of actors, as emphasized in the literature on adaptive governance.

Wide (or inclusive) boundary judgments start from a more holistic system approach (Holling et al., 1998) in which the cross-cutting characteristics of complex water issues are taken as the point of departure. Water managers with wide boundary judgments focus on the interdependencies of issues, actors, processes, and structures. This means that managers are oriented towards making meaningful connections (Edelenbos et al., 2012). This could lead to more inclusive water governance processes “...where ambitions and actions can be combined and consensus between possible diverging strategies more easily realized” (Boons et al., 2009: 248).

In order to analyze the boundary judgments of water managers in a systematic way, we have developed an analytical framework in which we distinguish four categories of boundary judgments relating to different dimensions of complexity faced by water managers (table 1).

Table 1 Four categories of boundary judgments

Substantive boundary judgments	Participation boundary judgments	Structural boundary judgments	Contextual boundary judgments
Demarcations concerning the content.	Demarcations concerning the involvement of actors.	Demarcations concerning the structure of the policy process.	Demarcations concerning the project and its environment.
What is the issue about? Which domains and values are included?	Which actors have to be involved, in which way and on which occasions?	Who is responsible for which part and how are the parts related?	Which external developments are relevant?

2.2 Four categories of boundary judgments

In dealing with complex water issues, water managers have to make boundary judgments with respect to the substance of the issue at question. Which kinds of aspects and domains are involved? These demarcations could be typified as *substantive boundary judgments*. The choice of values that are considered relevant is important for these boundary judgments. For example, is the specific water issue about realizing ecological sustainability or about economic vitality, or both? Within political processes, substantive boundary judgments are often made explicitly when decisions are made concerning the priority of policy programs and related values; but technical experts examining water issues also make substantive boundary judgments, whether implicit or explicit (e.g. Dewulf et al., 2005; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004).

A second dimension stems from the emergent dynamics during the governance process, resulting from interaction between involved actors (e.g. Ashmos et al., 2000; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). The way in which stakeholders are involved (the width and depth of participation) influences the governance process (e.g. Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Raadgever et al., 2008). Water managers make *participation boundary judgments* regarding the involvement

of different actors at different junctures (cf. Ashmos et al., 2000). Hence, these judgments are about actors' inclusion in, and exclusion from, the governance process and the depth of participation, influencing the specific interaction patterns emerging during the governance process.

Although involved stakeholders may come to consensus about the substantive issue at stake, designing and implementing policy measures is certainly not straightforward. A third dimension of complexity in this respect stems from the institutional fragmentation of the water governance system. Especially in more polycentric governance systems (Huitema et al., 2009), this structural complexity is relatively large (cf. Ashmos et al., 2000) as a result of the increasing specialization and fragmentation of the responsibilities concerning water among different organizations and sectors (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011). Furthermore, the cross-cutting characteristic of water issues, including different jurisdictions and institutional domains or sectors, enhances this structural complexity. It often means that cooperation and coordination among a variety of governmental agencies is necessary to realize policy measures. This is challenging, as every pillar often has the tendency to defend its own interest (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011). Regarding this structural complexity, actors make *structural boundary judgments*. Water managers have to make choices about how to organize their activities. These are demarcations regarding the structure of governance processes: demarcations of different phases and elements of a policy process, how these different parts are connected, and which agents are responsible for each part.

These three different dimensions of complexity are oriented towards the internal dynamics within the specific governance process, resulting from the evolution of interpretations, actions, and interactions of involved actors. As complex water issues cross different geographical borders and governance levels, dynamics could also occur in the environment of the project. These external dynamics constitute a fourth dimension of complexity. An example of these external dynamics are so-called change events (e.g. De Bruijn et al., 2002; Teisman et al., 2009), such as abrupt political developments (e.g. changing coalitions), new knowledge concerning climate conditions, or changing conditions of another, but influencing (water) system. These external events could change the scope of the issue or the position of the issue on the policy agenda (Kingdon, 1984). Boundary judgments regarding these external dynamics could be typified as *contextual boundary judgments*. Water managers can differ in their (implicit) orientation and behavior to include or exclude developments in the surroundings or context of their project.

We stress that in reality these four categories are related. For example, participation boundary judgments also influence the values that are being considered, thereby influencing substantive boundary judgments. In our analysis, we also pay explicit attention to these interrelationships. In order to analyze the boundary judgments of water managers in our case study, we need to further conceptualize and operationalize the four categories of boundary judgments.

3 OPERATIONALIZATION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Operationalization

On the basis of the distinction between the different categories of boundary judgments, we analyze the case by focusing on the following specific demarcations that actors make. We use a five point scale (from -- to ++) to indicate the tightness or wideness of the boundary judgments:

- To analyze the substantive boundary judgments, we examine the domain demarcations indicating the extent to which different values are included in the project. Tight substantive boundary judgments are made when the project is (mainly) approached and developed from one functional domain, for example water quality. Wide boundary judgments are made when different domains play a significant role in formulating measures;
- To analyze the participation boundary judgments, we examine the demarcations with regard to the actors involved. Tight participation boundary judgments are made when relatively few stakeholders in the policy process are (actively) involved and many are (implicitly) excluded. Wide boundary judgments are made when relatively many stakeholders are actively involved in the policy process;
- To analyze the structural boundary judgments, we examine the demarcations with regard to the different parts of policy processes (e.g. policy development and implementation) and the coordination of actors' responsibilities to act on these parts. Tight structural boundary judgments are applied when the project is divided into clearly separated parts by strictly defined responsibilities. Wide boundary judgments are made when parts of the project and related projects are approached as interacting and co-evolving;
- To analyze the contextual boundary judgments, we examine the way the responsible actors relate the project to its environment. Tight contextual boundary judgments are applied when the project is approached as relatively separate from the context. Developments on other scales are ignored. Wide boundary judgments are made when external dynamics are constantly taken into account. Attempts to connect the project with these external dynamics could easily lead to adaptation of the initially planned course of action.

3.2 Methodology

In order to examine the relationship between actors' boundary judgments and their relationship with adaptive governance around complex water issues, we conducted an in-depth case analysis of the decision to change the management of the Haringvliet sluices. It comprises an instrumental case study, in which the researcher uses a specific case to gain more understanding about a particular phenomenon of interest (Stake, 1995). The research design of a single in-depth case study does not enable us to develop generalized empirical

knowledge about achieving adaptive governance, but it does provide a detailed understanding of how managers' boundary judgments could be related to adaptive governance. The case has not been selected explicitly as an example of adaptive water governance. However, the case is about responding to ecological developments as a result of the policy goal to increase estuarine dynamics in the area. We are interested in whether and how water managers implement adaptive strategies, and to what extent their boundary judgments relate to these. The case is especially interesting as it already takes more than 20 years to change the water management regime.

Boundary judgments can be reconstructed by 'observation of observations' (Pel, 2009: 127). To enhance the internal validity of our research, we used triangulation of research methods and resources: in-depth semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observations. At time of writing, we have been following the case for more than two years. All relevant written documents were subjected to detailed study, such as policy documents, memos, technical reports, and council minutes. Furthermore, we observed seven meetings between stakeholders and experts concerning the issue. These occasions were used to observe stakeholder interactions and to check our findings derived from the interviews and the document analysis. We interviewed 15 key players who are representatives of the key stakeholders in the project. These interviews lasted two hours on average, and the interview reports were checked and controlled by the respondents. We focused on the boundary judgments of the main managing actors in the case, i.e. a national governmental agency (i.e. *Rijkswaterstaat: RWS*), and the regional government (*the Province*), responsible for enabling a change in the water management regime in the Haringvliet estuary. We therefore extensively interviewed these two actors (six interviews). We asked questions regarding the four types of boundary judgments (1) the scope of the issue, the problem to be resolved, and the consequences of possible measures, (2) the interaction process with other actors (e.g. the stakeholders involved, in what way, and on which occasions), (3) the structuring of the policy process, the allocation of responsibilities, and the relationships with other projects, and (4) the external developments relating to the project according to the actors, and what these meant or should mean for the project according to the respondents.

4 CASE DESCRIPTION HARINGVLIET SLUICES

The Haringvliet sluices are part of the Dutch Delta Works built in reaction to the storm flood of 1953. The sluices were finished in 1970 and closed off the Haringvliet estuary from the North Sea (figure 1). This had major consequences for the surrounding social-ecological system. The closing off led to the disappearance of estuarial tides and turned the Haringvliet into a freshwater lake. This was especially valuable for safety, agriculture, and freshwater supply in the south-west Delta, particularly on the islands of Goeree-Overflakkee and

Voorne Putten. On the other hand, the closing off has led toward “a system with generally low natural ecological values [due to] the accumulation of contaminated sediments, disappearance of intertidal areas and nursery grounds for fish, disturbance of fish migration, and less mixing of river and seawater” (Smit et al., 1997).



Figure 1 South-west Delta, Haringvliet estuary (Source: Google Earth)

In the 1980s, integrated water resource management (IWRM) was introduced in Dutch water management (Disco, 2002; Mostert, 2006). With its adoption, national government aimed at “optimal coordination of the wishes of society with regard to the functioning and functions of the water systems ... by means of an integral consideration of (these wishes and) the potential of the systems” (Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat 1985 in Mostert, 2006: 20). By the time of its adoption, this IWRM approach had a strong ecological emphasis. Disco (2002) speaks of the ecological turn in Dutch water management and the ‘ecologization’ of Dutch coastal engineering. In line with this changing paradigm on water management, national government started to investigate whether it was possible to change the management of the Haringvliet sluices to restore estuarine dynamics in the Rhine-Meuse estuary in 1988 (see table 2). As a possible opening of the sluices was also considered to be important for the migration of fish as salmon and sea trout, this policy was connected to the Rhine Action Program for Ecological Rehabilitation, started in 1987 by the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (Smit et al., 1997).

After an environmental impact assessment, it was decided to open the sluices also during periods of high tides, allowing brackish North Sea water into the Haringvliet system. RWS concluded that the most appropriate policy scenario would be to change the management regime of the sluices in various steps. The first step was to open the sluices slightly (leave them ajar) in 2005. This decision was taken in June 2000 by the minister (henceforth: *the decision to change the management of the sluices*). In this way, learning could take place during implementation about how best to achieve greater estuarial dynamics, and the effects for the users and stakeholders could be controlled. Although this first step will not improve

Table 2 Overview of policy and decision-making process

Timeframe	Events/markings decisions
1985-1994	Ecologization of Dutch Water management. Start of Rhine Action Program. Start of examinations to change the management of the sluices by national government
1994-1998	Environmental Impact Assessment
1998-2000	Decision to change the management of the sluices by national government
2000-2004	Delegation of part implementation program to the Province. Connection between nature development project Goeree-Overflakkee and relocation water intake points
2005-2009	Rejection of the relocation of the water intake points by Local Governments. Procedural struggles between the Province and regional stakeholders.
2010-2012	Decision to change the management of the sluices is reconsidered by the national government. Due to international agreements on fish migration, implementation of the decision is continued

tidal dynamics, it was considered to be at least of direct value for enhancing the migration of fish as part of the Rhine Action Program. However, a higher level of salinity has negative consequences for different water system users, such as farmers and water companies. Therefore, two important conditions had to be met: (1) the salt intrusion should not move any further than a specified line and (2) the intakes for water for drinking and agriculture should be relocated before the sluices were opened. In this way, the functionality of the freshwater intakes was secured. RWS focused on realizing the first condition. In figure 2, the imaginary border with regard to the salt intrusion is shown. The Province was given responsibility for realizing the second condition. To meet this condition, freshwater canals have been developed (see figure 2).

However, during the policy development and implementation of these two conditions, the policy program was confronted with dynamics in the actor environment and in the

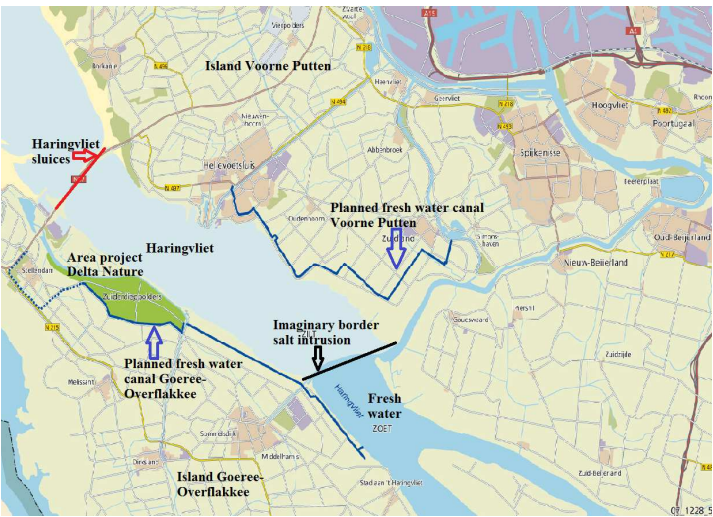


Figure 2 Project Area and the compensating measures (Adapted from Province of South-Holland 2010)

physical environment that created pressures on the direction, and the aim of the policy program. Ten years after the decision to change the management of the sluices, the policy program was provisionally cancelled in 2011 by national government as a result of a strong regional lobby. However, because of the international agreements on fish migration and possible financial consequences for non-implementation, national government eventually decided to proceed with implementation.

5 CASE ANALYSIS: BOUNDARY JUDGMENTS OF MANAGING ACTORS AND ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE

In this section, we analyze the boundary judgments of the managing actors: Rijkswaterstaat and the Province. We conclude this section with table 3, in which we provide an overview of the assessment of boundary judgments in relation to the realization or otherwise of adaptive water governance in the Haringvliet sluices case.

5.1 Analysis of the substantive boundary judgments

From the beginning, there was high uncertainty and ambiguity about the consequences of changing the management of the sluices. The water system users were critical with regard to RWS' examinations concerning the consequences of the decision. Although the ecological effects were extensively examined, the economic effects were not. For example, it remained unclear what the economic risks of the decision would be for the farmers and drinking water companies.

5.1.1 Rijkswaterstaat

Within Rijkswaterstaat, we observe a strong domination of water, ecology, and nature protection. In line with the ecological turn (Disco, 2002) and the IWRM approach in Dutch water management, the underlying values of nature and ecology have been shaping the decision about estuarial restoration. RWS concentrated heavily on water safety and water quality. Regarding the necessary compensating measures for freshwater on the islands (see figure 2), RWS initially aimed at pipe lines. *"Until 2002 we thought pipe lines on the islands could be used as compensating measures. [...] This meant that it would only have been a 'case of water' [...] A typical Rijkswaterstaat project."* (Interview PM 3). Although the effects of the decision for other domains, such as agriculture were examined, they were not incorporated in the policy development and implementation. In this sense, they did not influence the aim and direction of the policy program. This changed in 2003 when it became clear that the project costs were underestimated and regional support for the decision was lacking. Therefore, it was decided to connect the development of the compensating measures with other domains. *"We realized that we couldn't make it by ourselves. We are going to broaden*

the project. We are going to try to realize the compensating measures in broad area zones by which you could combine natural development, recreation, and water retention. In this way, you could include more financial resources [...]. However, it also became far more complex.” (Interview PM 3).

As Rijkswaterstaat initially considered few domains, but later on more domains were included, we assess the substantive boundary judgments as moderate (+/-).

5.1.2 Province

In the development of the compensating measures (figure 2), important criteria for the Province were the consequences for spatial planning and the natural environment. When the Province started to cooperate with the Goeree-Overflakkee Water Board and when connections were made with the Delta Nature project, water retention and recreation were also included. This led to an integral development plan in which these three values were important drivers. However, the inclusion of agriculture and economic development was avoided, despite initiatives of local stakeholders (i.e. farmers, inhabitants, and municipalities) to realize this. The Province had somewhat conflicting goals in this respect. Because it was their responsibility to realize Delta Nature, there was little room for maneuver according to the Province’s project manager: *“Concerning alternatives in the area, there is little flexibility. We want to realize new nature. We are not going to transform existing nature. This automatically means that you have to sacrifice agricultural land”* (Interview PM 5).

In all, the Province had a moderate consideration of domains (+/-), including recreation and water retention, but mainly excluding agriculture and local economic development.

5.2 Analysis of the participation boundary judgments

To implement the decision, the initiating parties were dependent on a variety of actors. For example, the water boards are responsible for water management on the islands, and the land is owned by local governments and private users. The relocation of the water intake points therefore needed the cooperation of the water boards, the local governments on the islands, and private owners. These actors had different interests and perceived the decision to change the management of the sluices in different ways. On both islands, there was increasing resistance against the relocation projects and, in the end, also against the decision to change the management of the sluices.

5.2.1 Rijkswaterstaat

The process organized by RWS in the development of the decision (1990–2000) was characterized by a relatively low representation of stakeholders touched by the decision. RWS notes about this: *“The somewhat small regional stakeholder representation was a consequence of the desire to keep the administrative complexity under control”* (Interview PM 1). One

formal representative of each group of regional stakeholders was involved (i.e. one dike count for the different water boards and one mayor for the different local governments on the islands). The interaction with these representatives was mainly characterized by informing and consulting. After the decision, there was sporadic interaction between stakeholders and RWS. This interaction was about communication with stakeholders concerning the state of affairs. As RWS notes in this matter: *“After the decision, the communication with the region became less frequent. A decision had been taken, so this was not considered necessary anymore.”* (Interview PM 2).

To sum up: the interaction with regional stakeholders was mainly characterized by communication and not co-production. Relatively few stakeholders were actively involved. Therefore we assess the participation boundary judgments as tight (-).

5.2.2 Province

The policy process with regard to the compensating measures on the two islands (see figure 2) was characterized by low stakeholder involvement. At Goeree-Overflakkee, there was frequent interaction with only one stakeholder (i.e. the water board). The Province mainly developed the compensating measures internally and translated them into formal procedures that were then communicated to local governments. The local government council (Bernisse) rejected the relocation in 2008. The Province responded by using procedural steering mechanisms in order to bypass the local government. This resulted in further delays, procedural struggles, and juridical conflicts between regional stakeholders and the Province. This changed significantly at the end of 2009 when the Province decided to reconsider the plans. At Voorne Putten, an interaction process with many local and regional stakeholders was set up. There were frequent interactions, and the process aimed to develop a freshwater route, taking into account the regional stakes as much as possible. The location and the form of the freshwater route were developed in co-production between the Province and the regional stakeholders. *“The group [of stakeholders] came together every three weeks till the summer of 2010 [since March]. This resulted in a more positive attitude of the regional stakeholders. [...] They are getting the feeling that they are being listened to seriously and they now really do have influence in the planning process.”* (Interview PM 6).

As the involvement of regional stakeholders was initially weak, but changed later on as more stakeholders were included in the planning process, we assess the participation boundary judgments of the province as moderate (+/-).

5.3 Analysis of the structural boundary judgments

After delegation to the Province of the task of establishing compensatory measures, there was increasing ambiguity with regard to which governmental organization was responsible for which part of the policy program, and no one was assigned overall responsibility for the program (Kuijken 2010). Furthermore, the relocation of the water intake points interfered

with environmental and spatial development projects in the area. For example, on the island of Goeree-Overflakkee, there were provincial nature development projects running in the same spatial area as the planned relocations of the water intake points. This caused ambiguity regarding the relationship between these projects and what they meant for the regional stakeholders.

5.3.1 Rijkswaterstaat

A strong indicator of the structural boundary judgments in the case is the clear subdivision of the program into different subprojects and accompanying project responsibility. Although the administrative agreement between national government and the Province in 2004 stated that the involved governmental actors should cooperate as much as possible, both actors mainly acted on their own until 2010. *“In that period, we were operating at a distance. This was also in line with national policy [...]. The [...] integral execution of the compensating measures is a responsibility of the Province. [...] The position was that we shouldn’t interfere in the Province’s business. And vice versa, from the perspective of the Province: we don’t need any ‘busybodies’.”* (Interview PM 3). In an evaluation of the project, commissioned by national government, it is stated that “the complexity of the implementation is underestimated and has increased during the project [implementation]: there is a lack of one party taking responsibility for the overall program. [...] The activities of the province and RWS are administratively not well coordinated and managed” (Kuijken 2010: 8). Since 2010, this has been changing. There is now more or less joint responsibility, marked by the involvement of national government in the administrative steering group to realize the compensating measures.

In general, Rijkswaterstaat imposed a very strong division of the project into separate parts/subprojects and responsibilities, although this changed in the end. Hence, tight boundary judgments are made on this category (-).

5.3.2 Province

The Province focused on the development of the compensating measures on the two islands. In the development of the freshwater route on Goeree-Overflakkee, a connection was made with another provincial project, Delta Nature, dealing with wetland development. Thus, an area development program was set up. This coupling remained at project level: it was not addressed in the overall program, although both programs were about enhancing the natural transition in the Delta. As one of the project managers of the Province illustratively notes: *“Delta Nature is a separate project. There is a connection at the northern edge of Goeree-Overflakkee, but the two projects are independent of each other”* (Interview PM 5). Furthermore, inclusion of projects of local stakeholders was avoided or not actively managed. A typical quote is the following: *“Local governments have their own agenda. They wanted to connect their own recreational plan to the area designated for the compensating*

measures. This was a political issue in the local council and an important reason for rejecting the relocation. We were sucked into a process that we had nothing to do with." (Interview PM 5). The Province was focused on realizing her own project and was rather surprised by these local interferences.

In all, the Province made a strong division into subprojects and therefore we assess the structural boundary judgments as tight (-).

5.4 Analysis of the contextual boundary judgments

In order to assess the contextual boundary judgments, we identified three concrete external dynamics mentioned by a majority of the respondents as highly important. Firstly, there was a growth of blue-green algae in a connected freshwater basin (Volkerak Zoommeer) (1). As a solution to this issue, it was planned to increase the level of salinity of this water basin. This measure could also affect the level of salinity in the Haringvliet. Secondly, increasing attention was paid to the future availability of fresh water in the Netherlands, as part of the increasing awareness of the climate change issue (2). A national Delta Program was set up, in which freshwater availability was an explicit theme. The decision to change the management of the sluices would affect the availability of freshwater in the south-west Delta. Thirdly, in cooperation with different provincial governments, water boards, and the national government, an integral program with regard to the whole south-west Delta was developed in which freshwater, ecological resilience, and economic vitality were key themes (3). In this cooperation, decisions were prepared regarding the water governance in the south-west Delta in the near future, but also for the long term. Changes in Haringvliet water governance pose consequences for this integral policy program and vice versa.

5.4.1 Rijkswaterstaat

Before the decision to change the management of the sluices was made, developments in, and consequences for, connected water systems and areas were taken into account by RWS. However, once the decision was made, new external dynamics did not influence the direction or aim of the policy. This indicates a tight boundary with regard to the context. Regarding the developments in the Volkerak Zoommeer, one of the respondents notes: *"The developments in the Volkerak have no relationship with the decision to change the management of the sluices. There is a possible leakage of salt water, but that is also the case without the decision to change the management of the sluices."* (Interview PM 1). After the decision, management focused solely on technical implementation. Connections with emerging policy programs and issues in the environment were not made in a mutual way. The project was framed as conditioning for other policies in the south-west Delta.

To sum up: Rijkswaterstaat was not receptive to external dynamics; therefore we assess the contextual boundary judgments as tight (-).

5.4.2 Province

The Province also made tight boundary judgments regarding the relationship between the program projects that it manages and the context. The policy was that connections with other projects (e.g. nature development, recreation) were only allowed if these connections would not slow down the process. This was an important reason for not making a connection with the integral policy development of the south-west Delta.

Overall, the Province had a very closed attitude towards external dynamics; therefore we assess the contextual boundary judgments as very tight (--).

Table 3 provides a summary and assessment of the boundary judgments made by the two managing actors for the four categories.

Table 3 Boundary judgments of the two main managing actors in the Haringvliet sluices case

Type of boundary judgment	Rijkswaterstaat (RWS)	Province
Substantive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The water system mainly judged from the domains of water and ecology • Later, the domains of water retention and recreation are partly included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The freshwater routes mainly considered from the domain of nature development • Later, the domains of water retention and recreation are partly included
Participation	Assessment: +/- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the preparation of the decision, stakeholders are consulted • After the decision there is sporadic contact between RWS and regional stakeholders. Interaction is mainly characterized by one-side communication 	Assessment: +/- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Until 2009, few stakeholders actively involved • After 2009 process management changed. More intensive interaction process with diverse regional stakeholders to develop the freshwater routes.
Structural	Assessment: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is clearly separated into different parts. RWS demarcated its responsibility around the technical preparation of the sluice management. Communication with the other managing actor (the Province) is weak 	Assessment: +/- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the compensating measures; the realization of the freshwater routes • Later, connections made with other provincial projects in the region. At the end of the process these projects are deliberately uncoupled
Contextual	Assessment: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the decision new developments in the field of water governance in the surrounding area and climate adaptation do not result in any changes of the direction or aim of the project 	Assessment: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is considered to be a condition for other programs in the south-west Delta area
	Assessment: -	Assessment: --

5.5 Boundary judgments and adaptive governance in the case

Our case study reveals that there is little *adaptive* water governance as mutual learning processes between a variety of stakeholders did not take place. The interaction process was highly conflictive. Project management was mainly characterized by tight boundary judgments. RWS displayed a strong focus on ecological values. Because the Province had a strong orientation towards nature development, including with regard to its responsibilities in the Delta Nature program, a strong connection between these two actors was established. However, these rather tight substantive boundary judgments conflicted strongly with the values and interests of regional stakeholders, rooted in agricultural land use and the protection of freshwater availability. This tension was increased by tight boundary judgments on participation and structure by the managing actors who tried to keep control of the governance process by demarcating the issue, clearly dividing responsibilities and restricting the participation of other stakeholders. Pressures from the environment of the project increased during the implementation process. Non-supportive behavior by important stakeholders, decreasing political support for ecological restoration, and cost overruns brought the project to the edge.

These pressures resulted in an important broadening of the project scope in 2004. RWS and the Province decided to realize the compensating measures in broad area zones by which more functions could be combined. Connections emerged between the Haringvliet sluices project and Delta Nature. More inclusive boundary judgments emerged with regard to substance, although the domain of agriculture was not included in the planning process, despite stakeholders representing this domain being among the fiercest opponents of the project. Furthermore, boundary judgments with regard to structure, participation, and context remained relatively tight, and connections with regional stakeholders and their agendas were not made. Increasing delays, because of procedural struggles between the Province and local stakeholders, resulted in a loose coupling between both projects. The broadening of the project scope was declined.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In this article, we examined how water managers demarcate complex water issues. This approach makes it possible to increase our understanding of why certain governance processes prove more adaptive than others. Water managers' specific boundary judgments influence the specific connections in which they invest.

Before drawing conclusions from our research, we want to stress several important research limitations. We are fully aware that care must be taken in generalizing the insights from this case study as it is simply one case in one specific country, i.e. The Netherlands. The specific patterns from the case suggest that the relative dominance of tight boundary

judgments was not supportive to the adaptability of the governance process. More empirical research (comparative and quantitative) is needed to provide more evidence for this relationship. Secondly, we did not examine the factors or conditions which were influencing the construction of these boundary judgments. Furthermore, and in relation to this, we did not include (transnational) external factors influencing the adaptability of the governance process in the specific and local project of Haringvliet sluices. For example, as mentioned in our case description, an important factor concerns the international agreements on Ecological Rehabilitation in this respect. These international agreements conditioned the project of changing the sluice management to a large extent and were an important reason why national government decided to continue with the implementation of the decision in 2011 and contributed to the tight focus on ecological restoration. Despite these limitations, we believe that our analysis provides useful new insights into adaptive water governance.

A first insight emerging from the case study is that adaptive water governance seems to be conditioned or hampered by tight boundary judgments. Limiting the scope for decision-making, the level of participation and focusing upon formal competencies and initial ambitions, conflicts with stimulating or allowing for variety and flexibility. Although tight boundary judgments could reduce feelings of uncertainty or provide a feeling of control for managing actors, they also make the project vulnerable for growing pressures in the project environment, due to conflict and resistance as we have seen in this case.

Boundary judgments regarding substance, participation, structure and context, are important aspects to be considered in achieving adaptive water governance in practice. These boundary judgments are interrelated and can reinforce each other. In the case we observed that actors holding tight boundary judgments around nature development and ecology easily find each other, but mainly excluded other stakeholders with other interests and values. Tight participation boundary judgments increase the chance of fixation on certain solutions or values (see also Termeer & Koppenjan, 1997). Tight substantive boundary judgments decreases the potential value for other actors to engage in water governance processes (tight participation boundary judgments).

Tight boundary judgments by organizations initiating and facilitating the process evoke pressures from the environment of the project which destabilize the existing tight boundary judgments and lead to temporarily opening up them. More room is created for participation, and new substance (ideas, interests, etc.). A learning process emerges in which new connections are made and progress in terms of process is made.

However, our final conclusion is that (tight) boundary judgments are rather persistent. When pressures become less strong and complexity as a result of a more adaptive approach becomes apparent and less easily to manage for managers, tight boundary judgments get revived and diminish the explorative and learning focus that is characteristic for adaptive water governance processes. In this sense, broad boundary judgments implies (the need for) connective capacity as the complexity of water issues and governance processes is

more embraced (Edelenbos et al., 2013). This is however a very challenging task as making and maintaining connections require specific managerial skills. The literature speaks of boundary spanners: persons who manage the interface between organizations and their environment (e.g. Williams, 2002). These are individuals with specific skills, who are able to operate at the boundaries of different (sub)systems. These persons are effective networkers, who understand the social constructions and coding schemes of other actors and institutions. Further research is needed to clarify the relationship between boundary spanning and the occurrence of (wide) boundary judgments. The presence and role of boundary spanners could be an important additional aspect to consider in research on adaptive water governance.

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CHAPTER 3

The relationship between boundary-spanning management, democratic throughput legitimacy and performance of water governance networks

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we empirically examine the relationship between connective management, democratic legitimacy, and network performance in governance networks around complex water projects in The Netherlands. Realizing effective and legitimate solutions in such a context is highly challenging, as a variety of interests are at stake, and actors often disagree about goals of the water issue at stake. Although previous research has indicated the importance of network management for the performance of governance networks, the issue of democratic legitimacy is not much addressed in this relationship. Building on the literature, we expect to find that throughput legitimacy has a partly mediating role in the relationship between connective management and network performance. The results, based on survey research, indicate that governance networks have indeed democratic potential but, in order to make this potential manifest, network managers can play a key “connective” role. Furthermore, the results confirm our hypotheses that throughput legitimacy positively affects network performance and has a mediating effect on the relationship between connective management and network performance. Network managers can create important conditions for the evolution of a democratic governance process, but are dependent on the way stakeholders interact with one another and the democratic quality of that interaction.

INTRODUCTION

This article is about connective management, democratic legitimacy, and network performance of governance networks around complex water issues. Complex water issues cross different kinds of boundaries, such as physical and geographical boundaries (e.g. surface and ground water), different administrative and institutional boundaries (e.g. governmental levels and sectors), and social boundaries (e.g. between social and economic groups) (Van Meerkerk et al., 2013; Van der Brugge et al., 2005). Therefore, these projects are often developed and implemented in networks of interdependent actors, who employ dynamic interaction and negotiation processes with each other and who lack clear relations of domination and subordination (although power inequalities certainly exist) (Dryzek, 2010; Hajer, 2009). Realizing effective and legitimate solutions in such a context is highly challenging, as a variety of interests are at stake, and actors often disagree about goals of the water issue at stake (Edelenbos et al., 2013a).

This article examines the role of connective management in reaching legitimate and qualitatively good outcomes in governance networks around complex water issues. It is therefore strongly related to the academic debate on the democratic legitimacy of governance networks, which developed in the last decade (e.g., Sørensen, 2002; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2007; Klijn & Skelcher, 2007; Dryzek, 2010). Up till now, there is no consensus among academics what governance networks mean in terms of democratic legitimacy, while their presence and role in policy and decision-making is hard to ignore in contemporary Western society. According to several authors, a fundamental cause is that the nature of governance networks does not fit with the assumptions of traditional models of democracy in this respect (Sørensen, 2002; Dryzek, 2007) (this will be further elaborated in the theoretical sections). In governance networks, there are no clear constitutional rules and norms that determine what a legitimate decision is (Hajer & Versteeg 2005; Mathur & Skelcher, 2007). At the same time, various scholars argue that governance networks have democratic potential because a diversity of (affected) stakeholders, such as citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses, has more room for direct engagement (e.g., Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2005).

Although previous research has extensively analyzed the role, and indicated the importance of network management for the performance of governance networks (see for example Kickert et al., 1997; Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Klijn et al., 2010), the issue of democratic legitimacy is not much addressed in this relationship, which holds especially for (quantitative) empirical research (cf. Bogason & Musso, 2006; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009; Torfing and Triantafyllou, 2011). In this article, we empirically examine this relationship, by analyzing survey research among participants involved in governance networks around complex water projects in The Netherlands. We examined the relationship between connective management, the level of throughput legitimacy, and network performance. The notion of throughput legitimacy is based on the deliberative model of

democracy, which goes relatively well with the nature of governance networks (Dryzek, 2010). Throughput legitimacy focuses on the democratic quality of the decision-making *process*. It is about how input (ideas, plans, expression of interests) is *processed* throughout the policy-making process. It is the process of deliberation itself and the conditions of the process that are important for generating this kind of democratic legitimacy. Building on the literature, we expect to find a positive relation between (1) connective management, (2) democratic (throughput) legitimacy of governance networks, and (3) network performance. In line with previous research, we expect that the connective activities of network managers positively influence network performance, but that legitimacy has a partly mediating role in this relationship. Before we go deeper on these relationships, we will first specify the characteristics of the governance networks we are talking about.

CONTEXT OF RESEARCH: GOVERNANCE NETWORKS AROUND COMPLEX WATER PROJECTS

Characteristics of Governance Networks

In contemporary public administration theory it is recognized that interdependent sets of actors provide input to many decision-making processes (e.g., Kickert et al., 1997; Pierre, 2000; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). This has led to a developing body of research on so-called governance networks. In this article, the concept of governance networks refers to more or less stable patterns of social relations between mutually dependent actors around boundary crossing public issues, and which are formed, maintained, and changed through interactions between the involved actors (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Despite the differences in use and meaning among scholars, certain main characteristics and presumptions of governance networks can be identified:

1. They emerge and evolve around boundary crossing public issues that cannot be resolved by one actor alone but require collective actions of more actors (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). These issues cross different organizational, jurisdictional, geographical, societal, and/or functional boundaries, and have a multi-value character (Kickert et al., 1997);
2. Therefore there is relatively high interdependency between actors to deal with these issues (Scharpf, 1978). The different actors around boundary crossing public issues have to join their resources and knowledge to achieve qualitatively good outcomes (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001);
3. These interdependencies require interactions between various actors, which show some durability over time (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004);
4. Steering within these interactions is complicated, because each actor is relatively autonomous in the sense that network participants typically have limited formal account-

ability to network-level goals (Provan & Kenis, 2008), and each actor has his/her own perception about the policy problems and solutions (Teisman, 2000).

