Aalto University
School of Business

The importance of building strategic intent for Finland and the discursive practices to pursue it - A critical discourse analysis of Finnish Government Programmes

International Design Business Management (IDBM)

Master's thesis

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— A critical discourse analysis of Finnish Government Programmes

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Abstract

The main objectives of this thesis are to validate the importance of creating strategic intent for the public sector and to investigate the discursive practices by which this intent can be built. As a multidisciplinary study combining literature from various fields of science, the aim is to also suggest connections between existing knowledge from different disciplines. A rather elaborate context review is constructed in order to carry this out: the narrative runs from the ultimate aim of pursuing sustainability to dealing with wicked problems by managing transitions. Transition visions are contrasted with the concept of strategic intent, leading back to the main research questions.

The empirical study is constructed in two parts. The first method used is an online questionnaire that was submitted to public sector employees across organizations. Its aim is to validate the importance of building strategic intent in the context of Finnish governance. The second method used is critical discourse analysis, where the Government Programmes of Finland are explored in connection to the key discourses of building strategic intent.

The study results suggest that while building strategic intent for Finland is a pressing and important issue, the Government Programmes fail to use discursive practices to support this. Discourses of creating strategic intent should be considered as guidelines for communication in matters related to strategy in the public sector. These discourses should be paid special attention to in the preparation of Government Programmes, as their role as the overarching strategy document of the whole of nation is rather unique.

Tekijä Jemina Lehmuskoski	
Työn nimi Strategisen tahtotilan muodostamisen tärkeys Suomelle ja diskursiiviset käytänteet, joilla tahtotilaa voidaan rakentaa — Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi Suomen hallitusohjelmista	
Tutkinto Maisterin tutkinto	
Koulutusohjelma International Design Business Management (IDBM)	
Työn ohjaaja(t) Professori Mikko Koria	

Hyväksymisvuosi 2015 **Sivumäärä** 121 **Kieli** Englanti

Tiivistelmä

Tämän tutkimuksen päätavoitteena on todistaa julkishallinnon strategisen tahtotilan luomisen tärkeys ja tutkia niitä diskursiivisia käytänteitä, joiden avulla tätä tahtotilaa voidaan rakentaa. Poikkitieteellisen tutkimuksen tavoitteena on myös osoittaa linkkejä eri tieteenalojen välillä: usean eri tieteenalan tutkimusta yhdistelemällä tutkimus nostaa esiin ja yhdistelee olemassaolevaa tietoa uusissa yhteyksissä. Laajan kirjallisuuskatsauksen kautta tutkimus kuljettaa lukijan aina päämäärästä, kestävän kehityksen tavoittelusta, viheliäisten ongelmien kanssa pärjäämiseen siirtymien johtamisen keinoin. Näiden siirtymien tulevaisuuden tavoitetilat ja strateginen tahtotila rinnastetaan tutkimuksessa, ja siten palataan alkuperäisiin tutkimuskysymyksiin.

Empiirinen osuus koostuu kahdesta osasta. Ensimmäisessä osassa menetelmänä käytetään verkkokyselyä, joka lähetettiin julkishallinnon työntekijöille eri organisaatioissa. Sen tarkoitus on vahvistaa strategisen tahtotilan rakentamisen tärkeys Suomen julkishallinnon kontekstissa. Toinen menetelmäosuus koostuu kriittisestä diskurssianalyysistä, jossa Suomen hallitusohjelmia tarkastellaan strategisen tahtotilan muodostamisen avaindiskurssien kautta.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että strategisen tahtotilan muodostaminen Suomelle on tärkeä ja ajankohtainen aihe, mutta hallitusohjelmissa esiin tulevat diskurssit eivät tue tämän tahtotilan muodostumista. Strategisten avaindiskurssien tulisi toimia kaiken strategisen tason viestinnän suuntaviivoina julkisella sektorilla. Erityisesti niiden esiintymiseen tulisi kiinnittää huomiota hallitusohjelmia laadittaessa, sillä näiden dokumenttien rooli koko julkishallintoa yhdistävinä teksteinä on ainutlaatuinen.

Avainsanoja

viheliäiset ongelmat, julkishallinto, siirtymien johtaminen, strateginen tahtotila, strategia käytäntöinä, kriittinen diskurssianalyysi

Foreword

This thesis was not supposed to be about global issues or wicked problems. It started from exploring how design thinking methods might be used in early childhood education – a long-lasting personal interest of mine. However, I soon realized that in order to truly make a change in the way we educate our children, we would have to reform our educational policies and guidelines. Getting into the way we come up with policies and laws, I understood these processes themselves needed to change to better serve our society. Diving into public policymaking, I began to see how fundamentally the way our public sector works lacks in mechanisms to guide our society towards a more sustainable future.
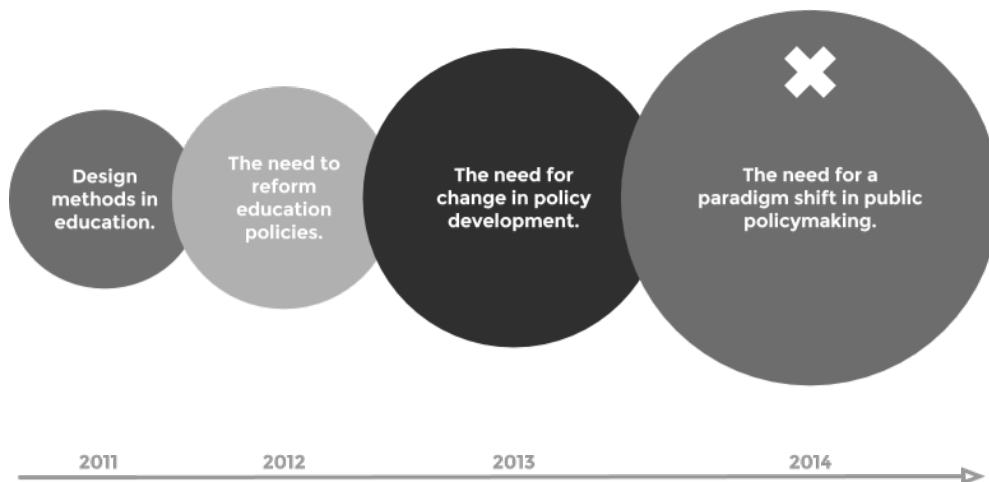

Design methods in education.

The need to reform education policies.

The need for change in policy development.

The need for a paradigm shift in public policymaking.

2011   2012   2013   2014

Figure 0. The journey of this thesis 2011-2015.

When at times doubting my abilities to finish this piece of work, what made me push through was a certain sense of urgency. I truly believe that understanding sustainability and our abilities to cope with huge systemic challenges are crucial in determining the fate of humanity as a whole, and with this thesis I hope to contribute to this discussion in Finland.

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1   Introduction

"The ability to make consistently good decisions over time, enabling an organization to adapt quickly to changes in its environment, has become a critical determinant of success."

— State Services Commission, New Zealand, 2000

Governments today are under immense pressure to renew themselves and their policymaking procedures to better respond to the growing and increasingly complex challenges they face. The quote above well captures the dilemma of policymaking: on one hand, policy should be consistent over time — on the other, it should be able to not only adapt to changes but to proactively shape the future. (Doz & Kosonen 2014; Hämäläinen 2013; Loorbach 2007; Kemp et al. 2005; Head & Alford 2008)

Socio-demographic trends and low economic growth question existing welfare state services. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) In Finland, for example, government spending related to ageing has added up to almost half of the total growth in expenses during the last decade.[1] Tax income is not enough to cover the costs of maintaining a welfare state as we know it, and the amount of national debt has rapidly increased since the economic downturn. At the same time, citizen demand for open, adaptive and transparent government is increasing, and new and cheaper technological solutions provide an efficient way of sharing real-time information and engaging the public in discussion. (Sørensen & Torfing 2012)

It is becoming clear that in order to cope with complexity, our ways of governance will need to change. The current ways of decision-making and the strategic management of our public sector are unable to successfully deal with these wicked issues of tomorrow. (Osborne 2007; Sørensen & Torfing 2012)

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[1] Data source: Tilastokeskus, retreived 18.1.2014

As a response to this need, *innovation in the public sector* has risen to be a popular topic in the discussion of public management renewal. (Sørensen & Torfing 2012) Within the recent years, service design and design thinking as methodological approaches to *routinely generating innovation* have begun to gain their place in the discourse. They provide ways for governance to get engaged in a dialogue with the civil society and the private sector, and tools to better communicate the multiple angles of this complex environment we live in. Research strongly supports this pursuit by suggesting that citizen in general are more satisfied with their lives given the chance to take part in innovating services they will be using themselves. (Bason 2010; von Hippel 2005) In many countries, both local and central government agencies have indeed found ways to incorporate design capabilities into their operations: internal and external design agencies, design brokering services, and embedding designers into the organization. (The Design Commission 2013)

The UK, Wales, Finland and Denmark have been especially active with their work on innovation and design policies, and many others are now taking their example. 'Design for Government' in Finland has especially been fortified by the 2012 World Design Capital year and the growing amount of design projects in the public sector that have followed since (Kansainvälinen designsäätiö 2012). International organizations promoting the use of design methods in the public sector, such as Sharing Experience Europe (SEE) and the European Design Leadership Board, have been established. There is a growing global body of evidence to show that bringing in design tools and -thinking early in the process can have a significant impact on the consequences of an existing or future public service, (The SOLACE Foundation Imprint 2008; SEE Platform 2012; European Commission 2010) and in 2010, design was named as one of the ten priorities for innovation in the European Commission.

However, current practices of innovation and design within the public sector can be characterized as accidental and episodic. Innovation occurs in relatively small scales and is highly dependent on the personal commitment and preferences of management. The nature of design activities within government is not systematic,

and design and innovation capabilities thus do not build inside the public sector to enhance government renewal in a larger scale. (SEE Platform 2013b) Despite national initiatives in building design and innovation capabilities in Finland (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2013), there is no master plan for renewing the ways of policymaking itself. There is a clear *need for strategic approaches to innovation within the public sector*. (Head & Alford 2008; Sørensen & Torfing 2012)

The Public Sector Design Ladder (see Figure 1 below) by members of the SEE Platform is a three-step tool for assessing the degree to which design is applied in public sector organizations. (SEE Platform 2013a; SEE Platform 2013b) The same kind of thinking has earlier been applied to design capabilities in private sector companies: de Mozota & Kim (2009), for example, have studied the concept of design as a core competency. Their work argues that design can be seen as an important organizational asset in building sustained competitive advantage. This thesis suggests that in a similar way, design in the public sector should be considered as a way to not only create better outcomes of service design projects, but to generate new kinds of knowledge within the organization and in its strategic levels conversations. (de Mozota & Kim 2009)
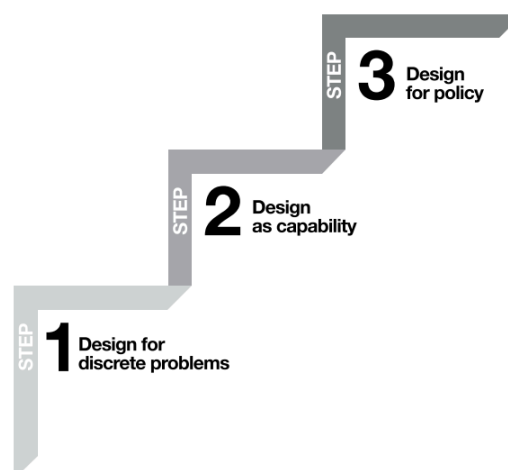
Figure 1: The public sector design ladder. SEE Platform 2013b.

The first step of the ladder describes the most common situation in public sector organizations today, where design methods such as service design are recognized as important tools in solving problems. These discrete problems may be large and wicked, and the outcomes can have significant implications in the society. Projects are, however, often commissioned from outside or temporarily hired expertise, and thus no design capabilities build within the public organization itself. This means that each project is treated as a one-of-a-kind exploration, and design activities hardly have any effect on the framing or procurement of projects elsewhere in the organization. (SEE Platform 2013b)

The second step of the ladder answers to this problem by recognizing the need to actively develop design capabilities within public management. Design thinking amongst many other techniques is easily accessible without a formal education in design. (Brown & Wyatt 2010) Philosophies such as gaining back *creative confidence* (Kelley & Kelley 2012) aim to encourage public sector employees to innovate without a fear of failure. A growing number of toolsets, introductory courses to design and collections of case studies has emerged. In Finland, some of these include the events, guidance and case studies generated by Design Driven City[2] and the extensive toolbox for citizen-driven service design by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (Kuntaliitto 2014). Many others have also compiled their own channels of sharing design tools and experiences.

In the third step of the ladder, design for policy, design thinking is used by policymakers and often facilitated by designers. This field is still relatively unexplored in both academia and practice, but the logic, according to SEE Platform (2013b), is clear. Design methods can answer to some of the key issues identified in policymaking today, providing methods of low-cost rapid prototyping and testing solutions, engaging people across organizations, and thinking in systems, among others. Design for policy aims to utilize these skills to the benefit of overcoming problems typical to the public sector: fragmentation of operations into silos, slow processes and high-cost pilots. (SEE Platform 2013b)

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[2] www.toimivakaupunki.fi/en/

This third level of embedding design into public policymaking is here called *strategic design*, following Helsinki Design Lab (HDL) (Boyer et al. 2011). The field, as HDL describes it, is about "-- *shaping decisions, framing challenges, defining opportunities, and stewardship*". While the methods and tools that strategic designers use are adapted from many established fields of science, such as systems thinking, social sciences or anthropology, the emergence of a profession aimed particularly to create disruptive change within the public policymaking system is rather unique.

Though strategic design is a trendy term among practitioners, the lack of academic research on the particular term in relation to public governance makes it difficult to straightforwardly validate the phenomenon as significant in the conversation on public sector strategy making. There is, however, a more established discussion of the theme within the private sector and in management sciences. Seidel (2000) wrote of design-led consultancy as a way to shape the strategies of companies, Stevens & Moultrie (2011) have claimed design thinking may significantly contribute to the strategy formulation process, and Best (2011) further elaborated on the value of design in generating new insights on emergent possibilities.

The field of management theory has long talked of *strategic thinking* as the enabler of successful strategy formulation and implementation. The attributes connected to strategic thinking in literature are highly similar to those of a strategic designer. (Liedtka 1998; Boyer et al. 2011; Best 2011; Stevens & Moultrie 2011) What the design field and designers may bring as new to this discussion, are for example skills of visualization and communication, user-centered methods and stewardship, meaning the rapid feedback loops and learning achieved by doing, not only thinking. (Boyer et al. 2011; Boyer et al. 2013) This proposed connection of design methods and strategy making is further elaborated on later in this study.

This thesis is particularly interested in the structural innovations within policymaking itself. With the search for ways to generate change within the governance system, embedding strategic design and innovation agendas in the

highest levels of policymaking is an important step. (European Commission 2010) *Transition management* is one approach aiming to achieve this, and to guide large systems continuously towards sustainability. Despite the term it is less about management and more about creating the right conditions for structural innovation to occur. Transition management can be seen to happen, much like the design ladder, on three levels: strategic, tactical and operational. (Timmermans 2006; Kemp et al. 2005) Out of these, my interests lie within the strategic level and particularly in the mechanisms of *creating strategic intent*. This cohesive intent can be described as the driving force behind all innovation actions: it offers the answers to why a system should exist in the first place and what the shared goals that it pursues are (Hamel & Prahalad 1989; Liedtka 1998; Mantere & Sillince 2007).

These themes will be further elaborated on in the context review of this study. Next, I will shortly introduce the current decision-making arena of national strategy within the public sector of Finland.

The arena of building strategy for Finland

The current arena of forming strategy for Finland as a nation is the political context of *government formation talks*, occurring every four years in conjunction with the parliamentary elections. The winning party of elections appoints a negotiator to form the next Cabinet, and in practice, he or she becomes the Prime Minister once the Cabinet is appointed. During these negotiations, the political parties involved in discussion aim to find consensus on the priorities of action during their term of office. This consensus forms the next Government Programme, which the appointed Cabinet will then pursue.

This highly political nature of strategy making combined with the relatively short cycles of governance has lately been seen to lead to a tactical game plan rather than a strategic long-term discussion on the future of Finland (OHRA Project Group 2014). There is, however, no other arena that would have the position of power to enforce long-term visions for the whole of government. On this basis, I make the claim that the Cabinet of Finland should be responsible for initiating strategic discourse and building coherent strategic intent with all the actors involved in the network of developing the public sector.

These problematic notions have not gone unnoticed within the government itself. In January 2015, OHRA Project steered by the Prime Minister's Office published a number of proposals considering the Government's steering program and its renewal. These suggestions included a shift to the Government Programme as a clearly strategic outline of long-term broad goals, and the addition of a separate Government Action Plan containing detailed means and tools for implementation. The project presented critique of recent Governments for having too many and too detailed objectives. Reforms have been poorly planned, and the details of implementation too early locked in for the whole of the term of office. (OHRA Project Group 2014)

Unlike in some countries, the administration in Finland does not follow political cycles. Still, it is naturally affected by the decisions made in higher levels of policymaking (see Figure 2 below for the public administration structure of Finland). The somewhat confusing nature of Government Programmes has left civil servants without a clear mutual understanding on the primary objectives of the government. On the other hand, the expertise of administrative personnel has not been utilized in planning the pursuit of these goals, as very detailed plans for implementation have already been included in the Government Programmes in the beginning of term. (OHRA Project Group 2014)
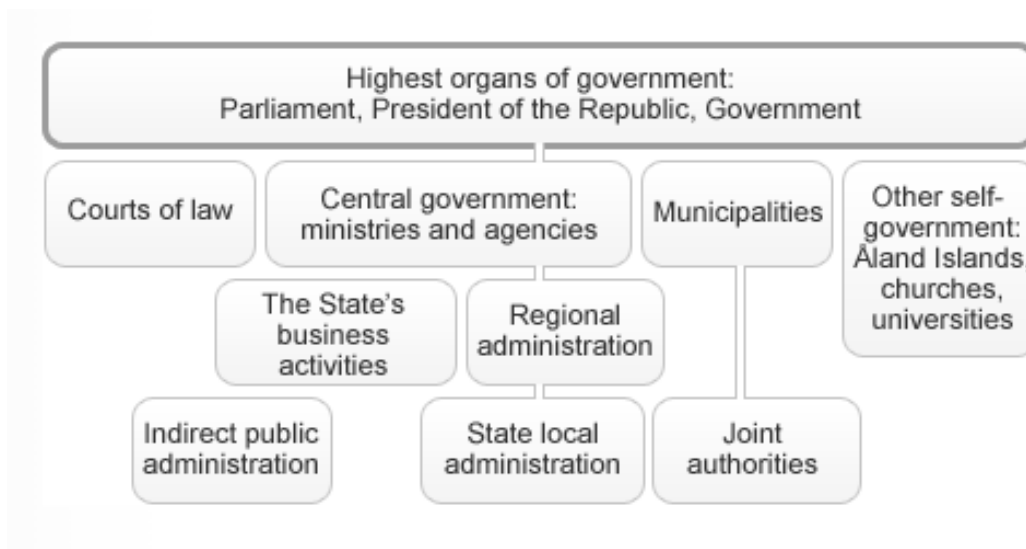
Figure 2: The structure of public administration in Finland.
www.suomi.fi, retrieved 3.4.2015.

The empirical study of this thesis aims to examine the discursive logic by which the Government Programmes of Finland have recently answered to the need of building strategic intent. As responsible for generating the highest level of common strategy for Finland, the ways in which government formation talks and the Government Programmes as their end result are built and communicated is especially important in the pursuit of sustainable strategies.

1.1 Research objectives and questions

This thesis aims to explore the current state of abilities in our public government to produce strategic intent, in order to pursue a sustainable future. By first defining the preconditions for sustainable strategy making through introducing transition management, and then examining how well these conditions are met, I hope to raise discussion on the need for change within the public decision-making system itself.

Due to the complex and vague field of transition management and strategic intent within the field of policymaking, this thesis explores existing literature and knowledge with perhaps a more wide perspective than usually necessary. An important objective for this study is, however, to learn to understand the complex nature of innovation in public policymaking and to channel this complexity for the reader as well. Through the elaborate context review, I also hope to establish a solid ground for my central argument of the necessity of building strategic intent as part of policymaking.

The research questions of this thesis can be summarized as follows:

1. Why is building strategic intent relevant for policymaking?
2. What are the key discourses of building strategic intent?
3. How are these discourses constructed within the Government Programmes of Finland?

These questions will first be addressed with an overview on existing literature and knowledge. In the spirit of *breaking silos*, this study combines research from multiple different academic disciplines. IDBM being an interdisciplinary study program, I believe a truly multidisciplinary approach may shed light on issues that might otherwise be left overlooked in between the 'territories' of academia.

Since the very nature of wickedity is having no generic answers to suit all of the vastly different challenges, this thesis explores the *approach* of transition management to tackling wicked problems instead. By defining the key enablers of

dealing with wicked problems, I hope to contribute on my part to the discussion of building a public policymaking system better equipped to taking on these huge challenges.

Design thinking, service design and strategic design have been popular topics within the public sector in the recent years. There seems to be a rather cohesive view within the design education field of Finland on the need for design services in the public sector. This thesis aims to provide another viewpoint into this discussion by searching for some reasons why the public sector itself might proactively want to adopt this thought of designers being involved in the policymaking process on its strategic level.

1.2   Definitions

Innovation: Following the definition of Bland et al. (2010), innovation in this study is understood as both an iterative process and an outcome. It includes the ideation, acceptance and implementation of a new idea or approach within the social context, and challenges the prevailing way of things. Given the context of public policymaking in this study, innovation is also seen to create public value.

Transition: Timmermans (2006) describes transitions as "structural innovations of societal systems, in reaction to wicked problems threatening development". Transitions here are understood as radical shifts in a system's way of seeing and doing.

Governance and *government*: Governance here is understood as all the processes of governing, regardless of who initiates these actions. Often this actor is the government, which in this study is mostly used to describe the formal body of authority on the national level.

1.3   Structure of the study

The study begins by introducing the methodology and research methods used in this thesis. The topic being so complex and hard to grasp, the thesis then rather broadly explores the concepts of sustainable development and wicked problems before getting into transition management as a way for policymaking to answer to these challenges. The final chapter of context review has a sharper focus on the strategic level of transition management and on building strategic intent in particular.

The first two chapters of context review will answer to the first research question of the necessity of building strategic intent in the public sector. The third chapter of context review will then define the ways of constructing strategic intent through discourse, answering to the second research question. Empirical research consists of two methods used. An online questionnaire will support the validity of building strategic intent in the Finnish public sector, and critical discourse analysis will then look at Government Programmes in Finland to examine the state of strategy making within the highest levels of our government, thus finding answers to the last research question.

The main empirical study consists of a rhetorical analysis of government programs within the past three decades — the lifetime of one generation, which is the minimum timeframe a societal transition takes to develop (Rotmans et al. 2001; Kemp et al. 2005). The method of critical discourse analysis was chosen, because strategic intent can be seen first and foremost as a rhetorical device for creating a coherent narrative of the desired future to aim for (Mantere & Sillince 2007). This basis of the empirical study will be further explained in the next chapter.

Finally, the research findings will be concluded and discussed in relation to the empirical framework and its implications to public sector management and policymaking.

2   Methodology

This chapter will first set the methodological base for this study and assess its reliability and validity. To conclude the chapter, the selected research methods of online questionnaire and critical discourse analysis are explained in more detail.

2.1   Research methodology

The research consists of two parts: a broad context review looks at the theoretical side of pursuing and creating strategic intent, while the empirical study examines these principles of theory in practice within the governance of Finland. The empirical part is built on the basis of *methodological triangulation*: the selection of more than one research method, looking at the same issue from different angles. Its purpose is to increase the validity and reliability of studies, and it is commonly used in qualitative inquiries where the affirmation of research results is not so straightforward as often in quantitative methods (Given 2008). This study aims to confirm my central hypothesis of the necessity of building strategic intent in the policymaking arena of Finland by combining the methods of an online questionnaire and critical discourse analysis. The use of multiple methods also adds to the overall richness of research and analysis, providing a more varied set of data to base my findings on.

Despite the fact that this utilization of triangulation can be seen to mimic the nature of quantitative methods, where research is on the search for "one truth", this study clearly positions itself in the realm of *interpretive inquiries* and recognizes the complexity of environments. (Given 2008) The key distinguishing factor between these two approaches is the probing and explorative nature of methods used in qualitative research: they aim not to provide a certain definitive statement, but to explore multiple possible explanations to questions. The nature of qualitative research is cyclical and the research phase cannot be completely separated from the analysis and interpretation of findings. This shows accordingly in the way I treat the findings of my research in the sixth and seventh chapters of this thesis, where they are simultaneously introduced and interpreted.