Governance networks around complex water projects

Also in the Dutch water sector a transition from a technocratic top-down governmental approach towards a more open, network oriented governance approach has been observed (Van Buuren et al., 2012; Van der Brugge et al., 2005; Wolsink, 2006). This change in the water management regime has been induced by the changing nature and scope of water problems on the one hand and the professionalization of interest groups, the expanded role of provinces and municipalities in water management and the emancipation and activation of citizens on the other hand. Many contemporary water issues are characterized by significant complexity due to their boundary crossing nature. Water has multiple manifestations, multiple functions and multiple values. This makes water projects complex and hard to manage, touching upon the interests of many stakeholders. Van der Brugge et al. (2005: 164-165) make the following analysis about this growing complexity and the consequences for the involvement of a variety of stakeholders in many contemporary water projects (cf. Van Buuren et al., 2012; Edelenbos et al., 2013a). Due to increasing spatial claims from agriculture, industry, traffic, housing and infrastructure as a result of growing economic development, increased population density and changing life-styles, water managers can no longer optimize one particular utility function, but have to manage across multiple utilities and multiple stakeholders. At the same time, the continuous subsidence of soil, the rising sea level and the decreasing capacity to retain water due to loss of nature have resulted in pressure from water on land. In this changing landscape, it becomes increasingly clear that conventional strategies of water management, such as the fast drainage of redundant water, canalizing rivers and the construction of dams and dikes, are not solely effective anymore and are also confronted with serious implementation barriers due to increasing interdependencies between a variety of actors with different perspectives on water problems. As a result, contemporary water projects which are developed in response to compounded water problems are embedded in governance networks.

These are the networks that we examined in our survey on complex water projects (see also the section 'methods'). The results of our survey confirm that these projects match the characteristics of governance networks as mentioned above:

- task complexity: in 51 percent of the cases respondents indicate that, 3 or more spatial functions (such as nature development, housing, water retention, recreation, etc.) play a relatively large role in the project, and in 26 percent of the cases, 4 or more spatial functions are at stake;
- large networks of actors: The networks around these projects include different public organizations (e.g., local governments, national government, water boards), societal (interest) organizations (e.g., environmental groups, agriculture associations), private

firms (e.g., project developers), and citizen groups (e.g., affected residents organized in an association). 90 percent of the respondents indicate that they participate in a water project with more than 5 actors involved, and in 53 percent of the cases more than 10 actors are involved;

- strong interdependencies: 77 percent of the respondents state that they are strongly dependent on other actors within the network of which they are part.

CONNECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND NETWORK PERFORMANCE

In the governance network literature, network management is seen as an important factor for realizing good network performance (for example, in terms of innovative, acceptable, and durable solutions) (Kickert et al., 1997; Meier & O'Toole, 2001, 2007; Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). In this article network performance refers to the substantive results of the actor network in relation to the specific water project, such as the problem solving capacity of the project results, the innovative character, and the impact of involvement of the stakeholders on the project results (see also section "methods"). In the literature on network management around complex spatial or environmental projects, four different categories of network management strategies can be distinguished (see Klijn et al., 2010): (1) exploring content (creating more variety, organizing research, exploring the perceptions of different actors, etc.); (2) arranging the structure of the interaction (securing a temporary organizational arrangement for interactions); (3) establishing process rules (designing temporary agreements and rules to govern interactions); and (4) connecting (to actors, scales, developments, opportunities, etc.). In particular, the connective management style is supposed to be an effective management strategy in governance networks (Williams, 2002; Edelenbos et al., 2013b; Van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2014). Edelenbos, Van Buuren, and Klijn (2013b) consider a connective management strategy to be a specific boundary spanning activity that is focused on interrelating actors (government, business, society), layers (national, regional, local level), and domains or sectors (infrastructure, housing, water management, nature development, etc.). O'Toole, Walker, Meier, and Boyne (2007) have shown that connecting is common among managers in both the US and the UK.

Effective managers develop an intense and wide variety of contacts with actors in the network (Meier & O'Toole, 2001, 2007). Research on network management shows that network management activities that are focused on developing relations between actors from different organizations through for example selective (de)activation and boundary spanning activities have a significant impact on achieving good (process and content) outcomes (Klijn et al., 2010). Connective network managers bring about new interactions between actors with different interests and problem perceptions, creating opportunities for learning and goal intertwining (Koppenjan & Klijn 2004). They increase the flow of informa-

tion in the network, which contributes to variety, which in turn increases the number of potential solutions (Wagenaar, 2007; Van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2014). Also the literature on bridging ties, individuals who span and connect different structural holes in networks, stress the increase of social capital available for the network to use, if brokerage activities are performed (Granovetter, 1985; Burt, 2004). “A theme in this work is that behavior, opinion, and information, broadly conceived, are more homogeneous within than between groups. People focus on activities inside their own group, which creates holes in the information flow between groups, or more simply, structural holes” (Burt, 2004: 353). In line with previous research on network management, our first hypothesis is:

- (1) *A higher level of connective management activities will lead to better governance network performance.*

Not only with regard to network performance, connecting strategies are also relevant in the contemporary debate about the accountability and legitimacy of governance networks. According to Sørensen and Torfing (2009), network managers could play a key role in unleashing the democratic potentials of governance networks. What is this democratic potential of governance networks and how does this work?

GOVERNANCE NETWORKS AND THE ISSUE OF DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

If we look at the characteristics of governance networks mentioned in the previous sections, then it becomes clear that they often have a highly pragmatic and context-bound essence because they emerge as a result of interdependency between relatively autonomous actors around complex issues (cf., Bogason & Musso, 2006). Governance networks could be general-purpose, but often they are issue specific (Dryzek, 2007). The networks that we include in our empirical research have this issue-specific character, since they emerge around concrete complex water problems, dealing with specific water and land use issues. Moreover, these issues transcend existing jurisdictional borders of governments. This delivers challenges for analyzing the democratic legitimacy of these networks, at least in terms of traditional models of democracy. Dryzek (2007) describes this in as follows (p. 262): “democratic theory has historically proceeded under the assumption that the proper – and perhaps exclusive – locus of political authority is the sovereign state claiming exclusive political authority over a defined territory and population.” Within the system of representative democracy, political authority is related to the so-called primacy of the politics, which “presupposes that the council of elected representatives confers legitimacy on the decisions it takes. Yet when policy problems do not respect the territorial scales, this system breaks down,” as Hajer (2009, p. 30) aptly puts it. In short, the institutional structure of representa-

tive democracy does not match with the boundary crossing nature of wicked issues, which are an important *raison d'être* for governance networks. Governance networks are polycentric and the relevant demos for decision making in governance networks consists of those affected by the complex issue(s) at stake (Dryzek, 2007). In this sense, there is no one single all-purpose demos, but rather multiple demoi that could exist at different levels, below, above, and across the state. Hence, as Warren (2009, p. 7) notes: “the legitimacy generated by electoral democracy does not carry over to issue-segmented constituencies.” Although they could be set up or initiated by representatives of the state, they are often neither the result of intentional design by political principals nor constituted in a legal sense through statute or administrative regulations. This makes it difficult for elected political actors to steer governance processes, and traditional institutions of checks and balances on power and accountability become less effective in such a context (van Kersbergen & van Waarden, 2004). In governance networks, accountability is often diffuse and spread among different actors and governmental layers (Hajer, 2009). In the words of Dryzek (2010, p. 123):

In governance, there are few moments such as a vote in a legislature or election where power holders display themselves and can be called to public account for their actions. Policy making is often a low-visibility affair, and it may be hard to determine where power actually lies. Clearly, electoral democracy is in trouble when networked governance dominates. Networks do not hold elections; they do not have an electorate, an opposition, or any obvious alternative set of power holders.

Taking the complexity of certain issues as the starting point, governance networks are a response to the limits of hierarchical-instrumental policymaking, which is part and parcel of the representative democratic system (Wagenaar, 2007). Unsurprisingly, analyzing the democratic performance of governance networks via the conceptual understanding built in liberal democratic theory, which is the normative basis for representative government in Western countries, generally leads to negative audits (Bogason & Musso, 2006, p. 10).¹ Again, in the words of Dryzek (2010: 124): “liberal notions of constitutionalism and liberty, and electoral notions of authorization and accountability, [...] fare badly when applied to governance networks.” However, governance networks are not a threat for democracy *per se*. According to several authors they have democratic potential (e.g., Dryzek, 2007; Klijn & Skelcher, 2007; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009).

It is exactly their flexibility and un-predetermined structure that make governance networks potentially valuable for dealing with complex issues and generating democratic legitimacy according to other standards. We have to stress the adverb *potentially* here, because it follows from the outset (due to their context-specific character) that governance networks differ tremendously in their relative level of democratic legitimacy or performance, no matter what model is taken as the normative basis. According to Klijn and Skelcher (2007, p.

588), governance networks offer "...new ways of connecting (...) policy-making to citizens and stakeholders, overcoming the constraints and limitations of representative democracy and party politics." An important question then is to what extent governance networks are inclusive, transparent, and provide opportunities for debate and dialogue. This shifts the focus towards the democratic quality of the governance process. As elaborated below, deliberative models of democracy are helpful in this respect, and relatively well suited to evaluate the democratic legitimacy of governance networks. Organizing a deliberate, inclusive, and transparent governance process increases the legitimacy of the throughput (i.e. interests, ideas, plans) in the governance network. This, in turn, could increase the performance of governance networks. The argumentation is that a properly structured interaction and deliberation process among stakeholders can help to generate more effective and innovative solutions to complex issues (e.g., Fung & Wright, 2003; Bogason & Musso, 2006; Wagenaar, 2007). For this to happen, network management or metagovernance is argued to be of high importance. This line of thought is elaborated in the next sections.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY, THROUGHPUT LEGITIMACY, AND GOVERNANCE NETWORKS

Deliberative democracy is not usually thought of as an alternative to representative democracy, but rather as an expansion of it (Chamber, 2003). Deliberative democracy focuses on the communicative processes of opinion and will-formation that precede voting. Hence, deliberative democracy is grounded in an assumption that preferences of individuals are not fixed, but can change in debate and political dialogue (Held, 2006). This distinguishes deliberative models of democracy fundamentally from aggregative models of democracy, which generally take preferences as given, defined prior to political action (Dryzek, 2007). Manin describes this assumption as follows (1987, p. 351):

We need not to argue that individuals, when they begin to deliberate political matters, know nothing of what they want. They know what they want in part: they have certain preferences and some information, but these are unsure, incomplete, often confused and opposed to one another. The process of deliberation, the confrontation of various points of view, helps to clarify information and to sharpen their own preferences. They may even modify their initial objectives, should that prove necessary.

Such an assumption is well suited to issues dealt with in governance networks, which are often coined as "wicked" (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). These issues are multifaceted, involve conflicting preferences and values of involved stakeholders, and are often not well understood at the beginning of the process (e.g., de Rynck & Voets, 2006). They demand delibera-

tion and dialogue to become structured and mutually understood. Furthermore, although governance networks are seldom designed with deliberation in mind, they are potential sites for deliberation. As Dryzek notes: “So compared to a hierarchy, communication, and the distribution of communicative capacity, can be relatively egalitarian. The implication is that governance networks may have some potential for promoting dialogue compared to their more hierarchical alternatives..., because to exert influence, an actor has to persuade others in the network” (Dryzek, 2010, p. 125).

Building on this deliberative democracy point of view, one can use the concept of throughput legitimacy to assess the democratic legitimacy of governance processes. The notion of throughput legitimacy focuses on the democratic quality of the decision-making process. It is about how input (ideas, plans, expression of interests) is *processed* throughout the policy-making process. It is the process of deliberation itself and the conditions of the process that are important for generating this kind of democratic legitimacy. As Manin notes (1987, pp. 351–52): “the source of legitimacy is not the predetermined will of individuals, but rather the process of its formation, that is, deliberation itself.” This deliberation and argumentation process generates more or less support for certain measures. Furthermore, for this deliberation process to be successful, the communication process between actors in governance networks has to be open and transparent, or at least conform to a number of rules and practices that are all connected to the process of discussion, information, plurality of values, and so forth. Besides transparency, the inclusiveness of the process is an important consideration. According to Dryzek (2007), a deliberative model views a decision as legitimate to the degree all affected by it have the right, opportunity, or capacity to participate in deliberation about the decision in question (see also for example Cohen, 1989; Manin, 1987). And Dryzek (2007, p. 268) continues: “While there can be problems in operationalizing this ideal..., as a criterion it can be applied as a matter of degree.” To empirically examine the democratic legitimacy of governance networks around complex water projects, we focus on throughput legitimacy, taking the deliberative model of democracy as our starting point. Due deliberation, the transparency of the decision-making process, and the degree of inclusion of affected stakeholders are important indicators in this respect.

CONNECTIVE MANAGEMENT, THROUGHPUT LEGITIMACY, AND NETWORK PERFORMANCE

Connective Management and Throughput Legitimacy

As argued in the previous sections, governance networks have democratic potential because citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses have more room for direct engagement. In order to make this potential manifest, it is important that these stakeholders become included and connected to the processes of governance networks (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009;

Edelenbos et al., 2013b). According to the literature, network managers could play a key role in structuring dialogic interaction between network actors (e.g. Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). A connecting-oriented network manager brings people together and is focused on enabling interactions and relationship building in order to develop and explore content and attempt to come to an agreement on sharing resources and joint content. Network managers create opportunities for citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses to deliver input in governance processes. As different stakeholders deliver input, a connective network manager aims to bring these stakeholders together in a constructive manner. He or she has a feel for the diversity of interests, for what is relevant for the different involved stakeholders, and provides opportunities for these stakeholders to engage. Connective management in this sense is important for creating the conditions in which a legitimate governance process can evolve (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009; Mathur & Skelcher, 2007). Throughput legitimacy is about further specifying the quality of the interaction process, focusing on the quality of the argumentation process, the opportunities for deliberation, the transparency of the decision-making process, and the transparency of information. Other aspects, such as bargaining and negotiation, can also be part of the interaction process but these are not included in our conceptualization of throughput legitimacy.² Moreover, the manager takes responsibility for connecting this debate and communication in informal governance networks throughput to formal decision-making structures and processes. Stakeholders in governance networks want their input and throughput to be taken seriously and adopted in decision making. The level of throughput legitimacy depends therefore on the connective activities of the network manager. This argumentation leads to the formulation of the second hypothesis that we test in this research:

- (2) *A higher level of connective management activities will lead to a higher level of throughput legitimacy*

Throughput Legitimacy and Network Performance

The quality of the interaction process between stakeholders is not only interesting in terms of (throughput) legitimacy. Governance scholars, both with and without a special interest in deliberative democracy theories, also make the argument that, especially when it comes to complex issues, a qualitatively “good” interaction processes will lead to better network performance (see for example Mandell, 2001; Fung & Wright, 2003; Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Wagenaar, 2007). Deliberation increases exchange of information, perceptions, and preferences, by which a learning process can take place. As Risse and Kleine (2007, pp. 73–4) argue: “...decision-making processes that systematically allow for arguing, reason-giving and mutual learning rather than hard-nosed bargaining will have a substantially improved chance of leading to better outcomes. The main reason is that arguing and reason-giving provide a mechanism to probe and challenge the normative

validity of actors' interests as well as to check the empirical facts on which policy choices are based." As a wide variety of authors point out, in interaction and debate, different sources, perspectives, interests, and values are explored and exploited to develop innovative, acceptable, and sustainable results (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Mandell, 2001). Moreover, from previous empirical (case study) research we know that the development of an interesting content that attracts wide sets of actors is very important (see Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Marcussen & Torfing, 2007; McGuire & Agranoff, 2011). Due deliberation, if it is organized properly may contribute to this development of solutions by providing good argumentation and dialogical processes that tap the available information and knowledge from involved actors. This leads to the final two hypotheses that we want to test in this research:

- (3) *A higher level of throughput legitimacy will lead to better governance network performance.*

Assuming that connective management positively influence network performance and throughput legitimacy, and that throughput legitimacy also contributes to network performance, we expect a partially mediating role of throughput legitimacy:

- (4) *Throughput legitimacy partially mediates the relationship between connective management and network performance.*

In the model depicted in Figure 1, the various hypotheses are combined in the conceptual framework to be tested. The following section addresses data collection and the measurement of our core variables.

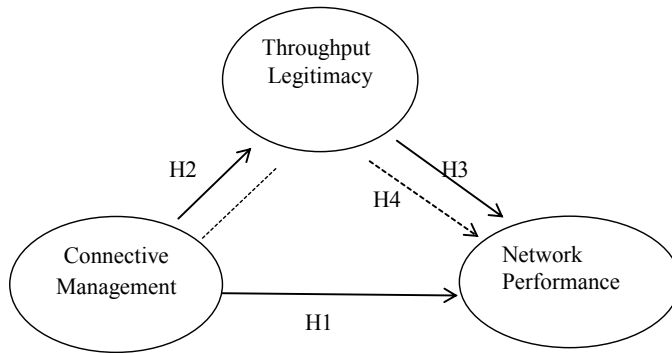


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

METHODS

Sample and Data Collection

For our analyses we conducted a survey among participants in governance networks around Dutch complex water projects. What makes these projects complex is that a variety of private/societal actors are involved, as are different governance levels and policy domains, and that these projects touch upon a variety of spatial functions (e.g., housing, infrastructure, agriculture, nature development, and water retention), interests, and values (e.g., Edelenbos et al., 2013a). However, an exhaustive list of people participating in complex water projects does not exist. Nevertheless, we were able to obtain 874 e-mail addresses of people from our target group by utilizing the Living with Water mailing list. This is a national knowledge research program aimed at developing and sharing knowledge about the management of complex water projects in various areas in The Netherlands. People on this list are participants in complex water projects, i.e. project managers and stakeholders, from a variety of organizations which are involved in these projects (municipalities, water boards, building contractors, and project management organizations). We want to stress that our population consists of individual participants involved in different governance networks around complex water projects. Each of the respondents received an e-mail with a login code where he/she could enter the survey and complete it. We asked the respondents at the start of the questionnaire to name the project with which they were mostly involved and to use this project to answer all the questions. A total of 272 questionnaires (31.1 percent) were returned. For the final analysis, we used a database with 200 respondents because we deleted 72 cases composed of those who answered only 15 questions (55 respondents) or quitted the survey after half the items (17 respondents). The 200 respondents were involved in 166 different water projects geographically dispersed over The Netherlands. Because several of the respondents are involved in the same water project and thus the same governance network, we randomly selected one respondent for

each project in order to ensure the independence of the data. This resulted in a sample of 166, with one respondent for each water project.

Respondents' Organizational Background and Position

Table 1 displays the respondents' organizational background and role in the projects. We made a distinction between *managers* (36 percent), *actively participating stakeholders* (39 percent), and less actively participating stakeholders, who have a monitoring role (25 percent) (we call this category *followers*). Most of the respondents are from a governmental organization (54%), i.e. national government, regional/local government, water board. Of this group of respondents, the water board is the largest, which is not surprising given their important role in Dutch water management.³ The other big group consists of consultants (33 percent), who are generally (externally hired) project managers or actively involved project advisors. Furthermore, there is a group of respondents representing societal or economic interest associations (e.g., farmers, environmental groups, and resident organizations). The remaining category consists of individual involved citizens (residents) and business firms (private developers, building companies). The managers mainly have a governmental background (water board, regional/local government), or are from a management consultancy, hired by a (combination of) governmental organization(s) to manage the project. Furthermore, the category followers consist for an important part of representatives from national government. This is not surprising, as national government often has a monitoring role in these projects (e.g. providing and monitoring national policy guidelines). To check whether the respondent's organizational background or the respondent's position in the project mattered for the evaluation of the network performance or the level of throughput legitimacy, we included these (dummy) variables as controls (see section 'control variables').

Table 1 Respondents' Organizational Background and Role in Project

Organizational background	Manager of the project (N=60; 36.1%)		Actively participating (as stakeholder or advisor) (N=64; 38.6%)		Less actively involved (monitoring, follower) (N=42; 25.3%)		Total (N=166)	
National government	4	6.7%	11	17.2%	10	23.8%	25	15.1%
Regional/local government	10	16.7%	10	15.6%	6	14.3%	26	15.7%
Water board	18	30%	12	18.8%	9	21.4%	39	23.5%
Societal/Economic interest organization	5	8.3%	2	3.1%	5	11.9%	12	7.2%
Management consultancy	21	35.0%	26	40.6%	9	21.4%	55	33.7%
Other	2	3.3%	3	4.7%	3	7.1%	8	4.8%
Total	60	100%	64	100%	42	100%	166	100%

Measurement of Variables

In this section, we discuss the different scales used to measure our core variables: throughput legitimacy, connective management, and governance network performance. Subsequently, we discuss the measurement model, presenting each construct's reliability and validity. Table 2 presents the specific items on the scales, their factor loadings, and construct reliability. The descriptive statistics and the correlation matrices can be found in Table 3.

Throughput legitimacy

To measure throughput legitimacy, we focused on three aspects derived from the literature: the way stakeholders are involved (we call this voice), the way decision making is transparent for stakeholders (transparency), and the way argumentation processes are organized (due deliberation) (Bekkers, Dijkstra, Edwards, & Fengers, 2007; Dryzek, 2010; Risse & Kleine, 2007). We used six items (see Table 2) to measure these indicators (two items for each dimension) and combined them into a scale to measure throughput legitimacy.

Network performance

There has been much discussion in the governance literature on how to measure performance of processes in governance networks. We want to stress that there is no particular best approach (e.g., Provan & Milward, 2001). Especially within governance networks around the formulation, decision-making and implementation of projects, such as water management projects, actors have different goals, and it is thus difficult to pick a single goal by which to measure outcomes for these processes. Furthermore, measuring network performance is problematic because decision-making processes in governance networks are lengthy, and actors' goals can change over time. Goal displacement is the negative term for this phenomenon, and learning is the positive term (see Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). To deal with these issues in measuring network performance, we use the previously tested scale of Klijn et al. (2010). They used perceived network performance as a proxy for measuring network performance (see also, for example, Hasnain-Wynia et al., 2003). This scale consists of multiple criteria: the problem solving capacity of the project results (Provan & Milward, 2001), the innovative character of the project results (Sandström & Carlsson, 2008), the established connection between different spatial functions, and the impact of involvement of the stakeholders on the project results ('recognizable contribution') (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004).

Connective Management

To measure the connective activities of the network manager, we build on Klijn et al.'s (2010) scale regarding connective network strategies. It consists of items that measure different connective activities, such as the degree to which the network manager aims to connect different parties with different interests, the degree to which he makes the diversity of per-

ceptions manifest as much as possible, and the extent to which he or she provides enough opportunities for the representatives of the different involved parties to give feedback to their grassroots.

Measurement Analyses

Construct validity: analysis of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses to assess convergent and discriminant validity.⁴ The overall fit of the measurement model was tested by two different fit indices. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) has a value of 0.91, which is acceptable (Byrne, 2010). Furthermore, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) has a value of 0.065, which can be considered as an adequate fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2010).

All factor loadings are larger than 0.50, a very conservative cut-off level (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1995), and an important indicator demonstrating convergent validity. Construct reliability assessment is based on item-to-total correlations, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability. All items have corrected item-to-total correlations greater than .40, which represents a general threshold (Field, 2005). All values are considered reliable; they exceed the generally accepted threshold of 0.7 for Cronbach's alpha, and the threshold of 0.6 for composite reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), except the value of composite reliability for connective management (0.54).

To establish discriminant validity, we compared the average variance extracted (AVE) with the squared interconstruct correlation estimates (SIC) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The AVE of all three constructs are larger than the SICs; this means that the indicators have more in common with the construct they are associated with than they do with other constructs.

Testing for General Method Bias

An important issue with respect to measurement is that our data are all self-reported and based on a single application of a questionnaire. This can result in inflated relationships between variables due to common method variance, that is, variance that is due to the measurement method rather than the constructs themselves (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). We therefore conducted a Harman one-factor test to evaluate the extent to which common method variance was a concern. A factor analysis was conducted on all 15 items used to measure the perceptual variables covered by the hypotheses. No single factor accounted for the majority of the explained variance (i.e., 34.3%). Although the above analysis does not totally rule out the possibility of same-source, self-report biases, it does suggest that general method variance is probably not an adequate explanation for the findings obtained in this study (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

Control Variables

We selected several control variables for taking into account differences in the complexity of the specific water projects, the networks, and the respondents. On the project level, we included task complexity as a control variable. The literature suggests that increased task complexity increases the difficulty of realizing effective and efficient network performance (e.g., Moynihan, et al., 2010). To measure this variable, we enquired about the role of 8 different spatial functions in the project, measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *no role* to *a very strong role*. These 8 different spatial functions are: nature development, business area, recreation/leisure, roads, railway, shops/retail, water management, and housing (see also Klijn et al., 2010). Cases in which more spatial functions are involved in the project or are touched upon by the project could said to be more complex. In 51 percent of the cases, 3 or more spatial functions play a relatively large role in the project, and in 26 percent of the cases, 4 or more spatial functions. To include this variable in our analysis, we made a scale, ranging from 1 to 5, by adding up the scores for the 8 functions and dividing them by 8. Furthermore, we included the size of the network as a control variable. Although the literature on governance networks is not clear about the relationship between size of the network and network performance (Turrini et al. 2010), we may expect that in larger networks around complex issues, it is more difficult to realize good network performance, due to a more broad diversity of interests which are at stake and more differences in problem perceptions (cf. Hasnain-Wynia et al. 2003; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). The size of the network was measured by a 5 scale category: (1) less than 4 actors, (2) 5-9 actors, (3) 10-14 actors, (4) 15-19 actors, and (5) 20 or more actors. The mean score was 3.03 (10-14 actors), with a standard deviation of 1.4.

On the respondent level, we included several control variables: the respondent's position in the project (manager, actively participating stakeholder, or follower/monitoring), organizational background (interest group, national/regional government, water board, etc.), and project experience. The respondent's position and organizational background might make a difference in judging the items on throughput legitimacy or network performance (e.g. Head, 2008). Furthermore, we included the number of years the respondent has been involved in the project (in this particular role). This is a general check on whether the respondent has participated for a sufficiently substantive amount of time to actually be able to make experience-based judgments. The mean score on this variable is 3.5 years, which is a considerable amount of time. However, the standard deviation (2.8 years) is quite high, and this strengthens the case to include this variable as a control variable.

Table 2 Measurement Items and Construct Reliability

Items and Constructs ^a		Factor loading	Corrected item-to-total correlations	Alpha/ Composite reliability	Source
Throughput legitimacy					
1)	There are many different stakeholders involved in the project [voice]	.51	.47	.80/.62	New scale
2)	The process is very accessible to stakeholders [voice]	.76	.67		
3)	The provision of information about this projects is well organized [transparency]	.72	.63		
4)	The decision-making process concerning this project is characterized by high transparency (insight into concrete decisions) [transparency]	.60	.49		
5)	The process around this project included many opportunities for debate and discussion [due deliberation]	.62	.55		
6)	The argumentation about this project was careful and good in terms of content [due deliberation]	.57	.51	AVE 0.40	SIC 0.34; 0.31
Governance network performance					
1)	Do you think that innovative ideas have been developed during the project?	.51	.44	.78/.62	Adapted from Klijn et al. (2010)
2)	Do you think that different environmental functions have been connected sufficiently?	.68	.59		
3)	Do you think that in general the involved actors have delivered a recognizable contribution to the development of the results?	.66	.58		
4)	Do you think that the solutions that have been developed really deal with the problems at hand?	.66	.54		
5)	Do you think that the developed solutions are durable solutions for the future?	.75	.63	AVE 0.43	SIC 0.34; 0.26
Connective management					
1)	The manager aims to connect different spatial functions in the development of the project	.53	.44	.71/.54	Adapted from Klijn et al. (2010)
2)	The manager creates enough opportunities for the representatives of the different involved parties to give feedback to their grassroots	.70	.51		
3)	The manager aims to connect different parties with different interests as much as possible	.77	.62		
4)	The manager tries to make the diversity of perceptions manifest as much as possible and to include them in the decision-making process	.52	.43	AVE 0.41	SIC 0.31; 0.26

a. All the items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree.

FINDINGS

Correlations

To analyze the relations between the variables, we first performed a correlation analysis. The results presented in Table 3 show that the main variables have a strong positive correlation to one another; this is in line with our hypotheses. In general, the control variables do not show significant correlations with the core variables. Only the size of the network positively correlates with connective management and throughput legitimacy. A larger network requires more connective management activities and vice versa (more connective management leads to a larger network). Furthermore, there is a small negative correlation between the dummy of project followers and connective management. In general, the followers judged the connective activities of the project managers a bit more negatively than the group of managers and the group of actively participating stakeholders.

Impact of Connective Management on Throughput Legitimacy and Governance Network Performance

In Figure 2, the results of the structural equation modeling analysis are displayed.⁵ The standardized estimates and the subsequent impact on throughput legitimacy and governance network performance are shown. The first three hypotheses are confirmed in this structural model. The standardized direct effect of connective management on network performance is 0.28 ($p < 0.05$), which is not that strong. In contrast, the effect of connective management on the level of throughput legitimacy in governance networks is strong. We found a standardized regression coefficient of .56 ($p < 0.01$). With regard to the relationship between throughput legitimacy and network performance, we found a standardized regression weight of .42 ($p < 0.01$), which also indicates a quite strong relationship.

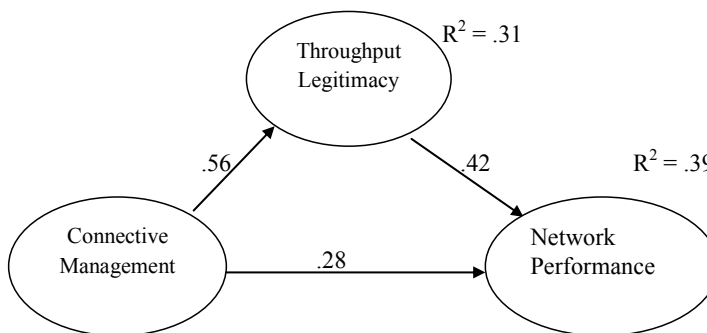


Figure 2. Connective Management, Throughput Legitimacy, and Network Performance^a

a. Goodness-of-fit statistic: Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .91; χ^2/df = 1.69. Badness-of-fit statistic: Root Mean Square Error (RMSEA): 0.065.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations between Variables in Analysis

	Mean	St.D	CM	TL	NP	TC	SN	AP	F	NG	RG	WB	C	O	YI
Connective management (1–5)	3.75	.69	1												
Throughput legitimacy (1–5)	3.68	.56	.48**	1											
Network performance (1–5)	3.85	.55	.47**	.48**	1										
Task complexity (1–5)	2.69	.62	.15	.02	.14	1									
Size of the network (1–5)	3.03	1.39	.17**	.21**	-.08	.13	1								
Role respondent: Actively participating (dummy) ^a			.01	.07	.01	.02	-.10	1							
Role respondent: Follower / monitoring (dummy) ^a			-.18*	-.15	-.13	.07	-.02	-.46**	1						
Organizational background: National government (dummy) ^b			-.12	-.01	-.14	.01	.23**	.05	.12	1					
Organizational background: Regional government (dummy) ^b			-.05	-.01	.03	.05	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.19*	1				
Organizational background: Water Board (dummy) ^b			.07	.05	.08	-.04	-.15	-.09	-.03	-.24**	-.24**	1			
Organizational background: Consultancy (dummy) ^b			.00	.04	.04	-.03	-.02	.12	-.10	-.30**	-.30**	-.38**	1		
Organizational background: Other (dummy) ^b			.01	.04	.05	.02	-.05	-.02	-.04	-.09	-.08	-.11	-.13	1	
Years of involvement	3.51	2.82	-.03	-.03	-.07	.09	.01	.04	-.04	.15*	-.01	-.06	-.07	-.05	1

** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Note: N is in between 154–166 (pairwise deletion of missing values). CM = connective management; TL = throughput legitimacy; NP = network performance; TC = task complexity; SN = size of the network; AP = actively participating (role of the respondent); F = follower/monitoring (role of the respondent); NG = national government (organizational background); RG = regional government (organizational background); WB = water board (organizational background); C = consultancy (organizational background); O = other (organizational background); YI = Years of involvement.

a. The role 'manager' is the reference category.

b. The organizational background 'interest group' is the reference category.

These results provide a first indication that throughput legitimacy has a partially mediating role in the relationship between connective management and network performance. The standardized indirect effect of connective management on governance network performance is 0.24 ($0.56 * 0.42$), which results in a standardized total effect of 0.51 ($0.277 + 0.235$). To estimate the significance of this mediation effect, we performed the bias-corrected bootstrap method described by Shrout and Bolger (2002). We requested 2,000 bootstrap samples. The indirect effect of connective management on network performance is significant at the one percent level. Therefore, we can also confirm hypothesis four.

The final step in the analysis was the examination of the control variables. Control variables considered and dropped from the final model due to non-significant results were task complexity, respondent's position, organizational background, and years of involvement. Only the size of the network was positively related to connective management ($\beta = .26, p < 0.01$), but negatively related to network performance ($\beta = -.27, p < 0.01$). Larger networks require more connective management activities. Furthermore, it seems to be more difficult to realize good network performance in such networks. This is line with other research (Hasnain-Wynia et al., 2003). The relationship between the core variables remained significant and the same size (approximately).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this article, our aim was to provide more empirical insights into the democratic legitimacy and the performance of governance networks, and the role of network managers therein. Before we present our conclusions, we first want to mention some important research choices and limitations of our study. Because traditional democratic principles are based on liberal democratic theory and their application to governance networks suffers from theoretical issues (cf., Sørensen, 2002), we have chosen to use the deliberative model. We focused on the democratic quality of the governance process, using the concept of throughput legitimacy to assess democratic legitimacy. This has limited our research, omitting other important indicators for democratic legitimacy, such as political accountability. We think, however, that when it comes to empirically investigating a fuzzy and contested concept like democratic legitimacy, such choices are, to a certain extent, inevitable. Furthermore, there are some empirical limitations. This study has focused on specific kinds of governance networks; all the networks studied were in the field of water management. These results cannot automatically be assumed to hold also for other types of projects or policy domains, such as (social) service delivery networks. Next, the study was conducted in The Netherlands, and the projects are all Dutch. The results may differ in other countries with different decision-making cultures (e.g., Skelcher et al., 2011). However, the transition in the Dutch water sector from a technocratic top-down governmental approach towards a

more open, network oriented governance approach, reflects similar trends in other Western countries (e.g. Wolsink, 2006) and within other sectors (e.g. Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). Furthermore, we based our analysis on the perceptions of a single participant within the different networks. Although such an approach is certainly not unusual (e.g. Moynihan & Pandey 2005; Klijn et al., 2010) and enabled us to include a large number of networks in our analysis, we have to be careful in making generalizations. However, we believe that, within the constraints of this research, we can draw meaningful conclusions.

Our first conclusion is that network management positively affects network performance. This confirms previous empirical studies on governance networks (Meier & O'Toole, 2001, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010). Our study indicates that in particular the connective abilities of network managers are important in realizing good network performance. The network manager connects actors with different organizational backgrounds, thus enhancing the integrated nature of network outcomes.

Our second conclusion is that governance networks have indeed democratic potential, as several authors argue, but in order to make this potential manifest, network managers can play a key role. Democratic legitimacy, conceptualized and elaborated in this article as throughput legitimacy, can be enhanced by the connective activities of network managers. This confirms theoretical assumptions made in the literature on governance networks (e.g., Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). In line with other scholars, we acknowledge that interaction processes between actors in governance networks have a complex nature and could therefore not be controlled by the manager (e.g., Wagenaar, 2007; Teisman, van Buuren, & Gerrits, 2009). However, a network manager could facilitate this interaction process and could influence the conditions. As the results indicate, network managers who have an eye for the diversity of perceptions and interests involved in governance networks, and who aim to create a constructive interaction between these stakeholders, positively affect the throughput legitimacy of governance networks.

Our third main conclusion is that (throughput) legitimacy is important to realize network performance. This study provides the insight that throughput legitimacy has a strong positive effect on network performance. Network managers can create the conditions, but are dependent on the way stakeholders interact with one another (cf. Van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2014). Throughput legitimacy has a strong mediating effect in the relationship between network management and network performance. A high level of throughput legitimacy reflects a relatively high level of communication, deliberation, and debate among actors in the network in order to achieve results. Actors get the opportunity to communicate and explain their frames and interests. This learning process in turn has a positive effect on network performance.