Complexity sciences, with which this thesis on a philosophical level affiliates, are rather new theories and have no well-established research methodology. Interpretive inquiry as an approach of study, however, fits their ontological and epistemological ("What is reality?" and "How do I know this is reality?") positioning. Complexity sciences suggest that these questions of what is on the outside and how we interpret it from within are inseparable. Our reality and the knowledge of it are seen to co-evolve, and implementing theories to practice can actually change the reality we experience in a social context. (Allen & Varga 2007; Given 2008) Inquiry requires dialogue, which then needs to be interpreted in a mutual act between the researcher and the context (Given 2008). My selection of critical discourse analysis as the method for the main empirical study well complements this idea of generating new knowledge in the dialogue between the text and its reader. The method itself stems from the same ontology of *critical realism* than complexity sciences, and will be further introduced at the end of this chapter.

Some critical theories radically suggest that the concepts of validity and reliability are irrelevant in relation to the sense-making activities of qualitative research. They claim that these processes of generating new understanding are always relative constructions, and thus the validity or reliability of them cannot be objectively assessed. (Given 2008) More moderate viewpoints suggest that the validity and reliability of qualitative research may be improved by methods such as triangulation, which I have utilized within this study. These two research methods of online questionnaire and critical discourse analysis will now be introduced in the following subchapters.

2.2   Online questionnaire

The aim of the online survey was to validate my key hypothesis of the lack of strategic intent in Finnish governance being an important issue we should address. To investigate if this in fact was the case, I followed the viewpoint of Mantere & Sillince (2008) on the rhetoric qualities of strategic intent, disassembling the concept into two main areas of research: its capacity of creating *a shared sense of purpose* within the organization, and the sense of *continuity in actions* it creates. These different functions of strategic intent will be discussed in more detail in the final part of context review.

To find out how public sector employees felt about their work community in relation to these two research areas, I broke down the topics to more detailed survey questions. For example, the question of shared purpose was addressed with statements like: "*I understand my own role in reaching the goals of my work community*", "*I am able to affect the shared goals of my work community*", "*Some members of my work community pursue their own agendas instead of our common goals*" and "*I find my work meaningful*". I addressed the question of continuity in actions by statements such as: "*My work is guided by conflicting instructions*" and "*My work community learns from failure*". All the statements can be viewed in Appendix 1a.

The survey questions were presented as positive or negative claims. Respondents were asked to assess the statements on a 7-point Likert scale, 0 being "I strongly disagree", 4 standing for "I do not agree or disagree" and 7 being "I strongly agree". Empirical research has shown that respondents are more likely to choose a negative than a positive alternative when the midpoint option is eliminated from the alternatives. This so-called social desirability bias arises as respondents aim to answer in a socially accepted manner, and use self-censorship in limiting their negative answers. (Garland 1991) The midpoint option was, however, offered and quite actively selected in the responses of this survey.

Distributing the survey

As the intention of this survey was not to gain a comprehensive or generalizable estimate of the opinions of all public sector employees, I used the method of *convenience sampling* in distributing the survey. Convenience sampling is often used in this kind of preliminary research, where the intent is to gain a rough estimate of the subject with low costs and in a rapid manner (Boslaugh & McNutt 2008). As respondents were also asked to distribute the survey to some of their colleagues, the method of *snowball sampling* is assumed to also have occurred.

The survey was distributed mainly through two Facebook groups: *Muotoiluagentit*, an open group for municipal public sector employees in Finland interested in the use of design, and *Virkamiesten vapaa verkosto,* also an open group with the agenda of renewing public governance. I also e-mailed the questionnaire to some public sector employees I had met personally or otherwise knew were active in taking part in the discussion of renewing policymaking, and thus willing to voluntarily take part in the survey.

I am well aware of the bias that this method of selection might have caused in the answers: it is likely that most respondents already had an interest in renewing public policies, and may have responded in a more critical manner than those who have no particular or personal interest in improving the ways of policymaking. On the other hand, a great deal of respondents is likely to have been situated in managerial positions (top or mid-management) rather than implementing policies at the grass-root level. This emphasis of managerial opinions may have caused a bias towards positive answers in questions regarding the possibility to influence common goals or instructions in the work place.

Slight differences in the translations' nuances may also occur, as the questionnaire was distributed in Finnish. However, the issues presented in the research findings rose clearly above others, and may thus be regarded a rather valid representation of the problems evident in public sector work communities in Finland.

2.3   Critical discourse analysis

The second part of empirical research was carried out using *critical discourse analysis* (CDA). It is a well-established and cross-disciplinary approach to the study of discourse. It sees language as a way to socially construct the reality around us: stemming from the practice theory, it complements the viewpoint of this thesis on strategy making as social practice. CDA is a commonly used method for analyzing text in organizational studies and social sciences. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 2010; Leitch & Palmer 2010)

Fairclough (2005), one of the pioneers in the field of CDA, sets the methodology in the context of certain ontological questions and the viewpoint of *critical realism*, arguing that the natural and social worlds differ in the sense that the latter is constructed by human action. People's concepts and views of this world we live in constantly reproduce and transform the perceived reality. Social agreements and phenomena are socially constructed in discourse, and discourse in turn is constructed by other agreements and phenomena. (Fairclough 2005; Leitch & Palmer 2010; Given 2008) Strategic texts and discourse are also seen to have textual agency: the ability to construct reality by actively contributing to organizational practices. (Vaara et al. 2010)

The basic assumption of wicked problems, as we will further explore in the context review, is that these *social messes* are always situated within human discourse and behavior. (Rittel & Webber 1973) CDA thus can be seen a suitable methodology for examining the social construction of the intents of our society through strategic discourse in the form of Government Programmes.

It is important to distinguish this approach from epistemological questions of judgmental relativism, where every representation of the world is viewed as equally good. Critical realism searches for ways to determine if some viewpoints actually construct a better representation of reality than others. (Fairclough 2005)

What builds to the critical nature of CDA as a methodology is its deep interests in *the relations of power and the discursive practices* they have internalized, and the rectification of power distributed in an unjust manner. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 2010) Discourse is seen to constitute these social relations of power, which through action become institutionalized. CDA also aims to expose assumptions that are taken for granted in these discourses of social, political and economical power. (Vaara et al. 2010) This provides an interesting setting for the study of Government Programmes, for which the tone of voice is clearly political by nature.

CDA is interested in the macro-level affects of texts, but the analysis itself happens on the micro-level of discourse and social practices (Leitch & Palmer 2010): the texts are studied within their context, not as separate entities. Context, by the definition of Chouliaraki & Fairclough (2010), is seen as an analytical construct that emerges within specific research questions. Consequently, most of CDA research is qualitative in-depth research, and quantitative methods are rarely used other than in a supportive role. This also implies that the framing of research and thus the researcher herself has a crucial role in defining its outcomes. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 2010; Fairclough 2005)

The Government Programmes as a source of material

The Government Programmes of Finland were an obvious choice for my main source of material, as these documents are the only format in which the strategic guidelines of Finland as a nation are publicly discussed in sufficient scope: in the context of nation-wide goals and actions. The introductory chapter to this thesis already explained the broader context in which these documents are produced and consumed. Government Programmes are freely available for anyone on the website of the Finnish Government, which adds to the visibility of my actions in interpreting them: anyone can gain access to the material, and reproduce the study if they wish.

I decided to set the temporal framing of this study to the Government Programmes from the past 25 years (see Table 1 on the next page), as this timeframe is commonly considered the equivalent of one generation. Transitions, as will be introduced later in the study, typically need at least a generation to reach new equilibrium (Kemp & Loorbach 2002), and thus a shorter timeframe did not seem suitable. A scope this large, however, sets certain restrictions on how in-depth the analysis can go. Therefore the first round of research, as illustrated in the next part, was restricted to the four key discourses of building strategic intent. The analysis combined both a grounded theory approach, where the framework arises through the analysis of research material, and a traditional positivist research methodology, which aims to investigate the application of a pre-determined framework on the material (Given 2008). This allowed for the selection of a relatively large pool of material, while also getting deeper into the pre-determined discourses.

On the other hand, my main interest lies in the approach of our *current and future decision-makers* and their abilities to enhance the birth of strategic intent today and in the future. Most members of the committees preparing and producing Government Programmes are, however, politicians with a long career in politics and experience from one or several past rounds of government formation talks. In this setting, also the intertextual examination of Government Programmes in relation to previous texts is interesting: has the group of politicians involved in the highest level of decision-making gained learnings from previous rounds of government formation, and is this visible in the discourses?

As the timing of this study coincided with the parliamentary elections and therefore with the formation of a new Government Programme, I would have wished to also include the newest material into research. The Programme was, however, published only days before the completion of this study, so it could not be included in an in-depth analysis. Some important notions of the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sipilä are, however, included in this analysis.

Prime Minister(s)	Year(s) of Government Programme
Sipilä	2015
Katainen — Stubb	2011 and 2014
Vanhanen II — Kiviniemi	2007 and 2010
Jäätteenmäki — Vanhanen I	2003
Lipponen II	1999
Lipponen I	1995
Aho	1991
Holkeri	1987

Table 1: The Government Programmes included in this study.

Some of the Government Programmes were treated together, as the first government of Prime Minister Vanhanen and those of Kiviniemi and Stubb all begun in atypical conditions in the middle of the previous electoral term. These Government Programmes mostly repeated the goals of previous documents, and the few additions to these programmes were taken into account in the analysis.

Within this study from now on, referring to "all Government Programmes" is to be understood as referring to all the Government Programmes examined here and listed in Table 1 above.

The research process

The process of critical discourse analysis, according to Fairclough (2005) and Chouliaraki & Fairclough (2010), proceeds in the following order:

1. The choice of research problem
2. Formulation of research questions
3. Choice of material
4. Analysis
    a. Discursive practice
    b. Text
    c. Social practice
5. Results

The choice of research problem and setting the research questions were presented in the beginning of this thesis: my aim is to explore how the key discourses identified in relation to building strategic intent are present in the Government Programmes. The choice of material was explained in the introduction and in the previous parts of this chapter. Government Programmes are the only consistently produced, publicly available material on the strategic level and long-term steering of Finland as a nation.

The phases of analysis follow Fairclough's (1992, cited in Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002) framework on the three dimensions of critical analysis. This approach is illustrated in Figure 3 on the next page. He suggests that every instance of the use of language is simultaneously a *text* (e.g. speech, writing or visual image), a *discursive practice*, which involves the production and consumption of text, and a *social practice* to which the communicative event belongs.

This study takes all three dimensions of analysis into account, but in terms of my framing of analysis on the four discourses of building strategic intent, the results are presented in the order of these strategic streams of discourse — not according to the level of discourse.
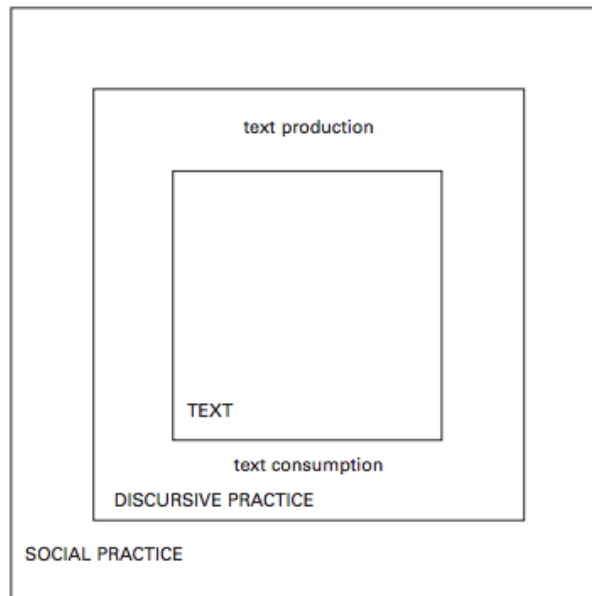
**Figure 3: The three-dimensional model of critical discourse analysis.
Fairclough 1992, cited in Jorgensen & Phillips 2002.**

The first phase of analysis in my study was reading through the rather large material base of these seven Government Programmes, a total of approximately 250 pages. Through this preliminary reading, the overall style and tone of the documents was examined. I also identified the main ways in which the key discourses of building strategic intent were present in the documents, and noticed some additional relevant recurring discourses. The second round of analysis then concentrated on the more thorough inspection of these initial findings within the text. These findings are presented in the seventh chapter if this thesis, simultaneously with their analysis and interpretation.

The following part will now dive into the context review of this study, and further introduce the concepts of wickedity, structural innovation and strategy as discourse.

CONTEXT REVIEW

3   A world of wicked problems

"Something new is happening, and those who excelled in the former paradigm are no longer succeeding as they once did. In place of prediction and control, we seem to have nothing but chaos; in place of individual efforts, the problem-solving process is now clearly social; in place of basing decisions on facts, we base them on stories that give us a more coherent sense of meaning. In place of finding the 'right answer', we seek to gain a shared understanding of possible solutions."

— *Jeff Conklin, 2009*

Societies today are overwhelmed by problems that seem impossible to solve with our current approaches: social and economic inequality, loss of biodiversity, starvation and fatal epidemics to name a few. (Loorbach 2007; Beinecke 2009; Hämäläinen 2013) Our governments are ill equipped for dealing with these issues. The public sector is built to mainly produce standardized services in a top-to-bottom manner, not to proactively pursue new innovative approaches. (Burns et al. 2006; Murray et al. 2010)

The answer to tackling these problems, as this thesis will further explain, starts with our ability to recognize *wickedness* where we see it. Acknowledging the interconnectedness and complicated social conditions of problems is critical in creating new approaches to unwinding them. (Senge 1997; Loorbach 2007; Vandenbroeck 2012)

Complex, global and intertwined challenges often come up when talking of sustainable development. Wicked problems and questions of sustainability are closely linked together, and by studying the nature of wickedity, we can learn to better answer to these sustainability issues on both local and global levels. (Loorbach 2007) This chapter will first briefly describe how *sustainable development* can be seen as a driver of change, and then take us through existing research on *wicked problems*.

3.1   Nurturing our common future

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

— *The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987*

The above definition of sustainable development was presented in the United Nations' report *'Our Common Future'*, and expanded upon in their *Millennium Declaration* in 2000. In thirty years, the foundation has not changed, but the public emphasis of these *needs* has strongly focused on economical wellbeing, having for long left social and environmental needs to less public attention. (Hämäläinen 2013; Loorbach 2007; Beinecke 2009; Adams 2006)

Sustainability as a field of study is relatively young, its foundational texts dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. Despite the short academic history of solving sustainability issues, there is no single prevailing approach to the topic. The nature of these concerns is problematic in itself, as sustainability stems across multiple distinct disciplines. Economists, sociologists, biologists and engineers, for example, have each their own approaches to the field but tend to mostly keep within their silos of research. Though there is growing understanding of the many ways our life is interconnected, the common approach still sees challenges narrowly as mainly economic *or* ecological *or* social. We rarely recognize that resolutions lie, more often than not, in a *complementary* approach. (Loorbach 2007; Strange & Bayley 2008)

How can we make a change for the better? Many institutions and researchers have defined the building blocks of a sustainable future. There seems to be a general agreement that sustainability consists of three main dimensions: the economic, ecological and social foundations of life. Figure 4 on the next page illustrates one such approach to sustainability, as seen by The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra (Hämäläinen 2013).

Figure 4: The building blocks of a sustainable future. Hämäläinen 2013.

Natural environment, pictured at the bottom of the pyramid, provides both the base and the *boundary conditions* to all human activities. Ecological sustainability thus means building a future that does not exceed the carrying capacity of our planet, but rather nurtures these foundations. The ultimate aim is to create *sustainable wellbeing*, achieved through actions of the economy, public administration and the civil society. (Hämäläinen 2013)

However, the different aspects of sustainability contain contradicting and even conflicting interests. A fundamental issue is that economic growth commonly occurs hand-in-hand with ecological decline, and yet there seems to be a need for growth in order to wipe out poverty. Our governments and businesses most often act as if trade-offs between the different aspects of sustainability were possible, but they are not. The economy is created by societies as a mechanism of exchanging goods and value. Human does not create our ecological environment, it thus providing a finite limit to our activities on the planet. (Adams 2006; McKenzie 2004; Strange & Bayley 2008; Meadows et al. 1972)

The public sector and sustainability

This thesis concentrates on the role of the public sector in the pursuit of sustainable wellbeing. Sustainability is seen here as a continuous process, not any reachable end state. Transitions towards sustainability occur as the result of multiple different but connected developments over a long period of time (Kemp et al. 2005; Kemp & Loorbach 2002), as we will later discuss in relation to transition management.

The role of the public sector is central in the pursuit of sustainability (Strange & Bayley 2008; OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010), as every decision it makes can shape the ways in which the private sector and the civil society act. (Birney et al. 2010) It has a vast set of mechanisms available to direct the actions of our societies as a whole (Michie, van Stralen, et al. 2011). This powerful position of public policymaking also sets a significant responsibility to decision-makers in the public sector: their actions can also take our societies further away from some aspects of sustainability, even impairing the wellbeing of citizen and the environment. Some critics state that this has for long been the state of our policymaking systems: that governments have hindered rather than promoted sustainable choices (Grindle & Hilderbrand 1995).

Though the topic has now gained a foothold in discussion, not nearly all of public management can yet take into account all the different aspects of sustainability. Responsibility has been divided between separate ministries and other organizations: in Finland, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health develops services and policy aiming for social sustainability, while the Ministry of Environment cares for environmental sustainability issues, to put it crudely. Lining up policies, strategies and resources across organizational boundaries to produce sustainable outcomes is a challenging task, and still rarely achieved. (Birney et al. 2010) More important than any individual decisions are in this relation the ways in which our policymaking itself is organized: are we able to pursue a mutual goal of a sustainable future?

3.2   Seeing wicked problems

"The adjective 'wicked' is supposed to describe the mischievous and even evil
quality of these problems, where proposed 'solutions' often turn out to be worse than
the symptoms."

– C. West Churchman, 1967

As we just explored in connection to sustainable development, dealing with complexity is the word of today. The discussion of complex or 'messy' problems started in the late 60's, but has gained attention of the mainstream only within the past couple of decades. Rittel and Webber (1973) formulated the term '*wicked*' (as opposed to '*tame*') to describe social policy problems for which there are no specific answers to. Ackoff (1974) at the same time spoke of '*messes*' — complex issues unable to be solved by traditional methods. Levin et al. (2012) later established '*super wicked*' problems as their own term, in response to the growing number of issues recognized in every field of science and policymaking to fulfill the criteria of wickedity. (Türke 2008; Rittel & Webber 1973; Levin et al. 2012)

Recognizing the wicked nature of most real-world problems is important, as the mechanisms for dealing with and continuously resolving these issues differ vastly from what 'traditional' problem-solving skills we have been taught. (Jentoft & Chuenpagdee 2009; McGregor 2012; Churchman 1967; Rittel & Webber 1973; Ritchey 2013; Beinecke 2009; Vandenbroeck 2012; Levin et al. 2012; Jordan et al. 2014) As a popular quote credited to Albert Einstein goes: *"We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."*

The rest of this chapter will describe the common nature of wicked problems, and the next chapter will shed light on approaches to tackling them.

3.2.1   Recognizing wickedity

Our dominant way of teaching and rehearsing problem-solving skills today is still largely based on 18th century beliefs. (Jordan et al. 2014) The 'scientific' or 'mathematical' method assumes that given accurate information of the present, we can predict precise future outcomes (Rittel & Webber 1973). Looking for a single best way to resolve a situation, or several *best practices* as often described in management literature, illustrates our human need to make sense of things in this complex world. The truth is, however, that there are no right or wrong solutions for most of the real-world problems we face: only ones that can be seen as worse or better. The wicked nature of these issues is that we cannot understand the problem before we have developed a solution — and even then, we have created a dozen more issues to be solved. (Beinecke 2009; Rittel & Webber 1973; Levin et al. 2012; Bettencourt & Brelsford 2015)

Wicked issues do not have a clearly defined problem statement (Ritchey 2013; Rittel & Webber 1973). Their properties are, thus, very different from any homework assignment in school or project brief in most work places. They are *subjective*: every person looking at the problem will define it differently, according to their own experiences, education and state of involvement (Rittel & Webber 1973; Vandenbroeck 2012). That is why these problems cannot be solved once and for all, but they tend to reappear in different settings (Jentoft & Chuenpagdee 2009; Rittel & Webber 1973). Frustrating as it may feel, we simply cannot *fix* them, but have to find ways of continuously *dealing with* them.

Rittel and Webber's (1973) article specified ten characteristics of wicked problems. This list (see Table 1 on the next page) has set the ground for all later academic discussion, and it captures well most aspects of wickedity. Researchers since have emphasized some properties over others or bound several characteristics together, but the *general essence* of wicked problems seems to be rather widely agreed upon.

Property	Explanation
There is no definite formulation of a wicked problem.	*Problems are ill-structured and contain multiple interlocking issues and constrains. Each definition is subjective and subject to change.*
There is no stopping rule.	*Since there is no single definition of the problem, there cannot be a definitive solution. The problem-solving process does not end, as there is no optimal solution to reach.*
Solutions are not true or false, but better or worse.	*The determination of a solution's quality is not possible by objective measures. Solutions are merely good enough or not.*
There is no immediate and ultimate test for a solution.	*The full consequences of a solution cannot be traced. The effects of any action will continue over a virtually unlimited period of time.*
Every solution is a one-shot operation.	*Every action has consequences. While developing solutions for wicked problems, all attempts to interfere will also change the nature of the problem.*
There is no way to identify all possible solutions.	*All possible solutions can never be thought of. There will always be unexplored opportunities.*
Every problem is unique.	*Despite the many similarities multiple problems may have, there is always some important property to distinguish them.*
Every problem can be considered a symptom of another problem.	*A problem can always be redefined as a symptom of some higher-level problem. The level of definition will affect the possible outcomes of providing solutions.*
The choice of explanation of the causes determines the nature of the solution.	*People tend to choose explanations most amicable to their solutions: conforming to the set of actions available for them.*
The planner has no right to be wrong.	*Wicked problems cannot be solved in a laboratory, separate from people's lives. The planner is responsible for all consequences of the actions they take.*

Table 2: Characteristics of wicked problems. Adapted from Rittel & Webber 1973 and Vandenbroeck 2012.

Where can we find wicked problems?

When Rittel & Webber (1973) first compared tame and wicked problems, their interests lied in the realm of social policy. Going on at the time in the United States were multiple social conflicts: protests against the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and many other issues poorly managed by and out of the immediate control of the government. This radical diversification of values, goals and lifestyles was rather unforeseen — mainstream sociology in the 1950's had predicted the rise of a '*Mass Society*'; a homogeneous shared culture of the civilized Western countries (Rittel & Webber 1973). We now know that current reality is quite the opposite: while globalization drives the rapid diffusion of social and cultural phenomena on one hand, on the other hand we have such a diverse set of heterogeneous subcultures that it is impossible to even begin identifying all.

All of the wicked problems now evident to researchers did not suddenly emerge with the invention of the term. However, bringing the failures of 'traditional planning' to the center of discussion has had a permanent effect on multiple disciplines and fields of science. Our understanding of the complexity within human and environmental systems has grown, and we have begun to realize the simultaneous strength and vulnerability of these connections. (Batie 2008; Jentoft & Chuenpagdee 2009)

Despite the sociological starting point of discussion, current discourse of wicked problems also happens largely in context of environmental issues, such as climate change. Some disciplines seem to have more eagerly adopted this '*messy*' approach than others. For example, the mainstream of financial economics is only beginning to pursue the thought of wickedity, as old models are proven flawed. Financial systems in the modern society have largely depended on quantifiable units, optimal solutions and known consequences to actions. With criticism towards the claimed rationality of human behavior, we have recently seen a new rise of *complexity economics* and *behavioral economics,* aiming to better understand the ways in which economic systems are embedded into our social surroundings. (Morgenstern 1972; Brealey et al. 2011; Prast 2004; Vealey 2014)

To conclude, seeing wicked problems is not restricted to one field of science or practice. Instead, when we begin to look at real-world problems through the eyes of wickedity, it will be hard to unsee the multiple connections stemming across disciplines. Wicked problems are by nature impossible to completely distinguish from each other — framing problems is a wicked issue in itself!

The social side

Returning to the origins of the term and to Rittel & Webber's (1973) field of study, we can see that wicked problems are always set in the context of human behavior and decision-making. Despite the point just stated of wicked issues being present in all disciplines, in the end they are about and exist because of people. Just as with issues of sustainability, the social structures and systems surrounding us define the challenges we face. (Conklin 2007; Christensen 2009; Horn & Weber 2007; Batie 2008)

These complex messes are *public problems*: no one alone can claim ownership or patent a solution that would solve the whole issue. There are multiple different stakeholders involved in framing the problem, each with their own point of view. The public sector has an important role in the process, and is responsible for dealing with the consequences: taking care of the citizen and environment affected. Wicked problems are characterized by *conflicts of values, political and financial interests*. These underlying aspirations are often left unclear to the public, yet all the courses of action we take are driven by them. Causing conflict in relation to social messes are the vastly differing opinions on what kind of a future is desirable in the first place, what compromises and trade-offs are worth making, and who should gain the benefits or suffer losses. (Batie 2008)

This makes the identification of possible solutions more of a *social process* than an exact science. Since by definition wicked problems cannot be solved once and for all, dealing with them becomes about *creating shared understanding*, *negotiating* and *facilitation* to conclude which actions are for the better and which ones for the worse. The objective thus is to gain progress into a direction perceived as better,

not to reach any specific or permanent end goals. (Batie 2008; Horn & Weber 2007; Ritchey 2013; Conklin 2007)

3.2.2 Further defining wickedity

With this eye-opening discourse of wickedity now going on in many diverse fields of science and profession, the issue of *framing problems* has become increasingly important. Especially when we talk of global problems challenging policymaking processes on the high level, we quickly realize *most of policymaking* indeed fits the description of wickedity (Levin et al. 2012). To further separate some extremely difficult and current challenges, such as global climate change, Levin et al. (2012) suggest an addition of four characteristics to describe '*super wicked problems*':

1. Time is running out.
2. Those who seek to provide a solution also cause the problem.
3. The central authority needed to address it is weak or non-existent.
4. Partly as a result, policy responses discount the future irrationally.

Other researchers have also distinguished between different types of wicked problems. Head & Alford (2008), for instance, classify problems on two dimensions: *complexity* of the problem at hand and the *diversity* of interests of the parties involved (see Figure 5 on the next page). They suggest the more versatile set of knowledge is needed to provide solutions or the more diverse set of interests all parties have, the more wicked the problem is in nature. This typology implies that since there are different types of wicked problems, there are different types of answers to them as well (Head & Alford 2008). However, there is no prevailing paradigm in current research of distinguishing different types of wicked problems further — as Rittel & Webber's (1973) early definition suggested, in the end *every wicked problem is unique*. There may well be use for these types of typologies in other contexts, but for the purposes of this study, these complex messes will not be differentiated as separate categories but simply referred to as '*wicked problems*'.
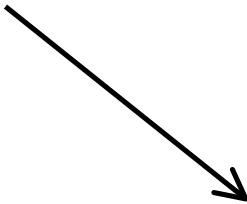
Diversity

	Single Party	Multiple Parties, each have incomplete knowledge	Multiple Parties, conflicting interests or values
Both problem and solution(s) known	*Tame Problem*		
Problem known, solution(s) unknown			*Wicked Problem*
Neither problem nor solution(s) known		*Wicked Problem*	*Super Wicked Problem*

Complexity (vertical axis label)

Figure 5: Typology of wicked problems.
Head & Alford 2008, Levin et al. 2012, Heifetz 1998.

The additions of Levin et al. (2012) to the properties of wicked problems are still interesting and relevant within our focus of policymaking. The following pages will briefly elaborate on these four characteristics, working as an introduction for the next chapter of finding wicked opportunities.

A sense of urgency

A certain sense of urgency is needed to drive action. The limited nature of time is especially important within the discussion of environmental problems: most events regarding the loss of biodiversity and climate change are irreversible, and problems not only persist but also become more acute as we speak. (Levin et al. 2012) Levin et al. (2012) suggest this a clear distinction between environmental issues and social challenges: the political system can over time mediate opposing opinions on policy-making and interventions to social problems, but the capacity of our environment is finite.

Natural diversity once lost cannot be brought back. Social sciences show, however, that reversing the growth of social inequality and injustice is also harder to attain with every generation the problems persist. (Berg & Ostry 2011; Deininger & Squire 1998) The effects of bad policy or broken social systems may be huge and irreversible, when considering the life of a single person or their family today. Here lies the problematic moral dilemma of wicked problems and equity: when the aim is to achieve sustainability in the long run, *who should pay the price of development today*?

All parties will never agree upon a single list of global priorities in solving problems: each seeks for arguments to support the overruling urgency of their own interests over others. Hence, instead of looking for a clear and agreed upon plan, we must learn on the go and adjust our actions accordingly. Our ever-changing environment calls for agile strategy making, and the complex nature of wicked problems accentuates this request: since there are no final answers, we can only try to consistently aim for what we see as better than the present. (Doz & Kosonen 2014; SEE Platform 2013b; Boyer et al. 2011; Spaulding 2014)

A fragmented focus

As Levin et al. (2012) point out, every person trying to solve a wicked problem is also contributing to the issue. Though individuals can choose to make sustainable choices in their lives, many of their daily actions still involve someone else who is making less sustainable ones. It is often impossible to pinpoint clear sources for wicked problems, as multiple factors contribute to their existence and development (Levin et al. 2012). Thus, finding the *leverage points* where actions most efficiently can create significant and sustainable change is indeed difficult. Too often we focus on treating the symptoms instead of true causes. (Conklin 2007; Rittel & Webber 1973; McGregor 2012)

Since we all are involved in both creating and resolving wicked issues, the danger is that though we might agree on a mutual goal of living in a more sustainable world, we often vastly disagree on *how* to pursue this vision. The lack of *strategic intent* hinders the search for novel resolutions (Boyer et al. 2011). The term, as Hamel and Prahalad (1989) introduced it in the context of management literature, stands for a *'sustained obsession on winning on all levels of the organization'*. It enables actors to operate independently while maintaining their focus aligned with strategy. Clear strategic intent helps avoid being distracted by the restrictions of current models of operation — an aspect that becomes extremely important when dealing with problems that have yet to be solved. (Hamel & Prahalad 1989)

As we will further explore later in the study, this perspective of creating high-performing organizations by establishing strategic intent is not far from our viewpoint of building a sustainably effective public sector.

A call for a 'glocal' approach

Wicked problems are most often both *global* and *local* at the same time: since people construct these social messes, we also decide whom to involve in creating solutions. Depending on the selected definition and wanted level of interference, the same issue can be framed to have an impact on a single neighborhood or the whole global community. (Rittel & Webber 1973; Levin et al. 2012)

The interdependence of societies has grown with the globalization of economic and cultural activities. People may directly communicate and seek for information on the global scale on a daily basis, but still also remain members of their local communities. Through more transparent production and sharing of information, we have become more aware and concerned of global justice and sustainability issues; it is not easy to close our eyes from what is happening on the other side of the world anymore. (Hämäläinen 2013; Doz & Kosonen 2014; McGregor 2012)

Lack of central authority is recognized a key issue in achieving change on the systemic level. (Levin et al. 2012) Despite the many international organizations promoting common agendas, such as the UN or OECD, affecting policies on many national levels simultaneously is an extremely ambitious agenda to pursue. On the other hand, the lack of localized measures and practices is also problematic. We cannot assume that even general guidelines would suit every situation — every local community is unique, and so are the wicked problems they face. (Bailey 2013; Rittel & Webber 1973)

One approach to this need for simultaneous localization and global authority is education regarding the *norms* and *values* of local communities. Instead of providing ready-made solutions or limitations, the aim is to create, *local, adaptive, self-sustaining and self-reinforcing systems*. When people have decided for themselves that change is necessary, it is bound to happen in one way or another. (Vandenbroeck 2012; SEE Platform 2013b; Bettencourt & Brelsford 2015)

A lack of perspective

Given the increasing amount of knowledge we have gained of sustainability issues and the dynamics underlying wicked problems, significant change in the way we make decisions has not happened. Policy-making tends to still consider relatively short time horizons, and we constantly make decisions that disregard information we should be aware of and take into account. (Levin et al. 2012; Meadows et al. 1972)

Research suggests that people most often cannot see the consequences of their actions neither in relation to their *larger environment* or very *far ahead* in their future, yet alone the lifetime of generations to come (see Figure 6 below). (Meadows et al. 1972; Meadows 2008; Meadows 1999) We tend to give greater weight to direct satisfaction than to solutions sustainable in the long run. This behavior of individuals is also apparent in the way our political institutions work: often aiming to answer to the immediate interests of society, while discounting the future in sometimes explicitly irrational ways. (Levin et al. 2012)
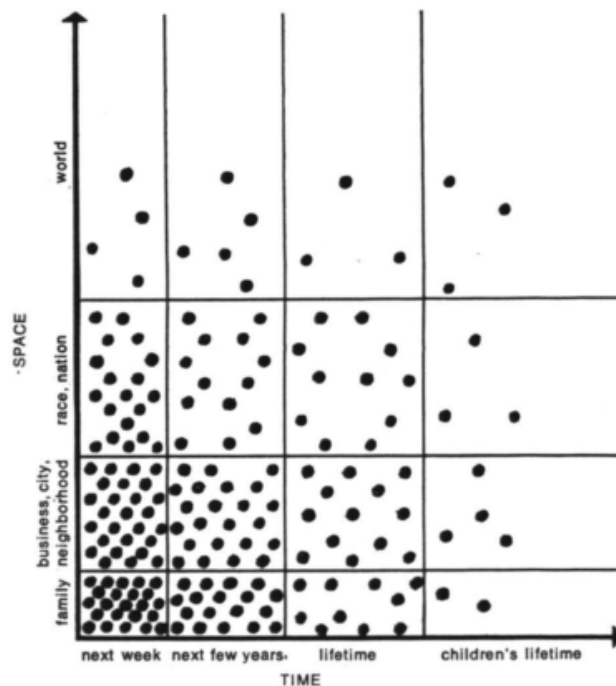
Figure 6: Human perspectives. Meadows 1972.

To create decision-making processes that are truly global and oriented far enough into the future, we need a focus on building discourse and structures that keep our mutual long-term interests at the top of our minds. (Levin et al. 2012; Ainslie 2005) As Levin et al. (2012) illustrate, these problems are similar to those of a smoker trying to quit. While he might not be able to resist the temptation at all times, during moments of clarity he can create mechanisms that will help him get past difficult times: he may, for example, make a deal with his friends to buy them dinner for each cigarette he smokes. The same logic applies to regulation, guidelines and incentives in governance: they are some of the long-term *'lock-in' mechanisms* available to the decision-makers on both local and global scales (Michie, Atkins, et al. 2011; Michie, van Stralen, et al. 2011).

Summarizing wicked problems

While resolving wicked problems is about continuously facilitating a process of finding better options, we must consider the voices of future generations and those not immediately affected by our decisions as well. This calls for a better understanding of the mechanisms by which we tend to discount future scenarios, the larger systemic effects of different kinds of actions, and the ways in which we can learn to adjust our behavior in a larger scale. Given the conflict-induced nature of wicked problems, there is a need for neutral facilitators able to create and maintain common ground. (Levin et al. 2012; Meadows et al. 1972; Conklin 2007; Rittel & Webber 1973; McGregor 2012; Bailey 2013; Vandenbroeck 2012; Hämäläinen 2013; Doz & Kosonen 2014)

These demands, combined with the unique nature of every wicked problem, set a challenging situation for decision-makers. Achieving sustainable change on a large scale is not possible without finding ways to empower local actors to operate for a mutual and clear goal: *building strategic intent for our communities*.

Now that we have familiarized ourselves with the nature of wicked problems, the next chapter will take us through several approaches to *tackling wickedity*.

4   A world of opportunities

"Do not be pushed by your problems, be lead by your dreams."

— Ralph Waldo Emmerson

Having now discussed the qualities of wicked problems we face in our pursuit of sustainability, this chapter will take us through approaches to dealing with them within the field of public governance. Many different fields of academia and practice are on the search for answers, but each mostly within their own frameworks and established principles of operation. This chapter aims to provide an overview to *how wicked opportunities may be seized.*

Since wicked problems cannot be solved once and for all, the search for 'best practices' in the field is marginally impossible. (Rittel & Webber 1973) Especially given the short time frame of research and experiments so far, in most cases we cannot yet determine if a certain change of policy has been successful or not in the larger scale. (Head & Alford 2008) This thesis deals with this notion by not searching for any single best way to operate, but by examining the common characteristics behind dealing with wickedity in governance.

The first part of this chapter will explain that in order to deal with wickedity, innovation is needed. The second part will argue that the key to systematic sustainable innovation in governance lies within *transition management*. The focus of this thesis is especially on the *strategic* level of transition management and *creating strategic intent*. This process of building strategic consensus will be briefly mentioned at the end of this chapter and further discussed in the next one.

4.1   Leaping into the great unknown

"We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people."

— *President John F. Kennedy, "We choose to go to the moon", 1962*

The basis for our modern society was built in the age of industrialization, and much of the progress we have taken in shaping our surroundings is due to technical innovation and breakthroughs in science. However, in the world of wicked problems where uncertainties and decision stakes are high, traditional scientific methods as value neutral and looking for certainty cannot alone provide answers. With the complex and conflicted nature of problems, *post-normal science (PNS)* is deemed a more appropriate strategy for solving them. (Funtowicz & Ravetz 1993)

'Normal' science builds upon existing knowledge and 'known truths', while PNS aims to integrate both 'formal science' and the contributions of an *extended peer community*: all the people affected by and involved in a dialogue of the issue at hand. (Batie 2008; McGregor 2012; Funtowicz & Ravetz 1993) In PNS, hard facts and quantitative data usually dominating the field of science are overruled by qualitative methods and questions of values and commitment. People dealing with wicked problems are always looking at multiple equally valid perspectives of different stakeholders, and many traditional scientific methods have trouble in dealing with this plurality of conflicting goals and the uncertainty of circumstances it creates. (Funtowicz & Ravetz 1993; McGregor 2012; Bettencourt & Brelsford 2015)

This post-normal approach is closely related to the term of *innovation*: it serves the purpose of leaping into the unknown and discovering new ways to see our current problems. Radical innovation projects aiming to create a shift in the status quo are in many ways related to the requirements of dealing with wicked issues: being surrounded by a great deal of uncertainty and the inability to rely on prior

competencies or experiences, to name a few. New knowledge has to be continuously developed during the innovation process, as it does when facing wicked problems. (Alexander & Van Knippenberg 2012)

Public sector decision-makers have eagerly adopted this idea of creating new ideas with value to the society. *Social innovation* and *public sector innovation* have emerged with respect to the statement that "wicked problems need wicked solutions". (Kerry et al. 2009; Murray et al. 2010; Sørensen & Torfing 2012) Their aim is to generate societal involvement in the planning and production of public services, (Murray et al. 2010; Mulgan 2014) and they typically suggest *user-centered design* and *design thinking* as methodologies for innovation, which fully supports the notion of the extended peer community in PNS. Both approaches aim to question the dogmatic way a small amount of experts produce unquestionable 'truths', and to make room for silent signals and the voices of all those affected in the process. (Best 2011; Alves 2013; Commission of the European Communities 2009; Mulgan 2014)

The next pages will further explore the relations of innovation in the public sector. The following subchapter will then introduce transition management as a way to coordinate all these innovation and design activities and steer them towards a mutual goal of large-scale *structural innovation* in the long run.

4.1.1 Innovation and the public sector

Innovation in public management is not an entirely new agenda, but a more systematic way of pursuing these initiatives has begun to emerge within the past decade or so. (Bason 2010) Many high-level decision-making arenas, such as the European Commission, have actively taken on promoting innovation. The Europe 2020 strategy describes it as the key to tackling wicked problems:

> *"– – our future standard of living depends on our ability to drive innovation in products, services, business and social processes and models. This is why innovation has been placed at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy. Innovation is also our best means of successfully tackling major societal challenges, such as climate change, energy and resource scarcity, health and ageing, which are becoming more urgent by the day."* (European Commission 2010)

As mentioned in the very beginning of this thesis, the role of governments in driving forward an issue such as this is important: they can support the agenda for example by legislation, creating nation-wide programmes, or using methods of persuasion. (Murray et al. 2010) However, it is also claimed that the government should learn to be more strategic in its actions and let go of the details in its promotion of innovation. The job of the government, according to organizations working with social innovation, e.g. NESTA and MindLab, is to provide resources, central guidance and a clear innovation agenda based on the long-term goals of sustainable development. (Gillinson et al. 2010; Bason 2010)

Who should be involved?

This idea of empowering communities answers to the need of localization identified earlier in discussion of wicked problems. However, taking policymaking activities from the highest level of governance to local environments may also have its downsides: horizontal learning or scaling does not occur, when local communities each act independently. Initiatives of building innovation toolkits, case studies and other means of sharing experiences seem to have a very limited effect on the scalability of local innovation. (Bason 2010) Research shows that local policymaking in the municipalities in Finland is extremely introverted in

nature: innovation activities mainly occur only within the organization or in some cases with other municipal organizations. Much of the development and innovation work overlaps with that of other municipalities, public organizations, universities and the private sector, but chances for collaboration are hardly seized. (Sotarauta et al. 2012) Evidence suggests that while collaborative actions have begun to gain a foothold in public management, not much has been achieved in the field of collaborative public *strategic* management. (Bryson & Berry 2010)

Rittel (1972), in relation to wicked problems, stated the importance of involving a wide network to tackling these messy issues:

> *"The knowledge needed in a planning problem, a wicked problem, is not concentrated in any single head; for wicked problems there are no specialists. The expertise, which you need in dealing with a wicked problem, is usually distributed over many people. Those people who are the best experts with the best knowledge, are usually those who are likely to be affected by your solution."* (Rittel 1972)

As established here, dealing with wicked problems needs to be a joint effort of multiple disciplines and many horizontal and vertical levels of government. As it now is, just involving all the willing participants *within* a single public organization seems to be an overwhelming task (Sitra 2014): there certainly is a lot of new ground to be explored in relation to enabling and encouraging innovation within governance.

Most mainstream discussions of policy development also have a strong emphasis today on *citizen-centered methods*: letting the general public affect, design and decide on matters regarding themselves. According to the principles of post-normal science, the actors most committed to solving issues in their environments may well be local citizen, now doing research and solving problems neglected by the formal institutions responsible for them in the first place. (Funtowicz & Ravetz 1993; Vealey 2014; Bland et al. 2010)

This recognition of proactive citizenship and its involvement in public decision-making varies greatly. In cultures with a tradition of politically active and strong local communities, efforts are often supported. In other environments, activities may be ignored or even hindered by the government. An OECD study from 2010 clearly states that citizen engagement in Finland is weak, especially on the state level of administration. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) Possibilities today are exponentially growing, as technology enables the popularization of actions previously reserved for professionals. With the likes of cheap and small sensors, crowdsourcing and communication platforms, visualization tools and open data, we could create new possibilities for both scientific and innovative approaches to citizen engagement. (Funtowicz & Ravetz 1993)

Innovation in networks

The traditional model of clearly distinguishing the roles of government, the civil society and the private sector has recently been under scrutiny. New approaches have emerged, where focus lies on identifying the multiple actors needed to drive change on societal and global levels. Evidence suggests, that the public sector or international organizations rarely can generate societal change without the involvement of other actors: top-down plans hardly ever work out just as intended. (STEPS 2007) Independent ministries and autonomous local level policymaking in municipalities characterize the Finnish government. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) Public-sector reforms within the past couple of decades have answered to this by slowly moving towards a mode of more active collaboration with NGO's and the private sector, in some areas such as health care even shifting to the privatization of public services.

Models of *non-hierarchical networks* aim to provide answers to the dilemma of a need for collaboration without top-down coordination. Research has shown plenty of advantages experienced when establishing 'free-form' collaboration. Eliminating hierarchical power can lead to grater speed in achieving a certain end result, but an important notion is that most benefits of self-organization only seem to be realized when the ultimate intention of actions is clear to all participants (Smith 1994). The main risk of carrying out public sector innovation

activities in networks is, indeed, internal conflict due to differing priorities, values, and expectations of outcomes. (Camarinha-Matos et al. 2008; Bland et al. 2010) In the case of sharing responsibility of the design and production of public services, also comes along the question of legitimacy in decision-making: is political power being used in a way that is just for all members of the society? A total lack of coordination may undermine the entire innovation process, yet there are no universal laws for the right amount of facilitation needed in networks. The public sector must develop and institutionalize mechanisms to handle innovation processes without overpowering local policymaking. (Bland et al. 2010)

Some researchers see all these pitfalls of network management to stem from difficulties in *knowledge and information management*. (Bland et al. 2010; Osborne & Brown 2011; Van Bueren et al. 2003) The role of public sector management should, according to this viewpoint, be merely to enable and encourage the sharing of ideas and to then mobilize the necessary resources to implement selected suggestions. The construction of such innovation spaces requires support in generating shared understanding amongst participants: people from different professional and cultural backgrounds will see problems and possible solutions differently. (Bland et al. 2010) Design methods, as the introduction to this thesis explained, provide an approach to facilitating discussion across silos.

4.2   Steering towards structural innovation

"In the space between chaos and shape there was another chance."

— Jeanette Winterson

Transition management, as Loorbach (2007) defines it, is a mode of governance to guide large systems towards sustainability. It provides a macro-perspective on the innovation activities just discussed: when aiming for sustained society-level change, no innovation or even a network of innovators is sufficient alone. Transition management is a proactive and future-oriented approach, utilizing both top-down and bottom-up techniques in policymaking. Its ambition is to generate change on the structural and social levels of our society: the very context in which wicked problems were earlier in this study claimed to exist. A transition in this relation stands for a continuous process, where the 'structural character' of a system fundamentally changes. As result of a transition, we reach a new equilibrium: arrive to a new (more or less) stabile state. (Kemp et al. 2005; Rotmans et al. 2001; Kemp & Loorbach 2002; Vandenbroeck 2012; Loorbach 2007)

Another definition by Timmermans (2006) describes transitions as "*structural innovations of societal systems, in reaction to wicked problems threatening development*". The connection between wicked problems and transitions is clear: in order to deal with wickedity, we must learn to guide transition processes and continuously steer our societies towards sustainable development. An example of an ongoing transition could be, for instance, the rise of renewable energy sources and their pursuit to become the dominant source of energy production. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Loorbach 2007; Timmermans 2006; Kemp et al. 2005)

Transitions consist of multiple connected and self-reinforcing processes on many levels. They are not caused by any single change (policy act or technological innovation for example), but can be significantly accelerated by them. Periods of slow and rapid change take turns during the course of a transition. (Rotmans et al.

2001; Kemp et al. 2005; Kemp & Loorbach 2002) The process is described to happen in four phases (see Figure 7 below):

1) Predevelopment, where the *status quo* does not change.
2) Take-off, where the state of the system begins to shift.
3) Acceleration, where visible structural changes take place through an accumulation of changes that react in relation to each other.
4) Stabilization, where the speed of social change decreases and a new dynamic equilibrium is reached. (Rotmans et al. 2001)

What is notable, however, is that the process in reality is not linear but builds upon multiple distinct yet connected innovations and changes within the environment. A transition is seen to typically span over a generation's lifetime, and it often takes more than 25 years to reach a new somewhat stabile state in terms of that particular transition. During the time of change, individual innovations may be radical or incremental, and multiple developments may also affect each other in complex ways. Policy changes are situated in this context of social, technical and economical changes. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Kemp et al. 2005)
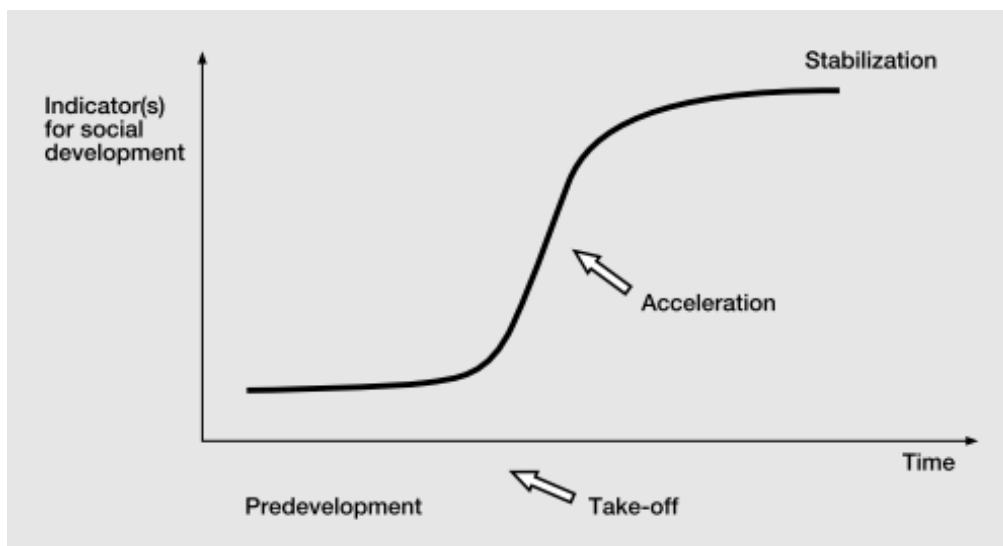
Figure 7: The phases of a transition. Rotmans et al. 2001.