NOTES

1. See for example Dryzek (2007) and Sørensen (2002) for elaborations of the misfit between traditional democratic principles, such as popular control and political equality, and the general characteristics of governance networks.
2. See Papadopoulos (2002) for an interesting elaboration of two contradictory approaches to actors' behavior in governance networks: strategic bargaining versus deliberation. Strategic bargaining approaches tend to underrate the role of discourse, whereas works on deliberation tend to underrate the "agonistic" dimension of politics (p. 11). He points out that in governance arrangements both forms of action are present.
3. Water Boards form a fourth layer of government in the Netherlands (next to national government, provinces, and municipalities). The Boards are water authorities with tasks exclusively in the water domain and their boundaries are determined by hydraulic factors, such as dike rings and pumping and storage areas.
4. Convergent validity is about the extent to which indicators of a specific construct share a high proportion of variance in common. Discriminant validity is about the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs.
5. We used AMOS Version 18.0.

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PART III

The importance of non-governmental boundary spanners in governance networks

Where the previous chapters were focused on boundary-spanning strategies from a governmental perspective – or more specifically: the boundary-spanning activities of public managers operating in governance networks – the following chapters go deeper into the boundary-spanning activities of non-governmental actors, especially community leaders. These boundary-spanning activities are less elaborated in the governance network literature. In the following two chapters governance networks in which citizens take a leading role are examined. The role of boundary-spanning activities in the establishment and development of vital relationships with other actors in the network, particular governmental institutions, will be examined. In the last chapter of part III the effects of both governmental as non-governmental boundary spanners on network performance will be tested.

CHAPTER 4

Boundary spanning between a citizen initiative and local government

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, we elaborate on the institutional implications of governance networks driven by self-organization of citizens within local democracy. Self-organization of citizens seem to be valuable for producing urban development, since such initiatives bring about development that starts from within the urban area itself, enhancing the chance that this development fits local needs and circumstances and enhances the commitment of the local stakeholders involved. However, an important difficulty for such initiatives to establish concerns the linkage with governmental institutions. This linkage might lead to new relationships between governmental institutions and civil society, but could also easily lead to evaporation of citizens' initiatives. In this chapter we go deeper into the evolution of this interaction process and look for important factors which are important for self-governance to establish in connection with local governmental institutions. Making an effective connection and realizing anchorage is dependent on different factors, of which boundary spanning, trust and informal networks are considered to be of major importance. These factors provide institutional interaction, which could be described as a co-evolving process wherein existing institutions slightly change or evolve by interacting agents, operating at the boundaries of these institutions.

INTRODUCTION

In the Netherlands, citizens have the formal opportunity to put issues – under certain conditions – on the political agenda. This has been possible since May 2006 at the national level and at the local level since March 2002. In addition, people increasingly engage in an informal way, on their own initiative, to draw from their expertise, experience and knowledge to formulate ideas for policy that they may offer to government. Such ‘citizens’ initiatives’ can be seen, in addition to interactive policy making, as a form of citizens’ participation (Edelenbos et al., 2008). Citizen participation is often initiated by government; it is a bottom-up development started by citizens themselves (Edelenbos et al., 2008).

In this chapter, we elaborate on the institutional implications of the ‘citizens’ initiatives’ within local democracy. These initiatives could be described as forms of self-governance, leading to the emergence of ‘proto-institutions’ (Lawrence et al., 2002). These proto-institutions interact with established institutions of representative democracy. This interaction is a co-evolving process in which both types of institutions react to each other in certain ways. In this contribution, we describe this institutional evolution and try to find determining factors in this process. We want to provide explanatory factors of processes of institutional co-evolution. We argue that these factors are of major importance with regard to processes of citizen participation and co-operating mechanisms between proto-institutions developed by citizens’ initiatives and established institutions of representative democracy.

We will treat one in-depth case study: the citizens’ initiative in the municipality of Vlaardingen. At this moment there is an initiative for the (re)development of Broekpolder, an area southwest of Vlaardingen. For the case study, we used two main research methods: document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The Broekpolder case was selected for scientific research is because it is unique in the Netherlands – here we see that a formal right to put something on the government agenda through citizens’ initiative developed to a form of self-organisation. In general, citizens’ participation is initiated and organised by government, but in this case it was organised by the local community. In the research, all relevant written documents, such as memos, reports and political documents, were subjected to accurate study. In addition, eleven key players were interviewed, some several times, and these were made up of civil servants, council members, aldermen and citizens. The interviews were semi-structured and main themes were used to structure the interview – process development, institutions, co-operation, and change. We reconstructed the process and history of the case, and then asked questions about the coordination and co-operation between the federation (citizens) and government (council, civil servants, administrators).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A Sociological Perspective on Institutions

The institutional approach in the functioning of public administration has received much attention in recent years (March & Olsen, 1989; Goodin, 1996). The institutional theory has a versatile 'body of knowledge' (Peters, 2005). This theory involves roughly three streams: economic, political and sociological (Edelenbos, 2005), which do not exclude each other. This chapter introduces the concept of 'institution' in accordance with the sociological perspective.

The sociological perspective focuses on rule systems and roles of (organised) individuals who shape interaction patterns between actors in a certain policy area (policy arena or policy situation) (Giddens, 1984; Eggertson, 1990). We then speak of 'rules of the policy game' and 'roles in the policy game' (Kiser & Ostrom, 1982; Goodin, 1996). Goodin defines (1996: 52) institutions as 'organised patterns of socially constructed norms and roles'.

Interactive Policy Making as Self-Organisation

Local citizens' initiatives and interactive policy making can be seen as processes of self-organisation where (organised) citizens and social interest groups spontaneously come to a common action (Edelenbos et al., 2008). Informal citizens' initiatives often arise from dissatisfaction with the actions of governments and function as a response to proposed government policy. Citizens and social groups often see that resistance is useless and then switch to a more proactive way of resistance by developing plans on their own initiative. Self-organisation is the internal capacity of elements within systems to adjust and develop (e.g. Cilliers, 1998; Heylighen, 2002). The concept focuses on how processes come about, develop and change. Processes evolve out of events, actions and interactions and build an institutional structure (Benson, 1977; Teisman et al., 2009). Through interaction and bonding among citizens and public officials, information exchange, learning and mutual experience develop, which may promote new patterns of relationships (Meek, 2008: 420; Morçöl, 2008). Processes of self-organisation in turn might lead to new relationships between governmental institutions and civil society. A form of participatory democracy enters a representative democracy, which could lead to a reorientation of existing democratic institutions (Edelenbos, 2005).

The Interaction Process between Institutions and Proto-Institutions as a Source of Institutional Evolution

Although many definitions and descriptions underline the sustainable, regulatory and stable character of institutions (Kiser & Ostrom, 1982; Giddens, 1984), here we also want to emphasise the volatility and transience of institutions (Lawrence et al., 2002). The institutions that are now stable and sustainable all had an origin in which they were capricious in nature and were experienced as a new institution. Institutions do not only regulate the act,

but are also found in that act and brought to further development (Eggertson, 1990). In this chapter, we approach institutions as being processes of social interaction that could become the object of transformation when different, interrelated but sometimes incompatible social arrangements meet (Benson, 1977; Seo & Creed, 2002).

As a result of the application of citizens' initiative, new institutional arrangements could be constructed that interact with the existing institutions of representative democracy. This interaction can produce tensions or 'incompatible institutional processes' (Seo & Creed, 2002). It leads to pressure on both institutional arrangements. The 'proto-institutions' (Lawrence et al., 2002) in participatory democracy can be understood as temporary, and these short-term institutions can provide a 'de-institutionalisation' of existing institutions that have a stable and long-term character (Edelenbos, 2005). Old and new institutions influence each other, and from this co-evolutionary process, both can mutually adapt themselves into a search for new operation logic. 'Ongoing social construction produces a complex array of contradictions, continually generating tensions and conflicts within and across social systems, which may, under some circumstances, shape consciousness and action to change the present order' (Seo & Creed, 2002: 225).

Finding a balance between the old institutions of representative democracy and the proto-institutions of participatory democracy asks for adaptability of both institutions. The interaction between the different institutions is therefore of major importance. However, in practice, this interaction process is difficult to bring about and in many cases does not lead to institutional evolution. 'Interactive governance is often organised as an informal process with different rules and roles than the existing institutional representative system, which runs parallel or prior to the formal institutions of negotiation and decision making' (Edelenbos, 2005: 128). This could easily result in the evaporation of emerging proto-institutions in participatory democracy and the reestablishment of existing patterns of behaviour within the institutions of representative democracy.

In the literature on adaptive capacity of systems different factors are mentioned which are important with regard to processes of adaptation, innovation and uncertainty. These factors are grounded in interaction processes between different institutions or systems and could therefore stimulate institutional co-evolution.

Factors of Adaptability Grounded in Interaction Processes

In the literature on adaptive governance and processes of institutional change, several factors are mentioned that may affect the evolution of institutions (Edelenbos, 2005; Folke et al., 2005; Granovetter, 1973; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Maguire et al., 2004; Seo & Creed, 2002; Teisman et al., 2009; Williams, 2002). Three important and interrelated factors are: informal networks, trust and boundary spanning.

Informal networks

Interactions between actors within informal networks outside the realm of formal institutions could enhance the chance of the emergence of innovative policies and arrangements (Bekkers et al., 2010). This factor is about networks with an informal character that connect agents operating within traditional institutions of representative democracy and agents operating outside these institutions. The informal character of the networks provides room for involved actors to think and behave outside their established roles and rules according to their formal position within established institutions. People are not directly pinned down to or held accountable for certain statements. Informal networks give room for experimentation and could lead to change. However, not all informal networks facilitate institutional evolution. Important in this matter is the structural ‘embeddedness’ of the networks (Granovetter, 1973). ‘Structural embeddedness is critical to our understanding of how social mechanisms coordinate and safeguard exchanges in networks, for it diffuses values and norms that enhance coordination among autonomous units ...’ (Jones *et al.* 1997: 924). For institutional evolution to happen, it is important that different parts of the social system representing the institutional processes of representative democracy are connected to one another.

Trust

Besides the structure of the networks, the quality of social relationships (Granovetter, 1973) is a determining factor for change. Trust is seen as an important facilitating mechanism for cooperation between different parts of social systems (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007; Nooteboom, 2002; Ring & Van de Ven, 1992). This could ultimately lead to changes within existing, established patterns of behaviour. Because trust helps people to tolerate uncertainty and make decisions where there is uncertainty (Luhmann, 1979; Bachmann, 2001), it is especially important in horizontal and emerging partnerships (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). In the interaction between the emerging institutions of participatory democracy and the institutions of representative democracy, there is uncertainty regarding the rules and roles of individuals. Representatives of both institutions must have trust in the partners’ intentions and competences for accepting their views and their influence.

Boundary spanning

As stated above, the existence of informal networks and processes in which new forms of governance are developed is not enough for the institutional evolution of the involved governmental entities to occur. Institutional change could happen when new practices are linked with existing routines (Maguire et al., 2004). Meaningful connections have to be made with the existing institutions of representative democracy (Edelenbos, 2005). Individuals who are able to connect emerging rules and roles within these informal networks with established rules and roles within the institutions of representative democracy could

therefore be described as key persons. These so-called ‘boundary spanners’ understand ‘... both sides of the boundary, enabling them to search out relevant information on one side and disseminate it on the other’ (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981: 291–2). Boundary spanners have a feeling for different institutional arrangements (cf. Williams, 2002) and could therefore make connections between these institutional arrangements, which could lead to institutional co-evolution.

Framework for Approaching and Analysing the Case

We describe and analyse the developments in institutions in the encounter between representative democracy (municipal institutions) and participatory democracy (citizens’ initiative). We speak of institutional evolution when new ways of working emerge. With regard to this case, this means that existing municipal institutions show resilience: they are able to connect (new) participatory forms of democracy with their institutional practices, developed within representative democracy. New forms of citizen participation are incorporated, leading to new patterns of behaviour. For actors in those institutions, it means that they are able and willing to change their roles and rules of behaviour. We speak of ‘institutional rigidity’ when municipal institutions resist new ways of working. This is the case when actors are not able or willing to change their roles and rules of behaviour: changes or new developments are delayed, resisted or absorbed in existing institutional procedures.

Our research examined the interaction processes between the emerging proto-institution (citizens’ initiative) and the (three) institutions of representative democracy within the municipality of Vlaardingen (see the three arrows in figure 1). In these three interaction processes, we looked at how the institutions of both citizens’ initiative and the local government developed in time (from 2005 to 2010). We depict institutions as the roles people play in practice, as argued above. We therefore looked closely at how representatives of the citizens’ initiative, the city council, the Civil Service, and the board acted, analysing their daily activities in performing their jobs.

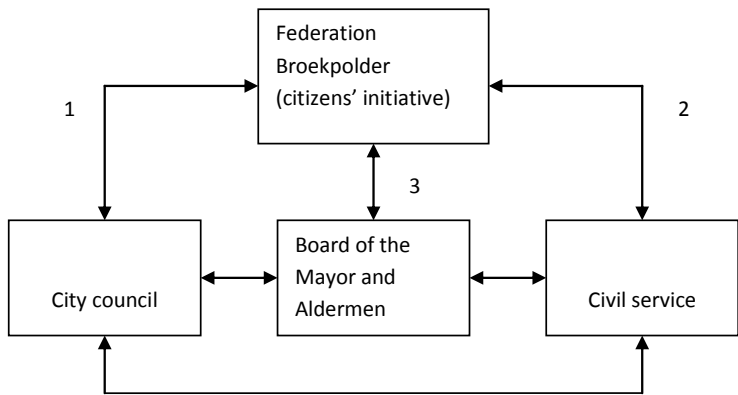


Figure 1 Relations between citizens' initiative and existing municipal institutions

CASE STUDY: INTRODUCTION

The Origin of the Citizens' Initiative in Broekpolder

The Broekpolder is an old recreational area of approximately 300 hectares in the north-western part of the city of Vlaardingen. In early 2000, the city and the province of Zuid-Holland had plans to build houses in the area. The Broekpolder was designated as a search location for 'rural living' by the regional government. This caused a large protest in the local community, which resulted in 10,000 signatures against the arrival of country houses in the Broekpolder. The regional government decided not to take any initiatives until 2010.

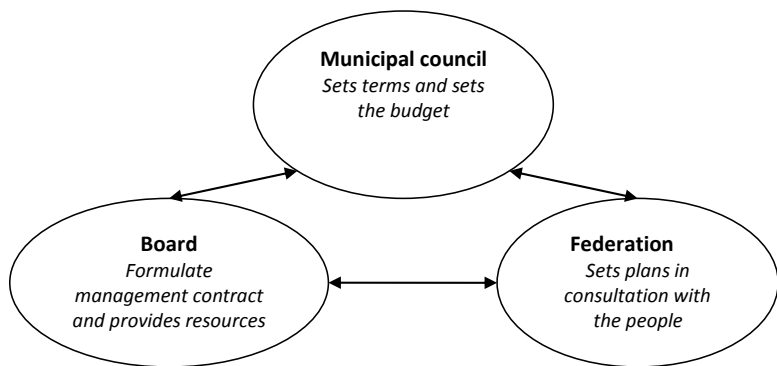


Figure 2 The model of Vlaardingen

Meanwhile, a group of thirty citizens of Vlaardingen had gathered with the aim of maintaining the open and green character of the area. At the end of 2002, this group organised a number of meetings where citizens were invited to consider the future of the Broekpolder. It looked for co-operation with the council, Mayor and Aldermen (administrative body), and civil servants (see figure 2).

The agreement between the municipality and Federation

This citizens' initiative was formalised on 5th October 2006 in the Foundation Federation Broekpolder. The Foundation has two goals:

- (1) In the broadest sense, to develop and maintain the Broekpolder area through sport, recreation, culture, cultural history, nature and education.
- (2) To take care of the common interests of the users of the Broekpolder on a voluntary basis.

The municipality (the administration) and the Federation jointly developed a policy note that later became a social contract in which the citizens' initiative and its relationship with the municipality were elaborated. Special attention was paid to the degree and the extent of citizen participation and initiative of the Federation. With respect to participation possibilities, a distinction was made between *area maintenance* and *regional development* of the Broekpolder. With regard to the maintenance activities, the Federation was allowed to give *qualified advice* on the contract extension of the Board, which is the basis of the performance of daily maintenance in the Broekpolder. The municipal administration can only differ from the advice if there is a strong argument against it. However, the Federation should refrain from a direct interference with the normal daily maintenance.

With regard to the regional development, two categories are distinguished: small enhancements and large development projects. With regard to small enhancements, the Federation gives *binding* advice to the Mayor and Aldermen. With regard to the large development plans and projects, the Federation takes *the initiative* in generating ideas and subsequently develops in cooperation with the municipality those projects. However, there is the precondition that the Federation provides societal support for their ideas and plans – it should make enough effort to bring all the interested parties and stakeholders together that reflects the population of Vlaardingen. The Federation receives a budget for their organisation and the maintenance and development of the area. This budget is approved by the council. The Federation is bound by this budget, by the overall structure plan for the region and by legal requirements.

Practice of the Federation

The Federation has the ambition, while practicing its initiating role, to serve as a platform where all citizens are able to get in contact with each other. A number of chambers are created in which several themes, such as recreation, sport and environment, are elaborated. The Federation sees its added value in acting as a loosely coupled organic network, where participants form linkages and alliances with others to obtain their goals.

The Federation also proposes to arrange the communication with the city council through the creation of a political portal (Municipality of Vlaardingen, 2007: 6):

If some ideas are beginning to show maturity in the Federation or if council members like to raise something, then an orientation meeting between Federation and (parts of) the city council can take place. These meetings are informal in the sense that the municipalities' members are free to bring their ideas.

With regard to its representativeness and creating support for ideas and plans, the Federation is focused on creating linkages to municipality (council, administration and Civil Service) and the broader society in Vlaardingen. It has several informal links to key players in the Civil Service, the Mayor and Aldermen. The vision document for the area is developed with the consent of the council and administration. The Federation will also involve the broader public in the development of the vision document and the specific projects it embraces. The Federation continuously tries to reach and involve the citizens of Vlaardingen through advertisements, presentations and (public) meetings and events. In this way, the Federation responds to the demand of the city council to represent the population of Vlaardingen as much as possible.

ANALYSIS: INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS IN THREE RELATIONSHIPS

Relationship 1: Board of Mayor and Aldermen – the Federation

From the beginning, the relationship between the Federation and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen has been positive and productive. People with management experience participated in the Board. The chairman of the Federation was a former council member and knew her way in the municipal organisation. At the time of the citizens' proposal, one of the aldermen (Mr Versluijs of the Labor Party), had a (personal) connection with the group of citizens. He had been actively involved in the design of the citizens' initiative. This seems to be a crucial aspect. Through this connection, support for the citizens' initiative was embedded in the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The involved alderman played an important role in convincing the Board and the city council to support the citizens' initiative.

The Board parties – Labour, Christian Democrats and Green Party – attached relatively great value to the citizens' initiative. Citizen participation was included in the Coalition Agreement (2006–2010) as an explicit theme and political ambition. The citizens' initiative fitted in well here.

Nevertheless, the Board had to get used to the new (co-operative) structure. This was especially expressed in the preparation of the strategic vision for the Broekpolder region. After a motion of the council, in article 2 of the Covenant, it was determined that, first, a financial framework should be developed, offering clarity about the conditions that related to the ideas proposed by the Federation. This vision should be jointly prepared by the Federation and the municipal board. However, the Board had given this task to the Civil Service, but without taking the new role of the Federation into account. Hereby, a regular internal work approach was activated contradictory to the covenant that proposed co-operation between municipality and Federation. Through well-timed and appropriate responses by an involved and committed civil servant and the involved alderman, a vision in collaboration with the Federation was finally drawn up.

Relationship 2: Municipal Council – Federation

The institutionalised role of the council (setting the terms and controlling the Board on these terms) was (to some extent) challenged by the citizens' initiative. There was uncertainty about the future role of the council. To what extent would the council still be involved in the decision-making process concerning the Broekpolder? Implementing such projects was politically sensitive in the Broekpolder area, where competing political interests were at stake. The councils' discussion about the citizens' initiative proposal on 19th January 2006 (Gemeente Vlaardingen, 2006a) shows that the council had reservations. For example, some council members feared making a decision from which they could not later withdraw. The council was afraid of losing its grip on the citizens' initiative that matters may be seen as a *fait accompli*. Some councillors wanted clear rules provided in advance, while the council as a whole was reluctant to create an extra organisational layer that could not be democratically controlled.

There are also some criticisms about the representativeness of the Federation. The strong involvement of some prominent Labor members (PvdA) in the initiative caused the scepticism with some political parties. This led the Federation to involve more people with other (political) backgrounds (such as the VVD, liberal party).

The politicised situation in the city council frustrated the development of a council portal, ardently desired by the Federation. The political portal would accelerate the decision-making process by ensuring a timely alignment with politics on specific project proposals. However, the political parties had insufficient confidence in each other to create this portal. Who can we trust to represent the council in this portal? Do we like it to prematurely commit ourselves to specific project proposals? The council wanted to retain the freedom and

opportunity to have the final say at the end of the policy process, as they always had. It was, therefore, decided to operate in accordance with the traditional political procedures to deal with project proposals; that the council would be involved through the whole Council Commission and would be informed by the Municipal Board on this issue.

Despite a reluctant and critical attitude, the citizens' initiative proposal was approved by the council with a large majority. What we observed in this case was that the political system was on the average positive about the initiative, but did not change its own patterns of behaviour. The council absorbed the initiative into its existing institutionalised practices. For example, the political portal is subjected and the treatment of new developments regarding the Broekpolder area (and therefore the citizens' initiative) takes place according to the usual procedures in the Council Commission on urban development (this Commission meets two times each year.)

Later in the process, around the beginning of 2010, one political party (Christian Democrats) was very negative about the way the plans were developed out of sight of the council. This party was not happy with the way the council had no democratic role anymore in the process.

Relationship 3: Civil Service – Federation

The arrival of the Federation as a new partner to the Civil Service caused some consternation. Previous negative experiences with a citizens' initiative did not help. Because of a lack of professional expertise among citizens, civil servants feared that the involvement of the Federation would only delay implementing any projects. According to some respondents, the proposed co-operation implicitly felt as if the functioning of the Civil Service was questioned. Until the decisive council meeting (in 2006), the attitude among officials was mainly passive and negative. Previous investments in the relationship would count for little if the plans of the Federation for the city council were to be rejected.

With the formal acceptance of the covenant between the city council and the Federation, civil servants had to take their new partner more seriously. Article 10 of the Covenant provides for assistance and support to be given to the Federation – something that had not occurred before. Civil servants are obligated to provide this through information or advice, in the same way they are obliged to assist the Mayor and Aldermen. Article 10 is made with regard to a lack of resources available for the Federation, such as time, procedural experience and finance. However, both Federation and Civil Service experienced difficulties with putting this into practice. For civil servants, the system became diffuse and unclear. Civil servants now have to deal with two principal players: the Board and the Federation. Who do they have to serve, especially when there are conflicts of interests between the two principals? The obligation to assist the Federation was something of a problem. A lot of effort would now have to be expended, which would take up valuable time and money from the Civil Service. Its view was that assistance could mainly be used when plans and

ideas became a project. Now, the official assistance could be overstretched and affect is too diverse: members of the Federation know where to find the officials. The arrangement leads to an appeal to the administrative capacity, which may not always be available at the desired moment.

The Federation, on the other hand, complained about a lack of administrative support. Some of this can be explained by the informal way in which the Federation acts and approaches civil servants. In the 'normal' case, whereby administrators can ask for support and advice, the interaction between administrator and civil servant was clearly regulated and institutionalised. Both parties knew, for example, how to arrange such an interaction and the extent of the support. However, this was not the case with regard to support for the Federation. Officials were not sure to what extent they could support the Federation and they did not see this service as 'part of their normal job'.

Civil servants responded by making the new situation as manageable and clear as possible, through regulations (as much as possible) and the development of a project organisation, in which tasks and responsibilities are clearly divided and defined. The proposed project organisation structure consisted of a programme manager, a steering committee and project groups. Directors of both the municipal and the Federation would participate in the steering committee. At first there was an explicit distinction between different project groups, both from the town and the Federation in order to create workable situation in the eyes of the civil servants. The Federation was approached as a separate organisation with its own structure.

However, at the end of 2009 things were moving in the Civil Service. A programme manager was appointed from within the city council. This person was given the explicit task of assisting the Federation and creating connections to the city organisation. Also, project groups were formed in which both civil servants and members from the Federation (from the various chambers) were involved. Within these project groups members from the Federation and civil servants work together in making feasible plans that fit within the vision of the Federation. The programme manager plays a very different role in comparison with his or her colleagues, who are responsible for other areas: he or she coordinates, connects and facilitates instead of directing and steering.

EVOLUTION OF ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS

What does the analysis to date indicate with regard to institutional evolution? We distinguish three periods of institutional evolution. The different periods of institutional evolution are summarised in Table 1.

In Period 1 of the institutional evolution, there is a tendency for the city council to keep the proto-institution at a distance. There are sceptics within the civil service, as well as among councillors. Councillors are critical about the representativeness and there is uncertainty with regard to the future role of the council with regard to this project. The attitude of civil servants could generally be characterised as reluctant. Civil servants were passive and sceptical towards the citizens' initiative. The proponents of the citizens' initiative (an alderman, an active civil servant and the chairman of the Federation) are exploring the way in which they could make a fruitful co-operating mechanism. They seek political support and broaden the participation within the Federation with members from different political parties.

Table 1 Periods of institutional evolution within the Broekpolder case study

Period of institutional evolution	Characteristics	Involved institutions	Focus on
Period 1 – dissociation (2002–2006)	Exploration, keeping other's institutions at a distance, awaiting, aversion	Civil Service, Federation, Council, Board of Alderman	Controlling, experimentation, seeking for political support
Period 2 – parallelisation (2007–2008)	Institutions are running and working in parallel, there is not enough coordination	Civil Service, Federation, Council, Board of Alderman	Searching for certainties, established institutions seek to absorb the initiative in existing institutionalised practices
Period 3 – synchronisation (2009 – 2011)	Institutions are to a large extent interwoven, leading to new ways of working together	Civil Service, Federation, Board of Alderman	Searching for effective co-operation mechanisms, embedding within different institutions

We observe a change in Period 2 when the covenant is accepted by the council. Not surprisingly, it was this judicial arrangement that was creating an awareness, 'acceptance' and acknowledgement of the Federation's work and ideas within the Civil Service. Civil servants tried to make the new situation as manageable and as clear as possible. They were doing this in their established way of working: formulating rules and dividing clear responsibilities and tasks. However this is sometimes difficult when confronted with the informal way the Federation works. The council also tries to absorb the initiative into its existing institutionalised practices. It does not accept the formation of an informal political portal and sticks to the usual procedural arrangements with regard to area development. Also, the Board of Aldermen reacted in its practiced way with regard to the development of the vision by activating a regular internal work approach. So, although the covenant was an administrative novelty, it did not cause change within the different institutions. The established institutions of representative democracy and the proto-institution still worked separately, in parallel, according to their own established ways of working.

This changed in the Period 3 (see table 1), which is still running. The Civil Service and the Federation are more interwoven with the emergence of project groups made up of members from both organisations. In this period, the rules and the roles (Goodin, 1996) within the Civil Service changed significantly in comparison with other development projects. We could speak of institutional change within the Civil Service. The responsible Alderman for area development supports the relationship between the programme manager and the Federation. The co-operation between the two organisations is in this way embedded within the Board. However, this clearly is not the case with regard to the council. The consequence of the clear separation of Federation activities and council activities is that projects and plans are developed out of sight of the council.

INSTITUTIONAL EVOLUTION AND INSTITUTIONAL EMBEDDING – EXPLANATORY FACTORS

The explanation for the evolution of existing institutions in this case was closely connected to the way in which the new ‘proto-institution’ was linked with the existing institutions. What was the role of the three factors mentioned in our theoretical framework?

The functioning of the *informal network* between members of the Board of Aldermen, the Civil Service and the Federation played a crucial role in the whole process. In the first phase (around 2004), the group of citizens made connections with the Board of Aldermen in an informal way to show their intentions and competences, to test the reaction, and to develop knowledge regarding important procedures and sensitivities within the political arena. After the acceptance of the proposal by the council (end of Period 1, see table 1) a direct connection between the group of citizens and the civil service emerged. The involved civil servant in this matter noticed that contacts with the group of citizens ‘were frequent and mainly informal’. He became part of the informal network and the structural ‘embeddedness’ with the established institutions of representative democracy increased. In co-operation with the group of citizens, he wrote a policy document aimed at organising the relationship between the Federation and the city council.

The Federation tried to expand the informal network with members of the council by proposing a council portal. The council rejected this proposal and this hindered a connection with the informal network. Regarding the latest developments in the council and the coming elections (March 2010), this might be problematic for the future development of the initiative. Because of the weak connection with the city council, one of the major parties – the Christian Democrats – complained about a lack of democratic control.

The *boundary spanners* between the different institutions played an important role in organising the linkage between the proto-institution and the existing institutions. In the civil service, the Federation and the Board of Aldermen there was such a boundary spanner.

At the end of the first phase (2006), there was a committed civil servant who took care of the connection between the administration and the Civil Service. He took on the role of a 'guide of the initiative through the civil service' and he was able to translate the ideas, proposals and informal patterns of behaviour from the Federation into internal procedures, which fitted more with existing patterns of behaviour within the Civil Service. He also organised internal workshops for civil servants aimed at the issue of 'how to deal with two different principals' (the Board and the Federation). When this particular 'boundary spanner' ceased involvement after 2006, the link between the Civil Service and the Federation deteriorated and the aims of the Federation and the Civil Service began to diverge. This is also expressed in Period 2 of institutional evolution (see table 1) which is characterised by 'parallelisation'. At the end of 2009 this connecting role is picked up again by the newly appointed program manager. He adapted his role as program manager in accordance with the partnership. He described his role as "coordinating", "facilitating" and "connecting" instead of directing and steering, which is the regular role of a program manager within the civil service. He facilitated the interaction process between civil servants ('experts') and members of the Federation which was aimed at developing policy proposals for the area. Together with the chairman of the Federation, he organised the formation of the joint project groups, which increased the interaction between both organisations (Period 3, see table 1).

The Federation also had such a boundary spanner in the person of the chairman. With her working experience as a councillor, she was well aware of some important formal procedures and institutions in the municipal organisation. She realised that it was necessary to make connections to existing institutional practices of the city council in order to put the citizens' initiative into practice. In order to obtain the necessary support of councillors and civil servants, the Federation should adopt to some extent the municipal institutional habits, procedures and routines. Together with the boundary spanner in the civil service, she wrote the covenant. This harmonisation with the working methods of the Civil Service provided the necessary clarity among civil servants and councillors. Her approach to the formal procedure of public consultation regarding the strategic vision was also helpful. Before starting this procedure, she ensured that the governmental entities agreed upon the Federation's approach. The Federation took the formal procedure as point of departure for the public consultation, but changed the process of this consultation according to its own working principles. Instead of seeing this formal procedure as a 'necessary evil', the Federation took advantage of the situation to get communicate with the local population and obtain new ideas and projects.

The third boundary spanner involved was an alderman. He played a crucial role in convincing the council that this experiment with citizens' participation should be given the opportunity to go forward on a trial and error basis. As a policy advocate, he convinced other parties of the added value of this initiative. With regard to the civil service, he focused on 'avoiding the emergence of detailed rules' concerning the initiative and the relationship

between the Federation and Civil Service: 'This is a typical reaction of civil servants, but is at the expense of the needed flexibility. For it is about a process and that needs room for development.'

The different boundary spanners connected the logics of the three different entities and played a crucial role in organising and embedding new patterns of behaviour into existing institutional structures. Together they harmonised the differences between the administrative structures and processes of the Civil Service and the informal self-organising ways of the Federation. There was not such a boundary spanner active within the city council.

What can be said about the role of *trust*? The increasing interactions between the city council and the Federation enabled the creation of familiarity, joint understanding and trust. Representatives from the citizens' initiative, Civil Service and the Board got to know each other's intentions and competences and this developed a growing trust. This was important for reducing the scepticism surrounding citizens' participation among civil servants (within the first phase of the interaction process). The committed civil servant 'was touched by the enormous drive and spirit of the involved citizens'. This indicates intentional trust. As an experienced civil servant in this matter, the boundary spanner noticed that many civil servants did not have a high degree of trust in citizens concerning their participation in projects. The growing co-operation between the Civil Service and the Federation led to a growing trust in the capabilities and application of the volunteers working within the Federation. This was important for the willingness of civil servants to co-operate and to modify their dominant role in formulating policy proposals with regard to the area.

Within the council, a lack of trust is an important factor hindering the realisation of an effective link between the Federation and council. In the beginning, there was a lack of trust because of the strong involvement of Labor Party sympathisers. After broadening the network of citizens and the withdrawal of some Labor councilors, the intentional trust of the councillors in the Federation increased sufficiently to accept the proposal. However, council members were still eager to keep control over their formal roles, tasks and activities. They were very sceptical with regard to the Federation's abilities to produce sound democratic proposals. This indicates a lack of competence trust. There is, however, also a lack of (intentional) trust between council members, which hindered the formation of the political portal. According to the different respondents, some council members are afraid that other council members will try to use this portal for their own political aspirations.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Our research indicates the difficulty to put participatory forms of democracy into practice within established institutions of representative democracy. Proto-institutions of participatory democracy have to be connected with these established institutions in order to prevent

evaporation. Making an effective connection and realising embedding is dependent on different factors, of which trust, informal networks and connective capacity through boundary spanning is of major importance. These factors provide *institutional interaction*, which could be described as a co-evolving process wherein existing institutions slightly change or evolve by interacting agents, operating at the boundaries of these institutions. The boundary spanners connected the logistics of the three different entities and played a crucial role in organising how to embed new patterns of behaviour into existing institutional structures. They merged new ways of organisation with existing institutional procedures. This is a difficult task and requires individuals who are committed and have the necessary experience.

However, the absence of a boundary spanner within the council and a lack of trust between council members hindered the realisation of the political portal or another form of institutional linkage with the council. The complaint regarding a lack of democratic control in the council is an expected reaction from the viewpoint of the representative institutional settings and relationships where there is little opportunity for participatory democracy. It shows the tension when new forms of participatory democracy meet highly institutionalised forms of representative democracy.

In the case study, we found different periods in the process of institutional evolution. The importance of *institutional design* with regard to changes in the processes is addressed in the literature (e.g. Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). The result of this research emphasises the difficult *processes of institutional evolution*. The co-evolving process of institutional interaction is hard to grasp and could hardly be controlled, designed and directed. Different, interacting factors, comes into play: boundary-spanning persons, informal networks and trust come together in a co-evolving process. It is a process characterised by learning, trial and error and is highly dependent on the interacting actors and specific contextual and cultural conditions of the case. If one of the factors (trust, boundary-spanning actors, informal networks) disappears, the evolution process could be brought to a halt.