The multiple levels of transitions

Transition management is based on a multi-layer perspective on change in society. It sees that transitions arise when developments on different scales reinforce each other. Macro-scale elements such as political and social cultures, the built and natural environments, and prevailing paradigms provide pressure from the landscape level. Micro-scale events, such as the innovation of new technologies, challenge existing structures and prompt emerging change. In the middle of these two on the meso-level are regimes, the dominant ways and infrastructures of doing things. Regimes are by definition hard to change: our interests, rules and beliefs situated on this level are naturally directed to maintaining and optimizing existing structures, not disrupting them. The macro level of *socio-technical systems* is what transition management ultimately seeks to change. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Vandenbroeck 2012) Figure 8 below illustrates this interplay of change between different layers.
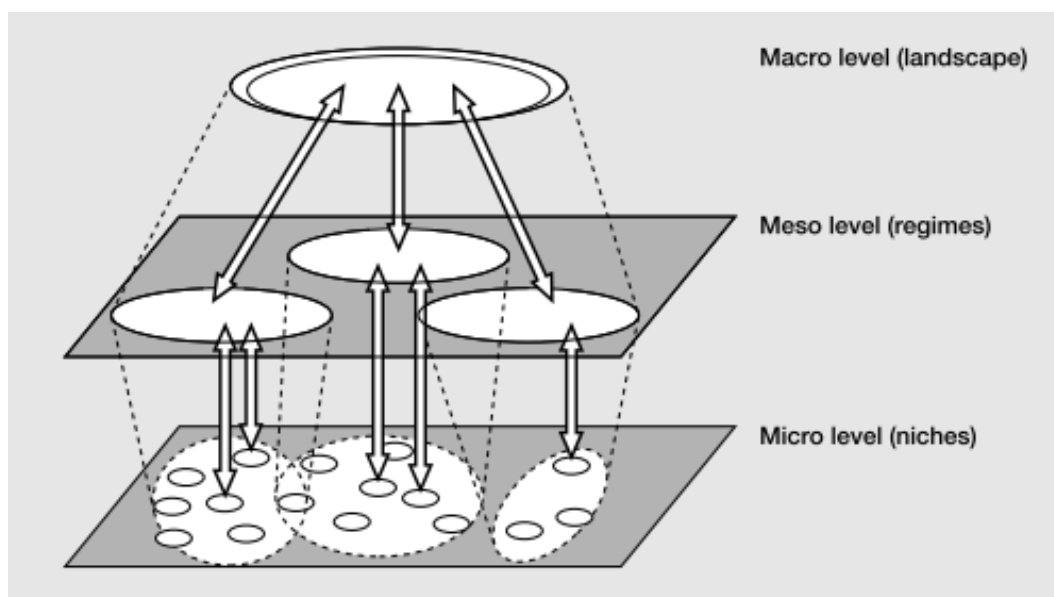
Figure 8: The levels of transition management. Rotmans et al. 2001.

Our earlier discussion on wicked problems provided viewpoints to the macro level phenomena: though we might recognize a messy societal problem we need to deal with, tackling the huge entity as such is remarkably hard. Innovation activities and design methodologies, for their part, provide solutions on the micro scale in enhancing rapid iteration, experimentation and innovation. It is, however, hard to break through from a niche to the scale of a regime, as this means changing the

behavior that is daily produced in routines of individuals, groups and larger organizations. (Ceschin 2014)

Despite the label, transition management is less about 'managing' and more about actively *creating the right conditions for change to happen.* There is no one path for reaching a certain equilibrium level, but change can in fact happen through different means. Many change processes are also simply out of the control of government: cultural change, for example, can be seen to happen more or less autonomously despite public sector involvement. What the government *can* do is influence the speed, direction and the odds of a transition: provide visions of a desirable future and enable innovation and implementation. (Vandenbroeck 2012; Kemp & Loorbach 2002; Rotmans et al. 2001)

Vandenbroeck (2012) describes three elements to have an important role in a transition process:

1. A guiding image of a more sustainable future.
2. A collection of innovative experiments that explore the boundaries of what is possible.
3. An infrastructure to extract and diffuse the learning from those experiences. (Vandenbroeck 2012; Kemp & Loorbach 2002)

As we explored in the introduction of this thesis, strategic design aims to answer to all of these elements by bringing design methodology into strategy making and enabling rapid prototyping and feedback loops. (Boyer et al. 2011; Best 2011; Stevens et al. 2008) The relation between the transition management approach and design is, however, academically fairly unexplored. Ceschin (2014) has recently coupled the two, creating a framework for what he calls *socio-technical system design.* He suggests the design process should start with identifying opportunities to produce multiple experiments in relation to a certain transition topic (a design brief), and that the guiding image or *transition vision emerges through the process.* (Ceschin 2014)

Ceshin's approach proposes a significantly broader scope for design actions and the needed skillset than what is traditionally understood as design. Strategic design describes the scope and role of design in a similar way, only with somewhat differing terminology. (Boyer et al. 2011; Ceschin 2014) These two categorizations of design are very close to each other in definitions, and may be regarded as ultimately discussing the same principles.

The next subchapter will further introduce the process of transition management, and concentrate on the first notion on Vandenbroeck's (2012) list: crafting a *vision of a sustainable future*.

4.2.1   Shaping the future through strategic intent

> *"What you choose for your future is more important than what you know about your past or present capabilities."*
>
> — *Charles Smith, 1994*

The process of transition management, as Rotmans et al. (2001) describe it, is based on long-term *transition visions*, which function as a framework for formulating short-term objectives and evaluating existing policy (see Figure 9 on the next page). (Rotmans et al. 2001) These visions are not stabile, but change with time as new knowledge is created and the complexity surrounding them is better understood. Midway goals are set, as they are in current policymaking patterns, but in transition management these objectives are produced by *backcasting*: deriving them from the overall visions. The task of transition management is, thus, to *guide towards radical change in incremental steps*. In the Finnish policymaking scene, think-tank Demos Helsinki has recently introduced backcasting methods to the context of public sector development. The method aims to generate strategic learning on the constraints and opportunities of the transition scene, while coordinating action towards the common vision. (Neuvonen & Ache 2014; Rotmans et al. 2001)
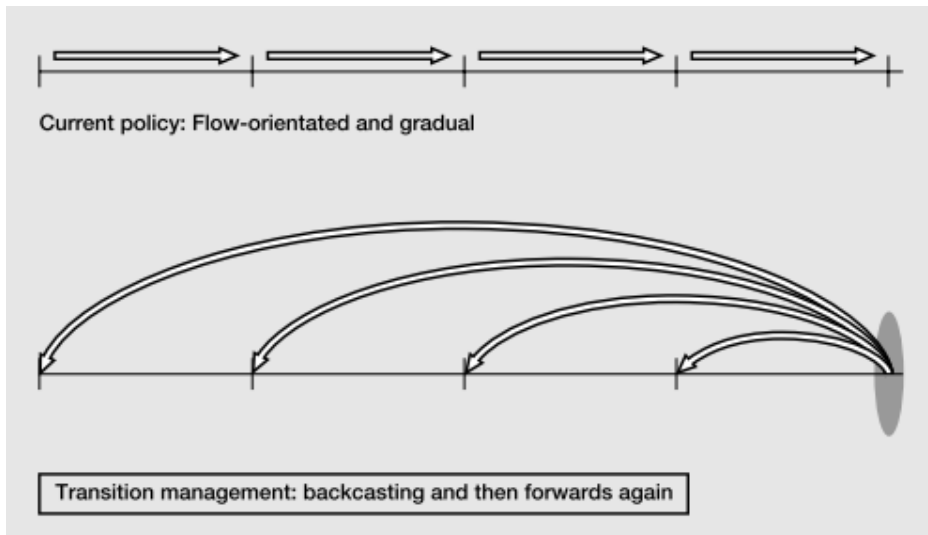
Figure 9: Short-term vs. long-term policymaking. Rotmans et al. 2001.

Transition visions are so similar to our earlier definition of *strategic intent* that the two terms will be used as synonymous from here on. They are characterized as appealing and innovative visions of a desired future, supported by a broad range of actors. Strategic intent aligns the actions of everyone involved towards an inspiring and challenging goal. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Smith 1994; Hamel & Prahalad 1989)

Future-led thinking

Smith (1994) in his work describes successful transition leadership through the metaphor of Merlin the Magician: the wizard was known for his abilities to see into the future and to live 'backwards in time'. This kind of *future-first –thinking* is essential to generating change. Hamel & Prahalad (1989) in their first publication of strategic intent introduced examples from leading companies in various fields, and the common factor behind success they identified was the courage of these organizations to envision a future that could not be reasonably implemented in the current state of these companies. The combination of seeing a future still unreachable and building commitment to pursue this radical vision is the essence of strategic intent. (Smith 1994; Hamel & Prahalad 1989)

The main challenge of building strategic intent is to change the *culture* of an organization. The contradiction between established ways of doing and thinking and new strategic intent creates *creative tension*, which Senge (1997) describes to be the driving force of innovation. While strategic intent is very explicit about the desired ends, it is flexible to means and leaves room for new ideas to emerge. (Senge 1997; Smith 1994; Hamel & Prahalad 1989) In the words of Hamel & Prahalad (1989): *"Achieving strategic intent requires enormous creativity with respect to means. But this creativity comes in the service of a clearly prescribed end."* Creative tension can be resolved by either shaping the reality towards the vision, or by forming a vision to match the current reality — in which case we can argue the vision is no vision at all. (Senge 1997)

The role of government in transition management

Despite the earlier introduction of innovation networks and decentralized decision-making, the government still has an essential part in the process of transition management. Strategic intent, as described, needs to be actively cultivated. Rotmans et al. (2001) suggest that the government should take a role in facilitating the process: not always providing content, but inspiring and encouraging participants to a long-term commitment to collaborative learning. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Kemp et al. 2005)

This position of the government as a facilitator is very different in nature to the current leading and controlling role it has in most of state-led innovation. The fundamental shift in thinking that needs to happen is recognizing that government itself does not hold answers to the wicked issues we face, but the commitment and determination of a larger network of actors is crucial in generating change. (STEPS 2007)

Local government has an important role in the transition process as well, as it holds the keys to enabling policy experimentation and radical prototyping. New ideas can be effectively tested and implemented in small scale, when local policymakers see their role as *enablers of innovation* instead of gatekeepers of change. (STEPS 2007; Vandenbroeck 2012)

Does Finland have strategic intent?

In 2010, the Finnish Government commissioned an OECD study to evaluate the abilities of Finland to respond to horizontal challenges at both the state level and across multiple layers of governance. The study findings claim that while the government has formulated high-level visions of the future, its mechanisms of generating future forecasts are inflexible and cannot incorporate emerging issues as they arise. The biggest issue identified in the study was, indeed, the lack of collective commitment to realizing strategy:

> *"Adherence to the government's common vision could be improved by addressing both incentives and values within the public service. Finland is hindered in its ability to achieve collective commitment on both fronts, and at both the strategic and individual levels."* (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010)

The lack of incentives and support for horizontal collaboration within government and with the network of actors outside of the public sector shows as a clear speed bump on the way to implementing strategy. The study also recognized the silo-based approach to policy development and implementation to be one of the most significant problems in the Finnish public administration. Performance-management systems and budgetary policies fail to support the pursuit of an overall strategic vision across different levels of administration. State officials interviewed by the OECD study felt that the strategic vision is not clear enough, and some of the goals seemed unrelated to other issues addressed. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010)

The strategic vision of each government is communicated through the Government Programme, a document formed by coalition partners that sets out the main focus of the incoming government (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010). The Government Programmes of Finland from the past three decades will later be used as material for the main empirical study of this thesis, and a critical discourse analysis applied on them in order to find out how strategic discourse is created in the highest levels of state government.

Next, the final section of context review examines the mechanisms of building strategic intent in more detail. After that, these findings will be applied in empirical research on the formation of strategic intent in Finnish governance.

5   A world of common intent

"Tactics is knowing what to do when there is something to do,
strategy is knowing what to do when there is nothing to do."

— Savielly Tartakower, chess Grandmaster

Most organizations are rather good at making things happen when they know what to do. Managerial 'best practices' may help in optimizing parts of an established agenda, but are often of no use in generating truly radical visions for the future. Within the field of business, management's inability to think and act strategically has been identified a significant detractor of an organization's performance. The problem is mainly a question of creating structures to enable and foster the building of strategic intent across the network of actors. (Liedtka 1998; Casey & Goldman 2010; Bonn 2001)

Strategic management in the public sector has become increasingly common within the past generation — approximately 25 years. A near-continuous chain of government reforms starting in the 1990's has supported this growth in Finland, where management practices and performance measurement have gained a strong foothold. On the negative, introducing new reform agendas on a fast pace has created an exhaustion of renewals: most of the changes risk never becoming fully implemented before new orders arrive. (Bryson & Berry 2010; OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) One comment on the preliminary study vividly brought this problematic notion up, as discussed in the previous chapter.

This chapter provides an overview into the field of strategy and concentrates on the mechanisms of building strategic intent as a driver for success in the long

term. The first subchapter introduces strategic management as a field of study and the viewpoint of strategy-as-practice, while the second takes us into the mechanisms of building strategic intent by discourse. The final part will summarize my approach to how an organization can rhetorically create strategic intent to foster innovativeness in its pursuit of sustainability.

5.1   Searching for the recipe of success

Research on strategic management seeks answers to the question of why some organizations consistently outperform competitors, i.e. *why some strategies are more successful than others*. (Hitt et al. 2004; Hoskisson et al. 1999; Nag et al. 2007; Porter 1991) The discipline originates from the field of business policy and was initially formed in the late 1950's (Ghemawat 2002). Since then, it has developed into an established field of research in business and organizational studies. (Hoskisson et al. 1999; Hitt et al. 2004)

However, as several recent studies (Nag et al. 2007; Hitt et al. 2004; Mintzberg 2007) point out, the field itself is fragmented and lacks clear, explicitly approved understanding on what strategy or strategic management are by definition: there are nearly as many ways of describing the field as there are authors talking about it. Most conceptualizations of strategic management can be seen to offer only partial insights into the complexity of a strategy process. (Hendry 2000) This adds a problematic note to the public sector conversation, where many 'best practices' adapted from the private sector have limited or very context specific empirical evidence to support them. As discussed earlier in relation to wicked problems, generic rules of thumb most often do not apply to complex situations. (Rittel & Webber 1973)

Recently, a line of research on the practice of strategy has offered insights to how strategic management can be seen as a collection of behaviors. Rather than trying to adopt strategic management as a "thing" you can take into use, this viewpoint sees strategy making as *routinized behaviors of strategic thinking, acting and learning*. (Bryson & Berry 2010; Vaara & Whittington 2012) This thesis agrees

with this view of *strategy-as-practice*, which will be further elaborated on in the following subchapter. The next pages will first briefly describe the basis of strategy and strategic management, providing some background.

Defining strategy

The word *strategy* in its original meaning was used in the context of battle in ancient Greece, to describe the ability to employ all available resources to win a conflict. It has since been widely used in the military and in political discourse, but only emerged in the management context a few decades ago. Recently, criticism has arisen on the use of strategy as an expression to hold all the various meanings it does in the management studies of today. It is claimed that the traditional interpretation of strategy has lead to management misunderstanding strategy making as a one-time activity that implies a strong focus on competition and the competitive environment. This, in turn, has resulted in a focus on short-term tactics over sustainable strategy. Another pitfall lies in interpreting strategy as a means (or a *ploy* (Mintzberg 2007)) to any specific, known end – in its original meaning, this goal was to win a battle. The nature of precise goals, however, indicates temporary success at the cost of sustainability. If the strategy is to win one battle, this does not imply a win of the war. (Mitreanu 2006; Benito-Ostolaza & Sanchis-Llopis 2014) This critique is acknowledged in this study, and strategy thus defined as *continuously creating sustainable, long-term success.*

Traditional viewpoints on strategy

Theorists of strategic management have for long had differing views on how strategies are composed. These viewpoints can be roughly divided into two distinguished streams of theory: the *rational* and *dynamic* perspectives. (Farjoun 2002; Mintzberg 2007)

The rational view, stemming from industrial organization (IO) economics and the likes of Porter (1991) as its advocates, sees strategy as a *plan*: a logical, linear process, lead intentionally by a manager. Formulation and planning precede implementation, and this cycle is repeated in a more or less scheduled manner. (Casey & Goldman 2010; Porter 1991)

The viewpoint also looks at strategy as a *position*: it believes that the success of an organization depends on how it positions itself in relation to the external environment, and that strategy thus should be derived from the thorough inspection of competitive forces by tools such as SWOT analysis. (Porter 1991)

In the context of wicked problems, as we earlier explored, this one-shot approach is not feasible. Traditional management tools, based largely on forecasting events on the markets, are proving to be useless on their own. The rather drastic simplifications that theories in the rational perspective tend to make have been described as static and fragmented. (Fontaine 2008; Mintzberg 1993; Farjoun 2002) The detailed planning approach requires "taming" the wickedity of the environment, which in turn leads to overseeing many crucial and subtle elements. The systemic impacts of actions may be something entirely else than what was intended in the first place. (Kemp et al. 2005; Kemp & Loorbach 2002)

In contrast to these limitations of the rational view on strategy stands the *dynamic perspective*. Advocates of this view, Henry Mintzberg being one of the most notable ones, see strategy as *patterns* in streams of deliberate (realized as intended) and emergent (realized despite or without intentions) actions (see Figure 10 below). (Mintzberg 2007)
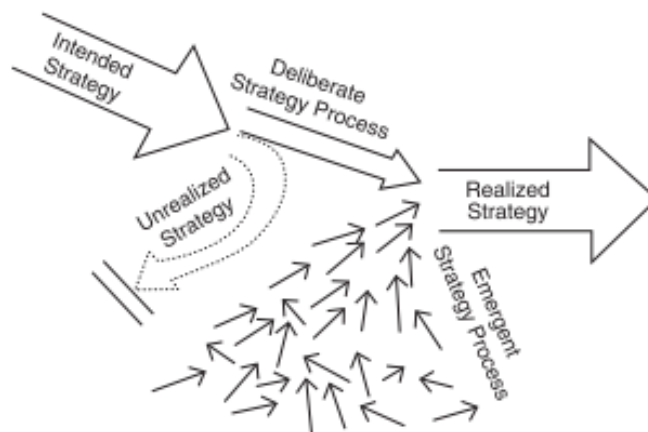
Figure 10: Forms of strategy. Mintzberg and Waters 1985.

While strategies are unlikely to be found in one extreme or the other on this deliberate–emergent scale, these opposing dimensions form a continuum on which most real-world strategies fall. The dynamic view sees strategy as a fluid *process*, where no particular set of actions has to precede another, and strategy is simultaneously *formulated* and *formed*. It also looks at strategy as *perspective*: the organization's shared, inherent perception of the world. (Mintzberg & Waters 1985; Mintzberg 2007) This viewpoint of strategy as a social construct serves as the basis for strategy-as-practice: *strategy is created in the rhetoric, the decisions and the actions of all those involved*. (Mintzberg 2007)

Rational and dynamic viewpoints are sometimes described as opposing, but the dynamic view in fact extends on the rational viewpoint, including both intended and emergent processes in strategy making (Mintzberg 2007; Mintzberg & Waters 1985; Casey & Goldman 2010). Looking at definitions of strategic management spanning over four decades (Bracker 1980; Jemison 1981; Nag et al. 2007; Eden & Ackermann 2000; Farjoun 2002), we can observe the shift from a strong managerial focus to a more dynamic perspective on strategies. Together with the growing understanding on how strategy is formed, the field of strategic management has evolved from the industrial settings of early research, slowly building the ability to answer to increasingly complex issues in the new competitive landscape (Hoskisson et al. 1999; Hitt et al. 2004).

5.2   Practicing strategy

As outlined in the beginning of the previous subchapter, strategic management in light of the practice theory can be seen as a generative system producing patterns of strategic action — both deliberate and emergent. Strategy making is seen as fundamentally of a social nature. Strategic decisions are made by people and groups of people, embedded in the social structures which they simultaneously construct. This social character exists in complex combinations of mental models and qualities, discourses and actions, and also the physical objects needed to perform these practices. (Bryson & Berry 2010)

In addition to shaping decision-making in organizations, strategic practices can change the nature of the system itself. Instead of relying on rigid processes, these practices can encourage iteration and change, thus enabling dynamic strategy making in the pursuit of strategic intent. Dynamism is achieved by consistently combining what Salvato (2003) describes as *core micro-strategies* with new initiatives: continuously exploring emergent possibilities without radically shaking the core of the organization. Change is, as characterized in connection to transition management, "radically incremental". Providing a sense of continuity, as we earlier explored, is vital in crafting strategic intent. (Rotmans et al. 2001) An example of a micro-strategy could be, for example, the consistent use of user-testing methods to provide confirmation in decision-making. (Vaara & Whittington 2012; Bryson & Berry 2010; Salvato 2003) These potential micro-strategies and other practices in strategy making will next be further explored through the concepts of strategic thinking and learning.

5.2.1   Practices of strategic planning and thinking

The contrast between practices of strategic planning and strategic thinking is most fiercely announced by Mintzberg (1993) in his work *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*. In his opinion, the field of strategic management is obsessed with the notion of planning and control, to the point at which any uncertainty is terrifying to the planner. Strategic planning practices aim to control the consequences of actions, to eliminate chance: any unforeseen actions or events. This in turn is claimed to lead to a variety of practices harmful to the strategy process — avoiding risk, repressing creativity, and failing to appreciate spontaneity — suppressing the results of strategic thinking. (Mintzberg 1993; Montuori 2003; Wildavsky 1973)

Research has shown that perspectives of strategy developed at relatively stable times in the economy tend to be more of the rational kind in nature. (Hoskisson et al. 1999) The fascination towards formal planning stems from the time of Industrial Organizations and years of steady economic growth. Authors such as Chandler (1962) and Ansoff (1965) drew focus on rationalism and economic determinism, separating formulation from implementation, and emphasizing an environment known through elaborate analysis. (Montuori 2003; Mintzberg & Waters 1985; Hoskisson et al. 1999) Many of these principles have since been adapted to strategy making in the public sector, though the context of wickedity clearly implies the need for more sophisticated strategy making practices. (Bryson & Berry 2010; OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010)

Strategic planning was first actively criticized in the 70's, and more vigorously so when the surrounding economical conditions suddenly changed with the recession of the 1980's in the United States. Interestingly, this did not mean the demise of strategic planning: instead, planners brought up the notion of *turbulent environments* bringing challenges to the planning process. The solution was to increase the level of planning practices — the more 'turbulent' the environment, the more detailed plans were thought necessary to survive. Mintzberg (1993) questions this notion of challenging environments, and argues that 'turbulence' is change that planning cannot comprehend or control – hence the problem lies not

in the environment, but actually in the practices of planning itself. (Mintzberg 1993)

If our time is any more 'turbulent' than the previous decades or not can be argued upon, but fact is that all environments are prone to change: transitions, as introduced earlier, are constantly changing our societies. (Hamel & Prahalad 1989) Some organizations experience more disruptions than others, while other environments at the same time remain relatively stable. In the context of public management, the nature of competition and competitive disruption are slightly different than within the field of business, but these same basic principles apply. Though all changes in the markets do not have a direct affect on the government itself, they do on the lives of citizen and the private sector, thus changing the dynamics of the complex environment in which the government operates.

Given that environments *do* change, strategic planning practices have several pitfalls in maintaining sustainable strategy. Since planning is often strongly based on competitive analysis, plans tend to be focused on a current 'snapshot view' of the environment. There is no accurate way to predict the future actions of the players in the field, yet to foresee entirely new actors invading the environment. Still, as discussed earlier, looking forward is vital for setting *strategic intent*. (Mintzberg 1993; Hamel & Prahalad 1989; Liedtka 1998) When focus lies on the actions of others, strategy quickly becomes a game of imitation, which can easily be lost. Hamel and Prahalad (1989) believe that strategy formation should not aim to find a position within the existing environment, but instead to create an entirely new space suited for the organization's own unique capabilities and goals. Strategic planning, given its tendency of being risk avoidant, driven by financial measures, and merely incremental in terms of change, does not foster innovation and creativity.

Does this imply that practices of strategic planning should be left out from strategy making? From the viewpoint of this study, no. Though the problematic nature of planning is clearly evident, there are reasons for organizations to continue these activities to some extent: the *translation of strategic intent into*

actions requires much of what is considered the strengths of strategic planning. Planning can increase coherence among the management or create an illusion of control necessary to encourage taking action in the first place. As one might notice, these arguments can also be presented to find fault in strategic planning — there are two sides to the coin. This study agrees on Mintzberg's (1993) viewpoint of excessive planning as a barrier of strategic change, but is more interested in finding a way to combine the best of planning practices with those of strategic thinking. Opponents of the rational viewpoint on strategy also agree that strategic thinking can, in fact, partly result from participating in practices of formal strategic planning (Casey & Goldman 2010; Mintzberg 1993; Vaara & Whittington 2012).