We found that besides management and meta-governance (Sorensen & Torfing, 2009), trust building was especially important (in Period 3, see table 1) for opening up the established institutions, exploring and developing new interaction processes and behavioural patterns, and synchronising different institutional patterns. Trust provided an acceptance of the citizens' initiative and the input from involved citizens in formulating and developing policy plans. Different aspects and effects of trust have been stressed in the literature (Lane & Bachman, 2001; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007). In this study, we observed intentional and competence trust. From this growing trust, the actors were willing to take risks and therefore possibilities for change emerged. In the literature, the relationship between institutions and trust is mostly studied from the perspective of the stability of institutions and institutional design, which may enhance trust (Farrel & Knight, 2003; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). This study supplies a supplementary view that the presence of trust is an important factor for institutional evolution. It creates the confidence for 'stepping out of the box' and

exploring new processes and institutions. This reverse relationship has not been studied widely. Further research should provide more insights in this relationship and the next step is to focus on adaptability (factors) and evolutionary aspects of governance networks.

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CHAPTER 5

Towards vital interaction within governance networks

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ABSTRACT

Urban regeneration processes in which local stakeholders take the lead are interesting for realizing tailor made and sustainable urban regeneration, but are also faced with serious difficulties. We use the concept of self-organization from complexity theory to examine the relationship between local stakeholders' initiatives and vital urban regeneration processes. We conducted a two case comparative research, Caterham Barracks and Broad Street BID Birmingham (UK), in which local stakeholders take the lead. We analyze the evolution of these regeneration processes by using two different manifestations of self-organization: autopoietic and dissipative self-organization. We found that a balanced interplay between autopoietic and dissipative self-organization of local stakeholders is important for vital urban regeneration processes to establish. We elaborate four explanatory conditions for this interplay. These conditions provide at the one hand stability and identity development, but also the needed connections with established actors and institutions around urban regeneration and flexibility to adjust to evolving demands during the process of regeneration. However, consolidation of such initiatives does mean a challenge for existing structures for government, market and society that will need to adapt and change their roles to new governance realities. In this way self-organizing processes become meaningful in the regeneration of urban areas.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urban regeneration processes are processes that refer to vision and action building aimed to resolve urban issues and to bring about sustainable improvement in the economic, physical, social, and/or environmental conditions of an urban area that has been subject to change (Roberts, 2000: 17). As an emerging new form of governance, these practices are often the result of partnerships between actors in formal government, market, and civil society (Healey, 2006). Urban regeneration processes are embedded in dynamic network environments, in which different governmental agencies, commercial actors, non-for-profit organizations and residents reshape urban areas and are dependent of each other (Wagenaar, 2007; Taylor, 2007). In this matter, we see that the need and importance of public engagement in the field of urban regeneration is stressed nowadays, although the extent, the results and the way in which this could or should be organized is certainly not straightforward (e.g. Campbell & Marshall, 2000; Innes & Booher, 2004; Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007). In this article we approach participation as a multi-way set of interactions among governmental parties, citizens or businesses and other actors who together produce outcomes (Innes & Booher, 2004). We focus on community-led initiatives in the context of urban regeneration. Local or community based initiatives from citizens or businesses seem to be valuable for producing urban regeneration, since such initiatives bring about development that starts from within the urban area itself, enhancing the chance that the regeneration fits local needs and circumstances and enhancing the commitment of the involved local stakeholders and therefore the implementation of visions and plans (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Wagenaar, 2007).

However, the difficulty of putting local initiatives from non-state actors into practice is also well-noted in the literature, for example because of the lack of resources and power of these actors (e.g. Chaskin & Garg, 1997) or the difficulty of making effective connections with governmental institutions to guarantee implementation (e.g. Edelenbos, 2005; Healey, 2006). Therefore, the establishment of vital actor relations in order to collaboratively create and maintain urban areas of high qualities is stressed in the literature (e.g. Healey, 1998; Innes & Booher, 2004). For example, the establishment of vital relationships between community-led initiatives and organizations of representative democracy, which are important for dealing with recurring issues in urban regeneration (Campbell & Marshall, 2000; Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2011).

In this article we therefore depart from the proposition that the success of local regeneration initiatives depends on the extent in which these initiatives are evolving within vital collaborative multi-actor relationships. In this respect, insight is missing in how these initiatives lead to vital collaborations among actors trying to realize urban regeneration (see also Taylor, 2000; Innes & Booher, 2004). We want to enhance the understanding of the emergence of community-led initiatives in sustainable improvements in the economic, physical, social, and/or environmental conditions of urban areas. We use the concept of self-

organization from complexity theory to theoretically approach and elaborate the emergence and evolution of community-led initiatives. We see self-organization as a useful concept in the context of urban regeneration, because it explicitly focuses on the dynamics within urban systems and the evolution of interactions between different stakeholders, which could lead to new system behaviour and ultimately to the transformation of urban areas (cf. Wagenaar, 2007; Teisman et al., 2009; De Roo, 2010). The following research question is leading for our research and article: “how do local initiatives, approached as self-organization, evolve and which conditions facilitate them to develop into vital actor relations for urban regeneration?” We conducted a two case comparative research of two urban regeneration projects in the UK: Caterham Barracks and Broad Street BID Birmingham. These cases are examples of urban regeneration processes in which local actors (users, residents) took initiative and responsibility. In the following section we provide our theoretical and analytical framework, in which we elaborate two different forms of self-organization, i.e. autopoietic and dissipative self-organization. Subsequently, we will analyze our two cases, resulting in a case comparative analysis. Finally, in section 7 we draw conclusions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FRAMING SELF-ORGANIZATION

We argued in the introduction that we approach local urban regeneration as processes of self-organization. In this section we theoretically elaborate the concept of self-organization. Self-organization is generally associated with complex system thinking as developed in physics, and broadly described as the emergence of new structures (‘order’) out of ‘chaos’ (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). Notions of complexity have not just remained within physics, but have also influenced social sciences and more specifically, planning and governance studies (e.g. Wagenaar, 2007; Teisman et al, 2009; De Roo, 2010). Complexity thinking could be useful for studying processes of change in complex network environments, such as urban regeneration, because it explicitly focuses on the dynamics of systems. It approaches systems as being in a continuous flux, in processes of becoming instead of being, emphasizing the continuous interaction between different elements forming a system. Self-organization is defined here as the emergence and maintenance of structures out of local interaction, an emergence that is not imposed or determined by one single actor, but is rather the result of a multitude of complex and non-linear interactions between various elements (Cilliers, 1998; Heylighen, 2002; Jantsch, 1980).

Autopoietic and dissipative self-organization

The literature on complex systems and self-organization distinguishes autopoietic and dissipative system behaviour. Autopoietic self-organization is about self-maintenance and reproduction of systems (Jantsch, 1980). This concept is developed in biology, but has also

inspired social scientists and even led to Luhmann's famous theory of autopoietic or self-referential systems (e.g. Luhmann, 1995). Autopoietic self-organization is aimed at stabilizing and sometimes intensifying boundary judgments in social settings, attain an existing structure and maintain it in self-referentiality (cf. Luhmann, 1995).

Complex systems also show dissipative self-organization. Prigogine (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984) specifically focuses on this type of system behaviour in his research. He argues that dissipative behaviour is boundary breaking, leading to evolution of systems. As opposed to irreversible physical processes which play a 'destructive role' (which develop towards a situation of equilibrium and thus inertia), Prigogine observed and analyzed irreversible processes which play a 'constructive role': the so-called dissipative structures (Bor, 1990). Dissipative behaviour refers to the (increasing) connection of various subsystems leading to a highly dynamic process heading towards far-from-equilibrium situations (Jantsch, 1980; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Heylighen, 2002; Morçöl, 2005). In these far-from-equilibrium situations, systems are much more sensitive to external influences and their behavioral patterns are non-linear; small changes in the components of a system may lead to large-scale changes (Morçöl, 2005: 11).

Complex systems (physical as well as social) that show both types of self-organization can be in situations of so-called 'bounded instability' (Merry, 1999; Stacey, 1995). In a situation of bounded instability "...the organisation can find the mix of confirmation and novelty that allows it to be a learning system that is able continually to self-organize and thus renew itself" (Merry, 1999: 275). In situations of equilibrium, systems are too static to be really adaptive to new, unanticipated situations. Such a system can grow isolated and thus become irrelevant to its environment. On the other hand, when a system is totally unstable, it is not capable to respond in a coherent way to new challenges and could easily become rudderless. Situations of bounded instability are thus characterized by both autopoietic and dissipative system behaviour.

Vital actor relations

In literature on collaboration and networks the importance of vital actor relationships is indicated. Healey (2006) argues that institutional or relational capacity is important to develop and realize cooperation and collaboration. Also the literature on networks stresses the importance of actor relationships. Meier and O'Toole (2001) for example found that networking activities have positive impact on the effectiveness of these actor relations. Other scholars mention that vital actor relations are characterized by trustworthiness which is developed and maintained by repeated interaction among actors in the network (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006). Network management activities are important to bring actors together and develop trustworthy and vital actor relationships and networks (Klijn et al., 2010).

Vital networks are those networks in which actors have positive interdependent relationships and in which actors frequently meet and exchange visions, meaning, interests,

information and knowledge (c.f. Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Healey, 2006). Vital actor relations develop joint fact finding and mutual understanding of problem situations (Healey, 1995). Actor relations are not dominated by conflicts or deadlocks, but are characterized by ongoing interaction leading to joint strategies to solve problems. For the establishment and maintenance of vital actor relationships an active role of so called 'boundary spanners' is indicated as an important condition (Alter & Hage, 1993; Friend et al, 1974; Williams, 2002). These are people who are skilled communicators, able to 'talk the right language' of the different forums or networks in which they are active, and have excellent networking skills giving them the ability to gain entry to a variety of settings and to seek out and 'connect up' others who may have common interests or goals (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002: 100).

In sum, many scholars mention the importance of vital actor relationships in complex planning and governance processes, because they lead to collaboration and trust between interdependent actors and subsequently to more legitimate and effective policy outputs. We are therefore interested in how processes of self-organization are related to vital actor relations, or more specifically: how autopoietic and dissipative behaviours contribute to the establishment of vital actor relations in the context of urban regeneration. In the next paragraph we operationalize this relationship.

Self-organization in urban regeneration: the analytical framework

Building on the previous sections, we translate self-organization to urban regeneration processes as the emergence of governance structures in which local stakeholders (residents, businesses, non-for-profit organizations, etc.) have a pivotal role. It is framed as an interplay of autopoietic and dissipative self-organization when these local stakeholders take initiative to come to collective and collaborative action. We focus on the relation between the interplay of autopoietic and dissipative self-organization on the one hand and vital processes of urban regeneration on the other hand. We want to find explanatory conditions in this relationship (see figure 1). We are especially interested in how these kinds of self-organised behaviour lead to vital actor relations in which different actors work together in a collaborative way, and what elements are crucial in this process.

Below we define and operationalize our three core variables in our research. We define dissipative self-organization as the openness of social systems and the exploration for (increasing) interconnection of different subsystems leading to highly dynamic and vital processes (c.f. Jantsch, 1980; Teisman et al, 2009). This type of self-organization is characterized by external orientation, wide boundary judgments and production of new structures and processes (Flood, 1999; Teisman et al, 2009) in which variety and redundancy of ideas (plans, content) and actors is aimed for. These new structures and processes often goes at the expense (in terms of attention, time, energy, resources) of existing structures and processes leading to tensions between 'the new' and 'the existing'. We define autopoietic self-organization as the inwards orientation of social systems that is about self-maintenance,

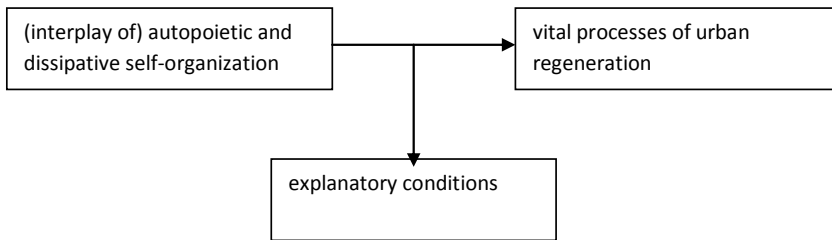


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

identity forming and stabilization, and reproduction (c.f. Jantsch, 1980; Luhmann, 1995). Autopoietic self-organized systems are characterized by internal orientation, narrow boundary judgments and stability (reproduction, maintaining) in structures (Flood, 1999; Teisman et al, 2009) in which variety and redundancy of ideas (plans, content) and actors are countered.

We define vital actor relations as the way in which different actors develop relational capacity, jointly and collaboratively develop problem definitions and solutions in the urban area (c.f. Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Edelenbos, 2005; Healey, 2006; Klijn et al, 2010). The processes are characterized by ongoing interaction in which mutual communication and understanding are present and high-level conflicts (i.e. sharp differences of opinion and interests) are absent.

Table 1 summarizes the indicators for autopoietic and dissipative self-organization. We want to stress here that the distinction between autopoietic and dissipative self-organization is purely analytical. In practice we see that the two are simultaneously present and reciprocal to each other. In case description and analysis we also see this intermingling of the two.

Table 1 Operationalization of the three core variables

Main variables	Indicators
Dissipative self-organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - external orientation through a) open boundaries, and b) looking for exposure - wide orientation through a) exploring new content, and b) involving and connecting a large number of actors in new actor constellations
Autopoietic self-organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internal orientation through a) closed boundaries, and b) strengthen internal identity - narrow orientation through a) explicating and consolidating content, and b) stabilizing existing actor constellations or even reducing the number of involved actors
Vital urban regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - co-production through a) joint problem-definition and b) joint solution finding - ongoing interaction through a) the presence of mutual communication an understanding, and b) the absence of high-level conflict

Case studies

We selected two cases in which a certain level of self-organisation was present, thus in our view providing examples of self-organization in urban regeneration. The case Caterham Barracks Community Trust is an example of community-based initiative that led to a self-organizing community trust. The case Broad Street Birmingham is an example of the establishment of a Business Improvement District in which property owners and business actors develop pro-active behaviour and self-organizing capacity for redeveloping the urban area.

We conducted theory-informed case studies in a focused way, to empirically analyze a particular theoretically relevant issue, self-organization in urban regeneration, and generate new theoretical knowledge from the empirical analysis. The research design of two case studies does not enable us to develop generalized empirical knowledge but it does provide a detailed understanding of contextual and situational conditions that influence the evolution of self-organization and the interplay with vital collaborative regeneration processes. From the cases we draw theoretical insights, which need to be empirically validated in other contexts before we know whether they can be generalized. This is in accordance with conventional case study methodology (e.g. Stake, 1998; Yin, 1984). We conducted an instrumental case study rather than an intrinsic case study (Stake, 1998). In an instrumental case study the researcher uses a case to gain more understanding about a particular phenomenon of interest. An intrinsic case study is carried out because of an interest in the case itself, and what happens in the case. We used the cases to develop new insights (emerging from the cases) in finding facilitating conditions for self-organizing processes in urban regeneration. The explanatory conditions that we find in the cases are derived from the interviews.

Data were collected through a combination of interviews, observations and document analyses. All relevant written documents were subjected to accurate study, such as memos, reports, newsletters, proposals, websites, political documents, statutory instruments etc. In addition, key players in both cases were interviewed: the involved individuals in the initiatives (local residents in Caterham and the BID management in Birmingham) and other involved actors in the regeneration process, such as civil servants of the local authority, council members, developers and other involved governmental agencies. The interviews were semi-structured. Firstly, the process and history of the cases were reconstructed. Secondly, questions were asked about the indicators mentioned in table 1: how did the self-organization develop and how did they demarcate the content and the process of the regeneration: how did they involve other actors, how did they decide on the themes and projects of the regeneration and how did they structure the interactions and communications with the other involved actors and the local community? In the next two sections the analysis of the cases is presented. In our analysis we focus on the behaviour of individual actors within the interaction regarding the regeneration processes.

3. INTRODUCTION OF THE CASE STUDIES

Both regeneration processes started off in the nineties and are examples of local stakeholders taking responsibility for the vitality of their urban environments. An important difference concerns the initiators of the self-organization: the Broad Street Birmingham case was initiated by private businesses, while the Caterham Barracks case was initiated by local residents. Below, the two cases are further introduced. Table 2 compares the cases regarding their main characteristics. To structure our analysis, we use the rounds model of Teisman (2000) on policy and decision-making processes. This model fits our complexity perspective on urban regeneration, because it is focused on the variety of actors involved in decision-making processes and the dynamics resulting from their interactions. Each round is ended with a crucial decision or event (e.g. the involvement of a new actor), defined by the researchers in retrospect, but based on the reconstruction of the process by the respondents. The crucial decision or event is the beginning of a next round, and generally serves as a focal point of reference for the actors involved. Both regeneration processes could be divided in four rounds (see table 2).

Table 2: main characteristics of the two cases

	Broad Street Birmingham	Caterham Barracks
Key actors	Broad Street businesses Property owners and developers City Centre Partnership West Midland Police Broad Street BID	Local Group Private developer District Council Caterham Barracks Community Trust
Issue	The BID is established to counter the controversy between “drunks and bankers” and to make Broad Street “cleaner, brighter and safer”.	Closing of the Barracks has impact on the local economy and the character of the area. The redevelopment of the site is a chance to create new vitality for the area.
Timeframe	Round one: 1991 – 2003 Growing controversies Round two: 2003 – 2004, Establishing the BID Round three: 2004 – 2009, Operating the BID Round four: 2009 – 2010, Expanding the BID	Round one: 1995 – 1997, Redefining the Barracks Round two: 1998, Plans for redevelopment Round three: 1999 – 2000, Establishing governance arrangements between main actors Round four: 2001 – 2010, The Community Trust in action
Legislation	Business Improvement District (Statutory Instrument 2004: 2443)	Section 106 Agreement between private developer, local authority and Community Trust
Size	Approximately 100 acres and over 300 businesses	57 acres divided in three parcels, Approximately 400 new houses.
Budget	Approximately £ 400,000 p.a. since 2004.	Initial investment of £ 2,000,000 by private developer for community benefits

Caterham Barracks

Caterham Barracks is an urban regeneration project, developed and managed in a cooperative process between local community, a private developer and the District Council. The site is located in the North-western edge of Caterham-on-the-Hill (see figure 2). Caterham is a town in the Tandridge District of Surrey and located south of London. The self-organizing character of the case is represented by the emergence of the Caterham Barracks Community Trust, in which local residents took responsibility for developing and managing community facilities and played a key role in the regeneration process. Caterham Barracks refers to a Depot used by the army until 1990 when it was declared redundant by the Ministry of Defence.

In 1995 the barracks were closed. This affected the local economy and the character of the area, since the population of the Barracks had for a long period of time contributed to the social life and economic well-being of the local area (Tandridge District Council, 1998: 2). When the Barracks were closed, interactions between local residents and the District Council commenced, aimed at preserving the area (Interview CBCT, 2009). In this way the demolition of the historical buildings and the construction of high- and middleclass housing was prevented; the scenario most interesting to private developers. From that moment on the redevelopment of the area became a process in which local residents in cooperation with a private developer played a key role.



Figure 2 Overview geographical area Caterham Barracks (Source: Google Earth)

Broad Street Birmingham

Broad Street BID Birmingham is a Business Improvement District, initiated by local businesses, property owners and the Birmingham City Council. The main goal of the organization of this BID was to bring down the nuisance of the night-time economy on the business environment within the Broad Street area (see figure 3).

The self-organizing character of the case is represented by the emergence of the BID, in which local business took responsibility for developing and managing their environment. The concerns about the business environment on and around Broad Street Birmingham started off in the early nineties. The establishment of a convention centre in this part of the city centre boosted the local economy around Broad Street, both for offices as for the emerging night-time economy. The quality and reputation of the area became seriously challenged as the night-time economy started to cause increasing nuisance, thus devaluating the expensive real estate investments made in the area. When a person was killed during a night-time fight, interactions between local businesses, city council and police started around the issues on Broad Street. Consequently, local businesses took initiative to solve the controversy between “drunks and bankers”. From that moment, the BID played a key role in the regeneration of the area.

In the next section the case studies are described and analyzed by focusing on autopoietic and dissipative characteristics.



Figure 3 Overview geographical area Broad Street Birmingham (Source: Google Earth)

4. ANALYZING THE CATERHAM BARRACKS REGENERATION PROCESS

In this paragraph the urban regeneration of Caterham Barracks is analyzed by the concepts of dissipative and autopoietic behaviour and vigorous actor relationships. Table 3 summarizes the results of the analysis. The indicators of table 1 are marked (in bold) to explicate the autopoietic and dissipative elements.

Table 3: dissipative and autopoietic self-organization within the case Caterham Barracks

Time frame	Dissipative self-organization	Autopoietic self-organization
Round 1 (1995-1997): Redefining the Barracks	Exploration of what the former Barracks (and the area) could mean for the local community Interaction process in which different actors are connected	Development of some clear guidelines and protection of the area: explication of what should be maintained Stabilization of the involvement of a certain group of individuals: the Local Group
Round 2 (1998): Plans for redevelopment	Explorative planning process in which a large numbers of actors are involved Connection between ideas and interests Local Group, private developer, local community and local authority	'Selection' of ideas for community facilities and future management organized by Local Group
Round 3 (1999-2000): Establishing governance arrangements between main actors	Exploration of effective cooperation structure between Local Group, private developer and local authority; Intensive interactions between Local Group, private developer and local authority	Refinement of plans towards implementation Formalization of arrangements between main actors: dividing responsibilities Establishment of Community Trust
Round 4 (2001-2011, still running): The Community Trust in action	Community Trust is looking for exposure : it seeks for sustainable user groups for running community facilities.	Decreasing interactions between main actors Internal orientation : Community Trust is increasingly focused on internal management and running business

Dissipative and autopoietic self-organization in the regeneration process

Below, the elements of dissipative and autopoietic self-organization are elaborated for each round of the process.

Round 1 (1995-1997)

Dissipative behaviour

After the Barracks were closed, an interactive process developed, which was characterized by increasing interaction between local residents, local government officers and local councillors, about the redevelopment of the area. An important figure in connecting these

different actors was the later chairman of the Community Trust, living in Caterham and at that time a District councillor. He wanted to explore the possibilities for making the redevelopment of the site more productive for the local community. In this respect, a forum for discussion about the future of the Barracks' site was formed: the so-called Local Group. This Local Group consisted of representatives from different community groups, officers and councillors of the District and members of the Caterham Residents' Association and it reported back to the District Council (TDC, 1998; Interview TDC, 2009). To protect the area from building houses and demolition of the historical buildings, the Local Group wanted to turn the site into a Conservation Area (see below). This required local consultation and was an important trigger for wider community participation. Through bus tours, organized by the local government, local residents were taken into the area and asked if the site should be preserved (Interview TDC, 2009). Furthermore, local residents were invited to vote for different development scenarios, which were co-produced by the local authority and the Local Group. This consultation attracted a high response. About 1300 people voted (TDC, 1998). The scenario with the minimum amount of housing, an emphasis on retaining the best buildings and convert them for employment, and providing various community facilities attracted the most votes, i.e. 66%. According to the later chairman of the Community Trust and the private developer, this scenario was financially unrealistic or at least very difficult to realize and economically not sustainable, but it provided a clear statement of what local people wanted with the site (Interviews CBCT, 2009; private developer, 2009).

Autopoietic behaviour

Two important focal points for setting boundaries concerning the content of the regeneration process were the protection of the area from housing and the prevention of the demolition of the historical buildings. There was high consensus in the local community that a development strategy focused on building new houses would not be beneficial for increasing the vitality of the urban area (TDC, 1998; Interview CBCT, 2009). Such an area, in which mainly newcomers would settle, would not be connected to the local community. Furthermore, the historical buildings would have to be knocked down, which would significantly harm the historical meaning of the site for local residents. The chairman of the Community Trust notes on this matter: *"it was the institution [Caterham Barracks] that created this part of Caterham. In terms of the historical growth of this place, it is really important. Just to knock it down doesn't really do anything sensible with it."* (Interview CBCT, 2009). Therefore, in consultation with the local community, the site was turned into a Conservation Area by which development initiatives were restricted if they would harm the historical value of the area.

On the basis of the selected scenario, the Council produced a development Brief for the bidding process in which community benefits were ensured, such as employment uses, community facilities, recreational and sport uses and in which it was clearly stated that new

residential development only would be permitted if sufficient community benefit is demonstrated (TDC, 1998: 5).

Round 2 (1998)

Dissipative behaviour

Because of the specific conditions about combining different spatial and societal functions, different developers left the bidding process. *“A lot of the larger houses builder companies just walked away and thought [...] there is no way we want a piece of this, this is far too complicated. We just want to build a few houses, that’s what we do. We don’t want to get involved in employment or community facilities, that’s far too complicated.”* (Interview private developer, 2009). A relatively small, but upcoming, company decided to invest in this project: *“... because it was on our doorstep, we felt we had the time to invest in try to make this work.”* (Ibid). To make the project financially more beneficial and because of the restrictions of the development Brief, the developer took a broader perspective than simply focusing on housing and wanted to connect housing with integral spatial development and the delivery of community facilities. It started an interactive planning process with local residents to explore the possibilities for this perspective. In this respect, a community planning week was organized which attracted contributions from over 1000 people. For the consultants who facilitated this collaborative planning process, it was the first time a private developer approached them. *“But what was interesting in Caterham; it was the first time for us with a private sector client saying ‘that’s sounds like a good idea’, to actually engage people in this project.”* (Interview organizers collaborative planning process, 2009). During the planning weekend the private developer was focused on connecting housing and the development of new kinds of community facilities to make the scenario financially more attractive. *“The offer here was; well look guys, this [the scenario in the development brief] is not a deliverable plan at all. [...] What you need is more housing and the housing can then deliver the community facilities. And all of a sudden people say: we can have the community facilities and they get hooked on what they can have and probably less concerned about the housing, which was what happened.”* (Interview private developer, 2009). At the end of this planning weekend, it was agreed that both more facilities and more houses could be developed than initially noted in the development Brief (Interviews CBCT; private developer, 2009).

Autopoietic behaviour

An important autopoietic characteristic in this round is the quest of the private developer for commitment in terms of involvement towards the Local Group. This Local Group was until then a broad group of people from various community organizational backgrounds. The private developer was willing to cooperate with this group, but wanted commitment and convergence to financially deliverable plans (Interview private developer, 2009). The result

was a stable and smaller group of local residents who were very willing to get involved. In cooperation with the private developer, the Local Group set up several working groups to further elaborate the ideas concerning the community facilities and its future management. These working groups were organized around specific themes, such as land use, youth, environment, arts and recreation, and employment and enterprise and created boundaries regarding the scope of the projects (Website CBCT, 2002; Interview CBCT, 2009). In cooperation with the private developer, financially undeliverable plans were eliminated (Website CBCT, 2002; Interview private developer, 2009). Furthermore, only local residents were involved, because the idea was to give them responsibility for the management of community facilities (Interview CBCT, 2009).

Round 3 (1999-2000)

Dissipative behaviour

After the Planning weekend and the further development of the site, there was increasing interaction between the private developer, the local authority and the 'new' Local Group. In this process strategies were formed about the question how to make the regeneration initiatives and projects sustainable and community driven. An effective cooperation structure was explored about the future ownership of specific community buildings, land and community facilities (Interviews private developer; TDC; CBCT, 2009). Using the legal framework of the Town and Country Planning Act, a so-called S106 agreement⁵ between the developer, the local government and the Local Group was formed. The Local Group turned into the Caterham Barracks Community Trust. The developer contributed in excess of £2 million pounds in buildings and money to this project. The assets and the land for community facilities were transferred to the Community Trust.⁶

Autopoietic behaviour

In this round the identity of The Local Group evolved into a more formal entity: the Caterham Barracks Community Trust. The objectives of the Trust were to facilitate the development of the community facilities and activities, aimed to maximise the benefit for the local community (Interview CBCT, 2009). The interactions between the private developer, the local authority and the Local Group were formalized and stabilized by the development

5 S106 stands for 'Section 106 agreement', which is generally used by planning authorities to secure benefits for the community from planning approvals that cannot be secured in other ways (NLGN, 2002: 12). Developers often have to lodge bonds with the planning authority to the value of the amount they have to invest back into the community. The bond is only returned when the authority is satisfied that the developer has complied with the agreement.

6 The CBCT owns the cricket green, the pavilion, the Officers Mess, the NAAFI, the Old Gymnasiums and the football fields.

of an accountability structure: from that moment forward, representatives from the local authority and the developer sit on the Trust's Board and oversee the management of the community facilities (TCPA, 2007: 37).

Round 4 (2001-2011 and still running)

Dissipative behaviour

After its establishment, the Trust started looking for exposure. Different self-organizing user groups, having evolved from the working groups, were sponsored and facilitated in their management. The Trust used its funds to establish a range of economic, social, educational, cultural and sports facilities, such as an indoor skate park, a centre for arts and recreation, a cricket field, a children's play area, a nature reserve/community farm, a centre for enterprises and a football club. The Trust functioned as a platform or 'springboard' for these user groups to run certain community facilities and it holds an open attitude towards potential user groups. User groups are allowed to run a community facility on their own and ultimately to own the particular asset, if they are able to financially sustain themselves and to provide community benefits (Interview CBCT, 2009). In the end, all the community facilities should be self-sustainable.

Autopoietic behaviour

After the establishment of the Trust and the handing over of the community assets, the interaction between the private developer and the local authority and the Trust decreased. The Trust increasingly concentrates on its own task and defends its own interest against that of the private developer. There are some disagreements about the time schedules according to which the Trust gets the full financial responsibility over the community assets. At the same time the communication with the local community is less frequent compared to previous rounds of the process. In this round the internal orientation of the Trust increases.

Relating self-organization to vital actor relations in the regeneration process

The regeneration process started with increasing interactions between local residents, local councillors and civil servants to make sense of the closing of an institution which had been an important part of the identity of Caterham. According to the different respondents, the boundary spanning work of the later chairman of the Community Trust was highly important here. These dissipative characteristics evolved into vital actor relations in which joint problem-definition and joint solution finding were produced: the preservation of the site and the need to connect future developments of the site with the local community. The adaptive behaviour of the private developer in the second round is stressed by the respondents. The developer broadened his scope on housing and explicitly decided to develop the site in co-production with the local community. In this way the vital actor relations

were maintained and further evolved. Autopoietic behaviour is observed in the stabilization and reduction of the number of involved actors: local residents who were committed and willing to stay involved got a seat in one of the working groups of the Local Group. In the next round the cooperation between de Local Group, the private developer and the District Council led to a governance arrangement concerning the future management of the site. The District Council showed adaptive behaviour in this round by giving the Community Trust a leading role. Subsequently, the Trust evolved into a more formal entity with its own way of working. According to the chairman, the Trust model is a very useful model for community-led regeneration. It provides both the flexibility and legal capacity to evolve in accordance with the needs of the community (Interview CBCT, 2009). It was able to facilitate the different user groups in their efforts, contributing to the urban regeneration. At the same time, however, the interactions with the other actors are decreasing. In this respect, the Trust increasingly enacts autopoietic behaviour. As a result, actor relations seem to becoming less vital.

5. ANALYZING THE BROAD STREET BIRMINGHAM REGENERATION PROCESS

In this paragraph the urban regeneration of Broad Street Birmingham is analyzed by the concepts of dissipative and autopoietic behaviour and vigorous actor relationships. Table 4 summarizes the results of the analysis. The indicators of table 1 are marked to explicate the autopoietic and dissipative elements.

5.1 Dissipative and autopoietic self-organization in the regeneration process

Below, the elements of dissipative and autopoietic self-organization are elaborated for each round of the process.

Round one (1991 – 2003): Growing controversies

Autopoietic behaviour

In this round, the period before the catastrophic fight took place, individual businesses acted within their regular business activities. On the level of the Broad Street area, a specialized business area emerged with two main functions: business and service activities on one hand and a thriving night-time economy on the other, each of them successful in their own account (Interview BID manager 2010).

Dissipative behaviour

In the Broad Street area, internal cohesion was weakened as conflicts arose between specialised functions of offices and the night-time economy. The dissipative element of the 2003

fight was that from that moment on, an interaction process between actors started in which the various possibilities for dealing with the “bankers and drunks” controversies on Broad Street were explored.

Table 4: dissipative and autopoietic system behaviour within the case Broad Street Birmingham

Timeframe	Dissipative self-organization	Autopoietic self-organization
Round 1 (1991 – 2003): Growing controversies	Internal cohesion is weakened . Growing controversy between “drunks and bankers”	More and more specialization in business activities: Convention Quarter. External identity is strengthened . Businesses do not look beyond their regular business boundaries .
Round 2 (2003 – 2004): Establishing the BID	After the fight, open, explorative and informal explorations for solutions for Broad Street. Connection made to BID legislation, translation to local circumstances. Attempts to involve more businesses and get them to vote ‘yes’ for the BID. Exposure through newsletters, website.	Shared responsibility and interest among the different users and stakeholders of Broad Street is emphasized. Defining the BID: content, boundaries and involved actors are set. BID is formalized when most businesses vote in favour of the BID.
Round 3 (2004 – 2009): Operating the BID	Exposure to the BID through newsletter and website, in order to attract new investments and to establish a positive reputation for the area.	Interaction within a stabilized and defined group of actors. Responsibilities are divided . Executing projects, strengthening internal organisation and incorporating new ideas into the BID organisation.
Round 4 (2009 – 2010): Expanding the network	New content for the BID2 is explored, new actors get involved.	In the BID2 proposal, the same organizational structure is carried on.

Round two (2003 – 2004): Establishing the BID

Dissipative behaviour

After the catastrophic fight, deliberations started between the businesses of Broad Street, the West Midland police and the Birmingham City Centre Partnership (a public organisation established in 2001 to maintain and improve relationships between the city council and the Birmingham business community). These deliberations first took place in an informal partnership, emphasizing the shared responsibility and interest among the different users and stakeholders of Broad Street. In 2004, three summits were organised in order to address the local problems of “bankers and drunks”. In between the summits, businesses involved in the deliberations went around the area to talk to the other businesses. The City Centre Partnership was connected to the national Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) which was at that time promoting the new concept of Business Improvement Districts (BID) throughout the UK. During the Broad Street summits, the BID concept was brought up and met with great enthusiasm, because it would enable businesses themselves to take a leading role (Interview BID manager, 2010). The City Centre Partnership invested

the people, money and time to develop a BID, thereby meeting local parameters and following the procedures of the BID legislation.⁷ Because of the BID, interactions between the local businesses increased. The motives to choose for this specific institutional form were mostly opportunistic and pragmatic: “*Broad Street shows how timely things can be. The BID legislation came in, as a sort of vehicle to take things forward.*” (Interview City Centre Partnership, 2010).

Autopoietic behaviour

The autopoietic element of the 2003 fight was that through these events the mutual dependence of the two main functions on Broad Street became visible. According to the later employed BID manager everybody, including businesses, police and hotels, was suffering from the events at that time (Interview BID manager, 2010). When the BID legislation was introduced during this round, this legislation played an important structuring role in the further deliberations among the involved actors. Soon as the BID legislation was adopted and adapted to the local parameters, the legislation caused autopoietic behaviour in the sense of providing a specific identity and structure for local businesses. Businesses were being convinced of the deliverables the BID could provide for the amount of money the levy would be. The boundaries, both in content, geography and the membership were set up, the binding identity of the businesses involved became explicated and the organisational structure and the BID levy were agreed upon. The original controversy between “bankers and drunks” was still structuring this process, as is represented by three levels of levy: the premises closest to Broad Street have to pay the highest amount of levy, and the themes the BID would work on: safety, cleaning, greening and image building (Interview BID manager, 2010, Broad Street BID proposal 2005). The establishment round ended with the acceptance of the BID proposal in 2005. 65% of the non-domestic ratepayers of the BID area turned up for the vote, and 92% of them voted in favour of the BID (BID update No.4 May 2005)⁸.

Round three (2004 – 2009): Operating the BID

Autopoietic behaviour

The organizational structure set out in the BID proposal was followed, with an annual assembly for the levy payers and reports about the deliveries of the BID. The businesses

7 The BID legislation is a statutory instrument in order to promote partnership working between local authorities and local businesses. The regulations contain some general rules and requirements concerning a BID proposal. A BID can be initiated by non-domestic ratepayers in a certain geographical area, parties with an interest in land (landowners or landlords), bodies with a purpose to develop BID proposals, or the relevant billing authority (district, county of city council) (Deputy Prime Minister 2004, Statutory Instrument 2004: 2443)

8 For a ballot to be legitimate, the turn over has to be at least 30%, of which half should be voting in favour of the BID, representing a minimum 50% of all rateable value in the BID area (Statutory Instrument 2004: 2443).

participated in working groups, or raised issues of concern to the BID manager, who was instated to handle both the internal as the external matters of the BID on behalf of the BID board. The BID manager started to lead a day and a night team. The day team concerned communication, strategic delivery and promotion of the area. The night team consisted of wardens patrolling the BID area at night, and occasionally managing events. The BID manager was also the main contact point between local businesses and other parties involved in the Broad Street controversies (local authority, police etc.) (Interview BID manager, 2010). The interactions in this round aim at executing projects along the themes presented in the BID proposal, which relate to the “bankers and drunks”-problem: marketing to counter the negative reputation of the neighborhood, safety to address the anti-social behaviour and cleanliness to prevent littered streets after the weekends. Streets were refurbished and greened, events were organised, empty buildings were covered with promotional banners, safety was improved. Occasionally, new ideas were adopted and executed as well, but only if they fitted the clearly demarcated lines of the BID proposal.

Dissipative behaviour

The BID gave exposure of its actions in order to establish a positive reputation for the neighbourhood again, through a website, marketing campaign and close contact with press agencies. The BID worked on giving the businesses of Broad Street a voice on the plans and policies for the Broad Street area by other actors (Interview BID manager).

Round four (2009 – 2010, and still running): Expanding the BID

Autopoietic characteristics

In the preparation of the re-ballot, major attention was given to re-assure the earlier benefits of the BID and its network. In the proposal BID2, prepared to put forward in re-ballot, the key achievements and the new areas of work were mentioned. “*The BID has consistently delivered on its promises to improve the environment for business.*” (BID2 proposal, 2009) The BID2 proposal still put forward the initial controversy of “bankers and drunks” as the major concern of the BID, and warned for a return to that situation if the BID is not to be continued (BID2 proposal, 2009, Interview BID manager, 2010). The existing organization was reassured and maintained.

Dissipative behaviour

Apart from continuing with the current work, two new themes were introduced. These were ‘developing’ (targeting vacant buildings, regeneration in partnership with West Midlands Advantage) and ‘connecting’ (aim at lobbying for a rapid transport solution system and better connections). An effort was made to make the BID more heard in planning, economic development, and transportation strategies made by other (public and private) actors

outside the BID. The BID had earlier proven to be instrumental in establishing the Westside project in 2008 (a regeneration partnership of stakeholders in Birmingham-west), and the advantages of this partnership were emphasised in the BID2 proposal as well. These new activities were taken forward because the BID learned in previous rounds what it could deliver and because other stakeholders than the BID are not that active in addressing the challenges of Broad Street in relation to regeneration and connectivity (BID2 proposal, 2009; Interview BID manager, 2010). Although the process for re-ballot is structured along the prescribed BID legislation, the Broad Street BID again translated local, specific and new issues into the framework of the BID. Remarkable is that the BID tried to reach further than the initial controversy, and thus expanded its network, not only in organizational or geographical terms, but also strategically trying to expand its legitimacy, while keeping close to the local conditions at the same time.

5.2 Relating self-organization to vital actor relations in the regeneration process

On Broad Street Birmingham especially in the second round there were ongoing interactions between the various local stakeholders. The 2003 fight, ending round one, was the event that made the businesses and other actors on Broad Street aware of a joint problem, which was further defined in the second round. Boundary spanning work was done in order to look beyond the regular business activities, and co--production took place to find joint solutions. These were formalized by using the BID legislation as facilitating legal framework. As a consequence, the local businesses became leading and decisive in the process and the deliberations on Broad Street were furthered among a fixed group of actors represented in the BID Board during the third round. Again, the legal framework of the BID was facilitating this, and according to the BID legislation, both businesses, the BID board and the City Centre Partnership had to adapt to new roles. In the fourth round, the BID needed to renew its legitimacy by a re-ballot prescribed by the BID legislation. This demanded new interactions between local stakeholders to reassure and renew the BID strategy. Furthermore, connections were being made with other local stakeholders which were not part of the BID organisation, again boundary spanning work was done and potential new roles were explored. Although the deliberations on Broad Street started due to a conflict between different functions and users of the area, the process that emerged is characterized by vital actor relationships. There is a low level of conflict and high mutual understanding between the local stakeholders, which is symbolized by a positive re-ballot in 2010.

6. CASE COMPARISON

Vital urban regeneration processes?

In the previous two sections we subsequently discussed and analyzed the two forms of self-organized behaviour and its impact on the vitality of the actor relations in the urban regeneration processes of both cases. In this section we explore similarities and differences between the cases.

Autopoietic and dissipative self-organization

In both cases we observed both manifestations of self-organisation, dissipative and autopoietic. We argue that this continuous interplay was important for creating and maintaining the vital actor relations, which made the local initiatives effective. At the same time new structures emerged in which local stakeholders got the room and responsibility to take the lead in the regeneration process.

Vital actor relations

When we take a closer look into the specific contribution that either dissipative or autopoietic self-organization made to the vitality of the actor-relations, specific differences between the cases become visible. In Caterham Barracks, the dissipative characteristics in the case are focused on connecting different actors and different spatial functions, in order to create a wide and diverse community related to the barracks. The people involved gradually became a more stable group because of a number of participants that remained turning up at meetings. The autopoietic characteristics were focused on consolidating ideas, delineating focus, formulating plans and finding organisational structure, in a rather converging manner towards a coherent development plan and the start of the Trust. On Broad Street, the dissipative characteristics in the case were rather focussed on pragmatic problem solving. Each time an existing problem was solved, a further challenge was found. Hence, instead of integrated vision building, a more ad-hoc and pragmatic way of working was followed. Homogeneity between the main actors, the businesses, has been important in creating vital actor relations. An explanation for this difference could be found in the object of the self-organization: at Broad Street the regeneration was about overcoming the controversy between conflicting functions in the area but keeping both functions, i.e. night time and day time economy, sustain, while in Caterham it was about the transformation of an area's meaning and establishing new functions in the area after the closing of the Barracks.

As described above, the interplay between dissipative and autopoietic system behaviour led to vital actor relationships, and eventually, to new governance structures in which local stakeholders took the lead in the urban regeneration process. At the same time, these emerging structures triggered autopoietic self-organization by themselves. This led to stability and progress, but is also a potential risk: the new emerging structures sometimes

challenge already existing structures. For example, the democratic control of by the District Council concerning the developments in Caterham Barracks has significantly changed now. Also in the Birmingham case did the pre-existing City Centre Partnership adapt to a new role after the BID started to show off effects. A mutual adaptation of roles took place during the self-organized process: new governance structures emerge and old structures adapt.

In the case of Caterham the new structure of the Trust was capable of producing self-sustaining urban regeneration by running and facilitating community managed facilities. In Caterham Baracks, community engagement was focused on outcome. Each round has explorative actions, but seemed to be rounded up by consolidation, delineation or selection. After each round a product was put forward as a result, and the final result is the creation of a new vision for the barracks, to be realised in the new development and creation of the Trust to keep the community as involved as they were in earlier rounds. However, connections between the Trust and the other actors (private developer, District Council and local community) became less vital in the last round. This autopoietic behaviour, endangering vital relationships with the community, could become problematic, for example in terms of legitimacy, which is a common issue for neighbourhood based initiatives (e.g. Chaskin & Garg, 1997).

In the Birmingham case, the BID proved to be an efficient vehicle for producing self-sustaining urban regeneration. However, the BID also excluded non-business actors such as local residents. On Broad Street, not so much a final goal like a plan or redevelopment was the leading idea, but the pragmatic solving of the 'problems of the day'. As these problems were originally legitimating the BID, the problems both needed to be solved and remembered at the same time. In the last round, when the BID had become rather successful, new and further challenges were found in order to maintain the legitimacy of the BID governance structure. The autopoietic characteristic of shutting out residents and solely focussing on businesses could be seen as a weakness in the light of inclusiveness and community involvement, but at the same time it is an element that makes the BID effective in solving the shared problems on Broad Street.

7. EXPLANATORY CONDITIONS

The goal of this research was to gain understanding of self-organizing processes in regenerating urban areas and to find conditions which favour these processes to emerge and to evolve into vital collaborations. In this section we describe four conditions which we found in both cases. These conditions are case driven.

1) Events threatening the identity of the area

In both cases dissipative behaviour is triggered by (external) events which had a disrupting effect on the meaning of the area for local stakeholders, i.e. the identity of the urban social system was threatened. In Birmingham the controversies between “drunks and bankers” were harming the reputation of the area. The death of a person triggered local businesses in cooperation with local authorities to take initiative. For the local stakeholders, this event strongly symbolized the conflicting functions of the area. In Caterham the closing of the Barracks triggered local community members to take initiative in a regeneration process. Although the Barracks were losing their function, they still had a strong historical, economical and social meaning for the local community. The threatening of the demolition of the buildings in order to build new houses triggered local stakeholders to protect the area and to transform it into a preservation site. Subsequently, local stakeholders prevented the demolition of the historical buildings of the Barracks and came up with the idea to reuse these buildings for community facilities. In Birmingham, the BID did not destruct the neighbourhood ‘function’ of the night-time economy, but developed new ways of managing this night time economy in such a way that it was not a controversy for the day-time economy anymore.

2) Boundary-spanning work

In both cases we observed that key individuals were able to make connections between the different spheres (public, private and/or civic). In the literature, these connecting individuals are also known under the concept of boundary spanners (e.g. Alter & Hage, 1993; Williams, 2002). These boundary spanners not only connected actors operating in the different spheres, but also connected institutionalized structures to the emerging structures within the regeneration processes. In the case of Caterham the chairman of the Trust was important in creating relations between governmental institutions (the District Council and the District administration), the local community and the private developer. In Birmingham the BID Managers were important boundary spanners, especially in the second round, when the BID was initiated in the first place, but also in the fourth round, when it needed to renew its legitimacy again by the re-ballot. Then, new interactions emerged among local stakeholders in which the already existing BID partners sought and found communication and understanding with new content.

3) Mutual adaptation of roles

The emergence of new structures puts pressure on existing institutionalized structures. In both cases we observed a process of mutual adaptation of roles. In the Caterham case, the role of the local authority changed into facilitating instead of initiating or determining. In this way room is created for the self-organizing local stakeholders to take responsibility for the community facilities. Furthermore, the private developer adapted his way of working by

taking a broader perspective on spatial development, including other spatial functions in its planning, by organizing a community planning weekend for the first time and by developing a S106 contract with the Local Group. On Broad Street too, mutual adaptation with regard to the emerging structure of the BID took place. The City Centre Partnership reorganised itself from a liaison between City Council and the Birmingham business community into a facilitating agency working for the Birmingham BIDs. Other local stakeholders, such as the police, City Council and residents accept the leading role of local businesses in the regeneration process. At the same time, the participating businesses in the BID were willing to extend their regular business activities with taking up certain responsibilities for the area. In both cases we observe that the succession of the emerging structures by the self-organizing local stakeholders' coincide with adaptation of institutionalized roles of other actors in the environment, which is also concluded in other case-studies of interactive or self-governance (e.g. Edelenbos, 2005; Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2011).

4) Facilitating legal frameworks

In both cases enabling legal frameworks were used by the vigorous actor relations and facilitated the self-organization. In Caterham the S106 legislation obligated the private developer to invest in the local community. This framework has flexibility to be adapted to local circumstances. The S106 agreement was used as an innovative way to facilitate the Trust. Furthermore, the Trust model provided both the legal capacity as flexibility to facilitate community regeneration efforts. On Broad Street the BID legislation was used especially because it is prescriptive in procedures, but not on local conditions and themes. The legislation thus enabled businesses to find, and take forward the issues they regarded as important with their own means and responsibility.

8. CONCLUSION

In this paper we explored and investigated the emergence of local initiatives in vital urban regeneration processes. We acknowledge that we only analyzed two cases in a specific country (UK), and therefore cannot provide generalized conclusions. However, we believe we found interesting insights from our two case comparative research. Using the concept of self-organization from complexity theory is helpful for analyzing how these local initiatives emerged, evolved and were able to consolidate. These self-organizing processes were not at forehand coined as regeneration processes but were a reaction to area identity threatening developments. Eventually, they evolved into, what could be approached as, urban regeneration. Vital actor relationships emerged in which the meaning of the areas for the local stakeholders evolved in such a way that it was connected with its historical roots, but also redefined in order to make it productive for a regeneration of the local community.

In both cases, the local initiatives led to new structures embedded in vital relationships between public, private and/or societal actors. The case analysis showed that there was a continuous interplay between autopoietic and dissipative system behaviour. Other scholars also stress this balance between these two manifestations of self-organization, characterized by the so-called 'edge of chaos' (e.g. Kauffman 1993; Merry, 1999) or situations of 'bounded instability' (Griffin et al., 1999). Our research empirically substantiates this theoretical assumption. We argue that this continuous interplay provided space for the new governance structures related to the local initiatives to evolve, but in connection with existing institutional structures and actors relevant with regard to the urban regeneration processes. In the emergence of this new dynamic equilibrium existing roles of involved actors changed. In both cases we observe a rather facilitating role of governmental organizations and a more integral focus of spatial development by private actors in connection with the local community. Furthermore, boundary spanners were highly important in connecting different parts of the system in a meaningful way, catalysing or initiating these processes of change. To maintain the vital actor relationships, continuous efforts are needed to keep interplay between autopoietic and dissipative behaviour.

Harnessing complex governance issues, such as urban regeneration, by the use of participatory arrangements is, in line with academic and practitioner discourses criticizing modernistic principles (Bond & Thompson-Fawcett, 2007), increasingly seen as a more effective and legitimate approach than conventional representative arrangements linked to hierarchical-instrumental policy making (see Wagenaar, 2007). In this light, self-organization driven by local stakeholders' initiatives is highly potential as it even goes one step further as it is community-based instead of government-led participation (see Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). However, consolidation of such initiatives does mean a challenge for existing structures for government, market and society that will need to adapt and change their roles to new governance realities. In this way self-organizing processes become meaningful in the regeneration of urban areas.

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CHAPTER 6

The effects of multiple boundary spanners on trust and performance of urban governance networks

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ABSTRACT

Previous research has extensively analyzed the role, and indicated the importance, of network management for the functioning and performance of public or governance networks. In this article, we focus on the influence of boundary spanning actors in such networks – an aspect less examined in the governance network literature. Boundary spanners are considered to be important for governance network performance. Building on the literature, we expect a mediating role of trust in this relationship. To empirically test these relationships, we conducted survey research (N=141) among project managers involved in urban governance networks: networks around complex urban projects that include the organizations involved in the governance process (the formulation of policies, decision making, and implementation) in these complex projects. We found a strong positive relationship between the presence of boundary spanners and trust and governance network performance. The results indicate a partially mediating role of trust in this relationship. Furthermore, we found that these boundary spanners originated mainly from private and societal organizations, and less from governmental organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Previous research has extensively analyzed the role, and indicated the importance of network management for the functioning and performance of governance networks (see for example Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997; Meier and O'Toole, 2007; Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Klijn, Steijn, & Edelenbos, 2010a). These studies specifically focus on the management of interaction between different actors in the network and their impact on network performance. We approach network management in another way, as we focus on a specific set of actors in that network: the boundary spanning persons that operate on the borders of their home organizations. We are interested in their role and their significance for network performance and trust building in governance networks. We focus on issue-specific networks, formed around complex urban issues in the field of spatial planning. These urban issues, like regeneration of deprived areas, are embedded in networks, in which different governmental agencies, commercial actors, non-for-profit organizations and residents reshape urban areas and are dependent of each other, as these issues cross different organizational and jurisdictional boundaries (Healey, 2006; Wagenaar, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010a).

Connective capacity is considered to be important to realize supported and qualitatively good outcomes in networks around complex governance issues (e.g. Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Healey, 2006; Edelenbos, Bressers, & Scholten, 2013). The literature on boundary spanners pays specific attention to individuals who work at the boundaries of their organization. Competent boundary spanners are organizational members who are able to link the organization they represent with its environment (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). They are considered to be important for building trust within governance networks and to help improve coordination around decision making and implementation in governance networks around complex public issues (Steadman, 1992; Williams, 2002; Van Hulst et al., 2012). Although the effects of boundary spanning on individual organizational performance and inter-organizational collaboration and trust are (to some extent) reported in the literature (e.g. Leifer & Delbecq 1978; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981; Seabright et al., 1992; Ahearne et al., 2005), there is a lack of empirical studies, especially quantitative (and mixed method) research, focusing on the functioning and presence of competent boundary spanners on the one hand and governance network performance and trust within these networks on the other. In this article, we want to empirically investigate these relationships. Building on the literature, we assume that boundary spanners have a positive influence on network performance, and that trust has a mediating role in this relationship. We conducted survey research on complex urban projects in the four largest cities in The Netherlands. These projects were developed in governance networks including public, private, and societal actors. We examined where boundary spanners in these networks were located and what the effect was of the presence of boundary spanners on the level of trust within these networks and network performance.

In the next section, we elaborate the characteristics of the issues and the type of networks on which we are focusing. In the third section, we elaborate on the concept of boundary spanners and the relationships between boundary spanners, trust, and network performance, resulting in four research hypotheses. The fourth section, dedicated to our research methods and techniques, is followed by a discussion of our findings. The final section presents conclusions and a discussion of the research results.

GOVERNANCE NETWORKS AND THE NEED FOR CONNECTIVE STRATEGIES

Governance Networks: What Kind of Networks Are We Talking About?

In contemporary public administration theory it is recognized that interdependent sets of actors provide input to many decision-making processes (e.g. Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997; Pierre, 2000; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). This has led to a developing body of research on so-called governance networks. Despite the differences in use and meaning among scholars, certain main characteristics and presumptions of governance networks can be identified:

1. They emerge and evolve around boundary-crossing public issues that cannot be solved by one actor alone but require collective actions of more actors (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). These issues cross different organizational, jurisdictional, societal, and/or functional boundaries and have a multi-value character (Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997);
2. Therefore there is relatively high interdependency between actors to deal with these issues. The different actors around boundary-crossing public issues have to join their resources and knowledge to achieve qualitatively good outcomes (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001);
3. These interdependencies require interactions between various actors with different interests, which show some durability over time (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004);
4. Steering within these interactions is complicated, because each actor is relatively autonomous in the sense that network participants typically have limited formal accountability to network-level goals (Provan & Kenis, 2008), and each actor has his/her own perception about the policy problems and solutions (Teisman, 2000).

Based on these characteristics, we define governance networks as more or less stable patterns of social relations between mutually dependent actors, which form around public issues, and which are formed, maintained, and changed through interactions between the involved actors (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004). We focus on governance networks around complex urban projects that include the organizations involved in the governance process (the formulation of policies, decision making, and implementation) in these complex projects. We tested whether these networks had the characteristics of governance networks described above (see section Methods). Hence, we use a rather broad conceptualization

of governance networks (cf. Klijn, 2008), for example in contrast to literature focusing on policy implementation networks around public services, which have – usually – a more clear goal and are often characterized by high-density groups of actors (e.g. Provan and Kenis, 2008; Meier and O'Toole, 2007). The interrelationships between the different organizations in the networks that we examined are more loosely coupled. They are issue-specific networks, since they emerge around concrete complex urban problems, dealing with specific urban development, like regeneration of certain city districts where for example city representatives, private project developers and residents form a temporary actor network in developing and implementing the project. In these networks there is a strong diversity of involved organizations, interests, and perceptions within these kinds of networks. The realization of good network performance in such an environment calls for connective capacity (Edelenbos et al., 2013).

The Need for Connective Network Strategies

The concept of connective capacity of governance networks is a response to the struggle against fragmentation in contemporary specialized governance systems in Western democracies dealing with complex societal issues (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011; Edelenbos et al., 2013). Fragmentation is defined as a whole field of separate and specialized organizations, and is the consequence of specialization, the main driving force for wealth and development. Further, as long as specialization is a driving force for wealth, fragmentation will be the normal societal organizational principle (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009; Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011).

As noted above, complex urban issues are cross-boundary in nature. Literature on urban governance stress the problems of fragmentation and complexity encountered by different kinds of stakeholders (including governmental agencies) to effectively deal with these cross-boundary issues (Wagenaar, 2007; Christensen & Lægreid, 2007). As governance processes dealing with these issues evolve at the boundaries of different public, private, and societal organization, the connective activities of a variety of individuals are likely to matter for the performance of the network. While this is recognized in the literature, much of the attention goes to the role of (representatives of) central actors (e.g. lead organizations, network managers, politicians) (e.g. Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009; Klijn et al., 2010; Cristofoli et al., 2012). Empirical research with a broader focus, i.e. formal and informal boundary spanners originating not only from official responsible organizations, but also from societal organizations, NGOs and community organizations, is scarce (cf. Van Hulst et al., 2012). Therefore, and in addition to many literature on network management, we focus on a broader set of boundary spanners with various organizational backgrounds, to empirically examine their influence on network performance.

Boundary Spanners as Connective Agents

The concept of boundary spanners is developed in organizational literature. Just like actors dealing with complex governance issues, organizations are also confronted with forces of fragmentation due to specialization (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981). Organizations have different types of boundaries (e.g. horizontal, vertical, and external), which “...separate specialized subunits from each other and from external areas” (Ibid, p. 290). Successful boundary spanners are strongly linked internally and externally, so that they can both gather and transfer information from outside their sub-units. The combination of internal linkages (in their own unit or organization) and external linkages (with other units or other organizations) makes up their perceived competence and determines their boundary status (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981; Levina & Vaast, 2005). We want to stress that we focus on ‘boundary spanners-in-practice’, as Levina and Vaast (2005) call them. There is a lot of ambiguity in the literature on boundary spanning due to differences in operationalization. Confusing (formal) representational communication roles and informational communication roles (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981) and/or officially nominated boundary spanners (agents who are expected to engage in boundary spanning, such as top managers) and boundary spanners-in-practice (Levina & Vaast, 2005) is probably an important explanation for this ambiguity. Informational roles are involved in a two-step information flow (acquiring external information and transmitting/translating this internally and vice versa), whereas representational roles are rather involved in a one-step information flow and perform a more routine transacting or representational role. In this study we mean by boundary spanners, individuals who are involved in this two-step information flow: individuals practicing high boundary spanning activities.

In short, boundary spanners manage the interface between organizations and their environment. Boundary spanning is essentially characterized by negotiating the interactions between organization and environment in order to realize a better fit, which often also means that practices of involved organizations/systems are transformed (Steadman, 1992; Levina & Vaast, 2005; Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2011; Van Hulst et al., 2012). To effectively accomplish a better fit, boundary spanners are engaged in three main (and inter-related) activities: connecting or linking different people and processes at both sides of the boundary, selecting relevant information on both sides of the boundary, and translating this information to the other side of the boundary (Leifer & Delbecq, 1978; Tushman & Scanlan, 1981; Jemison, 1984). Realizing connections between actors in governance networks is about building and maintaining sustainable relationships (Williams, 2002). A common denominator in the early organizational boundary spanning literature is the emphasis on information exchange (see Jemison 1984). For selecting relevant information on one side of the boundary and translating this information to the other side of the boundary, boundary spanners need to have a feeling for the social construction of other actors (Williams, 2002). According to Tushman and Scanlan (1981: 291–2), boundaries “can be spanned ef-

fectively only by individuals who understand the coding schemes and are attuned to the contextual information on both sides of the boundary, enabling them to search out relevant information on one side and disseminate it on the other.” In this respect, Williams (2002) distinguishes a variety of personal characteristics of competent boundary spanners in governance networks, like empathy, being a good listener and translator to other communities. Boundary spanners understand other actors’ needs (Ferguson et al., 2005) and are so-called *active listeners* (Williams, 2002; Van Hulst et al., 2012): open to be influenced by the views of other people. This enables them to search for shared meanings (Levina & Vaast, 2005). In this way, sustainable relationships with actors from different organizational backgrounds are developed and maintained. These and other personality traits are also widely stressed and discussed in (social) psychology literature and related to building effective cooperation and project performance (e.g. Thal & Bedingfield, 2010; Davis, 2011).

However, at this point we have to be clear that we don’t study personal traits of boundary spanners from a (social) psychological point of view. Instead we depart from a behavioristic viewpoint and specifically look at how boundary spanners act in a governance network and which actions they perform in (trying to) connecting different stakeholders in the network. In the section “operationalization and measurement” we come back to this, by operationalizing boundary spanning as a set of actions that boundary spanners perform in the practice of urban governance.

Many studies show that the presence of competent boundary spanners leads to a better fit between organization and environment, although the results are not that straightforward. A better fit is often deduced from better organizational performance or higher levels of trust within inter-organizational cooperation. For example, positive organizational outcomes of boundary spanning individuals are found in terms of innovation (Tushman, 1977), financial performance (Dollinger, 1984), strategic decision-making (e.g. Jemison, 1984), access to knowledge (e.g. Cross & Cummings, 2004), and organizational identification of customers (e.g. Ahearne et al., 2005). Furthermore, boundary spanners could increase trust between individuals of different organizations involved in inter-organizational cooperation, but this in turn could have negative consequences in terms of organizational adaptability due to over embeddedness (Seabright et al., 1992; Brass et al., 2004). While negative outcomes of boundary spanning activities are less found in the literature, they are also less examined according to Ramarajan et al. (2011). In their study on negative consequences of boundary spanning contact in uncertain multi-organizational contexts, they found that frequent contact of boundary spanners with other organization’s personnel was related to more inter-organizational problems, and also related to more negative attitudes toward their own job and organization. Hence, the results are somewhat mixed, at least due to differences in operationalization, level of analysis, and organizational context (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981; Perrone et al., 2003; Brass et al., 2004; Ramarajan et al., 2011).

Boundary Spanners and Governance Network Performance

Dealing effectively with complex urban governance issues requires a high flow of information between involved actors (Wagenaar, 2007). Especially, because in such a context goals are not straightforward and often diverse (Teisman, 2000; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Furthermore, it requires mutual alignment of a diversity of stakeholders. This means that realizing vital connections between actors could increase the performance of these mutually dependent actors, as it stressed in the literature on urban regeneration and neighborhood governance (e.g. Purdue, 2001; Musso et al., 2006; Van Meerkerk, Boonstra, & Edelenbos 2013). Also the literature on bridging ties, individuals who span and connect different structural holes in networks, stress the increase of social capital available for the network to use, if brokerage activities are performed (Granovetter, 1985; Burt, 2004). “A theme in this work is that behavior, opinion, and information, broadly conceived, are more homogeneous within than between groups. People focus on activities inside their own group, which creates holes in the information flow between groups, or more simply, structural holes” (Burt, 2004: 353). In their study of neighborhood governance reforms in Los Angeles, Musso et al. (2006) note that bridging ties increases the reachability of information between individuals and could create more and shorter paths between groups. However, they also note that it is “a combination of strong and weak ties, [which] have direct effects on information diffusion, access to resources capacity for collective action, and political mobilization” (p. 92). This is line with the literature on boundary spanning, stressing the importance of strong internal and external linkage.¹

With their role in increasing the flow of information, and translating information across organizational boundaries, connecting individuals and processes across organizational boundaries, we expect that the presence of boundary spanners contributes to the performance of governance networks. By network performance we refer to the substantive results of the actor network, such as the innovative character of the project plan, problem-solving capacity, and cost- efficiency (see also Klijn et al., 2010a), regarding specific urban projects. The specific operationalization and measurement is discussed in the next section. We formulate the following hypothesis to test the relationship between the presence of boundary spanners in the network and governance network performance:

H1) The presence of more boundary spanners has a positive effect on governance network performance

Boundary Spanners and Trust

In the relationship between boundary spanners and network performance it is important to consider their influence on trust building. An important driver for the emergence and sustainment of collaborative efforts in networks is trust (Huxham & Vangen 2005; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2008). Going through the literature and providing a definition

useful for empirical research of governance networks, Edelenbos and Klijn (2007) describe trust as referring to “a more or less stable perception of actors about the intentions of other actors, that is, that they refrain from opportunistic behavior” (p. 30).

In some literature boundary spanning activities are positively related to trust building (Williams, 2002; Ferguson et al., 2005; Perrone et al., 2003). Frequent and recurring interaction with actors with different organizational backgrounds gives the opportunity to get familiar with one another’s values and perspectives and to show respect to these in building common ground and framework (Steadman, 1992). As competent boundary spanners are relationship builders and develop a feeling for the interests and social constructions of other actors in the governance network, we assume that they positively influence the level of trust in the governance network.

H2) The presence of more boundary spanners leads to a higher level of trust in the governance network

Boundary Spanners, Trust, and Governance Network Performance

From previous research we know that trust has a positive influence on governance network performance (Klijn, Edelenbos, & Steijn, 2010b; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Building on the literature, Klijn et al. (2010b, 196–8) mention four arguments why trust is important within governance networks for achieving supported and qualitatively good outcomes:

1. Trust reduces the risk inherent in cooperative relations, because it creates greater predictability about each other’s behavior.
2. Trust increases the probability that actors will invest their resources, such as money and knowledge, in cooperation.
3. Trust stimulates learning by increasing the exchange of information and knowledge. Knowledge is partly tacit and only available, for instance, in the form of human capital. This type of knowledge can be acquired only by exchange and intensive cooperation.
4. Trust has the ability to stimulate innovation. Innovations emerge by confronting different ideas and expertise. Trust can facilitate innovation by reducing uncertainty about opportunistic behavior and by making vertical integration and coordination – which could hinder innovation – less necessary.

We acknowledge that in literature the relationship can be vice versa, i.e. that good performance and continued cooperation lead to increased trust (e.g. Lewicki & Bunker, 1996), as ‘good results’ like consensus on decisions and satisfaction with concrete implementation of decisions strengthen trustworthiness among stakeholders (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007). However, for this study we explicitly focus on how trust leads to higher network performance. To test this causal relationship we formulate the following hypothesis:

H3) A higher level of trust between actors involved in the governance network leads to better network performance

Assuming that boundary spanners positively influence network performance and trust, and that trust also contributes to network performance, we expect a partially mediating role of trust:

H4) Trust partially mediates the relationship between the presence of boundary spanners within the governance network and governance network performance

In the model below (figure 1), the various hypotheses are combined in the conceptual framework we will test. We have to note that we did not include context variables in our model, such as the political opportunity structure or the network position of actors. Previous research shows that such context factors are important for both the extent in which (and what kind of) connective activities are undertaken and the effectiveness of boundary spanning activities (Stevenson & Greenberg, 2000). However, our main goal is to examine where boundary spanners are located and whether boundary spanners effect the level of trust within governance networks and network performance. Hence, we have left this contextual dimension out of our research.

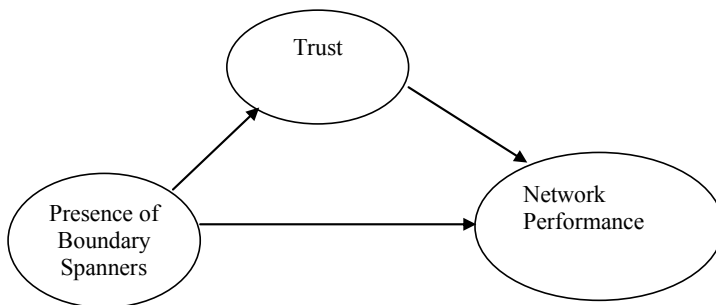


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

The following section addresses data collection and the measurement of our core variables. Then, we describe the extent to which boundary spanners were present in the urban governance networks researched and test our model.

METHODS

Sample and Data Collection

We collected data from a web-based survey held in 2011 (April–July) among leading project managers in the four largest cities of the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht²) and managers within two private firms (P2 and DHV) that operate as project managers in these four cities. The organizations involved actively participated in the survey in two ways. Firstly, they organized the e-mailing to the project managers and encouraged them to participate in the survey. Secondly, we held three preparation sessions with eight project managers from the four participating cities to validate our survey approach and questionnaire. In these sessions, we discussed the relevance of the items and whether they understood all the survey questions. In this way, we were able to improve our questionnaire: we added some items and we changed the formulation of questions. In the next section, we present and discuss the items that we used to measure our core variables. These items are largely derived from the scientific literature, using existing scales.

Each respondent is a manager involved in specific urban projects in one of the four cities. We consider the set of actors involved in each (urban) project as a governance network: a governance network consists of actors (local government, project developers, building companies, residents, societal stakeholder groups, etc.) that have interdependent relationship with one another in developing and implementing an urban project. Each project manager was asked as a respondent to fill in the questionnaire with a specific urban project in mind in which they are/were most intensively involved, and which they had to keep in mind when responding to all questions. We explicitly selected the project managers because they know what is going on in the surveyed projects and are also equipped to answer specific questions concerning boundary spanning, project management, relations with principal, and so forth. To safeguard the independence of our data, we arranged with participating organizations that they send e-mails to each leading project manager of a specific urban project. In this way, we made sure we had one manager for each project. We sent one follow-up by e-mail. In addition, we called respondents to remind them about the survey.³

Table 1 describes the population of the project managers from the four largest municipalities of the Netherlands and from two private firms. The table also shows the response rate, which is 41 percent ($N=141$).

Table 1 Population and Response of the Survey

	Population	Response (absolute)	Response (percentage)
Municipalities (4)	288	117	40.6%
Private organizations (2)	57	24	42.1%
Total	345	141	40.9%

Unit of analysis

In this research we study the relationship between (the presence of) boundary spanners in the governance network and network performance, with trust (among people in the network) as an partly mediating variable in this supposed relationship. Our unit of analysis is on the level of the governance network. We study the presence of boundary spanners in the network, which don't necessarily be the official project manager but also can turn out to be other persons (resident, private project developer, etc.). We therefore asked the leading project manager of each network to what extent they witnessed boundary spanners in the network. As will be further elaborated in the section "measurement of variables", these persons were referred to as performing explicit activities to connect different actors and processes in the network with their home organization. The variables performance and trust are also analyzed on the network level. Performance is measured by asking the respondent for example to score the durability and the innovative character of the project results in relation to the urban issue at stake (see section "measurement of variables"). The level of trust was measured by explicitly asking the respondent to indicate and score the level of trust among (main) actors in the governance network. We have to note here that our data is cross-sectional and were collected at a single point in time. More research is therefore required to sustain the causal relationships.

Governance Networks around Complex Urban Projects

The urban projects could be described as complex projects developed within governance networks. The networks around the projects on which the managers reported, mostly included more than ten organizations (66%). In the results section, when we discuss the locus of boundary spanners, more specific information is presented about the types of organizations included in the networks. Most of the networks included societal interest groups (94.3%), private developers (78.6%), architectural firms (79.4%), and different governmental organizations.

We also checked whether the urban projects were really boundary-crossing public issues. We measured this by focusing on task complexity: how many and what kinds of development and/or spatial activities are included in the project (Klijn et al., 2010a)? Consequent to the preparation sessions with the eight project managers, we asked about six different kinds of spatial activities/tasks: infrastructure (rail and public highways), water management, housing, social facilities (schools, sports facilities), development and/or regeneration of business areas, and development of city parks (cf. Klijn et al., 2010a). Measured on a five-point Likert scale, on average more than three of these tasks ($M = 3.76$) play a medium to large part in the projects, which confirms the boundary-crossing nature of the projects.