Practices of strategic thinking

If the pitfalls of strategic planning are its excessive focus on stability, a limited view on the environment, and an overly rational perspective, then practices of strategic thinking well compensate these shortcomings. In her work *Linking Strategic Thinking with Strategic Planning,* Liedtka (1998) claims strategic thinking has commonly been characterized mainly as *much of what strategic planning is not*. Other authors have elaborated on this by describing strategic thinking as defining the vision of an organization's future and creating new ideas that build competitive advantage. (Benito-Ostolaza & Sanchis-Llopis 2014) Liedtka's (1998) work collects together the following attributes of a strategic thinker from previous literature. A strategic thinker practices:

a. A systems view
b. Focus on intent
c. Thinking in time
d. Hypothesis-driven
e. Intelligently opportunistic

Having a *systems view* refers to the ability to understand the implications of one's actions within the larger environment. Quoting Liedtka, "*A strategic thinker has a mental model of the complete end-to-end system of value creation, his or her role within it, and an understanding of the competencies it contains.*" (Liedtka 1998; Senge 1997; Meadows 2008) Systems thinking is focused on trying to comprehend the dynamics of underlying mental models and systems. While most strategic planning activities aim in understanding or forecasting the *events* these systems produce, a systemic point of view takes us deeper into the *root causes* instead. This viewpoint believes strategic problems originate from inside of the system itself, instead of being caused by the actions of competing systems. It looks into the organization's internal and external dynamics to find the optimal *leverage point* to change the existing situation. Systems thinking literature argues that attempted transformation elsewhere than at the right leverage point results only in reluctance and unsustainable change. (Liedtka 1998; Fontaine 2008; Senge 1997)

Focus on intent refers to the concept of strategic intent introduced earlier in this study. Creating an inspiring vision of the future to strive for and building commitment across the network of actors enables independent practices and keeps the focus of actions aligned with strategy. The goal of strategic intent, as Hamel & Prahalad (1989) define it, is to "--*fold the future back into the present*".

Thinking in time means being able to hold the past, present and future in mind at the same time. Strategy is not driven by vision alone, but continuously *examines the gap between today's reality and the intended future*. Learning from past outcomes is also an important part of building strategic intent. Thinking in time can be incorporated into the strategic practices of an organization by using tools such as *scenario planning* and the before-mentioned methods of *backcasting* (Rotmans et al. 2001) in order to find unrecognized opportunities. (Liedtka 1998)

Hypothesis-driven strategy making incorporates both critical and creative practices into the process. Strategic thinking is based on creating scientific hypothesis, then testing and improving on them. Creative and analytical thinking follow each other in sequences of hypothesis generating and testing: asking creative *'What if?'* – questions, then testing them with critical *'If this, then what?'* –questions. This sequence allows for iterating on existing hypothesis, without restricting the exploration of completely new hypothesis simultaneously. This hypothesis-driven nature of strategic thinking is similar to that of many design practices (Kelley & Kelley 2012; Stevens & Moultrie 2011), as introduced earlier in this study.

Intelligent opportunism stands for the practices of allowing the intended strategy to change: recognizing that actions beyond of what is mutually agreed upon might build alternative and better suitable strategies for the future. The balancing act between a focus on intent on one hand, and leaving room for it to change on the other, is what Liedtka (1998) refers to as intelligent opportunism.

Liedtka's (1998) listing of the practices of a strategic thinker is only one of the descriptions available, but it collects together various viewpoints from literature and seems most comprehensive. Bonn (2001) emphasizes having a holistic understanding of the organization and its environment, the value of creativity and a vision of the future. Senge (1997) as well uses slightly differing terms when describing the strategic thinking practices from an organizational point of view.

Briefly concluding, strategic thinking practice is here understood as a way of combining several *convergent* (rational) and *divergent* (creative) practices of thinking and doing, in order to find new insights and seize emerging opportunities in the pursuit of strategic intent. (Moon 2013; Liedtka 1998; Bonn 2001)

5.2.2   Practices of strategic learning

Theory of *strategic learning practices* aims to explain how learning occurs at the strategic level. It highlights the importance of knowing how actors know what they claim to know — an epistemological question of what the practices that contribute to the understanding and dealing with problems are. Studies on strategic *sensemaking* aim to find out how both informal interactions and deliberate practices of framing affect various interpretations of strategic change. (Vaara & Whittington 2012)

Strategic learning is, by the definition of Kuwada (1998): *"-- organizational learning that improves the strategic capabilities of the organization and changes the basic assumptions underlying the stable generation mechanism that structures the strategic behavior design process."* The viewpoint sees practices of gaining and embracing strategic knowledge as a sustainable source of competitive advantage. (Thomas et al. 2001; Kuwada 1998; von Krogh et al. 2012; Nonaka et al. 2000; Nonaka 1991)

The definition suggests that strategic learning is a process of renewal: not only does the strategy itself change, but the strategic practices of the organization as well, affecting how strategy in the future is formulated. (Kuwada 1998) It explains how the practices of an organization enable and constrain strategic decisions within the social context, and how these practices in time change to better respond to the needs of the system. Closely linked to the fields of knowledge management and organizational learning, the stream of research sees learning as practices that are *active, explorative and creative,* and that *learn from outcome* (Thomas et al. 2001) – it is learning without prejudice or questioning in advance (Kuwada 1998).

If strategy is simultaneously created, implemented and learnt upon, as this thesis suggests, how might we form strategic intent in the first place? The next subchapter will introduce means of discourse in building a shared vision of the future and collective commitment to it.

5.3 Constructing strategic intent through discourse

From the viewpoint of strategy-as-practice arises an interest in strategic discursive practices. Research has revealed that the roles and identities of actors are constructed through discourse, and that these discursive practices provide support for the legitimation of power positions of some, while marginalizing others. This means that certain discourses can include or exclude actors from the conversation of strategic intent. In the context of public governance, it is clear that these kinds of power relations are constructed on a continuous basis: typically it means the strengthening of traditional hierarchical structures, where only top management is involved in strategic discussion. (Vaara & Whittington 2012; Bryson & Berry 2010)

The earlier definition of strategic intent contains the notion that this discourse of strategy should, however, happen on all levels of the organization and within the larger network of actors. Intent itself cannot be held by institutions, but implies the active involvement of conscious actors, who both practice this strategy and carry out its practices. (Mantere & Sillince 2007) Organizations often are fragmented, and this silo-based nature of our public sector was especially emphasized in the OECD study on Finland introduced earlier in this thesis. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) In building collective commitment to strategic vision, the actors need to be aware of the intents of other members of the discourse and able to relate their own intent to these. (Mantere & Sillince 2007) Many methods of strategic design and design thinking, as earlier discussed, aim to facilitate this discussion and bring visible the underlying interests and ambitions of each actor to others. (Seidel 2000; Boyer et al. 2011)

Practices of strategic discourse are seen as both the medium in which decisions are discussed and the medium through which the interpretation of these discourses happens and strategic actions are initiated. The relationship between thought and action is, naturally, not always straightforward. When we look at the actions of an individual as outsiders, we see only the resulting action or the lack of it — we might not know what the mental intentions behind this action were or were not.

In the context of organizational and collective behavior, however, the intents of actors must become known in order to be shared. Strategic discourse and strategy texts, according to Vaara et al. (2010), have textual agency: they achieve something by merely their existence. Studying the prevailing practices regarding the discourse of intentions is, thus, an important aspect of creating commitment to a shared vision. (Hendry 2000; Vaara et al. 2010; Mantere & Sillince 2007)

Given this basis that all actors are considered active and have their own perceptions of intent, the building of strategic intent becomes more about *creating coherence between multiple simultaneous intents*. A monolithic view on strategic intent believes, that intent is formed within top management and then diffused through strategic discursive practices to the whole organization. This study, however, follows the viewpoint of multiple intents and the promotion of practices aiming to gain coherence among them. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Jarzabkowski & Sillince 2007) Figure 11 below illustrates this approach. In contrast to the hierarchical nature of the monolithic viewpoint, where typically only top management is responsible for the strategic practices of an organization, this thesis suggests that *all actors in the network of public governance can and should be part of these discursive practices*.
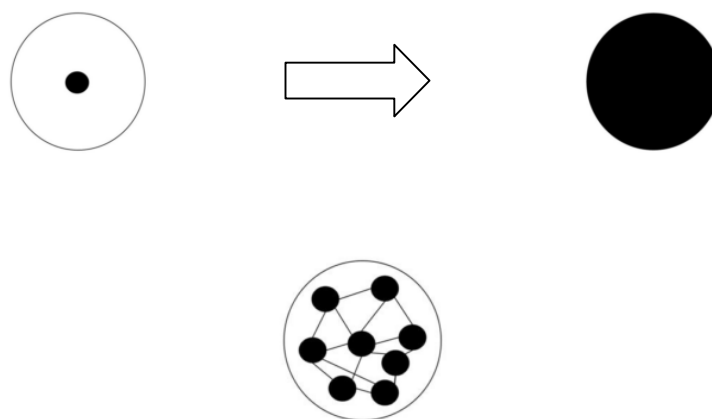
Figure 11: The monolithic view of strategic intent vs. multiple intents in coherence. Mantere & Sillince 2007.

What, then, are the discursive practices through which we can build coherence of strategic intents? Mantere & Sillence (2007) propose a collection of these discourses and their rhetoric means in relation to strategic intent. This study adapts their viewpoint and also touches on the work of Jarzabkowski & Sillence (2007) on rhetoric, defined as *the deliberate use of persuasion to influence change*, as a means of building commitment to multiple strategic goals. The key discourses of building coherent strategic intent, according to Mantere & Sillince (2007) and Jarzabkowski & Sillince (2007) are:

1. Creating purpose
2. Building consistency
3. Acknowledging complexity
4. Emphasizing context

Mantere & Sillence (2007) suggest that coherent strategic intent exists when the discursive practices of *integration* and *differentiation* are in balance. Practices of integration, namely creating purpose and building consistency, create an underlying logic for the multiple discourses of an organization, where propositions regarding strategy can be seen as related to each other and in an order perceived as temporally logical. Practices of differentiation, such as acknowledging complexity and emphasizing context, in contrast, bring forward the local contexts and unique properties of decisions and actions. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

The next pages will further introduce these four discursive practices, and the following list can also be considered the theoretical basis, or a loose framework, if you may, for the empirical study of this thesis. The findings are presented and interpreted in chapter seven.

1. Creating purpose

A sense of purpose may be regarded the most distinctive feature of strategic intent. Generating purpose is an integrative practice, adding to the coherence of multiple strategic intents by providing reference for actors of the *big picture.* Creating purpose gives context to and legitimates the actions of an organization in relation to its goals and desires. Discursive practices have a focus towards a distant yet compelling vision of a desired future. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Hamel & Prahalad 1989)

The rhetoric of generating purpose aims to invoke divergent practices of strategic thinking and doing: innovation, experimentation and tolerating uncertainty. Emphasis is on tacit and unconscious ways of knowing, and the creation of shared ways of understanding. The practice is integrative, in that it aims to unify the intents of actors. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

2. Building consistency

Jarzabkowski & Sillence (2007) argue that within the context of multiple simultaneous goals, rhetoric is a valuable resource in establishing links between goals that the actors already pursue and goals that might otherwise be seen as differing from their intents. Rhetoric for creating consistency addresses possible conflicts or dilemmas in order to build coherence. It is integrative and convergent in nature, bridging together facts that may seem unrelated, thus providing a logical frame of operation to the actors. It also aims to answer to counterarguments by tackling them in advance. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

Discursive practices of building consistency are used in making strategic decisions: to justify the selection of one strategy option over another. They can also be utilized in simplifying and confirming future commitments. In doing this, they create coherence by minimizing uncertainty of future actions and providing a sense of continuity. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

3. Acknowledging complexity

The discourse of what Mantere & Sillince (2007) call *switching perspective* aims to help actors in making sense of the various discourses and actions occurring simultaneously, in relation to and intensified by each other. In the context of this thesis, this practice is closely linked to the acknowledgment of wickedity and complex environments, as introduced in the beginning. By embracing the uncertainty of future and understanding the nature of multiple connections effecting how it turns out, the discourse of acknowledging complexity acts as a guide for the discussion about strategy and its practices itself. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Rittel & Webber 1973; Head & Alford 2008)

4. Emphasizing context

Returning to the notion of wicked problems being in need of both global and local solutions (Levin et al. 2012; Rittel & Webber 1973), the rhetoric for emphasizing context aims to construct coherence by relating the strategic discourse to something already familiar to the actors involved in discussion. These discourses emphasizing context embrace multiple alternative approaches to problems, acknowledging the need for local solutions. It liberates the actors to interpret strategic intent in ways meaningful to them: to utilize the mutual goals and intentions in promoting action as they see fit in their own environment. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Levin et al. 2012)

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

This section of the study will apply the findings of the context review and look at the governance of Finland through the lens of building strategic intent. The first part of empiric research studies the need Finnish public sector employees themselves perceive for strategic intent. Through an online questionnaire, the importance of strategic intent and the lack of it in Finland are confirmed, answering to the first research question. In the second part, the Government Programmes are assessed in relation to the discourses of building strategic intent, answering to the third research question of how this intent is being built in Finland.

6   The need for strategic intent in Finnish governance

Before moving on to analyze the Government Programmes of Finland, I wanted to validate my assumptions of the lack of strategic intent within public governance in Finland — apart from the OECD study introduced earlier in the study, I had found very little academic evidence for this central claim in the context of Finland today. In order to hear what employees in the public sector thought of the matter, I prepared and distributed an online questionnaire. Its aim was to find out what the people part of our public governance system themselves saw as problematic areas in their own day-to-day work. To gain a more realistic picture of how questions related to strategic intent were presented among other aspects of work in the public sector, the questionnaire topics were rather broadly set in the field of work community and job satisfaction (See Appendix 1a for the questionnaire).

My hypothesis was that questions regarding strategic intent, i.e. the consistency of actions and a shared sense of purpose, would receive lower scores than those related to other aspects of wellbeing at work. The results, as explained in the following pages, were mostly consistent with this assumption and provided the reassurance I wished for in moving forward with this study. I also gained some valuable insights into the topic in the form of written comments from some of the respondents. These will also be presented in the following pages.

6.1   Online questionnaire results and analysis

The survey gained 66 respondents during the course of three weeks, which was a fairly satisfying number considering the explorative and preliminary nature of this questionnaire. Out of these responses, 38 were from women and 29 came from work communities larger than one hundred people. Respondents were from both municipal and state levels. The gender bias can be explained by the rather one-sided gender distribution in especially municipal jobs in Finland. According to the Ministry of Finance, 77% of employees in municipalities are women (Valtiovarainministeriö 2006). The size of work communities is relevant in relation to the question of forming mutual strategic intent: research suggests that cohesiveness tends to reduce in larger groups. (Mullen & Copper 1994) The sample size of this survey was too small to make conclusions on the effect of community size on experienced cohesiveness, but the worst grades received on statements regarding cohesive goals were in fact received from respondents part of a large (over 100 people) work community.

The results were collected and analyzed by coding the 7-point Likert scale into numbers ranging from -3 to 3 (where 1 on the Likert scale is -3, the midpoint answer of 4 on the scale is 0, and 7 on the scale is 3) and then counting the mean value for each statement. This provided an easy way to see which statements received negative and which positive grades. The method also eliminated midpoint answers ("Neither agree nor disagree") from the results, as they had no effect on the mean answer. Appendix 1a shows the comprehensive results of analysis.

The results showed several clear issues to address within public management organizations, but on the other hand some aspects received very good grades. Out of the 38 statements, the following three distinctively received the worst grading. All of their mean values were clearly negative, meaning that more people disagreed with the original statement than agreed. These statements are presented here in order and accompanied by a short analysis.

1. *My work community is bureaucratic in nature.*

   Bureaucracy itself is not good or bad in nature by default (Koll 2009; Peters 2009). Its purpose is to maintain stability and order — a two-sided issue in our time of wickedity and rapid change (Osborne 2007; Peters 2009). Finland has consistently been in among the top countries in studies on the quality of bureaucracy: when there is a process for doing something, it is done remarkably well (Van de Walle 2005; Boyle 2007). According to research, a moderate level of bureaucracy is also beneficial in building trust between the government (as an employer) and the public sector employee (Koivumäki & Pyöriä 2013). However, given the context of this study and the counterproductive nature of bureaucracy in relation to enhancing innovation (Osborne 2007), in this case I have interpreted the high amount of bureaucracy experienced to be "too much of a good thing". The need for extensive bureaucracy decreases when an organization shares strategic intent: its actions are naturally guided towards the same direction, even without specific guidelines of operation (Osborne 2007; Floyd & Wooldridge 1992).

2. *Some members of my work community pursue their own agendas instead of our common goals.*

   This notion of conflicting personal and organizational goals shows that while there is no lack of strategy making in public organizations, the commitment to pursue a common strategy in practice is not at the level of strategic intent. Weak consensus may result from a lack of understanding or simply from personal disagreement with a 'top-down' given strategy. Strategic intent is created in a process where both understanding and commitment are built through conversation around strategy on all organizational levels. This means that by definition, organizations with strategic intent carry a truly mutual agenda. (Floyd & Wooldridge 1992; Mantere & Sillince 2007)

3. *My work is guided by conflicting instructions.*

An organization continuously providing conflicting directions to its employees strongly implies the lack of coherent strategy (Osborne 2007). Strategic intent by definition means, that there is a real agreement on the priorities of the organization. Management on different levels and across units should thus have a shared understanding on how the agreed strategy will be pursued — often consensus is not specific enough, and thus conflicting viewpoints and instructions occur. (Floyd & Wooldridge 1992) The flip side to this issue is to find a midpoint in consensus building and allowing room for new viewpoints to emerge. The innovation network approach discussed earlier suggests that a certain amount of autonomy and distributed decision-making power is necessary in order to allow for innovation. (Bland et al. 2010)

Other issues closely linked to the apparent lack of strategic intent were questions of the ability to affect decisions regarding your own work and the goals of the work community, the culture of learning from failure and actively seeking to try new methods and ways of doing work. All these statements received poor grades, standing out from the questions related to other aspects of work.

In addition to assessing statements on the Likert scale, respondents were able to freely leave written notes or comments. These written notes turned out to be the most interesting findings of the survey: I received valid comments on the challenges these public sector employees themselves have identified. Surprisingly many of these comments also support my central hypothesis of the importance of strategic intent — the survey could have prompted many other viewpoints on work communities as well, but nearly all of the comments were somehow related to strategic choices and management. The comments quoted here have been translated into English, and the original comments in Finnish can be found in Appendix 1b.

> *(1) "My work community and its employees are strategically skilled. Management,*
> *however, has major problems. Prevailing favoritism undermines the effectiveness*
> *and direction of work and the success of strategy: one person gets to do what they*
> *want at the expense of collective work."*

Further elaborating the survey result of some members of work communities pursuing their own agendas over mutual goals, this comment clearly points into the direction of a lack of cohesive strategy and the commitment to pursue it. Conflicts and disagreements on the managerial level are quickly reflected to the whole work community: when decisions are made according to personal preferences and not mutual goals, the commitment of others may also suffer (Floyd & Wooldridge 1992).

> *(2) "Although you may see the effects of your own actions in the future, not*
> *everyone in practice has the possibility to bring forward their viewpoints. A poorly*
> *future-oriented agency kills the desire of future-oriented people to bring forward*
> *their own views."*

This comment implies the exclusion of some members of the organization from strategic conversation. Given that transition management is a *future-oriented approach*, it is concerning in the scope of this study to hear that the forward-looking activities of all members of the community are not fully supported.

> *(3) "In Finland we don't know how to lead in a goal-directed manner. There are*
> *some good leaders, though. Finnish public administration has the kind of trust in*
> *and autonomy of officials, that achieving change is very difficult. If you compare*
> *the public and private sectors, the fact that public sector work has no 'products'*
> *leads to a lack of goals and hence inefficiency. At the same time, the public sector*
> *highly values the know-how of people and their personal development."*

The comment illustrates the difficulty of generating change on the regime level: the established ways of doing are often regarded 'good enough', and the autonomy of other actors supported. This might partly result of the wish for one's own work

to not be disrupted in turn. The comment does, however, recognize the respect that public sector organizations have for developing new capabilities.

> *(4) "I currently have mixed emotions — reforms are implemented according to charts and the personal preferences of managers, not according to the needs of people who use the services, i.e. clients, i.e. the citizen."*

The comment above reminds of an important notion regarding the role of government as a facilitator — not only public sector employees as members of the organization, but citizens as clients should be involved in the creation of strategic intent. When structural renewals are planned and implemented without considering the needs of the most important user group of citizens, this should raise red flags within the system.

> *(5) "Doing work in projects and having project-based funding has gone too far. Instead of dealing with these disconnected small projects, we should seek for continuity. Another critical issue is the continuous organizational changes. The costs of these reforms are ignored, while the benefits may be left relatively minor. Does it make sense to put so much money into muddling up structures — shouldn't we rather develop the content of work."*

Lastly, the importance of concentrating on content instead of formal structures is highlighted. Disconnected projects are a real issue in the public sector, where the responsibilities of actors might overlap but opportunities for collaboration are often not encouraged by budgeting or steering systems.

The survey results clearly validated my argument of forming strategic intent within the government and the network of actors as a crucial issue that should be addressed. Next, the main empirical study of this thesis will explore how these rhetoric practices are present in Government Programmes.

7 The key discourses of strategic intent in Government Programmes

The seven Government Programmes were first read through in an overall analysis to identify how the key discourses, relevant to my framing of the mechanisms of creating strategic intent, were generally present in the material. Some of the discourses were present in only part of the documents, and others became increasingly common towards the more recent programmes. Table 3 below shows the frequencies of the key discourses occurred. The occurring of a discourse was defined by the number of distinct times the discourse appeared on the Programme. For instance, the discourse of *purpose* was only present in the introduction segments of earlier Government Programmes, and its presence throughout the whole document grew towards the more recent texts.

Government program	Year	Purpose	Consistency	Aknowledging complexity	Emphasizing context
Katainen — Stubb	2011 and 2014	22	0	17	4
Vanhanen II — Kiviniemi	2007 and 2010	17	0	19	1
Jäätteenmäki — Vanhanen I	2003	12	0	14	3
Lipponen II	1999	9	0	4	2
Lipponen I	1995	8	0	6	2
Aho	1991	4	0	6	0
Holkeri	1987	6	0	5	3

Table 3: The frequencies of strategic intent discourses present in the Government Programmes.

In addition to the key discourses of creating strategic intent, few other themes stood out when reading the material. These were mainly related to the growing amount of discourse on innovation, design, and collaboration. They can be seen to strongly relate to one or more of the key discourses, but will also be separately examined in this chapter. The growth of discourses on innovation and collaboration were especially interesting from the viewpoint of this thesis and the idea of innovation networks. I have treated collaboration *within the government*,

with the *private sector* and with *civil society* (citizen and third sector organizations) each as their own discourse. Table 4 below illustrates the growth of these discourses.

Government program	Year	Collaboration within government	Collaboration with the private sector	Collaboration with civil society
Katainen — Stubb	2011 and 2014	27	8	15
Vanhanen II — Kiviniemi	2007 and 2010	15	4	9
Jäätteenmäki — Vanhanen I	2003	14	2	6
Lipponen II	1999	8	3	4
Lipponen I	1995	3	2	2
Aho	1991	5	5	1
Holkeri	1987	7	0	0

Table 4: The frequencies of collaboration discourses in the Government Programmes.

In assessing the discourse of innovation, I have distinguished two discourses: one of innovation and experiments, and another of design methodology (see Table 5 on the next page). My interest in seeing how design methodology is treated in the discussion initiated by the public sector itself aims to contribute to the ways design education and professionals may communicate their viewpoints on the benefits of involving design on the strategic level of policymaking. The two discourses seem to rather significantly differ in the sense that innovations and experiments are quite explicitly present in the programmes, while design methodology is more implicitly involved. In other words, the discourse on design for governance is not yet established in the vocabulary of public sector decision makers, though some ideas stemming from it are involved in conversation. Design, when mentioned by name in the programmes, is still mainly understood as the 'traditional design field' of industrial and graphic design.

Government program	Year	Innovation and experiments	Design methodology
Katainen — Stubb	2011 and 2014	23	6
Vanhanen II — Kiviniemi	2007 and 2010	15	4
Jäätteenmäki — Vanhanen I	2003	10	3
Lipponen II	1999	6	3
Lipponen I	1995	2	2
Aho	1991	0	1
Holkeri	1987	1	0

Table 5: The frequencies of innovation & experiments and design discourses in the Government Programmes.