Measurement of Variables

In this section we discuss the different scales we used to measure our core variables trust, the presence of boundary spanners, and governance network performance. Subsequently we discuss the validity and reliability of these scales. Table 2 presents the specific items of the scales, their factor loadings, and the construct reliabilities. The descriptive statistics and the correlation matrices can be found in table 4.

Boundary Spanning Actors

We could not find an existing scale for measuring the presence of boundary spanners in governance networks. To develop a reliable scale we build on scales in the business literature (e.g. Jemison, 1984; Ferguson et al., 2005) and on the literature about the activities of boundary spanners (see section Boundary Spanners as Connective Agents). We distinguish five different boundary spanning activities as an indication of the presence of boundary spanners in the governance networks:

1. Good information exchange between the network and the home organization (e.g. Tushman & Scanlan, 1981);
2. Building and maintenance of sustainable relationships between organizations in the network (Williams, 2002; Klijn et al., 2010a);
3. Making effective connections between developments in the network and work processes in the home organization (cf. Jemison, 1984; Steadman, 1992);
4. A feeling for what is important for other organizations in the network (Williams, 2002; Ferguson et al., 2005);
5. Timely mobilization of their home organization when this is considered necessary/useful regarding developments in the network (cf. Klijn et al., 2010a; Ferguson et al., 2005).

In the survey, we asked the respondents whether they thought there were many persons active in the network who show these kinds of activities. Furthermore, we asked where these persons were located (i.e. their organizational background). The results will be discussed in the next section. Together, the items to measure the presence of boundary spanners form a scale with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84, by which we could consider the scale as reliable. The mean score on the presence of boundary spanning persons is 3.37 (SD = 0.67) on a five-point Likert scale, indicating a moderate presence of boundary spanners in the governance networks.

Trust between Actors in the Governance Network

To measure trust within the network, we build strongly on the existing scale of Klijn et al. (2010b), consisting of different dimensions derived from the business literature, including the notions of agreement trust, benefit of the doubt, reliability, and goodwill trust. Because the project managers in the sessions to improve our questionnaire argued that for them an

Table 2 Measurement Items and Constructs' Reliability

Items and Constructs ^a		Factor loading	Corrected Item-to-Total Correlations	Alpha/ Composite Reliability	Source
Presence of boundary spanners in the governance network				.84/.76	New scale
1)	In this project there are many persons active who are able to build and maintain sustainable relationships with different organizations in the network	.69	.59		
2)	In this project there are many persons active who have a feeling of what is important and what matters for other organizations in the network	.80	.71	AVE 0.53	SIC 0.42; 0.27
3)	In this project there are many persons active who take care of a good information exchange between the network and their home organization	.79	.73		
4)	In this project there are many persons active who make effective connections between developments in the network and internal work processes of their home organizations	.71	.66		
5)	In this project there are many persons active who are able to mobilize their home organization in a timely manner in relation to developments in the network	.61	.54		
Trust between actors in the governance network				.80/.66	Adapted Klijn et al. (2010a)
1)	The parties in this project generally live up to the agreements made with one another	.54	.49		
2)	The parties in this project give one another the benefit of the doubt	.67	.60		
3)	The parties in this project keep in mind the intentions of the other parties	.82	.69		
4)	Parties in this project can assume that the intentions of the other parties are good in principle	.63	.57		
5)	Parties in this project feel a good personal connection with one another	.68		AVE 0.46	SIC 0.42; 0.25
Governance network performance				.76/.63	Adapted Klijn et al. (2010b)
1)	Do you think that innovative ideas have been developed during the project?	.59	.50		
2)	Do you think that different environmental functions have been connected sufficiently?	.69	.57		
3)	Do you think that the solutions that have been developed really deal with the problems at hand?	.75	.60		
4)	Do you think that the developed solutions are durable solutions for the future?	.67	.52		
5)	Do you think that – in general – the benefits exceed the costs of the cooperation process?	.60	.48	AVE 0.44	SIC 0.25; 0.27

a. All the items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly disagree to (5) Strongly agree.

important additional element of trust is 'feeling a good connection with the other actors', we improved the scale by adding this aspect of trust.

Performance of Governance Networks

There has been much discussion in the governance literature on how to measure performance of governance networks. We want to stress that there is no particular best approach (e.g. Provan & Milward, 2001). In urban governance networks multiple stakeholders are involved which pursue different goals. Therefore, picking a specific goal of one of the nodes to measure network performance is not considered adequate (cf. Provan & Milward, 2001). Furthermore, measuring network performance is problematic because decision-making processes in governance networks are lengthy, and actors' goals can change over time. Goal displacement is the negative term for this phenomenon, and learning is the positive term (see Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). We follow the approach of Klijn et al. (2010a) to deal with this problem. They used perceived network performance as a proxy for measuring network performance. Furthermore, they used more than one criterion to measure this. We used their scale, which takes into account that goals change and that actors have different views about the outcomes.

Measurement Analyses

Analysis of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses to assess convergent and discriminant validity. The overall fit of the measurement model was tested by the fit indices CFI and RMSEA. The CFI index has a value of 0.973 and the parameter RMSEA has a value of 0.040 (PCLOSE larger than 0.050, i.e. 0.731), which indicate a good fit of the measurement model with the data (Byrne, 2010).

All factor loadings are larger than 0.50, a very conservative cut-off level (Hair et al., 1995), which is a first important indicator demonstrating convergent validity. Furthermore, the composite reliability indexes of the three scales all exceed the .60 threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

To further assesses the reliability of the measures we computed corrected item-to-total correlations and Cronbach's alphas. All items had corrected item-to-total correlations that were greater than .40, which represents a general threshold (Field, 2005). All Cronbach's alphas exceeded the widely accepted cutoff value of .70.

To establish discriminant validity, we compared the average variance extracted (AVE) with the squared inter-construct correlation estimates (SIC). The AVE of all three constructs are larger than the corresponding squared inter-construct correlations, which means that the indicators have more in common with the construct they are associated with than they do with other constructs.

Testing for General Method Bias

An important issue with respect to measurement is that our data are all self-reported and based on a single application of a questionnaire. This can result in inflated relationships between variables due to common method variance, that is, variance that is due to the measurement method rather than the constructs themselves (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). We therefore conducted a Harman one-factor test to evaluate the extent to which common method variance was a concern. A factor analysis was conducted on all 15 items used to measure the perceptual variables covered by the hypotheses (background variables such as phase of the project were left out). No single factor accounted for the majority of the explained variance (i.e. 36.2%). Although the above analysis does not totally rule out the possibility of same-source, self-report biases, it does suggest that general method variance is probably not an adequate explanation for the findings obtained in this study (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

Control Variables

We selected four control variables to test whether the measured effects on our dependent variables, trust and network performance, are not caused by certain specific characteristics of the project or the reporting managers. With regard to the projects, we included two control variables in our analyses, based on the literature. The literature suggests that increased task complexity increases the difficulty of realizing effective and efficient network performance (see Klijn et al., 2010a). Therefore, we included task complexity as a control variable (more information on this variable is reported at the beginning of this section). Secondly, we examined the phase of the project. This variable is about the realized activities within the project, such as the development of the final project plan and the realization of the first physical constructions. With regard to urban projects, performance in terms of effective and durable solutions for spatial issues become more visible if projects are in a later project phase. The level of trust could also be influenced by the phase of the project, for example because the diversity and intensity of interactions between organizations change in the development of urban projects (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007). In 81 percent of the sample projects, a master plan has been developed and has been established by the city council, and in 40 percent the first physical constructions have been built. With regard to the reporting managers, we included the number of years the respondent has been involved in the project as the manager. This is a general check on whether the respondent has participated for a sufficiently substantive amount of time to actually be able to make experience-based judgments. The mean score on this variable is 3.0 years, which is a considerable amount of time. However, the standard deviation (2.1 years) is quite high, and this strengthens the case to include this variable as a control. Furthermore, we included the general experience (measured in years) of the project manager with complex urban projects as a control variable. Our main argument here is that, through increased time spent working in the field, network

managers will get more experience in terms of analyzing and understanding network relationships, and more skills in bringing people together to promote sense-making among actors in the governance network as well as to realize collaborative relationships (Juenke, 2005). Although most project managers involved in this survey are relatively experienced in the management of urban projects (more than 13 years on average and a modus of seven years), there are strong differences (standard deviation of 7.2 years).

RESULTS

Description of Locus of Boundary Spanners

Table 3 and figure 2 present the descriptive statistics of the locus and the extent to which boundary spanners were present in the different organizations in the governance networks on which our respondents reported. Firstly, it is interesting to note that societal interest groups (94.3%), private developers (78.6%) and architectural firms (79.4%) are very often part of the governance networks around complex urban issues (see table 4). In most of the cases, different governmental layers are also part of the governance network: national government (61.3%), the province (59.9%), and sub local government (58.6%). This confirms that networks around complex urban governance projects often have a multi-level character (cf. Kern & Bulkeley, 2009).

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the Presence of Boundary Spanners in Different Organizations in the Governance Network (N=141)

Organization / interest group	Mean*	Standard deviation	Proportion of the governance networks (percentage)
National government	2.75	1.09	61.3
Province (regional government)	2.67	0.96	59.9
Other local government(s)	2.75	1.02	47.5
Sub local government	3.66	1.12	58.6
Housing association(s)	3.48	0.95	60.7
Private developer(s)	3.75	1.02	78.6
Architectural firm(s)	3.45	0.89	79.4
Societal interest groups (e.g. environmental, inhabitants)	3.46	0.93	94.3
Economic interest groups	3.10	0.94	63.8

*Measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly absent to (5) Strongly present.

We asked the managers to indicate the extent to which boundary spanners were present in the different organizations in the governance network.⁴ Interestingly, there is a strong difference between the perceived presence of boundary spanners in governmental organizations compared to private and societal organizations in the governance network. Boundary spanners originate mainly from private companies and societal organizations. According to the managers, boundary spanners are less present in the governmental organizations with

which they have contact (i.e. national government, regional government, and other local governments). An explanation could be that governmental representatives in the governance network are less flexible because they work in a more hierarchical and bureaucratic organizational context than representatives of societal and private actors (e.g. Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk 2011). Furthermore, the fragmentation of the governmental institutional set-up could provide an explanation. Dutch governmental organizations are highly sector or domain oriented. According to several authors (e.g. Klijn & Teisman, 2003; McGuire & Agranoff, 2011), such strict domain or turf demarcations act as barriers to cooperation in governance networks. However, further research is needed to examine this difference in the perceived presence of boundary spanners.

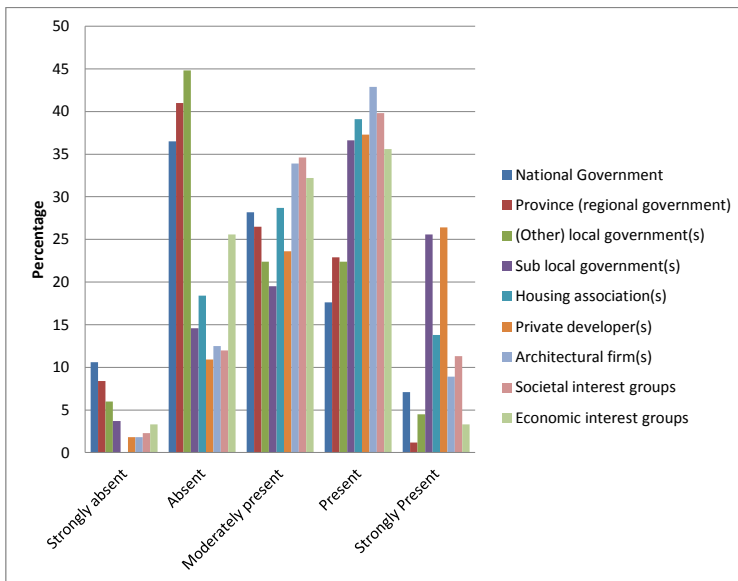


Figure 2 The Presence of Boundary Spanners in Different Organizations in the Governance Network

Correlations

Table 4 shows the correlations among all the variables included in the analysis. The table shows that the perceived presence of boundary persons in the governance network is strongly positively correlated with trust ($r = 0.55$) and network performance ($r = 0.44$); this is in line with our formulated hypotheses. Furthermore, trust is also positively correlated with network performance ($r = 0.40$); this is line with previous research (see Klijn et al., 2010b). There are also some correlations between the control variables and the core variables. The highest correlation in this respect exists between trust and the phase of the

project ($r = 0.22$). Projects that are in a later stage show a higher level of trust in the governance network. This is not that surprising. As is also described above, projects that are in a later phase have an increased chance of repeated interaction between organizations, which is an important factor for building trust (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2007).

The correlations described above give us a first indication of the impact of boundary spanners on trust within the governance network and network performance. They support our conceptual model. In the next section we will use structural equation modeling to test all the relationships in our conceptual model.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations between Variables in Analysis

	Mean	St. D.	BS	Trust	NP	TC	PP	YE	YI
Boundary spanners (1-5)	3.37	.67	1						
Trust (1-5)	3.34	.64	.551**	1					
Network performance (1-5)	3.73	.58	.440**	.402**	1				
Task complexity (1-6)	3.16	.83	.194*	.211*	.114	1			
Project phase (1-6)	3.21	1.34	.211*	.223**	.164	.131	1		
Years of experience	13.01	7.23	-.003	.096	.026	.052	.035	1	
Years of involvement	2.99	2.12	.129	.091	.077	.131	.280**	.191*	1

** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

N is in between 133–141 (pairwise deletion of missing values)

Impact of Boundary Spanners on Trust and Governance Network Performance

In figure 3 the results of the structural equation modeling analysis are displayed.⁵ The standardized estimates and the subsequent impact on trust and governance network performance are shown. The first three hypotheses are confirmed in this structural model. The standardized direct effect of boundary spanners on network performance is 0.34 ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, the effect of boundary spanners on the level of trust in the governance network is strong. We found a standardized regression coefficient of .65 ($p < 0.01$), which corresponds with an explained variance of 42% of the level of trust. The standardized direct effect of boundary spanners on governance network performance is 0.34 ($p < 0.05$). With regard to the relationship between trust and network performance, we found a standardized regression weight of .28 ($p < 0.05$). This is line with previous research, although the effect of trust on network performance is less strong than we found in previous research (Klijn et al., 2010b). This can be explained by the fact that boundary spanning turns out to be a very strong factor next to trust and accounts for a large part the positive relation with network performance in this model.

These results provide a first indication of a partially mediating role of trust in the relationship between boundary spanners and network performance. The standardized indirect effect of boundary spanners on governance network performance is 0.18 ($0.65 * 0.28$), which results in a standardized total effect of 0.52 ($0.18 + 0.34$). To estimate the significance of this

mediation effect, we performed the bias-corrected bootstrap method described by Shrout and Bolger (2002). We requested 2000 bootstrap samples. The indirect effect of boundary spanners on network performance is just above the significance level of 0.05 ($p = 0.053$). Therefore, we cannot confirm hypothesis four, but the results do indicate a partially mediating role of trust. The relatively small effect of trust on governance network performance compared with previous research could be of importance here.

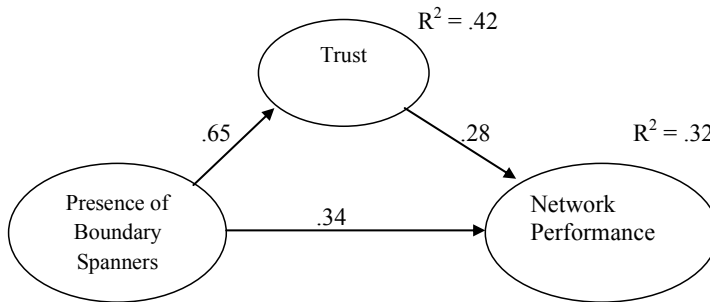


Figure 3 Boundary Spanners, Trust, and Network Performance^a

a. Goodness-of-fit statistics: Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .97; $\chi^2/df = 1.22$. Badness-of-fit statistics: Root Mean Square Error (RMSEA): 0.04; closeness of fit RMSEA (PCLOSE): .73

Model Fit

We used several statistics to evaluate the model's goodness of fit. Firstly, the $\chi^2/$ degrees of freedom ratio is 1.22 and the CFI is 0.97. Secondly, the indices for the badness of fit were conducted by the RMSEA, which is less than 0.05 (i.e. 0.04), and the PCLOSE, which is larger than 0.05 (i.e. 0.73). These indices indicate that the model has a good fit (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Byrne, 2010).

Control variables

The final step in the analysis was the examination of the control variables. Control variables considered and dropped from the final model due to non-significant results were the controls on the respondent (Years of involvement, Years of experience). The controls on the project (task complexity and project phase) did not show a significant relationship with the dependent variables (trust and network performance) either, but showed positive (small) relationships with the presence of boundary spanners. Task complexity requires more boundary spanning activities ($\beta = .18, p < 0.05$) as do projects which are in a later phase ($\beta = .22, p < 0.05$).

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In this article, we have focused on the role of boundary spanners in complex urban networks in the four largest cities in the Netherlands. There is an emerging body of literature on the importance of individuals in inter-organizational settings (e.g. Williams, 2002). In the collaborative governance and network management literature, distinctive skills and strategies of network managers are defined and examined in this respect. This research complements this literature in two ways. Firstly, it directs attention to the role of different connective agents in governance networks rather than focusing on the network manager alone. Secondly, empirical studies, especially large N research, on the effects of boundary spanners on network performance and trust building are scarce.

Our research has some limitations. Firstly, this study has focused on specific kinds of governance networks; all the networks studied were in the field of urban development and restructuring. These results cannot automatically be assumed to hold also for other types of public projects or policy domains, such as (social) service delivery networks (Meier & O'Toole 2007). Secondly, the study was conducted in The Netherlands, and the projects are all Dutch. The results may differ in other countries with different decision-making cultures (e.g. Skelcher et al., 2011). In The Netherlands there exists a consensual political and administrative culture, in which deliberation and consultation among stakeholders is relatively common practice. Connective capabilities may therefore have a more direct effect on the level of trust and performance (cf. Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 267). Furthermore, we based our analysis on the perceptions of the leading public manager within the networks. Although such an approach is certainly not unusual (e.g. Moynihan & Pandey, 2005; Klijn et al., 2010a) and enabled us to include a large number of networks in our analysis, we have to be careful in making generalizations. For example, the personality of the manager could be a factor influencing the manager's perception of boundary spanning activities of other actors in the network. Managers may differ in the way they value/perceive interdependencies between actors, the variety of boundary spanning activities, and their own role in this matter. However, we believe that, within the constraints of this research, we can draw meaningful conclusions.

A first conclusion is that boundary spanners are important people in complex (urban) governance networks. Because of the complex, multi-actor, and compounded character of these networks, the role of people who intentionally aim at crossing organizational borders and connecting people and organizations is highly important. This research stresses the importance of the *connective capabilities* of different individuals interacting in governance networks. We have shown in our research that their connecting activities are important in realizing network performance and trust building. This is often assumed in the literature (c.f. Williams, 2002) but only seldom substantiated by empirical research. The results show that people operating on the borders of organizational structures in the governance network

are important for connecting different actors and their viewpoints and interests. In this way, trustworthy relationships can be developed and network performance can be improved.

A second conclusion is that, in our research, boundary spanners originated mainly from private and societal organizations, and less from governmental organizations (at all levels: national, regional, and – especially – local). It seems more difficult for governmental agents to operate at the borders of their home organization. The internal fragmentation of their bureaucratic organization or agency turf may both be explanatory factors, hampering their connective capacity towards other organizations in the governance network (c.f. McGuire & Agranoff, 2011). This provides us with the insight that representatives from private and societal organizations are important in spanning the boundaries among private, societal, and public organizations in the governance network, and bringing these organizations more closely together in realizing network performance. It shows that (officially appointed) network managers are also dependent on the way other individuals in the network manage the interfaces with other organizations. In this respect, the network management research could be extended to further examine this relationship between network management and the connective behavior of other actors, and its effect on network performance.

However, more research – especially comparative qualitative research – should be undertaken to explain this difference in boundary spanning capacity of private versus public actors. This stresses the need to consider the organizational context in which boundary spanners operate, which is in line with organizational literature on boundary spanning which shows that, for example, a higher level of autonomy of the boundary spanner is related to a higher level of trust of external agents in the boundary spanner (Perrone et al., 2003). In addition, macro-structural context variables, such as the political opportunity structure and network position of actors, should also be included in further research, as such context factors influence the effectiveness of boundary spanning activities and the willingness of agents to perform such activities (Stevenson & Greenberg, 2000).

The value and relevance of the results of this study for the practice of policy making is in our view that organizations need to acknowledge the importance and value of boundary spanning persons and activities in improving organizational and network performance. In contemporary complex society, the role of specific connecting individuals increases in importance (cf. Edelenbos et al., 2013; Van Hulst et al., 2012; Van Meerkerk et al., 2013). Many policy making processes evolve in a network context, which stress the importance of people who develop connections among different parts in the network in finding common ground, mutual understanding and coordinated action. While many governments have a tendency to invest in new structures (reorganization) or organizational form to deal with complex governance issues (cf. Kort & Klijn, 2011), our study provides the insight that this one-dimensional approach is not enough, and need at least to be accompanied by investment in the connective and relational capabilities of people dealing with complex, cross-sectoral and multi-actor policy issues.

NOTES

1. Although the literature on boundary spanning and the more sociological research on bridging ties and structural holes show strong similarities, there is relatively little mutual awareness or interaction (Fleming & Waguespack, 2007). While an extensive comparison is beyond the scope of this article, we could note that the sociological research is relatively more focused on the consequences of the network structure, for example, for the position of the broker (putting the broker in a position of power) (see Fuchs, 2010), where the boundary spanning literature is more focused on the nature of agency, i.e. the effects of boundary spanning activities for (inter)organizational performance. We follow this later perspective, examining the effects of boundary spanners on network performance.
2. These four cities are relatively the largest cities in The Netherlands. Amsterdam has 783,000 inhabitants, Rotterdam 611,000, The Hague 497,000 and Utrecht 313,000. The fifth city, Eindhoven has 214,000 inhabitants, which is substantially lower.
3. The municipalities of The Hague and Rotterdam did not provide us with the telephone numbers of the project managers. In Rotterdam, we visited the managers' departments to promote the survey.
4. The different types of organizations were derived from the literature (e.g. Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Klijn et al., 2010a) and the sessions with the eight project managers to validate our survey questionnaire (see section Methods).
5. We used AMOS Version 18.0.

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PART IV

Conclusions

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions, recommendations,
reflection, and an agenda
for future research

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The question addressed in this thesis is: *In what way and with which effects do boundary-spanning activities impact upon the democratic legitimacy and performance of governance networks in the field of urban development and water governance?* The genesis of this thesis is grounded in the contemporary governance challenge of developing integrative and legitimate responses to tackle complex public issues in the fields of water governance and urban development. As elaborated in chapter 1, such public issues go beyond the boundaries of single organizations, but also beyond the boundaries of governments as a whole. Complex public issues are not well-bounded cases, and therefore it is highly challenging to develop effective and legitimate political responses.

Although complexity in public issues is not a new thing, the increased fragmentation of both the state apparatus and society has increased the difficulty of arriving at legitimate and effective policy- and decision making. The institutional set-up of functionally differentiated and specialized expert systems tends to complicate coordination and hamstring efforts to deal with complex public issues in an integrated manner, thereby impacting on their legitimacy and performance (Edelenbos & Teisman, 2011; Wagenaar, 2007). Furthermore, because of the growing interdependency between policy areas, policy levels, and policy actors, effective and legitimate policy- and decision making concerning complex public issues require resources and capacities different than those used in traditional forms of representative and hierarchical government. Moreover, the context of the public sector has changed considerable in the last decades. Citizens and societal organizations demand more direct participation when their interests are at stake and are increasingly capable of challenging governmental action. Education levels, socio-economic resources, access to political information, and other 'resources of citizenship' have increased substantially over the past several decades (Dalton, 2004, 2008). Citizens nowadays have, generally speaking, more time, money, and access to information and networks to influence public policy, but they seem more reluctant to engage in traditional institutions of representative democracy, as an average decrease in political membership and voting shows. This contributes to the challenge of realizing legitimate policy- and decision making in relation to complex societal issues.

As a reaction to the abovementioned challenges of dealing with boundary-crossing issues and rising demands for empowered participation, network forms of governance have been on the rise in the last decades (e.g. Kickert et al., 1997; Rhodes, 1996; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). Governance networks refer to more or less stable patterns of social relations between mutually dependent actors (government, business, and civil society actors) that form around public issues, and which are formed, maintained, and changed through interactions between the involved actors (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). In this thesis, I have focused on two types of governance networks around water management projects and urban development

projects: networks in which governmental actors have a more leading and initiating role and networks that are the result of self-organizing citizens.

As argued in chapter 1, the performance and democratic legitimacy of governance networks depend largely on the management and the quality of interaction between the different stakeholders on the one hand, and the interaction between network processes and governmental institutions on the other. In what way and with which effects boundary spanners impact upon the democratic throughput legitimacy and performance of governance networks has been the subject of this thesis.

In the following, the main conclusions are presented. Subsequently, the implications of these conclusions are discussed, followed by practical recommendations. This thesis closes with a reflection on the results and an agenda for future research on this topic.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: Boundary-spanning activities of public managers play a key role in, and have a strong effect on, realizing democratic throughput legitimacy of governance networks

In chapter 3, the relationship between connective management, democratic throughput legitimacy, and performance of governance networks was tested by survey research. Governance networks have democratic potential, as several authors argue, because they can engage a variety of affected stakeholders more directly in policy- and decision making. In order to make this potential manifest, the boundary-spanning activities of public managers play a key role. Connective management is a specific boundary-spanning activity, focused on interrelating actors (government, societal interest groups, businesses), layers (national, regional, local level), and domains (water management, infrastructure, housing, nature development). I found a strong positive effect of a connective-oriented management style on the level of throughput legitimacy (a standardized regression weight of .56 at the 1% level).

The concept of throughput legitimacy is about evaluating the quality of the interaction process. In this respect, I used the following indicators: the inclusiveness of the process, the accessibility of the process, the opportunities for deliberation, the quality of the argumentation process, the transparency of the decision-making process, and the transparency of information. Public managers can play a key role in facilitating a constructive dialogue between actors in a governance network. Boundary-spanning public managers focus on connecting different actors and different domains (cf. Feldman and Khademanian, 2008). They create opportunities for citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses to deliver input in governance processes and connect these with the administrative and political domain. They have a feel for the diversity of interests, for what is relevant for the different involved stakeholders, and can provide opportunities for these stakeholders to engage. In this way, connections between actors can emerge in ways that include different perspectives

and different ways of understanding and addressing the problem. Moreover, such managers take responsibility for connecting this debate and communication in informal governance networks' throughput to formal decision-making structures and processes.

This conclusion is in line with theoretical assumptions in the literature as well as with various case studies concerning the role of public managers practicing boundary-spanning activities in the creation of a deliberative governance process (e.g. Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009). A connective network manager facilitates the interaction process between stakeholders across different governmental and non-governmental boundaries. As the results indicate, public managers who perform boundary-spanning activities have an eye for the diversity of perceptions and interests involved in governance networks, and those who aim to create a constructive interaction between these stakeholders positively affect the throughput legitimacy of governance networks.

Connective management also directly influences network performance

Furthermore, this study confirms previous empirical studies that network management positively affects network performance (Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Klijn et al., 2010). More specifically, it is line with Klijn et al.'s (2010) finding that the connective, boundary-spanning activities of public managers are highly important in realizing network performance. By cutting across conventional boundaries of organization, sector and policy boundary-spanning public managers can enhance the problem-solving capacity and the integrated nature of policy- and decision making in governance networks. I found a standardized direct effect of connective management on network performance of 0.28 (at the 5% significance level).

However, this standardized effect is less strong than that found by Klijn et al. (2010). They found a standardized effect of 0.43 (at the 1% significance level) in the relationship between connective management strategies and network performance. Besides small differences in the field of research (environmental projects versus complex water projects), the mediating role of throughput legitimacy plays an important role in this matter. If we include this mediating effect of throughput legitimacy, the (standardized) total effect of connective management on network performance becomes 0.51, which is a little bit stronger than that previously found by Klijn et al. (2010). This mediating role of throughput legitimacy is further elaborated in the following conclusion.

Conclusion 2: A high level of throughput legitimacy has a strong positive impact on network performance and mediates the relationship between boundary-spanning management and network performance

The second conclusion of this thesis is that throughput legitimacy positively affects the performance of governance networks dealing with complex societal issues. I found a strong positive effect of throughput legitimacy on network performance (a standardized regression weight of .42 at the 1% significance level) within decision-making processes around Dutch regional water governance projects (see chapter 3). A high level of throughput

legitimacy reflects a high level of inclusion of affected stakeholders, transparency of the policy- and decision-making process, and a high level of communication and constructive dialogue among stakeholders in the network. There is interaction across the boundaries of governmental organizations, societal interest groups, and local community organizations with a high democratic quality (cf. Wagenaar, 2007). As deliberation increases the exchange of information, perceptions, and preferences, a learning process can take place by which network performance can be enhanced. In box 7.1, an illustrative case of a previous study

Box 7.1: Case illustration of connective management, throughput legitimacy, and effectiveness

Case illustration from the survey: the Noordwaard case (based on Edelenbos et al., 2013a)

The Noordwaard is a polder of nearly 2,500 hectares alongside the river New Merwede in The Netherlands. It has a mainly agricultural and residential function and consists of 75 farm and non-farm households. The Noordpolder area is located between the river New Merwede and the natural reserve area, Biesbosch. By making the Noordpolder available for water retention during high river discharges, a water level fall could be realized of about 60 centimeters in the Merwede and 30 centimeters near Gorinchem, a city threatened when the river floods.

Two managers from the National Department of Infrastructure and Environment were appointed to organize and implement the project. They implemented a very open and stakeholder-oriented process. The managers implemented a very connective management style, in which all kind of stakeholders (NGOs, citizens, farmers, and so forth) had the opportunity to become involved in the process and to provide information, thoughts, interests, and wishes. Through interactive design sessions, workshops, and discussion meetings, different kinds of alternatives were explored. In these sessions involving civil servants, external experts, and stakeholders, the 'Noordwaard option' was born. In several interactive sessions, the 'run-through' alternative emerged, which makes the inner part of the area available for temporary water retention when the river Merwede needs more space. The outer parts (left and right) are protected against flooding and available for multiple land use functions (existing residential areas, agriculture, recreation, and nature development). At the same time, the stakeholders managed to enforce a couple of conditions for developing the Noordwaard option:

- inhabitants have the opportunity to stay;
- inhabitants are given clarity within two years. The Noordwaard project should become a front-runner project;
- people who have to move out will get reasonable compensation;
- inhabitants and landowners (mostly farmers) are actively involved in planning.

The first point in particular was a victory for farmers and residents. In the event of people moving out, the national government had to provide new locations in the same area. Overall, the Noordwaard option was considered an effective solution for coping with flooding, but also for addressing other important functionalities in the area. This option was the result of an extensive interactive, stakeholder-oriented process. As one of the managers noted: *"The Noordwaard option would probably never have emerged if it wasn't for the interactive process."* This case illustrates how a connective management style resulted in high throughput legitimacy and how this throughput legitimacy subsequently contributed to network performance. The due deliberation between the stakeholders resulted in an innovative and integrative solution which was also acceptable to the different stakeholders.

we conducted is provided in this respect. This was one of the cases included in the survey study used in chapter 3.

Especially when complex societal issues are involved, a proper deliberation process will substantially improve the chance of achieving better outcomes. As these issues are multifaceted, involve stakeholders' conflicting preferences and values, and are often not well understood at the beginning of the process, deliberation and dialogue among stakeholders help to structure these issues and make them mutually understood. "The main reason is that arguing and reason-giving provide a mechanism to probe and challenge the normative validity of actors' interests as well as to check the empirical facts on which policy choices are based" (Risse & Kleine, 2007: 74). In interaction and debate, different sources, perspectives, interests, and values are explored and exploited to develop innovative, acceptable, and sustainable results (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Mandell, 2001; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Due deliberation, if it is organized properly, contributes to this development of solutions by providing good argumentation and dialogical processes that tap the available information and knowledge from the various actors involved.

This conclusion is in line with theoretical assumptions in the literature (e.g. Risse & Kleine, 2007; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004) as well as with various case studies on this relationship (e.g. Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Marcussen & Torfing, 2007; McGuire & Agranoff, 2011; Wagenaar, 2007), but is seldom tested with quantitative survey research. Furthermore, the inclusion of throughput legitimacy of governance networks in the relationship between boundary-spanning activities of public managers and network performance contributes to explaining the process that underlies this relationship.

The mediating role of throughput legitimacy in the relationship between connective management and governance network performance

An important finding of this study concerns the partly mediating role of democratic throughput legitimacy in the relationship between boundary-spanning activities of public managers and network performance. In this study (chapter 3), the standardized effect of connective management through throughput legitimacy on network performance (the *indirect effect* of connective management on governance network performance) was found to be 0.24 (at the 1% significance level). This makes the standardized total effect of connective management on network performance 0.51, which is a strong effect.

This finding nuances and clarifies the assumed and previously tested relationship between the boundary-spanning activities of public managers and the performance of governance networks (e.g. Ansell & Gash, 2008; Klijn et al., 2010; Meier & O'Toole, 2007). Public managers could play a key role in connecting relevant stakeholders to the policymaking process and building and managing a platform of inter-organizational interaction. This contributes to network performance. However, the results indicate that public managers will substantially improve their impact on network performance if they succeed in organiz-

ing an inclusive, deliberative, and transparent policy- and decision-making process. This deliberative quality of the interaction process between network actors has a strong impact on the performance of governance networks.

Conclusion 3: Realizing throughput legitimacy and improving network performance require broad boundary judgments by project managers with regard to content, process, and structure

As can be concluded from the Haringvliet Sluices case (chapter 2), also substantiated by other research on comparable cases (Edelenbos et al., 2013b), the boundary judgments of project managers matter with regard to the connections in which they invest and the way they approach the context of their project. Through these boundary judgments, managers influence the inclusion and exclusion of actors (public, private, societal), domains (e.g. water safety, environment, economic vitality, infrastructure), and frames (problems, solutions, interests). In this way, project managers' boundary judgments influence the throughput legitimacy and, more indirectly (see the previous conclusion), the performance of governance networks.

Actors make boundary judgments in order to cope with the complexities in their surroundings, by demarcating what is included in, or excluded from, the project scope. Tight (or exclusive) boundary judgments focus on reducing or controlling complexity. They are based on a modernistic rationality whereby the context of the project is perceived as relatively stable and distinct from the project. The project is managed as a closed system in order to keep control and to make the project evolution predictable (cf. Boons et al., 2009). A manager with tight boundary judgments makes a stable and relatively closed boundary between the project and its context (Edelenbos et al., 2013b; Teisman, 2005). This management style is also known as project management (e.g. De Bruijn et al., 1998; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2009). These boundaries protect the project from extra-systemic influences, regulating the interactions between the context and the project, the flow of information, and what is considered to be relevant and legitimized knowledge for the project's goals and development. However, such an approach does not fit with the complexity of many public issues nowadays. These issues cross a variety of organizational and functional boundaries, making them hard to catch in a tightly bounded project organization. A representative case is presented in box 7.2.

Broad boundary judgments allow greater room to discover more integral means of dealing with complex societal issues. Making broad boundary judgments fits with a complexity-sensitive approach towards complex public issues. Broad boundary judgments start from a holistic system approach in which the cross-cutting characteristics of complex public issues are taken as the point of departure (cf. Head & Alford, forthcoming; Teisman et al., 2009). Managers with broad boundary judgments focus on the interdependencies of issues, actors, processes, and structures. Such managers acknowledge that the boundaries between project and context are not objectively definable but are the result of choices, and that these bound-

Box 7.2: Case illustration of boundary judgments, throughput legitimacy, and network performance*Illustration from the Haringvliet Sluices case (see chapter 2)*

The Haringvliet case was characterized by tight boundary judgments of the managing actors. The project scope (the values and policy domains involved) was defined in a relatively exclusive way, focusing on the values of ecology and water quality. In addition, the scope and level of stakeholder participation was relatively low throughout the course of the project. According to the managing actors in the case, the low level of regional stakeholder participation was a consequence of the desire 'to keep the administrative complexity under control.' Furthermore, with regard to the diversity of knowledge included in the project, there was a clear dominance of expert knowledge from the water domain, and the project boundaries regarding local knowledge were relatively closed. The structural boundary judgments followed a logic of problem disaggregation: the project was split up into different components assigned to different organizations (RWS and the Province) that were given full responsibility for their specific task. These two components were loosely coupled, and the interaction between these two components was characterized by a low level of communication and coordination.

These tight boundary judgments clashed with the complexity of the issue and the dynamics in the project environment. The policy of enhancing estuarine dynamics and fish migration (linked to international agreements) is informed by freshwater availability, spatial planning issues at the connected islands, agriculture interests, the economic vitality of the region, and ecological and environmental issues. In this respect, the policy measure crossed different policy sectors and governmental levels, and touched upon the interests of a variety of governmental and non-governmental actors. Because the values of these other sectors and actors were not integrated, and because these actors were not included in the governance process in a satisfactory way, the throughput legitimacy of the central decision in this case (the decision to change the management of the sluices) was highly contested. This was reflected in the resistance of a diversity of stakeholders and several conflicts between governmental actors, which resulted in implementation problems because these actors failed to cooperate. Limiting the scope for decision making and the level of participation, and focusing upon formal competences and initial ambitions, are at variance with stimulating or allowing for the variety and flexibility needed to deal in a more effective and integrative manner with complex societal issues. Although tight boundary judgments can reduce feelings of uncertainty or provide a feeling of control for managing actors, they make the project vulnerable to growing pressures in the project environment because of conflict and resistance, as we can conclude from this case.

aries need deliberate legitimation. This means that the project is managed as an open system in which the boundaries between project and context are perceived as dynamic, fluid, and permeable (Edelenbos et al., 2013b). This could lead then to more inclusive governance processes where interests, ambitions, and actions can be combined, and consensus between possible diverging strategies more easily realized (cf. Boons et al., 2009).

The importance of making and enabling broad boundary judgments derives from literature stressing the importance for holistic approaches to dealing with complex societal issues, emerging in the last decades (see Head & Alford, forthcoming): for example, the literature on (complex) system thinking, which stresses the importance of understanding the complex web of inputs, processes, and outputs that lead to certain outcomes. Consequently, complex system thinkers often call for approaches that take into consideration parallel policy/production processes and initiatives outside their organization. The literature on frame reflec-

tion also stresses the importance of reflecting on the way different actors, including policy advisors or public managers, approach societal issues, as these issues are not objectively definable (Schön & Rein, 1994). Scholars advancing this approach call for the construction of ‘metaframes,’ building on various conflicting frames of reference deployed by key actors.

Before proceeding, I have to make an important comment on this conclusion. The opportunity structure for managers to enact broad boundary judgments is important to consider, as this can be constrained by the institutional environment and processes of governmental organizations. For example, managers, working with a precise assignment from their political principal or from their organizational context, have less opportunity to enact, or will experience more difficulty in enacting, broad boundary judgments and seeking connection with the project environment. Hampering context factors for making broad boundary judgments were also found in the Haringvliet sluices case. In this case, international agreements about fish migration to a large extent conditioned the project of changing the sluice management and were an important reason why national government decided to continue with the implementation of the decision in 2011 (after reconsideration due to a lack of support) and contributed to the tight boundary judgments on ecological values.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Edelenbos et al. (2013b), in their comparative study of eight complex water projects, found that externally hired project managers (with a consultancy background) had less trouble with making broad boundary judgments than managers with a governmental organizational background. The latter group, influenced by political boundary choices, enacted tighter boundary judgments on substance and participation because of their bias towards predefined project results. It seems that managers with a governmental background are more inclined to represent the perspectives of their own organization and (could) experience more pressure to follow internal guidelines and routines. This difference in connective capacity due to organizational background was also found in my survey research on boundary spanners in urban development projects, which is further discussed in conclusion 5. Actors with a non-governmental background showed more boundary-spanning activity than actors with a governmental background. More research on the opportunity structure for managers to enact broad boundary judgments and to engage in connective activities, and the way in which managers are influenced by this opportunity structure or deal with it, are interesting questions for further research. The organizational background of managers is at least one important variable to include in such a research effort.

Conclusion 4: Boundary-spanning activities by community leaders are crucial for governance networks driven by self-organizing citizens to become established and effective

Governance networks around complex public issues driven by self-organizing citizens are increasingly seen as an interesting societal development by both academics and governments. In these self-governance networks, citizens take a more leading role in governance

activities. The UK case study (chapter 5) and the Dutch case study (chapter 4) showed that the boundary-spanning activities of community leaders were of crucial importance for self-governance to become accepted by, and anchored within, local governmental institutions. There are striking similarities between the activities of the chairman of the Trust in the UK Caterham Barracks case (chapter 5) and the chairman of the Federation in the Dutch Broekpolder case (chapter 4). They both engaged substantially in connecting different individuals, their viewpoints, and interests across the boundaries of governmental institutions, the local community, and private/societal organizations. They invested in inter-organizational and interpersonal relationships between key individuals across the domains of administrative, political, and local community boundaries. Furthermore, they took a leading role in coordinating the activities of the self-organizing citizens and connecting the ideas and plans of these more or less informal citizen groups with related local government policies and decision-making procedures.

The community leaders were able to perform these high level boundary-spanning activities because of their well-connectedness (existing network and network position), their 'institutional experience,' and their relational capacities. They were strongly linked within the local community by their network activities, but they were also strongly linked at the governmental side of the boundary because of their previous work experience within governmental institutions. This provided them a variety of contacts within the governmental institutions; but, probably even more important, they had tacit knowledge about how policy and political processes work. This enabled them to embed the citizens' initiative across administrative, political, and local community boundaries (cf. Feldman & Khademian, 2008). Adapting to and translating institutional practices across these boundaries was a particular boundary-spanning activity in this respect (see below).

Furthermore, they were taken seriously at the other side of the boundary. They had a specific status across the administrative, political, and local community domain. In both the Caterham Barracks case and the Broekpolder case, the community leaders had in the past been members of the local council. They were taken seriously by councilors coming from different political backgrounds, and, through their established connections with aldermen and key administrative individuals, they were also taken seriously by civil servants. This increased their legitimacy across these boundaries – an important element enhancing their ability to perform boundary-spanning activities (cf. Perrone et al., 2003). Next, through their established relationships in the local community and their network activities with local community organizations and residents, they were also well-connected within the local community. Hence, they were strongly linked within the local community and strongly linked within governmental institutions (cf. Tushman & Scanlan, 1981 on the importance of the internal and external linkage of boundary spanners).

Translating and transforming as key boundary-spanning practices within governance networks stemming from citizen initiatives

These boundary spanners connected not only actors operating in the different public, private, and societal spheres, but also institutionalized structures to the emerging self-governance structures. The boundary spanners connected different institutional logics and played a crucial role in organizing how to embed new patterns of behavior in existing institutional structures. They merged new ways of organizing with existing institutional procedures. Hence, in addition to their role in information exchange and building relationships, their translating and transforming institutional practices were found to be important boundary-spanning activities (cf. Levina & Vaast, 2005). Again, their experience and status were crucial here. The community leaders in the self-governance networks had tacit knowledge about how policy and political processes work. They knew what was important for these institutions. They adopted institutionalized practices (e.g. procedures or working formats) in order to make effective and legitimate connections. At the same time, they adapted these practices in line with the practices and goals of the proto-institutions they represented.

Interplay of boundary-spanning activities on both sides of community-government boundary

In this adaptation and translation of institutionalized practices, the community leaders were certainly not acting alone. Boundary-spanning activities at both sides of the boundary were performed in order to align a governmental logic with the proto-institution of self-governance (see specifically chapter 4 in this regard). The trustful relationships between the community leaders and civil servants played an important role, and the civil servants' boundary-spanning activities also were important in the facilitation, consolidation, and embedding of self-governance. These civil servants were instrumental in guiding the citizen initiative through the administrative organization and connecting the ideas and proposals with the different policy departments; and, as became clear from the Dutch Broekpolder case, they also provided important cues for the citizen initiative to make their proposals more acceptable and in line with administrative and political rules and practices.

This corresponds with other recent research on practices of self-governance. In his research on three citizen initiatives, Specht (2012) also observed the importance of facilitating civil servants' boundary-spanning activities. These civil servants acted as 'translators' and 'connectors' between these citizen initiatives and governmental institutions, and this was important for the facilitation and consolidation of the citizen initiatives. Whereas Specht focused on the translation activities of boundary spanners located primarily within the institutions of government (he used the term professionals), my research also signaled the performance of these translation activities by community leaders. These non-governmental boundary spanners had often previous work experience within governmental institutions and could in this sense also be called professionals.

Hence, a combination of translating and connecting activities on both sides of the boundary was observed. This contributed to mutual adaptation of local government practices and the citizens' proto-institution. This was coined as institutional co-evolution in chapter 4, suggesting that translating boundary-spanning activities are not passive activities. They play an important role in transforming existing institutionalized practices and organizational change (cf. Honig, 2009; Yanow, 2004). This combination contributed to the legitimacy and the effectiveness of the self-governance initiatives. Translation as an important boundary-spanning activity between the different worlds of more informal governance network processes on the one hand, and governmental institutions on the other, has not yet attracted much attention from governance network scholars. This is further addressed below when I discuss a future research agenda for the topic of boundary spanning.

It can be concluded from the case studies that it was not only the boundary-spanning activities of either a community leader or of an engaged public manager, but the combination of their boundary-spanning activities, which played an important part in the establishment and performance of self-governance. This was further tested by survey research in governance networks around complex urban development projects.

Conclusion 5: The performance of governance networks and trust between network actors are enhanced by the interplay of boundary-spanning activities by public, private, and societal actors

A fifth conclusion following from the survey research on complex urban development projects (chapter 6) is that boundary spanners with both a governmental and a non-governmental background positively affect governance network performance. Furthermore, boundary-spanning activities are strongly related to the level of trust between actors in the network; and the results indicate that the relationship between boundary-spanning activities and performance is partly mediated by trust. I found a standardized effect of boundary spanners on governance network performance of 0.34, which is quite strong (at the 5% significance level). Competent boundary spanners are relationship builders and have a feeling for the interests and social constructions of other actors in the governance network. Through their informational and coordinating activities, they positively influence the performance of governance networks.

Connective activities beyond governmental organization: the importance of non-governmental boundary spanners

In line with the studies on self-governance networks, this finding stresses the importance of the connective capabilities of different individuals interacting in governance networks. Because of the complex, multi-actor, and compounded character of these networks, the role of people who intentionally aim at crossing organizational borders and connecting people and organizations is highly important in realizing network performance and trust building. This is often assumed in the literature (cf. Williams, 2002) but seldom substantiated by empirical research (cf. Van Hulst et al., 2012); and attention is mainly directed at the role of (repre-

sentatives of) central and/or governmental actors (e.g. lead organizations, network managers, politicians) (e.g. Meier & O'Toole, 2007; Sørensen & Torfing, 2009; Klijn et al., 2010; Cristofoli et al., 2014). The results of the survey research show that network performance is positively affected by the presence of multiple people practicing boundary-spanning activities. As governance processes dealing with complex societal issues evolve at the boundaries of different public, private, and societal organizations, the boundary-spanning activities of a variety of individuals matter for the performance of governance networks. These people operate actively on the boundary of their organization, improve the coordination between network and intra-organizational processes, build sustainable inter-organizational relationships, and collect and disseminate relevant information on both sides of the organizational boundary. In this way, trustful relationships can be developed and network performance can be improved.

According to the public managers' responses, these boundary spanners originated mainly from private and societal organizations, and less from governmental organizations (at all levels: national, regional, and – especially – local). This provides the insight that representatives from private and societal organizations are important in spanning the boundaries among private, societal, and public organizations in the governance network, and bringing these organizations more closely together, thereby potentially enhancing throughput legitimacy and network effectiveness. If one focuses on the interaction process between a diversity of stakeholders and considers their self-organizing behavior, boundary-spanning activities are the concern not only of (formal) public managers, but also of (informal) community leaders and representatives of NGOs and private businesses who are able and willing to cross their organizational boundaries.

In line with previous comments on the opportunity structure of public managers (see conclusion 3), it seems more difficult for governmental agents to operate at the borders of their home organization. The internal fragmentation of their bureaucratic organization or agency turf may both be explanatory factors, hampering their connective capacity towards other organizations in the governance network (cf. McGuire & Agranoff, 2011).

Boundary spanners have a strong positive effect on the level of trust between actors in governance networks

Besides their (direct) effects on network performance, boundary spanners positively influence the level of trust between actors in the network. The relationship between the presence of boundary spanners and trust was very strong: I found a standardized regression coefficient of .65 (at the 1% significance level). Through their relational activities and their empathic skills, boundary spanners could enhance trustful relationships between actors in the governance network. This result is in line with theoretical assumptions and case study research about the role of boundary spanners in developing sustainable and trustful inter-organizational relationships (e.g. Ferguson et al., 2005; Perrone et al., 2003; Williams, 2002).

Trustful relationships in governance networks enhance the sharing of information and resources. This could in turn increase the performance of governance networks.

As trust is also positively related to network performance, the results indicate that boundary spanners enhance the performance of governance networks also indirectly via trust. This mediating relationship was tested but was not found significant. The indirect effect of boundary spanners on network performance via trust was just above the significance level of 0.05 ($p = 0.053$). The relatively weak relationship between trust and network performance compared to findings in previous research (Klijn et al., 2010) (I found a standardized regression weight of .28 ($p < 0.05$)) could be an important factor here.

7.3 IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications

This research stresses the importance of the boundary-spanning role in giving shape to democratic legitimacy in the 'new democratic spaces' (Warren, 2009) offered by governance networks. The articles in part II of this research and the first three conclusions elaborated in this chapter specifically stress the role that public managers can play in this respect. Governance networks offer potential in giving shape to new democratic practices that complement representative democracy in realizing democratically legitimate and more effective responses to complex public issues. As argued in chapter 1 and chapter 3, governance networks follow a different logic than representative democracy in terms of democratic legitimacy. In contrast to representative democracy, constituencies are more dynamic and come into existence in response to specific policy issues and often dissolve when those issues are resolved (Warren, 2009). This means that the inclusive nature (the 'all affected' principle) and deliberative quality of the governance process are more useful and appropriate criteria for assessing the democratic legitimacy of policy- and decision making within governance networks. As shown in this thesis, public managers can play a key role in enhancing this. Their boundary-spanning activities positively affect the deliberative and inclusive quality of governance network processes. Furthermore, they play an important role in connecting governance network processes with formal institutions of representative democracy.

An important question then arises: how could this become more transparent? Should public managers be held accountable for the extent to which they perform boundary-spanning activities and enhance the throughput legitimacy of governance networks? And, if so, accountable to whom? If they play such a key role in shaping democratic legitimacy, this should be an important focus for both governmental organizations and academics. That is not to say that this has not been a focus of academics at all, but further research could

make this role more explicit and address the role dilemmas of boundary-spanning public managers (cf. Torfing et al., 2012).

The same holds for the boundary-spanning activities of non-governmental actors, especially when these actors are in a leading role. A frequently raised danger of giving more room to self-organizing citizens is that this could lead to forms of exclusion in which the better educated or the well-organized 'few' take over at the expense of the less educated or less organized 'many' (Warren, 2009). This is an important question for further research. According to recent empirical studies on self-governance networks in local neighborhoods, this inequality in participation seems to be overstated (e.g. Bakker et al., 2011; Van de Wijdeven, 2012). Furthermore, meta-governance activities by politicians and public managers could control for these potential dangers (e.g. Torfing et al., 2012). The boundary-spanning activities of community leaders could also be held to account in this respect. To what extent do local self-governance networks pay attention to an inclusive sample of interests, values, and views? In the Dutch Broekpolder case, the self-organizing citizens showed themselves to be responsive to various community groups and were also held accountable in this respect by the local government.

Practical recommendations

A first recommendation for the practice of public administration is that governmental organizations need to acknowledge the importance and value of boundary-spanning persons and activities in improving organizational and network performance. In our contemporary complex society, the role of specific connecting individuals is increasing in importance (cf. Edelenbos et al., 2013b; Van Hulst et al., 2012). Many policymaking processes evolve in a network context; this stresses the importance of people who develop connections among different parts in the network in finding common ground, mutual understanding, and co-ordinated action. Whereas many governments have a tendency to invest in new structures (reorganization) or organizational forms to deal with complex governance issues (cf. Kort & Klijn, 2011), this study provides the insight that this one-dimensional approach is not enough and needs at least to be accompanied by investment in the connective and relational capabilities of people dealing with complex, cross-sectoral, and multi-actor policy issues.

As the boundary-spanning activities of public managers are positively related to network performance and democratic throughput legitimacy, careful selection of public managers with boundary-spanning capacities is an important recommendation for governmental organizations dealing with complex public issues. The competency of public managers to perform boundary-spanning activities and deploy boundary-spanning strategies should be considered an important aspect in the selection of public managers who are engaged in dealing with complex urban or water management projects. An effective selection procedure for competent boundary spanners could for example be implemented by competence assessment and training. Previous research has shown that emotional and social intelligence

competences are related to boundary-spanning activities (e.g. Davis, 2010; Williams, 2008). High-level boundary spanners have a broad repertoire of emotional and social intelligence competences, which enables them to operate more effectively in a more complex environment.

A second recommendation is to facilitate and support the organization's boundary spanner. Next to careful selection of boundary spanners, governmental organizations can invest in careful crafting of the boundary-spanner's organizational position. This is especially relevant if governments want to be responsive to citizen initiatives. Governmental boundary spanners have an important, but difficult task to perform in this respect. For example, as followed from the studies on self-governance networks, governmental boundary spanners often need organizational units to adapt their practices in order to provide room for citizen self-organization and to make effective connections with the citizen's initiative. They have to be connected both externally and internally. Next to their personal competency and capacity needed to connect different worlds, they need authority to do their job. Next to one's personal character and experience (informal authority), one's organizational position and formal authority could be very useful in this respect. The importance of this supporting and facilitating of boundary spanners will become more severe if the amount and diversity of bottom-up citizen initiatives grows and if governments want to be responsive to these initiatives.

A third recommendation is addressed to initiators of citizen initiatives who want to invest in self-organization and self-management in the public domain. Investing in connections with a diverse set of actors coming from the public, private and societal sphere can enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of a citizen initiative. This is often a difficult and balancing act, as citizen initiatives also need time to develop their own identity and to build their own group of committed people. However, investing in connections with a diverse set of actors can enhance the support (for example, in terms of volunteers, finance, political legitimacy) of the local community and subsequently the sustainability and effectiveness of citizen initiatives. Hence, citizen initiatives which are concerned with self-organization and self-management in the public domain also need to invest in particular boundary-spanning activities as they are not acting in an institutional vacuum. Boundary spanning (for example informing and translating activities) between local government practices and the citizen's organization can enhance the support for and legitimacy of the citizen's initiative. Involving someone who has institutional experience and knows the way within local government (politically and/or administratively) is very useful in this respect.

7.4 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ON BOUNDARY SPANNING

In this section, I address several research limitations on the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological level. In addressing these limitations, I also discuss suggestions for future research. These directions for future research focus specifically on a research agenda with respect to the role of boundary spanners, their struggles, and their value for organizations operating in governance networks.

Methodological limitations

As also addressed in the individual articles, an important methodological limitation with regard to internal validity relates to the measurement of network performance and democratic throughput legitimacy. The measurement of these variables in the survey-based articles (chapters 3 and 6) used the perceptions of participants within the different networks. Although such an approach is certainly not unusual (e.g. Moynihan & Pandey, 2005; Klijn et al., 2010) and enabled the inclusion of a large number of networks in our analysis, we have to be careful about making generalizations based on these findings. With regard to the relationship between boundary-spanning management and good network performance, the results are in line with comparative case study research on comparable water and environmental projects (see Edelenbos et al., 2013b; Verweij et al., 2013). These studies also found that boundary-spanning management activities are positively related to good network performance, specifically with regard to complex public issues.

However, these studies also used participants' perceptions (stakeholder satisfaction) to evaluate the outcomes of the various networks. The question is whether respondents are likely to provide reliable answers. Individuals' assessments of network performance run the risk of reflecting the relative gains of respondents rather than the performance of the network as a whole (Torfing et al., 2012). Furthermore, the level at which different stakeholders are included (an important criterion in the measurement of democratic throughput legitimacy) is difficult for network participants themselves to judge. Asking about specific indicators of the performance of the network as a whole, such as its integrative nature, problem-solving capacity, and innovative character, partly reduces this issue. Next – and this holds particularly for the case study research – the bias towards individual network participants' gains is balanced by using the more in-depth evaluations of various network participants. Nevertheless, improvements can certainly be made in relation to measuring network performance. Using the evaluations of external experts and external actors in addition to those of network participants could be one such improvement (cf. Torfing et al., 2012). This would enhance the chance of providing a more sophisticated picture of democratic throughput legitimacy and network performance.

In relation to external validity, an important methodological limitation concerns the focus on specific kinds of networks within – mostly – one specific country. All the networks studied were in the field of urban development and restructuring. These results cannot automatically be assumed to hold also for other types of public projects or policy domains, such as (social) service delivery networks (Meier & O'Toole, 2007). Secondly, the study was conducted in The Netherlands, and the projects were all Dutch. The results may differ in other countries with different decision-making cultures (e.g. Skelcher et al., 2011). In The Netherlands there exists a consensual political and administrative culture in which deliberation and consultation among stakeholders is relatively common practice. Connective capabilities may therefore have a more direct effect on the level of democratic throughput legitimacy and network performance (cf. Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2011).

Enabling and constraining conditions for boundary spanners to act

Future research should consider more carefully the context factors that impact on boundary-spanning behavior in governance network settings. Organizational literature on boundary spanning shows, for example, that a higher level of boundary-spanner autonomy is related to a higher level of external agents' trust in the boundary spanner (Perrone et al., 2003). In addition, macro-structural context variables, such as the political opportunity structure, should be included in further research, as such context factors influence the effectiveness of boundary-spanning activities and the willingness of agents to perform such activities (Stevenson & Greenberg, 2000). My research focused mainly on the interaction process between different actors in governance networks and how this related to democratic legitimacy and network performance.

Buffering activities of boundary spanners

A conceptual limitation concerns the concept of boundary spanners. This conceptualization (see in particular chapter 1, chapter 3, and chapter 6) focuses on the connective ('spanning') activities of boundary spanners. Within the organizational literature on boundary spanning, buffering activities of boundary spanners have also been addressed. This may sound somewhat paradoxical, but because boundary spanners manage the interface between organization and environment, buffering activities in order to protect the organization are also part of the job. Buffering activities are aimed at protecting the organization or system from external disturbances in order to enhance the possibility of rational action (Yan & Louis, 1999).

An important reason for not including buffering activities concerns the theoretical points of departure, which were strongly influenced by interdependency theories in the field of governance networks. Interdependencies between organizations dealing with complex public issues and the increased functional differentiation within the state apparatus put the need for connective capacity on the research agenda. Realizing connections in networks

characterized by differing interests and embedded within a functionally differentiated institutional landscape is a difficult task. Consequently, a strong case can be made for focusing on boundary spanning as a connective activity. Hence, the question arises as to whether buffering activities are needed at all, because organizations are often strongly tempted to focus on their core task or to fall back into their institutionalized routines (e.g. Edelenbos and Teisman, 2011). I do think, however, that examining more explicitly the buffering activities of boundary spanners could be of added value: for example, how boundary spanners buffer their organization from network processes or protect the governance network process from disturbances coming from their organization or institutional environment (for example the political system).

The inappropriateness of boundary spanners

Different characteristics of boundary spanners have already been mentioned both in the literature and in this thesis (particularly in chapter 1 and chapter 6), such as being an active listener, an entrepreneur, and a relationship builder. However, within governance networks, institutionalized patterns of behavior are often challenged one way or another. More research could be done on the role of boundary spanners in this respect. In the citizen initiative cases, both governmental and non-governmental boundary spanners conducted entrepreneurial activities to align or adapt institutional practices in order to facilitate productive cooperation between citizens and local government. In this respect, performing boundary-spanning activities means implicitly, or sometimes explicitly, critically reflecting on the organizational and governmental rules of conduct. A boundary spanner acts on the border of his/her own organization and its institutional structure. Rephrasing the famous terms of March and Olsen's logic of appropriateness: boundary spanners often show *inappropriate* rather than appropriate behavior (cf. Peeters et al., 2010). Such a view on boundary spanners could be more elaborated, underlining the particular value of boundary spanners for organizations to reflect and to innovate in order to keep connected with the environment and to adapt towards the environment (which is of course related to the contingency perspective on organization and what this means for boundary spanners, see for example Baker, 2008). Such a perspective could also elucidate how boundary spanners often face forces of resistance or forces of institutional rigidity. Furthermore, boundary spanners could easily become isolated by performing such a critical role. In this sense, they often take personal risks, leading to the following point for future research.

Personal problems for boundary-spanning actors: the issue of the isolated connector

In their boundary-spanning activities, boundary spanners could, paradoxically, feel or become relatively isolated. In their spanning activities, they are constantly crossing boundaries, translating outside information and constructions internally, and vice versa. In this way, they could become someone who belongs neither to the environment nor to the of-

ficial organization that they represent. This could in turn lead to negative attitudes towards their own job or organization. For example, in a recent study on negative consequences of boundary-spanning contact in uncertain multi-organizational contexts, Ramarajan et al. (2011) found that frequent contact of boundary spanners with other organizations' personnel was related to negative attitudes towards their own job and organization.

The relatively strong difference in institutional logic between governmental organizations and governance networks makes this issue even more apparent. Civil servants who perform boundary-spanning activities are likely to encounter such struggles. Some of these boundary-spanning struggles are reported in a recent study by Peeters et al. (2010) on the role and work of neighborhood managers. These managers sometimes feel as if they are not really part either of the governmental organization or of one of the other organizations in the governance network in which they operate. They defend the different perspectives in these different contexts. This further stresses the importance of boundary spanners' personal characteristics and competences, as they have to be confident, experienced, and authoritative enough to be able to perform boundary-spanning activities.

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Summary

MAIN QUESTION, CONTEXT, AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Dealing with contemporary public issues in fields such as water management, urban development, healthcare, poverty reduction, employment policy, and environmental protection asks for interaction between a plurality of governmental and non-governmental actors. Many contemporary policy- and decision-making processes therefore unfold in networks of actors crossing the boundaries of public, private, and societal spheres. This has given rise to debates and research about how to realize effective and legitimate policy- and decision-making in these governance networks which, in contrast to the institutions of representative democracy, are more dynamic and come into existence in response to specific public issues. The focus of this thesis is on the management of interactions between governmental and non-governmental actors within governance networks in the fields of urban development and water governance. The concept of boundary spanning is used to examine this management of interactions across organizational and institutional boundaries. The research objective of this thesis is to describe the role of boundary spanners in these governance networks and to test their effects on the performance and democratic legitimacy. The question addressed in this thesis is: *In what way and with which effects do boundary-spanning activities impact upon the democratic legitimacy and performance of governance networks in the fields of urban development and water governance?*

This research is embedded in the changing context of policy- and decision-making in the last decades. In the contemporary age of late modernity, the classical modernistic institutions of policy- and decision making are increasingly facing difficulties in realizing legitimate and effective political responses by themselves. A number of transformations in contemporary societies can be identified as important factors in this diagnosis of which two main changes are elaborated in this thesis. The first concerns the increasing complexity of public issues accompanied by a highly fragmented institutional landscape. The second concerns a changing societal context in which traditional political authority is increasingly questioned and in which citizens are less participating in traditional forms of political engagement attached to the representative system of democracy. In contrast, alternative forms of civic engagement are on the rise. Citizens have become more assertive and are increasingly capable to challenge governmental measures which affect their living environment and to come up with alternative plans. There is a rise of alternative civic engagement, based on citizens' self-organization, which emerges outside the realm of traditional institutions of representative democracy, but which often interacts with these institutions.

Partly in response to these challenges, network forms of governance have arisen in the last decades. Governance networks refer to a web of relationships between government, business, and civil society actors, which form around public issues, and which are formed, maintained, and changed through interactions between the involved actors. These network forms of governance are often born out of frustration with modernistic institutional prac-

tices and growing mutual interdependencies in contemporary society. They can be initiated by governmental actors, but also provoked by self-organizing citizens. In this thesis I focus on these two types of governance networks around water management projects and urban development projects: governance networks in which governmental actors have a more leading and initiating role and governance networks which are driven by self-organizing citizens. Self-organization of citizens refers to bottom up initiatives which are citizen or community driven, which aim to deal with a specific set of public issues and which have the ambition to set up sustainable cooperation among citizens in this respect.

This thesis aims to contribute to the literature on governance networks in at least two important ways. Firstly, previous research has indicated the importance of boundary spanning activities of network managers or meta-governors as a factor for enhancing the performance of governance networks, but the issue of democratic legitimacy is not much addressed in this relationship. According to several authors, a fundamental cause is that the nature of governance networks does not fit with the assumptions of traditional models of democracy, complicating empirical analyses in this respect.

Secondly, as policy and decision-making processes in governance networks evolve at the boundaries of different public, private, and societal organizations, the boundary spanning activities of a variety of individuals are likely to matter for the performance of governance networks. While this is recognized in the literature, by far, most of the attention goes to the role of (representatives of) central and/or governmental actors (e.g. lead organizations, network managers, politicians). Therefore, and in addition to many literature on network management, this research will examine the influence of boundary spanners with various organizational backgrounds, especially non-governmental, to empirically examine their influence on the legitimacy and the performance of governance networks. This is specifically important, given the increasing interest of both governments and academics in the self-organizing capacities of citizens in dealing with public issues. Particularly, the discourse of the so-called Participation Society in the Netherlands and the Big Society in the UK are clear examples in this respect.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS AND METHODOLOGY

To answer the main research question, five studies have been conducted, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. Four of the five studies have been published within international peer-reviewed journals and one study has been published as a book chapter in an international edited volume. These five studies are structured into two parts (part II and III of the thesis). Part II focuses on the boundary-spanning activities of governmental actors, i.e. public managers, within water governance networks and their effects on democratic legitimacy and network performance. It contains two studies. The first one is an in-depth

qualitative study in which (a lack of) boundary-spanning around a contested complex water issue is examined. The second one is a quantitative study among respondents involved in complex water projects. In this study the effects of boundary spanning activities of public managers on throughput legitimacy and network performance are tested.

Part III goes deeper into the boundary-spanning activities of non-governmental actors in governance networks. It contains three studies. The first two are case studies (one single and one comparative case study) about governance networks driven by citizen self-organization. In these studies the evolution of citizen self-organization and the boundary spanning activities of community leaders are examined. Part III closes with a quantitative study (chapter 6), testing the effects of both governmental and non-governmental boundary spanners on trust and network performance within urban governance networks. This study is based on survey-research among managers of urban projects in the four largest cities in the Netherlands.

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, boundary spanners are understood as persons who actively work on the boundary of their organization. They are able to recognize and exploit opportunities for building inter-organizational relationships and have a developed feeling for the other side of the organizations' boundary. This means that they are able to empathize with others and that they have a feeling for the social construction of other actors. Boundary spanners understand other actors' needs, which enables them to search for shared meanings and to merge self-interests into joint interests. They are skilled networkers and specialized in crossing different structures. Besides these interpersonal and inter-organizational skills, boundary spanners are considered to be entrepreneurs and innovators in the sense that they try to link different policy issues and policy streams across boundaries.

Boundary spanning is understood as a combination of interrelated activities concerned with connecting different actors from the realm of government, society, and business, building sustainable relationships between these actors, and connecting governance network processes with intra-organizational processes. In this respect, they are engaged in three main (and interrelated) activities: 1) connecting different people and processes across organizational boundaries, 2) selecting relevant information on both sides of the boundary, and 3) translating this information to the other side of the boundary. In line with network-oriented interdependency approaches, I focus on 'boundary spanners-in-practice', as they are also called. These boundary spanners are actively involved in a two-way information and communication flow: from the network to the organization and vice versa. This means that boundary spanners should be both strongly linked inside and outside the organization.

The first conclusion of this thesis is that the boundary-spanning activities of public managers play a key role in, and have a strong effect on, realizing democratic throughput legitimacy of governance networks. The concept of democratic throughput legitimacy is about evaluating the democratic quality of the interaction process which evolves within governance networks (see next conclusion). Governance networks have democratic potential, as several authors argue, because they can engage a variety of affected stakeholders more directly in policy- and decision making and because they are better fine-tuned to the specific issue at stake. In order to make this potential manifest, the boundary-spanning activities of public managers play a key role. I found a strong positive effect of a management style based on boundary-spanning activities on the level of throughput legitimacy (see in particular chapter 3). Boundary-spanning public managers focus on connecting different actors and different domains. They create opportunities for citizens, civil society organizations, and businesses to participate in the governance process and to connect this process with the administrative and political domain and to perform the necessary translating activities between these two domains. They have a feel for the diversity of interests, for what is relevant for the different stakeholders involved, and provide opportunities for these stakeholders to engage. In this way, connections between actors can emerge in ways that include different perspectives and different ways of understanding and addressing the problem. In this way, public managers can play a key role in facilitating a constructive dialogue between actors in a governance network and to make policy- and decision making processes transparent. Moreover, such managers take responsibility for connecting this debate and communication in informal governance networks' throughput to formal decision-making structures and processes.

The second conclusion of this thesis is that throughput legitimacy positively affects the performance of governance networks dealing with complex societal issues. I found a strong positive effect of throughput legitimacy on network performance within decision-making processes around Dutch regional water governance projects (see chapter 3). A high level of throughput legitimacy reflects a high level of inclusion of affected stakeholders, transparency of the policy- and decision-making process, and a high level of communication and constructive dialogue among stakeholders in the network. There is interaction across the boundaries of governmental organizations, societal interest groups, and local community organizations with a high democratic quality. As deliberation increases the exchange of information, perceptions, and preferences, a learning process can take place by which network performance can be enhanced.

As a result, throughput legitimacy partly mediates the relationship between boundary-spanning public managers and the performance of governance networks. In line with previous literature on network management, I found a positive direct effect of boundary-spanning public managers on network performance (see chapter 3). By cutting across conventional boundaries of organization, sector and policy boundary-spanning public managers can enhance the problem-solving capacity and the integrated nature of policy-

and decision making in governance networks. In addition to this literature I also found a strong, indirect effect of boundary-spanning public managers on network performance via throughput legitimacy. This finding nuances and clarifies the assumed and previously tested relationship between the boundary-spanning activities of public managers and the performance of governance networks. Public managers could play a key role in connecting relevant stakeholders to the policymaking process and building and managing a platform of inter-organizational interaction. This contributes to network performance. However, the results indicate that public managers will substantially improve their impact on network performance if they succeed in organizing an inclusive, deliberative, and transparent policy- and decision-making process. This deliberative quality of the interaction process between network actors has a strong impact on the performance of governance networks.