The structural format for a Government Programme has, especially since the document produced by the Government of Lipponen in 1995, remained relatively unchanged. The length of programmes has, however, grown in ten-fold: from the 8 pages of Holkeri's Government to 80 pages in the programme of Katainen. This aligns with the findings of OHRA Project on the programmes having too many and too detailed objectives: the earlier programmes were more general in nature and thus more concise. This must also be considered in interpreting the tables on this and the previous pages: though the absolute number of times each discourse is present in the text might grow, this does not necessarily imply a relative growth in the importance of the discourse within each Government Programme. To illustrate this relative stability of discourses, Figure 12 on the next page shows the frequencies of discourses standardized by the length of Government Programmes. The programme of Holkeri was used as the basis of standardization, so that all discourses can be examined in relation to their development through time. Each value thus represents the frequency of the discourse, would it appear in the eight-page length of the first programme studied.
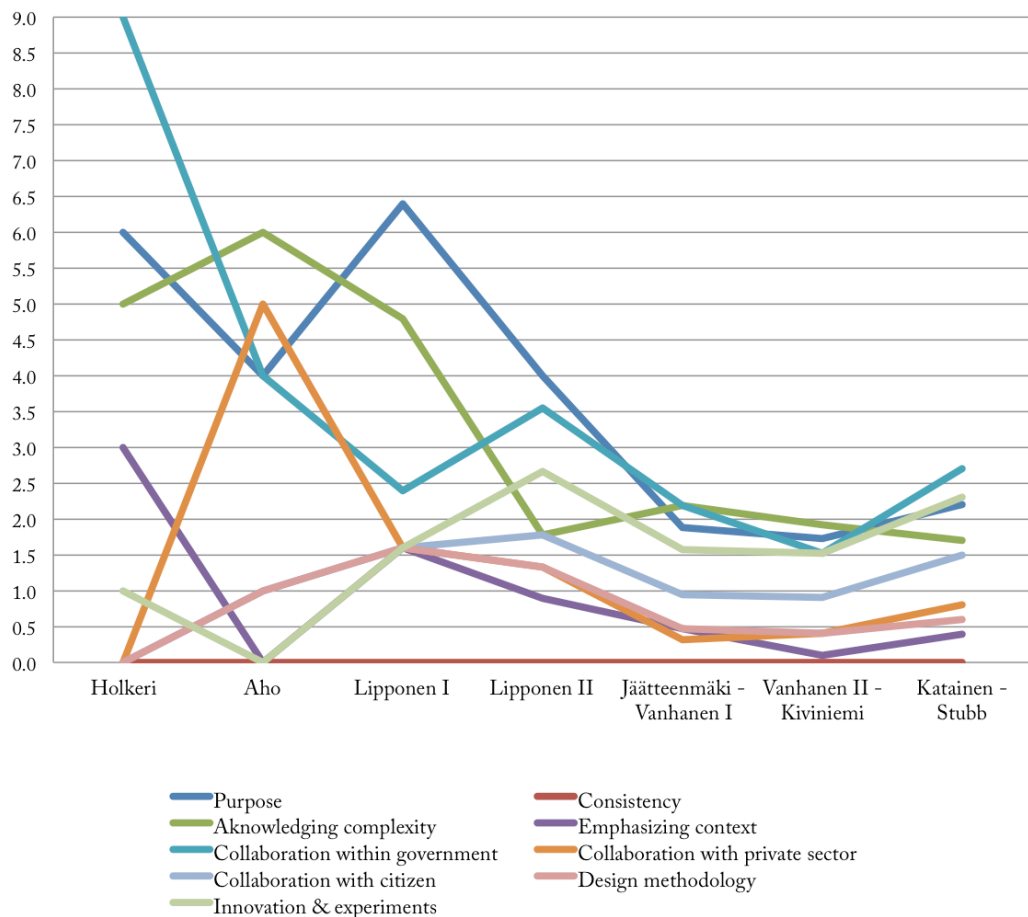
Figure 12: The standardized frequencies of strategic intent –related discourses in the Government Programmes.

The figure above reveals that although the frequencies of the discourses in absolute numbers have grown, their *relative importance in discussion has in fact mostly declined*. The more recent Government Programmes may well include most key discourses of building strategic intent, but this message is easily lost amongst all the other discussions going on. The nature of government formation talks can be interpreted to have moved on towards the handling of tactical details, instead of generating strategic discussion. This is supported by the findings of OHRA Project, as earlier mentioned.

These nine discourses will be discussed in more detail over the next subchapters. Before getting into the discourses themselves, the general style and tone of voice in the Government Programmes will be briefly described.

7.1 The overall style and tone of voice

All Government Programmes follow a similar structure: definitions of policy are arranged in separate chapters, loosely following the division of ministries. Titles such as foreign, industrial, economic, welfare and educational policies are present in all. Each programme also ends in a section discussing the development of administration itself. Some programmes are divided under more detailed headlines than others.

A few distinctive features regarding the tone of voice of the Government Programmes stood out. They will be briefly analyzed following the discursive attributes identified by Vaara et al. (2010) in their research on the formulation of strategy. The next pages will introduce these findings, and the following subchapters then go on to discuss the presence of the four key discourses.

Forced consensus

The tone of voice in all programmes is strongly one of *forced consensus*. According to Vaara et al. (2010), forced consensus is driven by the need to reach unanimity. The purpose of the government formation talks is, indeed, to find agreement necessary to move on with forming the next Cabinet — the context for the discourse of forced consensus to form is favorable by definition. However, this style of documenting government plans as if they were unanimously agreed upon gives a false impression of the discussions during government formation talks.

There arguably must have been disagreements or even heated discussions between the representatives of different political parties, especially on questions where the core values or beliefs of parties significantly differ. Reaching agreement in such questions is often achieved through finding new meanings together to accommodate differing viewpoints under the same terminology. Presenting the results of discussion in a voice of forced consensus, however, serves as *a formal closure of discussion*. When the agreed definition of terminology and the discussion behind the agreement are not visible to the reader, the meaning of the document to those not involved in the writing process can be very different than to those who were. Important aspects are lost in translation, yet the document adds to the

power of the plan itself: it claims to represent the mutually agreed objectives of high-level decision-makers. Questions of ideology are, however, not apparent from the text, and thus the need for having elaborate value discussions around the programme continues long after government formation talks.

This discourse of forced consensus is visible in the Government Programmes in most of their choices of words. Most sentences start by defining the actor as 'Finland' or 'The Government'. The Government is seen as a unified subject acting as one: phrases stating *"The Government will..."* or *"The Government's goal is to..."* occur in almost every paragraph.

Deonticity

Another characteristic feature of the Government Programmes is the imperative form used in describing goals and plans. Deonticity means the obligatory nature and a '*so-be-it*' component of discourse. Though at first the tone of voice may seem purely declarative, considered in the context of the programmes, which is to guide future actions, it shifts to obligations for the administration. (Vaara et al. 2010) Examples of deonticity are present in all programmes, in the form of sentences like the following:

> *(1) " This **will have** a positive impact on both central and general government finances––."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

> *(2) "Public administration **will coordinate and monitor** more effectively the funding of basic public services and local government finances."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

Both strategic goals and tactical direction can be considered as orders to the administrative levels of governance. The Government Programme is the basis for all subsequent decision-making during the term of office of Cabinets, and thus has textual agency as earlier described. Like forced consensus, deonticity acts as closure to the discussion — what has been decided will become.

Self-authorization and strategic terminology

The final notion regarding the style and tone of Government Programmes is the mechanisms of self-authorization used in the documents. This means the use of strategy to communicate its own importance, i.e. referring to the strategy itself within text. This forms the prerequisites for textual agency, implying that the document in itself is an important tool in achieving desired outcomes. Some referrals were direct, while most appeared in more subtle form:

> *(3) "A long-term language **strategy will be prepared** under the lead of the Prime Minister in order to develop two viable national languages, and, **on this basis, concrete measures will be specified** for the Government's term of office."*

> *(4) "Each ministry will prepare an **intelligent strategy**, including **targets** and **steering methods**, at the beginning of this Government's term of office."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

The quotes above imply that strategy comes first and actions follow in order to implement it. The importance of strategy is highlighted by the fact that the Prime Minister himself and the ministries will lead the strategy processes, and that the concrete measures to follow are based on these strategies. This provides a sound basis for textual agency, also accentuating the power relations of politicians versus administration: the Cabinet formulates strategy, and the implementation of it lies within the responsibilities of administration.

Finally, the use of strategic terminology in the programmes has become more common towards the newer documents. Terminology such as 'predictive systems', 'risk analysis methods', 'intelligence' and 'scorecard system' is used to describe the different phases of the strategy process and its implementation. This, according to Vaara et al. (2010), can be also seen to have certain implications to the power relations during government formation talks. Those skilled in the vocabulary of strategy making may have had more say in these topics: most participants are not highly experienced in strategic management per se, and may have encountered some of this terminology for the first time in their lives.

The latest Government Programme of Prime Minister Sipilä in 2015 differs from the previous programmes significantly in this particular area. The programme itself contains a vision statement for 2025 and a SWOT analysis prepared during the government formation talks, taking the discourse to a clearly more managerial direction. Vocabulary used in the programme is also notably oriented towards self-authorizing strategy. This can be partly explained by implemented suggestions of OHRA Project considering the content of Government Programmes, and partly by the educational and professional background of Prime Minister Sipilä in engineering and especially in management within the private sector.

Next, the four key discourses (purpose, consistency, complexity and context) and the five additional discourses of creating strategic intent will be discussed.

7.2   Creating purpose

The discourse of creating purpose, as described earlier, aims to provide reference to the bigger picture and relate agendas to the ultimate goals pursued. It can be used to legitimate decisions and actions, and it aims to unify the intents of various actors. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Hamel & Prahalad 1989)

Despite the supposedly central role of the Government in building strategic intent, the discourse for building mutual intent has begun to show only within the recent couple of programmes. The introductory chapter of each Government Programme starting from PM Lipponen's first Cabinet is a vision statement providing broad goals for the term of office. Until PM Vanhanen's second Cabinet, these are mainly goals for government itself, rather than long-term visions for the whole of Finland.

The older programmes set vague yet somewhat unenthusiastic goals for the Cabinet: to *improve* employment opportunities, *increase* gender equality, and take principles of sustainable development *better* into account, for instance. Without undermining the importance of these goals, this is not discourse on the level of

strategic intent. Objectives are short-term and concentrate on what the current Government can realistically achieve.

The newer programmes do contain mentions of higher-level strategies to pursue: the second Cabinet of PM Vanhanen already illustrates a certain shift in thinking, and states that Finland can "*--both prosper and also shoulder its share of responsibility for finding solutions to global problems.*" These programmes from the 21st century each have a 'catchphrase' aimed to describe the most important goals of the Cabinet. Examples of these are "*A responsible, caring and rewarding Finland*" from PM Vanhanen's second Cabinet, and "*An open, fair and confident Finland*" from the Cabinet of PM Katainen. The underlying values of the Cabinet are spelled out to some extent, and provide a basis for the discussion of goals. Programmes also provide a viewpoint to what the core values of Finland are according to the Cabinet, characterizing the society in positive terms such as *respect*, *openness* and *solidarity*.

These visionary statements, however, occur mainly in the introductory chapter of documents. The text in other chapters is rarely related to the vision itself, providing no clear connection between the long-term desired state and the actions declared for implementation. This leaves tactical level incentives rather unattached and without explicit information of the basis on which decisions are made. A lot is left for the reader to interpret on this part, which also provides the chance for using these statements to one's own purposes and disregarding the meanings initially built in. Mostly these documents consist of objectives that are not strategic but neither are they detailed enough to be considered an action plan. They can be best described as tactical agendas, but left without a strategy to relate them together, they do not build a discourse of purpose.

The programme of PM Katainen's Cabinet showed some improvement within this area by using a more explanatory tone of voice than the previous programmes. Many of the paragraphs in this particular Government Programme start by stating the goal, and then explaining the actions needed to pursue it. For example:

> *(5) "**In order to** combat youth unemployment, inequality, and social exclusion, each*
> *young person **will be provided** with a workplace or a place in education,*
> *rehabilitation or apprenticeship training."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

The quote above provides the reader a bigger goal: combating youth unemployment, inequality and social exclusion. It then moves on to describe the action needed to tackle this problem: providing each young person a place to study, rehabilitate or work. However, most of the document consists of detailed short-term actions and multiple objectives, leaving the reader to do their own prioritizing of these goals to pursue.

A focus on future?

An important part of building a mutual sense of purpose is the kind of future-first thinking introduced earlier in this thesis. The Government Programmes, however, tend to have an emphasis on the near future or at times even the past. A discourse on the long-term future past the term of office is completely absent from most parts of the programmes, and strategies tend to build strongly upon past experiences. For instance, PM Vanhanen's first programme promises to "-- *further develop the welfare state and society built up successfully through broad cooperation in previous decades.*" PM Katainen's newer programme introduces the idea of building predictive systems through various risk analysis methods. While this is certainly a future-oriented approach, the rational choice of methods may be questioned on the basis of what we earlier discovered on the nature of wickedity.

> *(6) "**Predictive systems for structural change** will be developed by*
> *enhancing collaboration between various administrative sectors and by*
> *introducing new risk analysis methods."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

As an exception to the general tone and discourse of purpose, all Government Programmes starting from PM Lipponen's second Cabinet in 1999 have envisioned the future of Finland as the forerunner of information societies. Here,

high hopes are nurtured on the becoming of a success story, and clear intention stated:

*(7) "The objective of the active information society policy is to transform Finland into an **internationally recognized, competitive competence-based service society with a human touch."***

(Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

Elsewhere in the programmes, some vague references to how things are suspected to develop past the term of office are made. For example, the Government Programme of PM Katainen's Cabinet discusses the future needs of fitting together work and family life. The programme then goes on to state that the government will promote 'procedures based on good practices' to make places of employment more family-friendly. As in most occasions, the programme here leaves very little room for alternative solutions to be innovated: when it does present a problem to be solved, it almost always provides a tactical answer or guideline, or claims responsibility of coming up with a solutions as well. The ultimate goal of building purpose, according to Mantere & Sillince (2007), is to *invoke capabilities such as innovation, risk taking or uncertainty absorption*. By providing more answers than open questions, the Government risks repressing the proactivity of both administration and the civil society and private sector.

The current programme of PM Sipilä approaches the issue head-on by using scenario tools and providing the Cabinet's view of Finland in 2025. Reportedly, future scenarios were of high importance during the government formation talks, although the programme itself again shows only the end result of these discussions. In each chapter, the programme sets ten-year objectives in addition to those for the term of government. This can be considered a significant step on the way towards a truly future-focused way of generating strategy, though the quality of scenario planning carried out by the participants has been questioned by some. Most of the document is, still, rather detailed description of the actions the new Government is planning to take. The generation of a shared purpose is not a forte of the Government Programmes, while my suggestion is that it should be.

7.3   Building consistency

The discourse of building consistency is closely linked to that of creating purpose. Similarly, it aims to add to coherence and provide arguments for choosing one option over others. It addresses the contradictions and conflicts within text, fitting together seemingly unrelated statements. In contrast to the visionary tone of creating purpose, the tone of building consistency can be described as logical and reasoning. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

According to my interpretation, the rhetoric of consistency is completely absent from all Government Programmes. This finding is supported by the earlier recognition of forced consensus and deonticity as characteristic rhetoric features: no alternatives and rare explanations are given to argue for the statements, but they are rather presented as the unanimous truth. The programmes do not contain contradicting viewpoints when addressing issues, but aim to provide one coherent view. They also fail to provide reasoning for their central systemic assumptions on how the world works, but state them as matter-of-facts. The following excerpts act as examples of how statements of initiated action typically follow one after the other in the Government Programmes:

> *(8) "Ways will be sought to improve the availability of public dental care. The overall situation and development needs of occupational health care, emergency care and ambulance services will also be examined. Measures that would improve the predictability of the costs of specialized medical care will also be surveyed. Ways in which municipalities could transfer financial liability for extra expensive treatments to central government will be surveyed."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

The tone of voice is extremely deontic and that of a forced consensus. The statements are declared as describing what will happen, and they are not explained in any way or related to the bigger picture. Most of the newer Government Programmes since the programme of PM Vanhanen's first Cabinet similarly follow this style of documenting the tactical implementation of their vision.

(9) "The Government will take active steps for the management of structural change situations. The employment-based investment allocations will be used to create replacement jobs. Simultaneously, new operating methods and financing models will be developed for managing structural change situations. The operating model for restructuring protection will be developed further to support employment of those who have been made redundant."

(Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

The declarative tone of voice in Government Programmes may be at times mistaken for building consistency, but on closer inspection is revealed to provide rather one-sided (if any) arguments to the issues discussed. The reader might not always recognize possible inconsistencies within the strategy and its tactical implementations, as the overall style is to present declarations one by one without clearly binding them together.

Government Programmes have indeed been criticized for stating one thing while initiating action in a counterproductive manner. For example, the new programme of PM Sipilä's Cabinet within days after its publication has awoken criticism on the inconsistency experienced between the strategic goal of raising the national level of education and becoming a world-wide leader in modern learning techniques, and the actions it later proposes on introducing significant budget cuts on education. Had the Government Programme utilized rhetorical means of building consistency, the reader might have been provided a better understanding on the kind of reasoning the actions stem from.

The aim of creating consistency is not to shut out differing viewpoints, but to bring visible the path of decision-making. The complete lack of reasoning within Government Programmes may be seen to in fact cause more resistance than the presentation of differing viewpoints would. The lack of adequate argumentation can be also seen to stem from the power gap embedded deeply in the decision-making system. If the concept of an active network of innovators stemming across the private sector, civil society, and all levels of government was truly seen as the preferred way of organizing decision-making power, more attention would be paid in opening up the reasoning logic behind decisions for others to question and

build upon. As the statements in Government Programmes now are formulated, they leave a lot of implicit knowledge or thinking unsaid, simultaneously undermining the ability of other members of the policy network to think in terms of strategic decisions.

7.4   Acknowledging complexity

The discourse of acknowledging wickedity and complex environments embraces the uncertainty of future and understands the nature of multiple connections effecting how it turns out. As stated earlier, it acts as a guide for the discussion about strategy itself: creating coherence by regulating the conversation. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

The concept of complexity has been increasingly present in the Government Programmes, and is often mentioned in connection to global issues. Interdependency, environmental, economic and security issues are also commonly repeated in the discourse. All programmes after PM Holkeri's Cabinet in 1987 have somehow addressed the wicked nature of policy problems, if only stating it in the introductory paragraphs. The following excerpts illustrate the way complexity is typically presented in the programmes.

> *(10) "The Government is beginning its work in **an unusually**
> **demanding international situation**, which also casts a shadow over future
> economic growth."*
>
>   (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

> *(11) "**Climate change and globalization reinforce the inter-dependence** between
> nations and citizens."*
>
>   (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

The first excerpt reveals the rather old-fashioned rational logic behind strategy-making: the turbulent global situation is seen as something extraordinary, implying that things will return to 'normal'. This assumption that rational

decisions will swing the nation's situation back to what it has been is used as a basis to justify decisions made in the programmes. In the contrary to what complexity theories state, and to the philosophical grounds of this study, Government Programmes seem to communicate the assumption that good governance can gain control of these complex situations. Rather than embracing the complexity, the documents could be characterized as generally cautious of it.

The underlying idea of complexity is present in more subtle ways as well. Many programmes contain sections especially in relation to questions of the environment and economy, where the recognized need for cross-disciplinary thinking shows. The following excerpt talks of promoting sustainable development, and identifies economic means (tax reforms) as an important tool in the matter listed under environmental politics.

> (12) *"The structure of taxation will be revised so as to promote sustainable development. Ecological tax reforms will reduce the use of non-renewable natural resources and prevent environmental damage."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

There is, however, a tendency to 'dumb' down or 'tame' these wicked issues. The need experienced by governments to provide ready-made solutions to everything is rather overpowering — a statement may first acknowledge that the issue at hand is indeed complex and incontrollable, but the next statement already claims a solution. The answer to tackling complex issues is seen as simple as engineering a system or a set of protocols to follow by. The following excerpt shows how a systematic approach to the increasing complexity of the environment is seen as the solution:

> (13) *"**In an interdependent world, many security challenges** – such as climate change, uncontrolled migratory flows, poverty and inequality, epidemics, international crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), terrorism and cyber attacks – **require systematic preparedness** consistent with the comprehensive concept of security."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

One could, indeed, argue that the discourse of complexity is not truly present in the Government Programmes, if the concept of wicked problems is understood as merely somewhat more challenging issues than others. There still seems to be a lack of understanding on the nature of wickedity and the required approaches to dealing with it.

Taking global responsibility

Hand-in-hand with the discussion on complexity, the recognition of Finland's role within the global community has also grown in the Government Programmes. The earliest programme studied here of PM Holkeri in 1987 barely addressed the country's role in solving problems not directly affecting Finland through monetary aid to developing countries. The recent programmes of PM Vanhanen and Katainen, on the other hand, clearly state the importance of contributing to the solving of global issues in other ways as well:

> *(14) "The Government will take **an active part in the global debate** on innovative funding mechanisms and debt relief programmes for developing countries. In development cooperation, **emphasis must be placed on the efficiency and effectiveness of work**, the division of labor between various donors and the recipient countries' ownership."*
>
> <div align="right">(Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)</div>

Here, however, the mechanisms of innovating new solutions are also seen as ones in need of strict structure and control. Efficiency and effectiveness are not bad measures of innovation, but neither do they support the search for novel solutions per se. No mention of the role of Finland as the initiator of building international networks of innovators is present, and though the active role of Finland in debate is emphasized, there are no concrete examples of the actions the nation will take in order to pursue the generation of globally sustainable innovations.

7.5   Emphasizing context

The discourse of context aims to build coherence by relating the strategy to something already familiar to the actors involved in discussion. It embraces multiple alternative approaches to problems, and recognizes the need for local solutions. It also allows for multiple interpretations of the strategic intent to form, where actors utilize the mutual goals and intentions in promoting action as they see fit in their own environment. (Mantere & Sillince 2007)

This discourse of emphasizing context-specific solutions is somewhat present in all but the programme of PM Aho in 1991. No significant growth has, however, happened. Mostly it occurs in relation to local development, where the autonomy of public sector actors has gradually been added in most sectors over the past decades. The decentralizing of decision-making has during the last ten to fifteen years been followed by the adoption of regional models, where power is yet again centralized to decision-making structures mediating between local actors and the state level. This introduction of regional actors may have hindered the growth of the discourse of context, as the focus of discussion has been on finding more efficient use of the resources in public administration by joining functions. The two excerpts below illustrate the common ways context-specificity is present:

> (15) "**In addition to promoting nationwide goals**, *the state's decision-making concerning regional and local government, steering, and targeting of regional development resources will emphasize the regional development approach,* **observing the special characteristics of each region.**"
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

> (16) "*The Government will provide adequate resources for the decentralization of the Agency for Rural Affairs by increasing the appropriations where necessary and take steps to* **guarantee the operative capabilities of the local rural administration.**"
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

However, this discourse can be claimed to be more about recognizing the need for local or rural decision-making than about relating the bigger mutual innovation

goals to these local contexts. Speaking in terms of truly understanding the idea of empowered local communities working within the network of public sector innovation towards mutual objectives, the frequencies of this discourse in Government Programmes would be near zero. Some exceptions may occur, as in the following excerpt from the second Cabinet of PM Vanhanen. Here the discussion of rural development offers the solution of creating a nationwide network to support local activities, thus implying that these local innovations may have great significance to their context-specific birthplace. The degree to which this implied meaning was intended by the Cabinet to be present is still uncertain — it might as well be that the purpose of a nationwide network mentioned is to clearly control rather than facilitate. The determination of this is difficult from the text, given the matter-of-fact tone of voice it contains.

> *(17) "Under the new Rural Development Programme, efforts will be made to promote rural microenterprises, develop decentralized bioenergy production and **create the necessary prerequisites for innovative local activities**, including village development, advisory services and training. The Government will establish an **extensive nationwide advisory network** with regional information offices to promote decentralized bioenergy production."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

Where the importance of local development is clearly understood, is in connection to housing policies and area development. This is a natural place for the discourse of context to occur, as the residential development of regions has for long been rather autonomous. Decisions regarding the development of housing options are also context-specific by default, as the geographical and historical guidelines are a given to each location and have significant affect on how the building of new areas can be pursued overall. The following excerpt illustrates the recognition of context-specific decision-making in connection to new housing projects.

(18) "An inter-sectorial programme will be launched to improve resident satisfaction in housing projects in an attempt to prevent segregation and increase the competitiveness of the areas while diversifying and upgrading the properties. In particular, efforts will be made to encourage local action."

(Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

The definition of the discourse of context states that it allows for multiple interpretations to occur. This, as earlier introduced, is not the case in Government Programmes. The rhetoric of forced consensus is so overpowering that the idea of generating local solutions communicates as a top-down forced initiative, aiming to simply increase the efficiency of policymaking. The pursuit of truly innovative and engaged local communities is not visible from the programmes, and neither is the allowance of multiple different solutions to be developed to solve national or even regional problems.

7.6   Initiating collaboration

In addition to the four key discourses of strategic intent, the discourse of collaboration came up during analysis. It is particularly interesting in relation to my earlier suggestion of public sector innovation activities being organized in networks, stemming across the silos of government and involving the civil society and public sector as well. These three aspects of collaboration within the government, with the private sector and with the civil society will each be shortly assessed on their own in this subchapter.

7.6.1   Collaboration within government

To partly counterbalance the trend of decentralized policymaking on local and regional levels, the discourse of collaboration within the public sector has been increasingly present in the Government Programmes. Most programmes recognize the need for collaboration between the various *levels of government*, and initiatives for working across the *silos of disciplines* are also more and more present.

The discourse of collaboration within governance is clearly present in connection to the development of new initiatives: in the following excerpts, the two Cabinets of PM Vanhanen broadly elaborate on the importance of integrative actions between ministries to address migration and integration issues. The latter programme proposes the formation of a new unit responsible of these matters.

> *(19) "The Government is prepared to develop immigration policy and integration measures. The demographic trend in Finland will result in an entirely new situation within this decade due to the ageing of the population and the declining workforce. If the economic dependency ratio so requires, Government policy will promote immigration in support of labor supply. **This will require extensive cooperation and commitment between central and local government,** the business sector, the social partners and NGOs."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

> *(20) "For the new entity to be formed within the Ministry of the Interior, **a special unit for integration will be created** which, in the discharge of its duties, will **work in close collaboration with** the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the future Ministry of Labor and Industry, and the Ministry of the Environment. The unit will support the ministry in shouldering general responsibility for integration issues and related coordination. **The importance of smooth cooperation between the individual ministries is underlined** in the implementation of the reform for the purpose of developing work-related immigration, etc."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

The topic of immigration in particular has evoked the pursuit of inter-organizational collaboration in other Government Programmes as well. Since it is a rather new issue of political debate in this national scale, there have been no established ways of dealing with these arising needs for alignment of policy. In other fields of policy where the operations have more history and ways of working have remained the same throughout decades, less of these new cross-ministerial initiatives are pursued.

In a more general scope, the development of rural areas is another topic around which the conversation of collaboration circles. The need for collaboration here is also rather explicit, as the geographical siloes are clearly visible and apparent to all. The trend of moving from local to regional development in many fields of policy has also speeded up the conversation of the need for collaboration. Municipal and regional cooperation is encouraged in most Government Programmes, but to which extent this actually is carried out in reality varies greatly. The OECD Study introduced earlier in this thesis stated the lack of horizontal collaboration in Finnish policymaking. This issue has been addressed in the Government Programmes, as the following excerpts show. The implementation of these intentions to practice seems to, however, lack in effectiveness.

> *(21) "Rural development calls for **strong cross-sectorial regional development** and industrial policy development work."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

> *(22) "The system of central government transfers to local government will be developed so as to promote reform of service structures and production methods, and to **encourage intermunicipal cooperation**."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

> *(23) "A central part of the programme involves **furthering regional collaboration between the various authorities responsible for employment**, as this will be necessary for operation of the proposed labor force development centers."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Cabinet 2003)

While these excerpts show how horizontal policymaking priorities are set within the Government Programmes, the steering systems and budget allocations are often seen to not sufficiently support collaboration in practice. (OECD Public Governance Reviews 2010) This lack of adequate resources to implement collaborative initiatives is often shown in the programmes as undetailed descriptions on how collaboration will be pursued in action. Many other objectives are described in plenty of detail, yet this seems to be a field too complicated for the Cabinet to get into. Ministerial siloes are so established that most members of administration do not see these barriers anymore, but are blindsighted by the prevailing customs of operation.

7.6.2 Collaboration with the private sector

The discourse of collaboration with private sector organizations is less present in the programmes. Mostly it occurs in connection to the privatization of municipal services, as the excerpts below illustrate. This trend of moving tasks formerly organized by the public sector for private sector companies to provide has accelerated during the time of the past few Cabinets. The adoption of managerial thinking in the search for efficiency suggests that the private sector is naturally more inclined to pursue efficient means of production, and that the public sector may thus gain savings by purchasing services from outside. The purchaser-provider model, as the excerpt below states, is encouraged in most of the recent Government Programmes.

> (24) *"**The private and third sectors complement municipal services** within the parameters permitted by law."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

> (25) *"The Government **promotes partnerships between the public, private and third sector** in the provision of services. **The adoption of the purchaser–provider model will be encouraged.**"*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

In some instances, however, possibilities of collaboration are seen past this obvious trend of privatization. The excerpts below show rare examples of how private sector organizations are treated as experts in something the public sector does not yet sufficiently know how to do. The first excerpt discusses the collaboration in creating centers of strategic expertise to enhance innovation in Finland. The second illustrates how the private sector is seen to contribute to the promotion of Finland as an attractive target for capital investments.

> (26) *"Within the scope of the centers of excellence strategy, strategic centers of expertise will be created **in collaboration with the private sector**, as outlined by the Science and Technology Policy Council."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

> (27) *"Capital investments boosting the internationalization of the Finnish capital investment sector will be promoted **in collaboration with companies operating in the sector** and other investors."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

Other than in instances like these illustrated above, the private sector is not commonly addressed as a possible source of innovation regarding the public sector itself. No initiatives are made to involve the private sector into discussion of the future of our nation, or into developing solutions to the wicked problems we face.

7.6.3   Collaboration with the civil society

Collaboration with the civil society, consisting of the citizens and third sector organizations of Finland, has been on a rising trend in the Government Programmes. The programme of PM Holkeri's Cabinet did not speak of working with the citizen at all, while the discourse of collaboration in the latest programmes was present in several occasions. Initiatives to engage the citizen into working together with the public sector have been increasingly common. There are, however, some inconsistencies visible that suggest the concept of an active civil society still remains non-familiar to the Government.

The citizens in most occasions are referred to as *passive objects of action* or *consumers of services* initiated by the government. Some programmes stated clearly that the government has an intention of involving citizens in decision-making, yet the phrase "designed *for* citizens" occurred consistently in all programs. The following excerpt from PM Vanhanen's second Cabinet well illustrates how the power relations regarding the government itself and its citizens are regarded. The government is seen as superior to both citizens and companies in its ability to act upon them. The 'information society' mentioned below is also regarded a separate entity, the creating of which the citizens or companies are not involved in.

> (28) *"**The Government will boost the confidence of the citizens** and companies in the daily services offered by the information society."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

The same Government Programme does also explicitly recognize the need to empower citizens in collaborative production of services with the public sector. The excerpt on the following page regards the creation of welfare services. Questions related to social welfare and health are the most common in which the active participation of citizens is considered appropriate: the connection between service design and user-centricity here is recognized better than in many other contexts. This might be partly explained by the fact that the public services offered are more tangible in nature: everyone can recognize that providing health care is a service, where the patient is also involved in the production of the end result. This connection might not be as clear in talking of more abstract services such as building certain infrastructure. Where the citizen as an end user is perceived closest to the consumption of the service, initiated collaboration is most likely to occur.

> (29) *"Citizens **will be given** improved **opportunities to be involved** in decision-making and influence the type and quality of services provided."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

Still, the opportunity to get involved in decision-making is seen as something that the Government can decide to give to its citizens, rather than something that

already belongs to them per se. The collaboration is also described as rather passive. The citizens are given the chance to influence decisions, but there is no implication that they would be actively involved in *creating* these services. No programmes mention the existence of citizen science or recognize that innovations regarding the work of the public sector may be born outside of the governance system itself. The perceived power position of civil society beneath the machine of public policymaking is implied in all programmes, despite their efforts to encourage the involvement of citizen.

The later Government Programme of Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet at times slips into a slightly patronizing tone of voice. Citizens in the following excerpt are seen as initially somewhat incapable or unwilling to care for their own well-being.

> (30) *"Citizens are **encouraged to behave responsibly with regard to their health** by, for instance, the good practices generated by the Policy programme for health promotion."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

Third sector organizations as members of the civil society are very rarely mentioned in Government Programmes. When they are, they usually are treated in connection to private sector organizations: bundled together as "private and third sector" in sentences. Given their unalike nature and underlying motivations for their operations, third sector organizations should, in my opinion, be approached as part of the civil society rather than the private sector. The excerpt from PM Katainen's programme below gives an example of how the civil society organizations are seen as collaborators in drafting new legislation.

> (31) *"New anti-discrimination legislation that takes into account the European legislative developments and that effectively guarantees equality regardless of the discrimination grounds **will be drafted in collaboration with social partners and civil society organizations** and be submitted to Parliament."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

7.7 Nurturing innovation and experimentation

The discourse of innovation in the Government Programmes has grown steadily over the past decades. Especially since the second Cabinet of PM Vanhanen, enhancing innovation capabilities has been actively present in all programmes. The responsibility of generating innovation can be seen to divide so that the public sector finances research and development, while the private sector and higher education are expected to produce outcomes. The 'strategic inputs' of Government mentioned in the first excerpt below mainly refer to funding R&D activities in the private sector as well as universities.

> *(32) "The Government is willing to strengthen the economy's capacity for innovation by **providing strategic inputs in selected areas,** to foster the development of expertise and improve the conditions for creating and expanding new risk-bearing businesses."*
>
> (Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet 2007)

> *(33) "An adequate level of funding for research, development and innovation activity will be secured. During this parliamentary term, the targeted share of RDI expenditure is 4% of GDP."*
>
> (Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

Ensuring financial support for innovation seems to be the main concern of Government Programmes: not many other means of supporting innovativeness are mentioned. Some programmes do suggest the formation of 'centers of expertise', like mentioned in the above excerpt. There are, however, no further explanation to what is meant by these expertise hubs. The programmes of PM Katainen's Cabinet and the current Cabinet of PM Sipilä put more emphasis on the creation of innovation hubs and networks, as the following excerpts show. There seems to be, at least to some extent, an understanding of the possible benefits of innovation networks. Still, the programmes do not specify on who is seen as part of these networks or if the innovations generated will affect the public sector itself.

*(34) "In addition to nationally and regionally **networked innovation communities**, strong regional **hubs of innovation** will be created in Finland. The innovation policy will support the rest of the R&D policy for its part."*

(Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

*(35) "Regional **centers of excellence and powerful hubs** representing specific fields will be provided with financial support."*

(Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Cabinet 2015)

The development of innovation policies for various sectors of the economy is also seen as an important channel to enforce innovation activities, as the following excerpt illustrates.

*(36) "Energy technology is a growth sector, **the growth of which is supported by means of innovation policy**, research and product development and training."*

(Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Cabinet 2011)

The Government Programmes do not elaborate on *how* innovations by their opinion are generated, or what else besides expertise and finances are needed. The current programme of PM Sipilä's Cabinet does, however, recognize that the conversion of expertise to innovation is not always straightforward:

(37) "Expertise is not being converted into innovations, innovations are not commercialized. We are losing our expertise-based competitive edge."

(Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Cabinet 2015)

The programme of PM Sipilä's Cabinet is, indeed, the first to explicitly promote the mindset of experimentation within the public sector. The programme places emphasis on experiments in several connections:

*(38) "Finland's competitiveness is built on high expertise, sustainable development and **open-minded innovations based on experimentation and digitalization**."*

(Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Cabinet 2015)

*(39) "The Government will promote the creation and exploitation of service innovations based on **a statutory framework that enables experimenting**. The use of service initiatives will be facilitated as a fixed-term experiment."*

(Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Cabinet 2015)

This idea of prototyping and iterating within the public sector is rather radically new. Although the tone of voice is still focused on a forced consensus, this discourse of experimentation suggests that the mindset of top-down planning has begun to change towards a more network-oriented way of generating innovation.

7.8   Promoting design methodology

Closely related to the discourses of innovation, experimentation, and collaboration with the civil society, the discourse on design methodology has also increasingly been present within the last few programmes. Design as a field of expertise is, still, understood in the Government Programmes in its 'traditional' meanings, and mentioned in connection to conversations where it can be seen to indicate methods of industrial design in particular.

The discourse on design in politics outside of the Government Programmes has been fortified by the introduction of the national design programmes since the second Cabinet of PM Lipponen. This discussion is not, however, visible in the programmes. The programme of PM Lipponen's second Cabinet barely states that '*the national design programme will be revised*'. This statement is made in connection to policies of culture, which clearly reveals that the field of design and the value of design actions is not recognized outside of its traditional meanings. The latest programme of PM Sipilä's Cabinet does not mention design at all, while design thinking philosophy can be seen to some extent be implicit in the discourse of experimentation. Designers as professionals involved in the generation of innovation are not involved in any of the discourses of Government Programmes.

8   Conclusion

This final chapter will gather the learnings of this thesis together, providing answers to the research questions asked in the very beginning of the study. The first section will conclude these key findings. The second section proposes contributions to literature and topics for future research, and the final section provides some managerial implications.

8.1   Key findings

The findings of this study are concluded in relation to each of the three research questions presented in the beginning of this study. The first question regarding the relevance of building strategic intent was answered through the context review and the online questionnaire. The second question of the key discourses of generating strategic intent was answered through examining existing literature. The final question of how these discourses are present in the Finnish Government Programmes was answered through the critical discourse analysis of these programmes and supported by literature. The response of this thesis to each question will next be summarized.

9.1.1   Why is building strategic intent relevant for policymaking?

In order to build a solid foundation for the closer examination of strategic intent in governance, the context review provided answers to assess the importance of building strategic intent for policymaking in the first place. This pursuit of intent was found out to originally stem from the search for sustainability. The context in which our public policymaking system acts can be characterized as wicked: the public sector has to continuously deal with increasingly complex challenges. These problems are intertwined and hard to distinguish from one another. They cannot be solved once and for all, but keep on manifesting themselves in changing forms when we aim to tackle them. (Rittel & Webber 1973; Levin et al. 2012)

These wicked problems require rather different methods of generating change than the traditional problem solving skills we have been taught. The study pointed out that understanding the social nature of policy issues is crucial in the search for ways to dealing with them. The ownership of wicked problems is not possessed by any actor alone, but these issues are dealt with by facilitating discussion on possible directions to take. (Horn & Weber 2007; Batie 2008) Since there are no specific end results to aim for, the process of dealing with wickedity is continuous and loaded with questions of values and opinions.

To facilitate this discussion, design thinking and strategic design were in this study suggested to bring concrete tools for communicating implicit knowledge and emotions, where traditional research methods struggle with this plurality of objectives. (de Mozota & Kim 2009; Seidel 2000) The contributions of design methodology in connection to public strategy making are still hard to validate through empiric study, given the rather recent appearance of the discussion. However, this study found a strong link between the concepts of strategic design and strategic thinking in management literature (Liedtka 1998), where the grounds to make this statement are better established. Strategic design can also be seen to bring added value to the conversation by methods characteristically connected to design: prototyping, rapid iterations, and 'soft' methodologies aiming to hear the implicitly included information that is often left unnoticed.

This thesis suggests that the key to systematically dealing with wicked problems is answering to them with wicked opportunities: pursuing structural innovation and embracing continuous change. Here, the methodologies of strategic design and strategic thinking are valuable. They provide a framework for routinely generating innovation, a skill the public sector is not exactly known for. (Kelley & Kelley 2012) This principle of incrementally building radical innovation (Kemp et al. 2005) constructs a sense of purpose for the operation of public sector organizations, by setting common long-term objectives to aim for. On the highest levels of public policymaking, a framework for managing these innovation activities is needed. Transition management provides one such viewpoint,

defining the process of structural innovation to form through backcasting midway objectives from a shared vision. (Rotmans et al. 2001; Kemp et al. 2005)

This mutual vision and the motivation to aim for it were here found out to be equivalent to the concept of strategic intent introduced in management literature. Strategic intent is seen to create a common sense of direction and purpose for the actors involved in pursuing it. (Smith 1994; Hamel & Prahalad 1989) In the context of public decision-making, my suggestion was that these actors should involve the whole of government, the civil society and the public sector. This proposal is related to the idea of innovation networks. Research on wicked problems suggests, that the answer to tackling wickedity lies within collaborative actions — not in the mind of any single person, but in the social processes of creating and managing knowledge simultaneously on multiple levels and across horizontal siloes. (Rittel & Webber 1973)

On this basis, the formation of strategic intent can be seen as a social process itself. Research on strategy making within management literature suggests, that this intent can be constructed through creating coherence between the multiple personal intents the actors possess. (Mantere & Sillince 2007) This is seen to happen through discursive practices in the social construction of meanings and purpose. These discourses of building strategic intent were the subject of my second research question, which will be next answered to.

To summarize the answer to why building strategic intent is relevant to policymaking, this mutual pursuit of long-term objectives is crucial in building goal-directed and proactive government. It creates a shared sense of purpose, enabling the elimination of unnecessary hierarchies. Strategic intent was also found to open the way to creativity: the introduction of new disruptive ideas creates creative tension within the public sector, which must in turn be resolved by shaping the current reality towards that of the shared vision. (Senge 1997) Strategic intent is explicitly clear of the desired vision, but leaves room for multiple means to pursue them and for new ideas to emerge and shape the intent itself through time.

The importance of creating strategic intent for the public sector in Finland in particular was validated through an online questionnaire. The results suggested that the lack of mutual intent in policymaking manifests itself in the cacophony of conflicting instructions, the pursuit of personal interests over mutual agendas, and the existence of unnecessary bureaucracy. The respondents also brought out the important issues of a lack of possibilities to act in a future-oriented manner, the difficulty of generating change within the public sector, and the uncertainty caused by continuous organizational reforms. Instead of using resources to tackle real-life problems, they are spent to organize and re-organize again the rigid processes of policymaking. Strategic intent, when pursued at all levels of the policymaking network, eliminates the need for formal hierarchical structures and their maintenance.

8.1.2   What are the key discourses of building strategic intent?

How, then, might we pursue this strategic intent? As stated on the previous page, this study suggested that mutual intent is constructed through discourse involving all actors of the network. The adoption of the viewpoint of strategy-as-practice allows for the examination of strategic discursive practices as strategic decisions made by people in their social context. These discursive practices are seen to build and re-enforce power structures and initiate action. Strategic texts, as Vaara et al. (2010) suggested, also have textual agency: they achieve something by merely their existence. Studying the prevailing practices regarding the discourse of intentions is thus seen as an important aspect of creating strategic intent.

This study followed the viewpoint of Mantere & Sillence (2007) in their classification of the discourses building strategic intent. These four discursive practices of (1) creating purpose, (2) building consistency, (3) acknowledging complexity and (4) emphasizing context were studied as the basis for the critical discourse analysis.

Coherent strategic intent was found out to exist when the discursive practices of integration and differentiation are in balance. Practices of integration, namely

creating purpose and building consistency, were seen to make sense of the underlying logic for the multiple discourses of an organization, where propositions regarding strategy can be seen as related to each other. Practices of differentiation, such as acknowledging complexity and emphasizing context, in contrast, bring forward the local contexts and unique properties of decisions and actions. (Mantere & Sillince 2007; Jarzabkowski & Sillince 2007) This ideology of the practices of divergence and convergence occurring in turns were also examined in connection to the practices of a strategic thinker, and are familiar to many design practitioners through models such as the 'double diamond' (SEE Platform 2013b).

These discourses functioned as a loose framework for the empirical study. Their occurrence was analyzed throughout Government Programmes of Finland from the past lifetime of a generation.

8.1.3   How are these discourses constructed within the Government Programmes of Finland?

The study examined the presence of these discursive practices of creating strategic intent within the Government Programmes of Finland. The source of material was chosen because it provides the only publicly open and documented medium of information regarding the strategic alignments of Finland as a nation. The Government Programmes were examined by the method of critical discourse analysis, where the four key discourses from literature and five discourses that emerged from the texts were analyzed. Attention was also paid to the overall style and tone of voice in the documents.

The discourses of strategic intent were found to be rather modestly if at all present in the Government Programmes. Though the length of programmes within the past terms of office has significantly grown, a majority of these documents are tactical implementation guidelines and alignments. When considered in relation to the length of documents, the relative importance of the discourses of strategic intent may in fact be seen to have declined. Though our general understanding of

complexity and wicked problems has grown, this does not yet show in public policymaking, where traditions and established ways of operation have a strong foothold. The Government Programmes are characterized by a deontic and declarative tone of voice, and they mostly provide no argumentation to support claims. On the contrary, they seem to act as closure to the discussion, presenting a unanimous viewpoint and ready solutions.

When considered in the larger political arena of public policymaking, the lack of these discourses in the programmes may be interpreted to purposefully maintain the power gap embedded deeply in the current decision-making system. If the concept of an active network of innovators stemming across the private sector, civil society, and all levels of government was seen as the preferred way of organizing decision-making power, more attention would be paid in opening up the reasoning logic behind decisions for others to question and build upon. As the statements in Government Programmes now are formulated, they leave a lot of implicit knowledge or thinking unsaid.

8.2   Contributions to literature

This thesis has provided a rather broad and multidisciplinary viewpoint to the problematic nature of policymaking and the pursuit of sustainability. By combining existing research from the fields of social sciences, management studies, political sciences and design research among others, I have suggested several new perspectives into collectively dealing with the interconnected issues we call wicked problems.

The discussion of strategic design and design for government has struggled with the lack of sufficient empirical evidence of the benefits of involving design actions in public policymaking procedures. This thesis has suggested a clear link between the fields of design and management studies, where the empirical research on the merits of strategic thinking are more established. The connection between strategic design and strategic thinking is here suggested to be strong, while design methodologies may indeed add to the benefits of strategic thinking. This connection is suggested as a topic for further exploration within the field of design research. Validating the connection through empirical research would provide a valuable opportunity for design practitioners to rationalize their involvement in the public sector in a way familiar to policymakers.

Another contribution of this study to literature is the suggested link between transition management and strategic intent. The field of transition management, like that of strategic design, is relatively new. It is also rather disconnected from the discourses of other fields of science, and would thus benefit from building some connections to more established viewpoints. Research on strategic intent and its pursuit are quite popular in the connection to private sector organizations, but recently have also been studied in the context of public management. Understanding the connection of strategic intent and the transition vision and objectives mentioned in transition management would be an interesting viewpoint for further studies, and may assist in the diffusion of transition management as a framework to guide large systems towards sustainability.

A third proposed contribution to literature is the link I have drawn between design methodologies and transition management (see Figure 13 below for illustration). The core idea transition management presents of forming a vision of the future, backcasting agendas for change, and iterating between these forward- and backwards-looking actions, is close to the nature of design methodologies. I suggest that combining these two viewpoints would present exciting opportunities for design professionals to get involved in strategic level decision-making. Understanding the benefits that design methods may bring to the rapid iteration and pursuit of continuous innovation is an important step in integrating these creative viewpoints into public management.
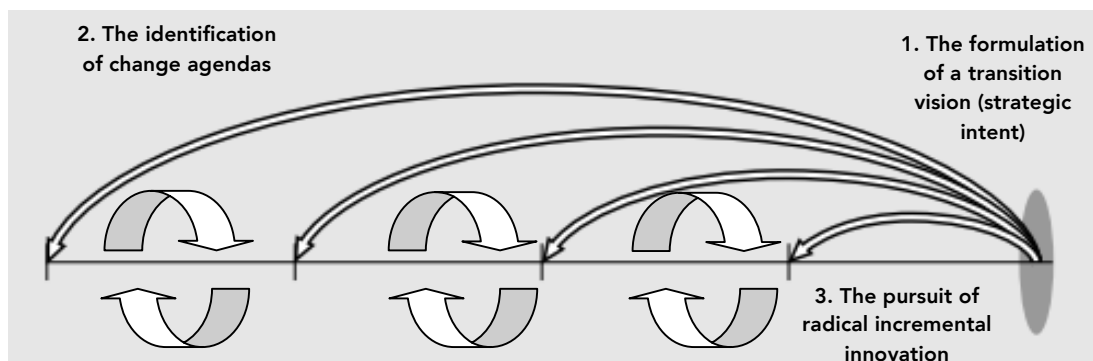
Figure 13: The proposed connection between transition management and design methodologies. Adapted from Rotmans et al. 2001

8.3 Managerial implications

The implications of this thesis to managers in the public sector and those outside of it willing to contribute to policymaking can be described as two-fold. Firstly, recognizing the wicked nature of most real-world problems is crucial in finding successful means to dealing with them. Creating wicked opportunities by nurturing innovation activities is the only way to proactively create the future instead of merely trying to cope with the increasingly complex and interconnected problems we face. The public sector has had difficulties in finding balance between its exploitative and explorative actions: it seems like experiencing continuous change has initiated a counter-reaction and lead to tighter control in some areas of policy. A more productive reaction, as this thesis suggests, would be to let go of control and enable the larger network of government as well as the civil society and the private sector to search for solutions together.