The third conclusion of this thesis is that realizing throughput legitimacy and improving network performance require broad boundary judgments by project managers with regard to the content, process, and structure. As can be concluded from the Haringvliet Sluices case (see chapter 2), the boundary judgments of project managers matter with regard to the connections in which they invest and the way they approach the context of their project. Through these boundary judgments, managers influence the inclusion and exclusion of actors (public, private, societal), domains (e.g. water safety, environment, economic vitality, infrastructure), and frames (problems, solutions, interests). Broad boundary judgments allow greater room to discover more integral means of dealing with complex societal issues. Making broad boundary judgments fits with a complexity-sensitive approach towards complex public issues in which the cross-cutting characteristics of such issues are taken as the point of departure. Managers with broad boundary judgments focus on the interdependencies of issues, actors, processes, and structures. Such managers acknowledge that the boundaries between project and context are not objectively definable but are the result of choices, and that these boundaries need deliberate legitimation. This means that the project is managed as an open system in which the boundaries between project and context are perceived as dynamic, fluid, and permeable, which requires more boundary spanning activities. This could lead then to a higher level of throughput legitimacy and network performance. However, the opportunity structure for managers to enact broad boundary judgments is important to consider, as this can be constrained by the institutional context of governmental organizations.

Next to the boundary-spanning activities of public managers, this thesis has examined the boundary-spanning activities of community leaders in governance networks driven by self-organizing citizens. *The fourth conclusion of this thesis is that boundary-spanning activities by community leaders are crucial for governance networks driven by self-organizing citizens to become established and effective.* There are striking similarities between the activities of the chairman of the Trust in the UK Caterham Barracks case (chapter 5) and the chairman of the Federation in the Dutch Broekpolder case (chapter 4). They both engaged substantially

in connecting different individuals, their viewpoints, and interests across the boundaries of governmental institutions, the local community, and private/societal organizations. They invested in inter-organizational and interpersonal relationships between key individuals across the domains of administrative, political, and local community boundaries. Furthermore, they took a leading role in coordinating the activities of the self-organizing citizens and connecting the ideas and plans of these more or less informal citizen groups with related local government policies and decision-making procedures.

Adapting to and translating institutional practices across these boundaries was a particular boundary-spanning activity in this respect. The boundary spanners connected different institutional logics and played a crucial role in organizing how to embed new patterns of behavior in existing institutional structures. They merged new ways of organizing with existing institutional procedures. Hence, in addition to their role in information exchange and building relationships, their translating and transforming institutional practices were found to be important boundary-spanning activities. The community leaders were able to perform these high level boundary-spanning activities because of their well-connectedness (existing network and network position), their 'institutional experience,' and their relational capacities. They were strongly linked within the local community by their network activities, but they were also strongly linked at the governmental side of the boundary because of their previous work experience within governmental institutions. This not only provided them a variety of contacts within the governmental institutions, but also provided them knowledge about how policy and political processes work. This enabled them to embed the citizens' initiative across administrative, political, and local community boundaries.

In this adaptation and translation of institutionalized practices, the community leaders were certainly not acting alone. Boundary-spanning activities at both sides of the boundary were performed in order to align a governmental logic with the citizens' community organization (see chapter 4 in this regard). The trustful relationships between the community leaders and civil servants played an important role, and the civil servants' boundary-spanning activities also were important in the facilitation, consolidation, and embedding of self-governance. These civil servants were instrumental in guiding and navigating the citizen initiative through the administrative organization and connecting the ideas and proposals with the different policy departments; and, as became clear from the Dutch case, they also provided important cues for the citizen initiative to make their proposals more acceptable and in line with administrative and political rules and practices. Hence, a combination of translating activities on both sides of the boundary was observed. Boundary-spanning became a co-production between key civil servants and community leaders. This contributed to mutual adaptation of local government practices and the citizens' community organization.

The fifth conclusion of this thesis is that the performance of governance networks and trust between network actors are enhanced by the interplay of boundary-spanning activities by

public, private, and societal actors. In line with the studies on self-governance networks, this finding stresses the importance of the connective capabilities of different individuals interacting in governance networks and their mutual interplay. The results of the survey research among public managers operating in complex urban development projects show that network performance is positively affected by the presence of multiple people practicing boundary-spanning activities (see chapter 6 in this regard). As governance processes dealing with complex societal issues evolve at the boundaries of different public, private, and societal organizations, the boundary-spanning activities of a variety of individuals matter for the performance of governance networks. These people operate actively on the boundary of their organization, improve the coordination between network and intra-organizational processes, build sustainable inter-organizational relationships, and collect and disseminate relevant information on both sides of the organizational boundary.

Besides their (direct) effects on network performance, boundary spanners positively influence the level of trust between actors in the network. I found a strong positive effect of boundary spanners on trust in the governance network (see chapter 6). Through their relational activities and their empathic skills, boundary spanners could enhance trustful relationships between actors in the governance network. Trustful relationships in governance networks enhance the sharing of information and resources, which could in turn increase the performance of governance networks. Although the results indicate that boundary spanners enhance the performance of governance networks also indirectly via trust, this mediating relationship was not found significant.

These boundary spanners originated mainly from private and societal organizations, and less from governmental organizations (at all levels: national, regional, and – especially – local). This provides the insight that representatives from private and societal organizations are important in spanning the boundaries among private, societal, and public organizations in the governance network, and bringing these organizations more closely together, thereby potentially enhancing throughput legitimacy and network effectiveness. If one focuses on the interaction process between a diversity of stakeholders and considers their self-organizing behavior, boundary-spanning activities are the concern not only of (formal) public managers, but also of (informal) community leaders and representatives of NGOs and private businesses who are able and willing to cross their organizational boundaries.

CLOSING OFF

This research stresses the importance of the boundary-spanning role in enhancing the democratic legitimacy in the new democratic spaces offered by governance networks. Governance networks offer potential in giving shape to new democratic practices that complement representative democracy in realizing democratically legitimate and more effective

responses to complex public issues. Governance networks follow a different logic than representative democracy in terms of democratic legitimacy. In contrast to representative democracy, constituencies are more dynamic and come into existence in response to specific policy issues. This also means that we need other criteria to assess the democratic legitimacy of policy- and decision making within governance networks. The notion of throughput legitimacy, which emphasizes inclusiveness, transparency, and the deliberative quality of the interaction process between network actors, offers an important contribution in this respect. As has been demonstrated in this thesis, public managers can play an important role in strengthening this form of legitimacy and therefore play an important role in increasing the democratic legitimacy of governance networks.

Whereas many governments have a tendency to invest in new structures (reorganization) or organizational forms to deal with complex governance issues, this study provides the insight that this one-dimensional approach is not enough and needs at least to be accompanied by investment in the connective and relational capabilities of people dealing with complex, cross-sector, and multi-actor public issues. Careful selection of staff at these qualities and / or investment in these skills can have a beneficial effect on coping with boundary-crossing issues. Another important recommendation for governmental organizations is to invest in careful design of the boundary spanner's organizational position. Boundary spanners have a difficult role to play and often have to face intra-organizational resistance or rigidity. In order to make connections across various institutional and organizational boundaries, boundary spanners often challenge existing organizational structures and routines. Appropriate support, such as a certain degree of autonomy and formal authority, could be helpful in this respect. The importance of this supporting and facilitating of boundary spanners will become more severe if the amount and diversity of bottom-up citizen initiatives grows and if governments want to be responsive to these initiatives.

In this respect, more research is needed to the enabling and constraining conditions of boundary-spanners to act effectively and to their willingness to perform boundary-spanning activities. Boundary spanners perform an important, but difficult task. In order to make connections across different institutional and organization boundaries, they often challenge existing organizational routines and structures. In their boundary-spanning activities, boundary spanners could, paradoxically, become relatively isolated. In their spanning activities, they could become someone who belongs neither to the environment nor to the official organization that they represent. Future research can focus on how boundary-spanners cope with environmental stress and/or intra-organizational forces of resistance and how they deal with role conflicts in this respect.

Summary in Dutch

HOOFDVRAAG, CONTEXT EN RELEVANTIE VAN HET ONDERZOEK

Veel hedendaagse publieke vraagstukken op gebieden als watermanagement, stedelijke ontwikkeling, gezondheidszorg, armoedebestrijding en milieubescherming vragen om interactie tussen een veelheid van overheden, maatschappelijke en private partijen. Veel hedendaagse beleid- en besluitvormingsprocessen ontvouwen zich daarom in netwerken van actoren over de grenzen van publieke, private en maatschappelijke sferen. Dit heeft aanleiding gegeven tot onderzoek over hoe effectieve en legitieme beleids- en besluitvorming te realiseren in deze zogenoemde *governance netwerken*: netwerken die ontstaan als reactie op specifieke publieke kwesties en die, in tegenstelling tot de instituties van de representatieve democratie, dynamisch en meer horizontaal van karakter zijn. De focus van dit proefschrift ligt op het management van interacties tussen overheidspartijen enerzijds en maatschappelijke en private partijen anderzijds in governance netwerken op het gebied van stedelijke ontwikkeling en watermanagement. Het concept *boundary-spanning* wordt gebruikt om dit management van interacties over organisatorische en institutionele grenzen heen te onderzoeken. De onderzoeksdoelstelling van dit proefschrift is het beschrijven van de rol van boundary spanners in deze governance netwerken en hun effecten op de prestaties en de democratische legitimiteit van deze netwerken te toetsen. De hoofdvraag die centraal staat is: *Op welke wijze en in welke mate hebben boundary-spanners effect op de democratische legitimiteit en de prestaties van governance netwerken op het gebied van stedelijke ontwikkeling en watermanagement?*

Dit onderzoek vindt zijn oorsprong in de veranderende context van beleids- en besluitvorming in de laatste decennia. In het hedendaagse, laat moderne tijdperk staan de klassiek modernistische instituties van beleids- en besluitvorming in toenemende mate onder druk om maatschappelijke vraagstukken effectief en legitiem het hoofd te bieden. Diverse veranderingen en ontwikkelingen in de hedendaagse samenleving kunnen daarvoor als belangrijke factoren worden geïdentificeerd. Twee belangrijke ontwikkelingen worden specifiek uitgelicht en uitgewerkt in dit proefschrift. De eerste betreft de toenemende complexiteit van publieke vraagstukken in wisselwerking met een sterk gespecialiseerd, maar daardoor ook gefragmenteerd institutioneel landschap. De tweede betreft de maatschappelijke context waarin betrokkenheid van burgers in de traditionele politieke instituties sterk is afgenomen. Burgers zijn bovendien steeds kritischer geworden ten opzichte van deze politieke instituties. Daarentegen zijn burgers assertiever geworden en nemen ze vaker het heft in eigen handen wanneer hun belangen op het spel staan. Burgers zijn steeds beter in staat om zich snel en effectief te organiseren en niet zelden ontwikkelen deze burgerinitiatieven alternatieve plannen voor overheidsmaatregelen die ingrijpen in hun directe leefomgeving waarmee zij de concurrentie met overheden tot op zekere hoogte aangaan. We zien een opkomst van alternatieve burgerparticipatie, die sterke geënt is op zelf-organisatie, die ontstaat buiten de traditionele instituties om, maar die wel in interactie staat met deze instituties.

Mede naar aanleiding van deze uitdagingen is er in de laatste decennia een sterke opkomst van netwerkachtige vormen van governance. Een governance netwerk verwijst naar een web van relaties tussen overheid, maatschappelijke organisaties, burgergroeperingen en/of bedrijfsleven dat ontstaat rond een publiek vraagstuk en dat gevormd, onderhouden en veranderd wordt door de interactie tussen de betrokken actoren. Deze interactieve vormen van bestuur ontstaan door groeiende onderlinge afhankelijkheden tussen actoren in de hedendaagse samenleving, maar ook door ontevredenheid over traditionele vormen van bestuur. Ze kunnen worden geïnitieerd door overheidspartijen, maar ze kunnen ook worden aangewakkerd door initiatief van zelforganiserende burgers, zogeheten burgercollectieven (De Moor, 2013).⁹ In dit proefschrift richt ik me op twee typen governance netwerken rond watermanagement vraagstukken en stedelijke ontwikkeling: netwerken waarin overheidspartijen een meer leidende en initiërende rol spelen en governance netwerken die worden aangedreven door zelforganiserende burgers. Met zelforganisatie van burgers doel ik op bottom-up initiatieven geleid door burgers, die ontstaan als reactie op een, veelal lokaal, publiek vraagstuk en die de ambitie hebben om middels een duurzame samenwerking tussen burgers dit vraagstuk aan te pakken.

Dit proefschrift beoogt bij te dragen aan de literatuur over governance netwerken op ten minste twee belangrijke punten. Alhoewel eerder onderzoek heeft gewezen op het belang van boundary-spanning activiteiten van netwerkmanagers of meta-governors als factor voor het verbeteren van de prestaties van governance netwerken, is hierin de democratische legitimiteit nog weinig aan bod gekomen, zeker wat empirische studies betreft. Een belangrijke reden hiervoor is dat de aard van governance netwerken niet aansluit bij de uitgangspunten van traditionele modellen van democratie. Naast wetenschappelijke debatten over de betekenis van governance netwerken in termen van democratische legitimiteit, compliceert dit empirische analyses.

Ten tweede gaat verreweg de meeste aandacht in de literatuur uit naar de rol van publieke netwerkmanagers en leidende politici, terwijl beleids- en besluitvormingsprocessen in governance netwerken evolueren op de grenzen van verschillende publieke, private en maatschappelijke organisaties. Dit maakt dat de boundary-spanning activiteiten van een groot aantal individuen van belang zijn voor de prestaties van governance netwerken. Daarom zal dit onderzoek ook de rol van boundary spanners met diverse organisatorische achtergronden, met name die met een maatschappelijk en private achtergrond, in ogenschouw nemen en ook hun effecten op de prestaties van governance netwerken toetsen. Gezien de toenemende belangstelling van zowel overheden als academici op het zelforganiserend vermogen van burgers in het omgaan met publieke vraagstukken is dit een belangrijke bijdrage. Denk in dit kader bijvoorbeeld aan het discours van de Participatiesamenleving in Nederland en de Big Society in het Verenigd Koninkrijk.

9 Zie de literatuurlijst van hoofdstuk 1 voor de volledige referentie

STRUCTUUR VAN HET PROEFSCHRIFT EN METHODEN

Dit proefschrift bevat vijf verschillende studies die verschillende aspecten van de centrale onderzoeksvraag behandelen. Zowel kwantitatieve als kwalitatieve methoden zijn hierbij gebruikt. Deze vijf studies zijn allen gepubliceerd en kunnen op zichzelf gelezen worden: vier van de vijf studies zijn gepubliceerd in internationaal peer-reviewed tijdschriften en een studie is gepubliceerd als een hoofdstuk in een internationaal geredigeerd boek. De vijf studies zijn opgedeeld in twee delen (deel II en III van het proefschrift). Deel II richt zich op de boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers binnen netwerken rondom complexe waterprojecten en hun effecten op de democratische legitimiteit en de prestaties van het netwerk. Dit deel bevat twee studies. De eerste is een kwalitatieve enkelvoudige studie waarin (een gebrek aan) boundary-spanning activiteiten omtrent een omstreden watervraagstuk wordt onderzocht. De tweede is een kwantitatief onderzoek, gebaseerd op een survey onder betrokkenen in de ontwikkeling van complexe waterprojecten. In deze studie worden de effecten van boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers op de democratische legitimiteit en de prestaties van het netwerk onderzocht.

Deel III gaat dieper in op boundary-spanning activiteiten van actieve burgers, maatschappelijke en private partijen in governance netwerken. Dit deel bevat drie studies. De eerste twee betreffen case studies (een enkelvoudige en een vergelijkende case study) over governance netwerken geïnitieerd door zelf-organiserende burgers. In deze studies wordt de evolutie van de burgercollectieven en de boundary-spanning activiteiten van de leiders van deze burgercollectieven onderzocht. Deel III sluit af met een kwantitatief onderzoek waarin de effecten van boundary spanners op vertrouwen en prestaties van governance netwerk rondom stedelijke ontwikkeling getoetst worden. Deze studie is gebaseerd op survey onderzoek onder managers van stedelijke projecten in de vier grootste gemeenten van Nederland.

CONCLUSIES

In dit proefschrift worden boundary spanners opgevat als personen die actief werken op de grens van hun organisatie. Ze zijn in staat om mogelijkheden tot het opbouwen van inter-organisatorische relaties te herkennen en te benutten. Ze hebben een sterk ontwikkeld gevoel voor de andere kant van de grens van de organisatie en het netwerk waarin hun organisatie zich begeeft en dat ze deels zelf opbouwen. Dit betekent dat zij in staat zijn zich in te leven in andermans belangen en in andere structuren en dat ze een gevoel hebben voor de sociale constructies van andere actoren. Boundary spanners begrijpen de behoeften van andere partijen, wat hen in staat stelt om te zoeken naar gedeelde betekenissen en individuele organisatorische belangen samen te smelten met gezamenlijke belangen. Ze zijn ervaren

netwerkers en gespecialiseerd in het doorkruisen van verschillende domeinen (overheid, maatschappelijk en bedrijfsleven). Naast deze interpersoonlijke en inter-organisatorische vaardigheden, worden boundary spanners beschouwd als ondernemers en vernieuwers in de zin dat ze proberen om verschillende gerelateerde vraagstukken en beleidsprocessen te koppelen over grenzen heen.

Boundary-spanning wordt opgevat als een combinatie van samenhangende activiteiten die gericht zijn op het verbinden van verschillende actoren uit het domein van de overheid, het maatschappelijk veld en het bedrijfsleven, het opbouwen van duurzame relaties tussen deze actoren, en evoluerende netwerkprocessen te verbinden met intra-organisatorische processen. In dit opzicht zijn ze bezig met drie belangrijke activiteiten: 1) het verbinden van verschillende mensen en processen over organisatiegrenzen heen, 2) het selecteren van relevante informatie aan beide zijden van de grens, en 3) het vertalen van deze informatie naar de andere kant van de grens. In dit proefschrift richt ik me op personen die in een hoge mate boundary-spanning activiteiten in praktijk brengen. Deze boundary spanners zijn actief betrokken in een tweezijdige informatie- en communicatiestroom: vanuit het netwerk naar de organisatie toe en vice versa. Dit houdt in dat boundary spanners zowel sterk verankerd moeten zijn binnen als buiten de organisatie.

De eerste conclusie van dit proefschrift is dat de boundary spanning activiteiten van publieke managers een belangrijke rol spelen in, en een sterk effect hebben op, het realiseren van democratische throughput legitimiteit van governance netwerken. Het concept van democratische throughput legitimiteit gaat over de democratische kwaliteit van het interactie proces dat zich ontvouwt in governance netwerken (zie ook de tweede conclusie). Governance netwerken hebben democratisch potentieel omdat ze, zoals verschillende auteurs stellen, verschillende belanghebbenden rechtstreeks kunnen laten participeren in gezamenlijke beleids- en besluitvorming en ze meer flexibel en toegespitst zijn op het specifieke publieke vraagstuk in kwestie. Om dit potentieel manifest te maken, spelen de boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers een belangrijke rol. Ik vond een sterk positief effect van een managementstijl gebaseerd op boundary-spanning activiteiten op de throughput legitimiteit van governance netwerken rondom complexe waterprojecten (zie hoofdstuk 3). Boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers richten zich op het verbinden van verschillende actoren uit verschillende domeinen. Ze creëren kansen voor burgers, maatschappelijke organisaties en bedrijven om te participeren in beleids- en besluitvorming. Daarnaast verbinden ze dit proces met het bestuurlijke en politieke domein en maken hierbij de nodige wederzijdse vertaalactiviteiten. Op deze manier spelen publieke managers een belangrijke rol in het faciliteren van constructieve interactie en een constructieve dialoog tussen de actoren in governance netwerken en spelen ze een belangrijke brugfunctie tussen netwerkprocessen en formele besluitvormingsprocedures en structuren.

De tweede conclusie van dit proefschrift is dat throughput legitimiteit een sterk positief effect heeft op de prestaties van governance netwerken rondom complexe maatschappelijke

vraagstukken. Ik vond een sterk positief effect van throughput legitimiteit op de netwerkprestaties van besluitvormingsprocessen rondom complexe waterprojecten (zie hoofdstuk 3). Een hoog niveau van throughput legitimiteit weerspiegelt een hoge mate van inclusie van betrokken belanghebbenden, transparantie van de beleids- en besluitvorming, en een constructieve dialoog tussen de belanghebbenden in het netwerk. Er is interactie over de grenzen van overheidsorganisaties, maatschappelijke belangengroepen en lokale burgercollectieven heen met een hoog democratisch gehalte. Deliberatieve praktijken verhogen de uitwisseling van informatie, percepties en voorkeuren, waardoor een leerproces kan plaatsvinden dat vervolgens de netwerkprestaties kan verbeteren.

Throughput legitimiteit medieert hierdoor gedeeltelijk de relatie tussen boundary-spanning publieke managers en netwerkprestaties. In lijn met de literatuur over netwerkmanagement, vond ik een direct positief effect van boundary-spanning publieke managers op de prestaties van het netwerk (zie met name hoofdstuk 3). In aanvulling op deze literatuur vond ik ook een sterk, indirect effect van boundary spanning publieke managers op netwerkprestaties via throughput legitimiteit. Deze uitkomst nuanceert en verduidelijkt de veronderstelde en eerder geteste relatie tussen de boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers en de prestaties van governance netwerken. Publieke managers kunnen een belangrijke rol spelen in het verbinden van relevante belanghebbenden bij de beleidsvorming en het opbouwen en beheren van een platform van inter-organisatorische interactie. Hierdoor kunnen verschillende sectoren met betrekking tot het voorliggende vraagstuk met elkaar in verbinding raken. Dit draagt bij aan de prestaties van het netwerk. Echter, de resultaten geven aan dat publieke managers hun impact op de prestaties van het netwerk aanzienlijk kunnen verbeteren als ze erin slagen om een goed georganiseerde, inclusief, deliberatief en transparant beleids- en besluitvormingsproces weten te creëren waarin er een goede feedbackrelatie bestaat met formele beleids- en besluitvormingsarena's.

De derde conclusie van dit proefschrift is dat het realiseren van throughput legitimiteit en het verbeteren van prestaties van netwerken rondom complexe maatschappelijke vraagstukken vraagt om brede en flexibele projectafbakeningen van publieke managers wat betreft de reikwijdte van het project (inhoud), het proces (wie er betrokken is) en de structuur (projectonderdelen, rollen en verantwoordelijkheidsverdeling). In de casus Haringvlietssluisen (hoofdstuk 2) is er nader ingegaan op de projectafbakeningen van projectmanagers en hoe die van invloed zijn op de verbindingen waarin zij investeren en de manier waarop ze stakeholders benaderen in het kader van hun project. Door deze projectafbakeningen ('boundary judgments'), oefenen managers invloed uit op de in- en uitsluiting van actoren (publiek, privaat, maatschappelijk), domeinen (bv. waterveiligheid, milieu, economische vitaliteit, infrastructuur), en frames (problemen, oplossingen, interesses). Affiniteit voor het complexe, grensoverschrijdende karakter van water vraagstukken resulteert in brede en meer flexibele projectafbakeningen waarin er meer ruimte ontstaat voor het ontdekken van een meer integrale aanpak van deze vraagstukken. Managers met brede grensoordelen richten zich op

de onderlinge verwevenheid van problemen, actoren, processen en structuren. Dergelijke managers erkennen dat de grenzen tussen project en context niet objectief bepaalbaar zijn, maar het resultaat zijn van (politieke) keuzes, en dat deze grenzen voortdurende legitimatie vragen. Dit betekent dat het project wordt beheerd als een open systeem, waarin de grenzen tussen het project en de context worden gezien als dynamisch, vloeiend en doorlaatbaar, wat gepaard zal gaan met meer boundary-spanning activiteiten. Dit kan vervolgens leiden tot een hogere throughput legitimiteit en betere netwerkprestaties. Echter, de mogelijkheid voor managers om brede projectafbakeningen in praktijk te brengen is belangrijk om te overwegen, omdat dit sterk kan worden beperkt door de institutionele context van overheidsorganisaties.

Naast de boundary-spanning activiteiten van publieke managers, heeft dit proefschrift de boundary-spanning activiteiten van de leiders van burgercollectieven nader onderzocht. De context van deze activiteiten betreffen de governance netwerken gedreven door zelf-organiserende burgers. *De vierde conclusie van dit proefschrift is dat de boundary-spanning activiteiten van deze leiders van cruciaal belang zijn om zelf-organisatie van de grond te krijgen (te laten beklijven) en te verankeren.* Er zijn opvallende gelijkenissen tussen de activiteiten van de voorzitter van de het burgercollectief (de Community Trust) in de Britse casus Caterham Barracks (hoofdstuk 5) en de voorzitter van het burgercollectief (de Federatie) in de Nederlands casus Broekpolder (hoofdstuk 4). Beiden investeerden aanzienlijk in het verbinden van verschillende individuen, hun standpunten en belangen over de grenzen van overheidsinstellingen, de lokale gemeenschap en particuliere en maatschappelijke organisaties heen. Zij investeerden in interorganisatorische en interpersoonlijke relaties tussen sleutelfiguren in de lokale gemeenschap, het bestuurlijke en het politieke domein. Bovendien namen ze een leidende rol bij de coördinatie van de activiteiten van de zelforganiserende burgers en het verbinden van ideeën en plannen die binnen deze informele groepen ontstaan met de formele beleidscircuits binnen de lokale overheid en de formele besluitvormingsprocedures.

Naast hun mobiliserende en relationele activiteiten, waren het vertalen van institutionele praktijken tussen lokale overheid en burgercollectief en het verankeren van de nieuwe governance structuur belangrijke boundary-spanning activiteiten. De boundary spanners speelden een cruciale rol in het verbinden van nieuwe gedragspatronen met bestaande institutionele structuren. Ze versmolten nieuwe manieren van organiseren met bestaande institutionele procedures (zie hoofdstuk 4 en 5). De leiders van de burgercollectieven waren in staat om deze hoogwaardige boundary-spanning activiteiten uit te voeren vanwege hun verbondenheid (binnen het bestaande netwerk en hun specifieke netwerkpositie), hun 'institutionele ervaring', en hun relationele capaciteiten. Ze waren sterk verbonden binnen de lokale gemeenschap door hun netwerk activiteiten, maar ze waren ook sterk verbonden met het bestuurlijke en politieke domein vanwege hun eerdere werkervaring binnen de lokale overheid. Dit voorzag hen niet alleen in een verscheidenheid aan contacten binnen

de lokale overheid, maar voorzag hen ook van de nodige kennis over hoe beleidsprocessen en politieke processen werken. Hiermee konden ze het burgerinitiatief verbinden over bestuurlijke, politieke, en lokale gemeenschapsgrenzen heen.

In dit vertalingswerk omtrent geïnstitutionaliseerde praktijken, stonden de leiders van de burgercollectieven zeker niet alleen. Boundary-spanning activiteiten aan beide zijden van de grens werden uitgevoerd om een betere fit te creëren tussen de werkwijze en gangbare regels van de lokale overheid en die van het burgercollectief (zie hoofdstuk 4 in dit verband). Betrokken ambtenaren speelden een belangrijke rol in het begeleiden en loodsen van het burgerinitiatief door de ambtelijke organisatie en het politiek-bestuurlijke domein. In dit opzicht was boundary-spanning een co-productie tussen individuen aan burgerzijde en aan overheidszijde. De betrokken ambtenaren vervulden een belangrijke brugfunctie in het laten landen van het burgerinitiatief binnen de ambtelijke organisatie (de verschillende beleidsafdelingen); en, andersom, gaven ze belangrijke feedback en suggesties aan de leiders van het burgercollectief om hun voorstellen meer aanvaardbaar en in overeenstemming met de bestuurlijke en politieke regels en praktijken te maken. De co-productie tussen boundary-spanning activiteiten aan weerszijde van de grens droeg bij aan begrip en wederzijdse aanpassing van gedrag patronen tussen overheid en burgercollectief.

De vijfde conclusie van dit proefschrift is dat de prestaties van governance netwerken en het vertrouwen tussen netwerk actoren worden versterkt door het samenspel van boundary-spanning activiteiten tussen publieke, private en maatschappelijke actoren. In lijn met de voorgaande conclusie, benadrukt deze bevinding het belang van de boundary-spanning activiteiten van verschillende individuen in governance netwerken en hun onderlinge wisselwerking. De resultaten van het survey onderzoek onder publieke managers van stedelijke projecten tonen aan dat netwerkprestaties positief worden beïnvloed door de aanwezigheid van boundary-spanners die afkomstig zijn van verschillende organisaties binnen het netwerk (zie hoofdstuk 6 in dit verband). Deze mensen opereren actief op de grens van hun organisatie en spelen een belangrijke rol in het verbeteren van de coördinatie tussen netwerk- en intra-organisatorische processen, het opbouwen van duurzame interorganisatorische relaties, en het verzamelen en vertalen van relevante informatie aan beide zijden van de organisatorische grens.

Naast hun (directe) effect op de netwerkprestaties, hebben boundary spanners een sterk positief effect op het vertrouwen tussen actoren in het netwerk (zie hoofdstuk 6). Door hun relationele activiteiten en hun inlevingsvermogen in de belangen en sociale constructies van andere actoren dragen boundary spanners bij aan het creëren van vertrouwensvolle relaties tussen actoren in governance netwerken. Vertrouwensvolle relaties tussen actoren in governance netwerken dragen op hun beurt bij aan de uitwisseling van informatie en middelen, die de prestaties van governance netwerken kunnen verhogen. Hoewel de resultaten een sterke indicatie geven dat boundary spanners in dit kader ook de prestaties van governance

netwerken verhogen via hun sterke effect op vertrouwen, werd dit mediërende effect van vertrouwen niet significant bevonden.

Volgens de managers van de stedelijke projecten waren de boundary spanners voornamelijk afkomstig uit particuliere en maatschappelijke organisaties, en werden ze minder sterk vertegenwoordigd door overheidspartijen (op alle niveaus: nationaal, regionaal, en lokaal). Het is voor vertegenwoordigers van overheidsorganisaties blijkbaar moeilijker om boundary-spanning activiteiten te vervullen. Dit draagt bij aan het inzicht dat vertegenwoordigers van particuliere en maatschappelijke organisaties belangrijk en creatief zijn in het leggen van effectieve verbindingen tussen private, maatschappelijke en publieke organisaties in het governance netwerk. Dit laat zien dat ook deze partijen een belangrijke brugfunctie kunnen vervullen tussen actoren en vraagstukken en dat dit niet alleen is weggelegd voor publieke managers. Dit onderstreept dat boundary-spanning niet alleen een verdienste kan zijn van managers in dienst van de overheid, maar ook van meer informele leiders in dienst van burgercollectieven, vertegenwoordigers van non-profit organisaties en private bedrijven die bereidwillig zijn om op zoek te gaan naar gedeelde belangen in governance netwerken en een integrale aanpak van complexe stedelijke projecten, en die capabel zijn om over verschillende organisatorische grenzen heen verbindingen te creëren.

AFSLUITING

Dit onderzoek benadrukt het belang van boundary-spanning in het vergroten van de democratische legitimiteit van de nieuwe democratische ruimtes die geboden worden door governance netwerken. Governance netwerken hebben potentieel in het vormgeven van nieuwe democratische praktijken die de representatieve democratie completeren in het vormgeven van democratisch legitieme en effectieve antwoorden op complexe publieke vraagstukken. Governance netwerken volgen een andere logica dan de representatieve democratie in termen van democratische legitimiteit. In vergelijking met de representatieve democratie, zijn de beleids- en besluitvormingsarena's van governance netwerken dynamischer en ontwikkelen ze zich als reactie op specifieke collectieve besluitvormingsvraagstukken. Dit betekent ook dat andere criteria aan belang winnen om de democratische legitimiteit van governance netwerken te toetsen. De notie van throughput legitimiteit, die nadruk legt op het inclusieve karakter, de transparantie en de deliberatieve kwaliteit van het interactieproces tussen netwerk actoren, biedt in dit opzicht een belangrijke bijdrage. Zoals aangetoond in dit proefschrift, kunnen publieke managers een belangrijke rol spelen bij het versterken van deze vorm van legitimiteit en in dit opzicht dus een belangrijke rol spelen in het vergroten van de democratische legitimiteit van governance netwerken.

Overwegende dat veel overheden doorgaans de neiging hebben om voornamelijk te investeren in nieuwe structuren (reorganisatie) of organisatievormen om hun responsiviteit

jegens complexe maatschappelijke vraagstukken en veranderingen te verhogen, levert deze studie de aanbeveling op dat investeren in de boundary spanning competenties van publieke managers hieraan een belangrijke bijdrage kan leveren. Gerichte selectie van personeel op deze kwaliteiten en/of investeren in deze competenties kan een gunstig effect hebben op de omgang met grensoverschrijdende vraagstukken. Een tweede belangrijke aanbeveling voor overheidsorganisaties is om te investeren in zorgvuldige vormgeving van de organisatorische positie van boundary spanners. Boundary spanners hebben namelijk een moeilijk rol te vervullen en lopen niet zelden tegen de nodige intra-organisatorische obstakels aan. Om verbindingen over verschillende institutionele en organisatie grenzen heen te maken, drijven boundary spanners vaak in tegen bestaande organisatorische routines en structuren. Hierdoor kan een zekere ondersteuning met een bepaalde mate van autonomie en formele autoriteit behulpzaam zijn. Het belang van dit ondersteunen en faciliteren van boundary spanners zal toenemen wanneer de hoeveelheid en diversiteit van bottom-up initiatieven van burgers groeit en als overheden responsief en ontvankelijk willen zijn jegens deze initiatieven.

In dit verband is nader onderzoek nodig naar de versterkende en beperkende condities waaronder boundary-spanners opereren en die van invloed kunnen zijn op hun bereidwilligheid en effectiviteit. Daarnaast kan toekomstig onderzoek zich richten op hoe boundary spanners omgaan met tegenwerkende krachten, rolconflicten en spanningen die voortkomen uit de specifieke rol die ze vervullen. Hierbij valt te denken aan de boundary-spanning ambtenaar die een brugfunctie probeert te vervullen tussen de organisatie en het instituut dat hij vertegenwoordigt en het burgerinitiatief dat hij probeert te ondersteunen. In zijn verbindende activiteiten kan hij zich – paradoxaal – relatief geïsoleerd voelen, omdat hij geen vast of regulier onderdeel vormt van de structuren die hij probeert te verbinden.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ingmar van Meerkerk (1986) studied Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam. During his Bachelors, he received a prize for the highest mean score. He graduated his Master, specialized in Public Management, cum laude. In 2007, Ingmar joined the Department of Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam as a student-assistant. From 2009 – 2013, he worked as a Ph.D. candidate. During his Ph.D. study, Ingmar completed the two-year training program of the Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG). Between 2011 and 2014, he was the coordinator of the department's research group Governance of Complex Systems (GOCS).

After completion of his Ph.D. research, Ingmar continued working as a researcher at the Department of Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam, doing both research projects, such as an evaluation study of interdisciplinary research for the ARCH FP7 project and lecturing, e.g. the Bachelor project. Furthermore, he was co-chair of the panel on self-organization and new citizen collectives at the International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM) conference 2014. In 2014, Ingmar received a research grant from IHS Erasmus University Rotterdam for his research proposal about an international comparative study on boundary spanning for community driven co-production in dealing with poverty reduction and urban regeneration. With that grant, Ingmar will start as a post-doctoral researcher at the Department of Public Administration, conducting his research project.