Secondly, the ways in which we create discussion of these issues is extremely important. Strategic intent for Finland, i.e. the mutual long-term vision to pursue, is seen to construct within the discourses of public strategy. Currently the ways in which strategic issues are publicly communicated do not support the building of a shared sense of purpose. More attention should be paid to the rhetoric means and discursive practices of public strategy making, in order to create consensus on the long-term goals of sustainable development. All reforms and policy changes can be claimed redundant, if there is no collective vision of a desired future to pursue.

The suggested discourses of creating strategic intent should be considered as guidelines for communicating in matters related to strategy in the public sector. These discourses should be paid special attention to in the preparation of Government Programmes, since their role as the overarching strategy document of the whole of nation is unique. Taking the suggestions of OHRA Project further, I claim that the nature of Government Programmes in the future should be clearly more strategic and future-oriented, and that the action plan for implementation could, in fact, be assembled by the larger policymaking network in true collaboration.

These collaborative practices of creating strategic intent should be supported by the methods of strategic thinking and strategic design. Design professionals should pay attention to finding ways to better communicate the benefits of establishing design methods as part of policymaking. In this pursuit, they should not stick to speaking of design alone, but combine knowledge from more established theories as well. Explicitly recognizing that many practices of design are in fact adapted from other fields of science may help in finding new arguments for embedding design into the formation of strategy in the public sector. Instead of always focusing on what is new or better in design methodologies, practitioners should also reflect on what is commonly known in public management and how design could contribute to these existing practices.

One clear way in which design methods may contribute to the pursuit of public strategic intent is by being an active participant of sense-making activities. Visual and tangible ways of communicating abstract entities is design's forte and a skill in which the government lacks. User-centered methods are currently increasingly utilized in connection to city planning and local policymaking, but the opportunities of these to be involved in higher levels of decision-making should be actively searched for. Creating ways of meaningful dialogue between all participants of the innovation network requires design capabilities also in the design of 'meeting places' for encounters to happen.

To conclude, the implications of this study to the development of public policymaking are that all participants of public innovation networks should aim in their actions for the common long-term intents shared and re-generated in the network. The aspirations of a sustainable future are realized only by building discourses and thus actions to support the formation of mutual strategic intent.

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Appendices

Appendix 1a: The online questionnaire statements and results in Finnish

1. Koen itseni tervetulleeksi työpaikalle.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	19.7%		13
Hyvin samaa mieltä	34.9%		23
Täysin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
		Total	66
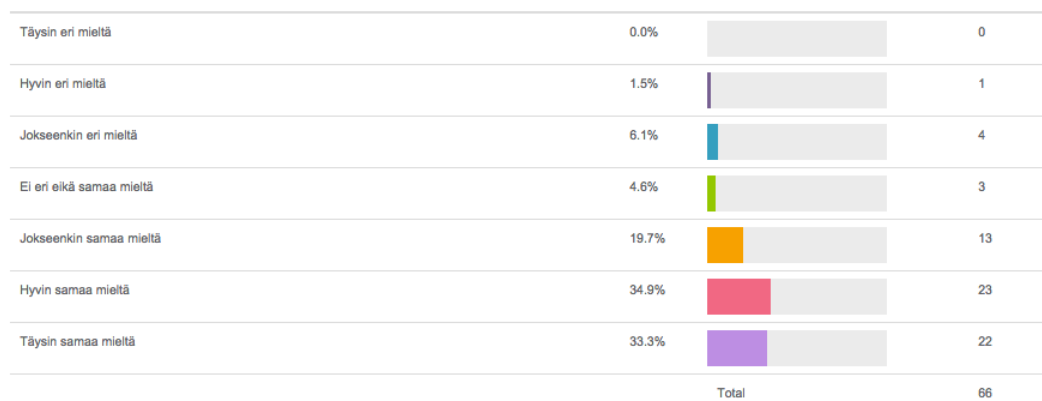
2. Työyhteisössäni on lämmin ja kannustava ilmapiiri.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	12.1%		8
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	39.4%		26
Hyvin samaa mieltä	31.8%		21
Täysin samaa mieltä	7.6%		5
		Total	66
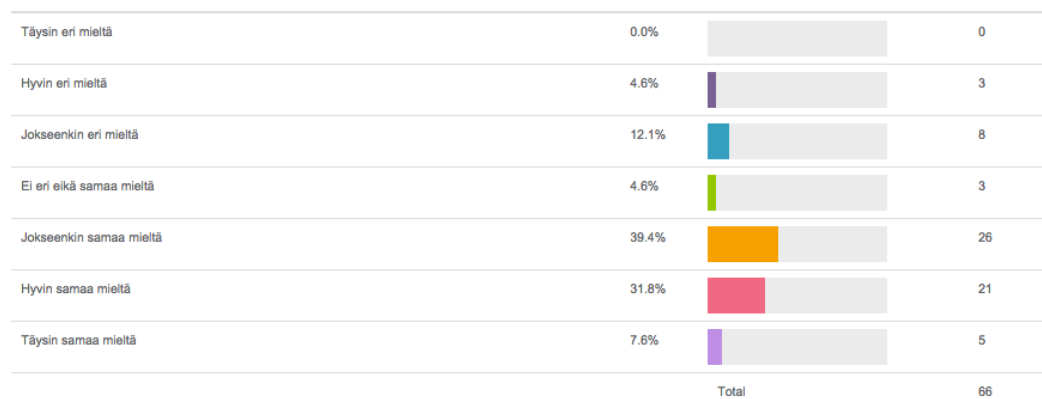
3. Koen, että esimieheni arvostaa työtäni ja osaamistani.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Hyvin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	13.6%		9
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	16.7%		11
Hyvin samaa mieltä	30.3%		20
Täysin samaa mieltä	30.3%		20
		Total	66
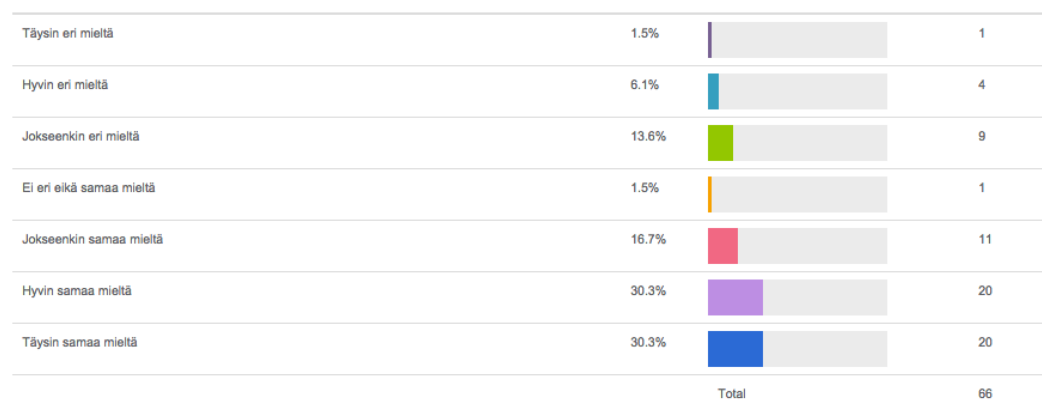
4. Koen, että työtoverini arvostavat työtäni ja osaamistani.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	9.1%		6
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	19.7%		13
Hyvin samaa mieltä	51.5%		34
Täysin samaa mieltä	12.1%		8
		Total	66
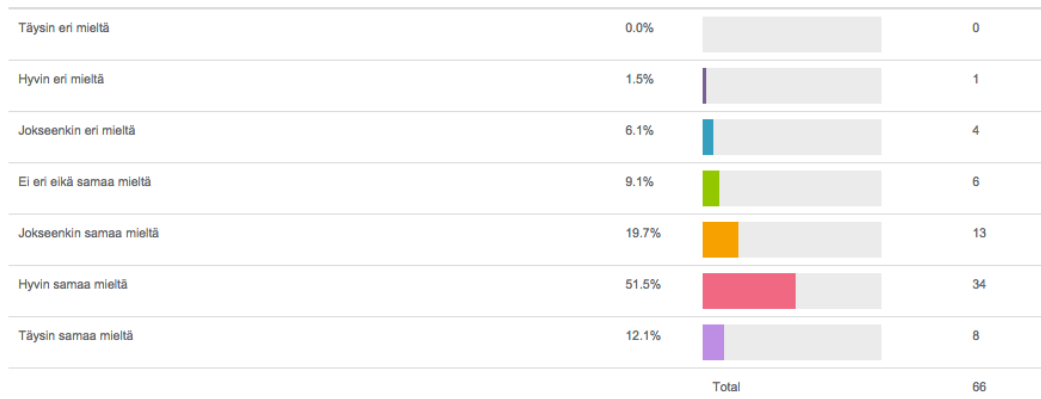
5. Koen, että minulla on töissä lupa olla välillä epävarma.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	16.7%		11
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	39.4%		26
Hyvin samaa mieltä	25.8%		17
Täysin samaa mieltä	12.1%		8
		Total	66

6. Koen, että töissä on lupa välillä epäonnistua.

Täysin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	13.6%		9
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	16.7%		11
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	34.9%		23
Hyvin samaa mieltä	19.7%		13
Täysin samaa mieltä	6.1%		4
		Total	66

7. Koen, että työni on merkityksellistä.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	19.7%		13
Hyvin samaa mieltä	30.3%		20
Täysin samaa mieltä	39.4%		26
	Total		66

8. Olen löytänyt oman paikkani työyhteisössämme.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	10.6%		7
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	25.8%		17
Hyvin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
Täysin samaa mieltä	22.7%		15
	Total		66
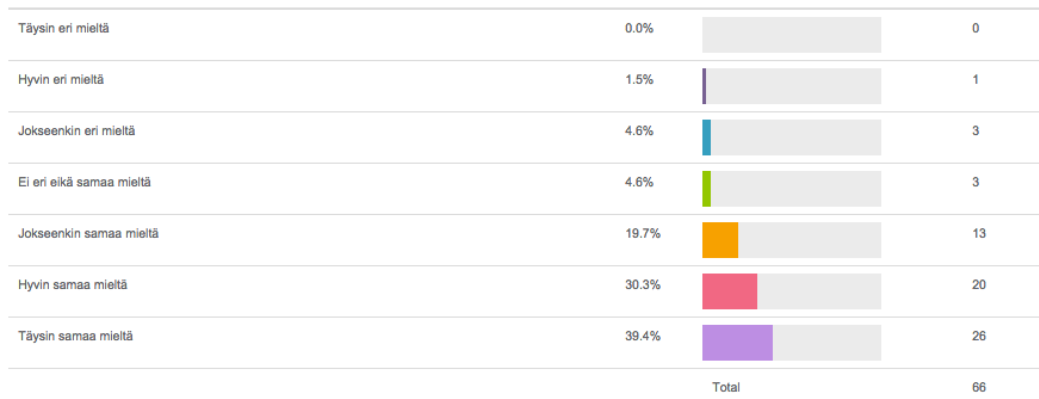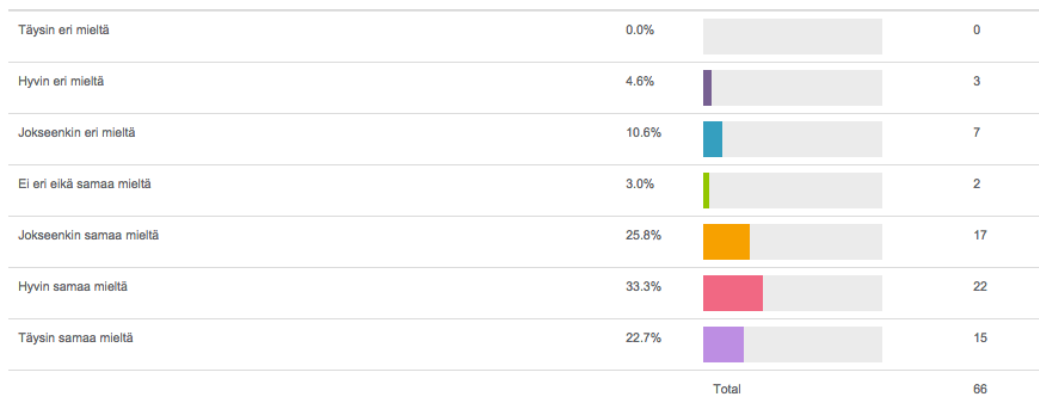
9. Saan toimia työpaikallani henkilökohtaisten arvojeni mukaisesti.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	6.1%		4
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	30.3%		20
Hyvin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
Täysin samaa mieltä	19.7%		13
	Total		66
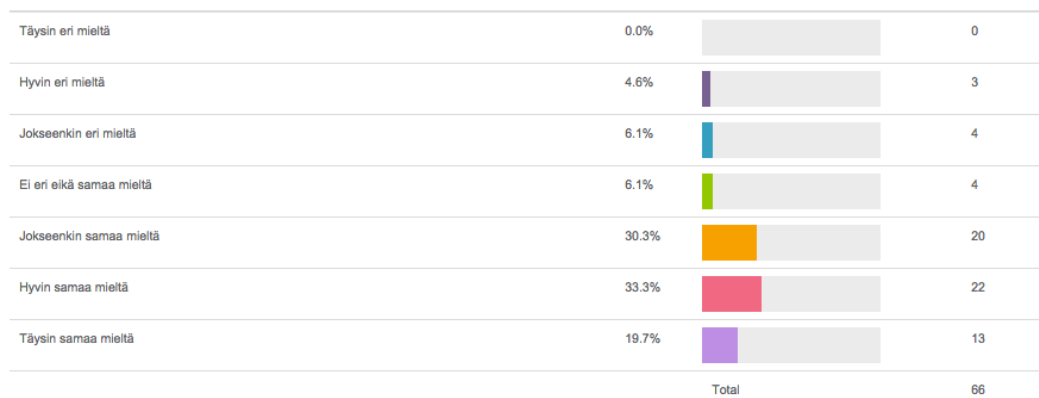
10. Inspiroidun usein työpaikalla.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	12.1%		8
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	6.1%		4
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	31.8%		21
Hyvin samaa mieltä	28.8%		19
Täysin samaa mieltä	16.7%		11
		Total	66
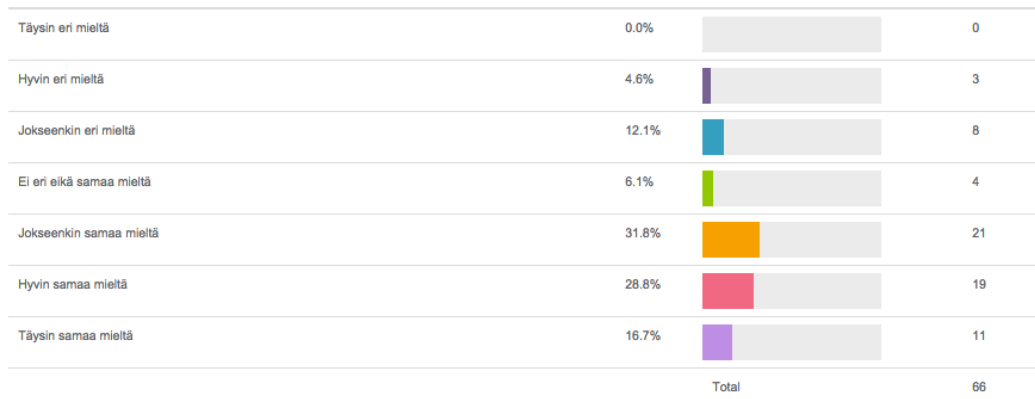
11. Työni edellyttää luovuutta.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	22.7%		15
Hyvin samaa mieltä	42.4%		28
Täysin samaa mieltä	27.3%		18
		Total	66

12. Työni edellyttää analyyttisyyttä ja systemaattisuutta.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	0.0%		0
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	16.7%		11
Hyvin samaa mieltä	43.9%		29
Täysin samaa mieltä	37.9%		25
		Total	66

13. Yritän työssäni ymmärtää asioiden syy-seuraussuhteita.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	0.0%	0
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	10.6%	7
Hyvin samaa mieltä	34.9%	23
Täysin samaa mieltä	53.0%	35
	Total	66
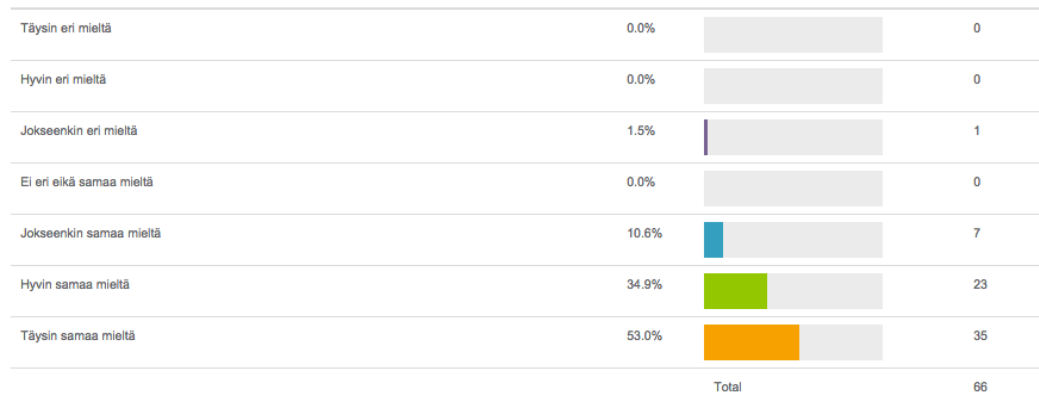
14. Pystyn työssäni hyödyntämään koko osaamistani.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%	2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	16.7%	11
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	0.0%	0
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	36.4%	24
Hyvin samaa mieltä	28.8%	19
Täysin samaa mieltä	13.6%	9
	Total	66

15. Kokeilen usein työssäni uudenlaisia toimintatapoja.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	10.6%	7
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	31.8%	21
Hyvin samaa mieltä	31.8%	21
Täysin samaa mieltä	12.1%	8
	Total	66

16. Ehdotan usein itse uusia toimintatapoja tai työkaluja.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%	5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%	2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	30.3%	20
Hyvin samaa mieltä	42.4%	28
Täysin samaa mieltä	15.2%	10
	Total	66
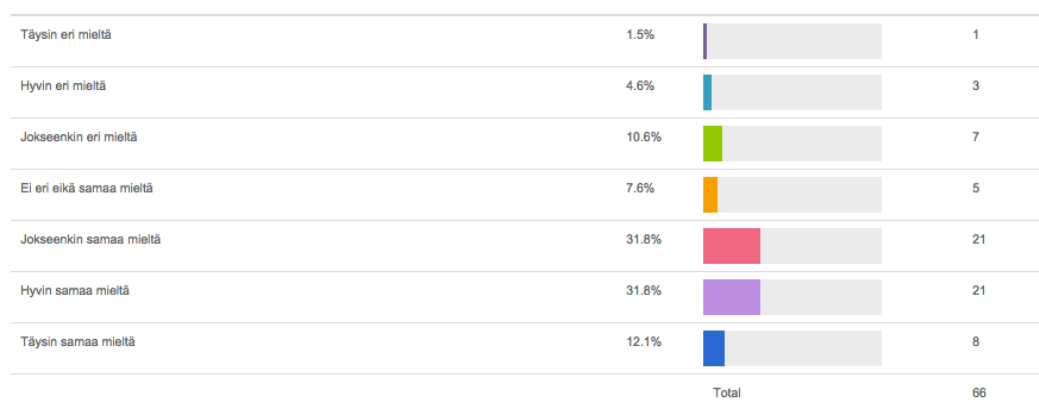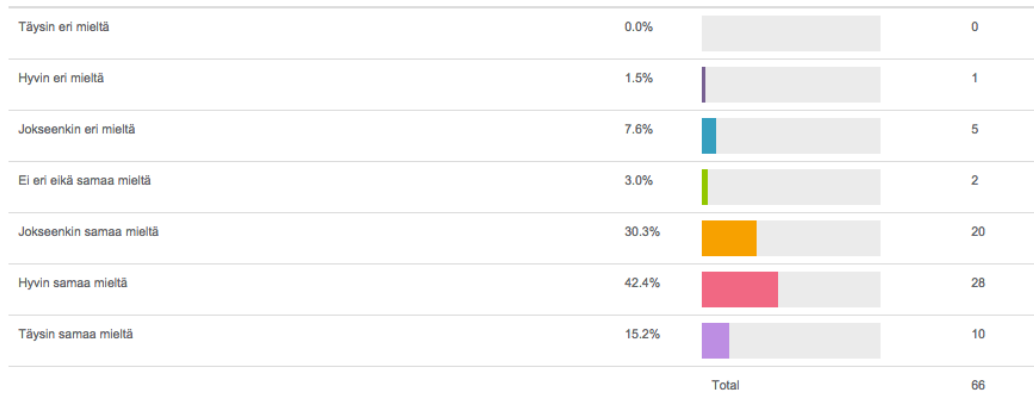
17. Minulla on töissä tarpeeksi aikaa hoitaa tehtäväni niin hyvin kuin haluan.

Täysin eri mieltä	6.1%	4
Hyvin eri mieltä	12.1%	8
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	28.8%	19
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.3%	18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	16.7%	11
Täysin samaa mieltä	3.0%	2
	Total	66
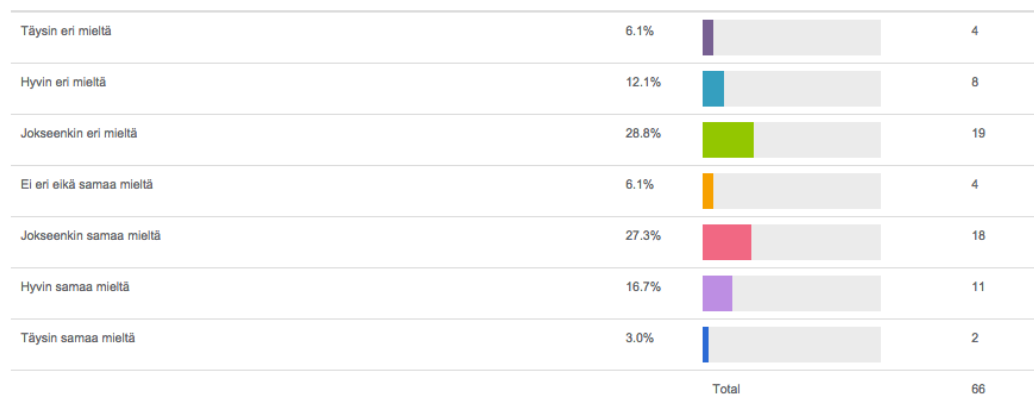
18. Koen, että minulla on työssäni liikaa vastuuta.

Täysin eri mieltä	15.2%	10
Hyvin eri mieltä	25.8%	17
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	37.9%	25
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	9.1%	6
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	6.1%	4
Hyvin samaa mieltä	6.1%	4
Täysin samaa mieltä	0.0%	0
	Total	66

19. Opin jatkuvasti töissä uutta.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%		5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%		5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	39.4%		26
Hyvin samaa mieltä	27.3%		18
Täysin samaa mieltä	15.2%		10
		Total	66
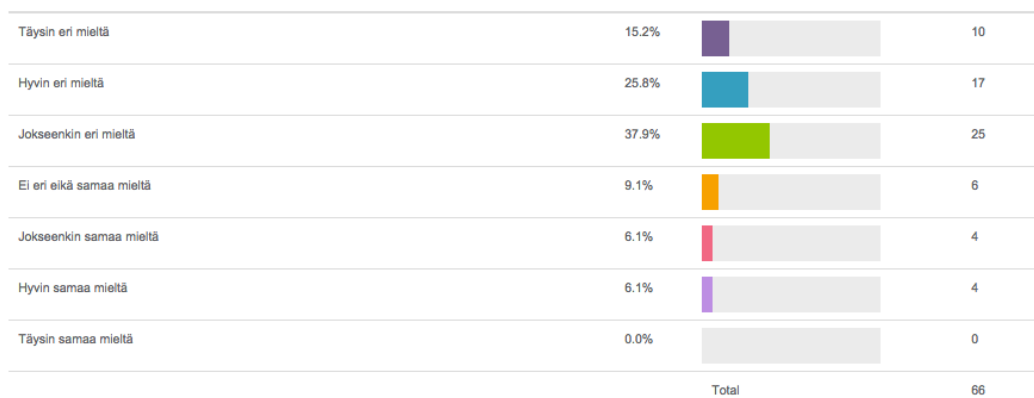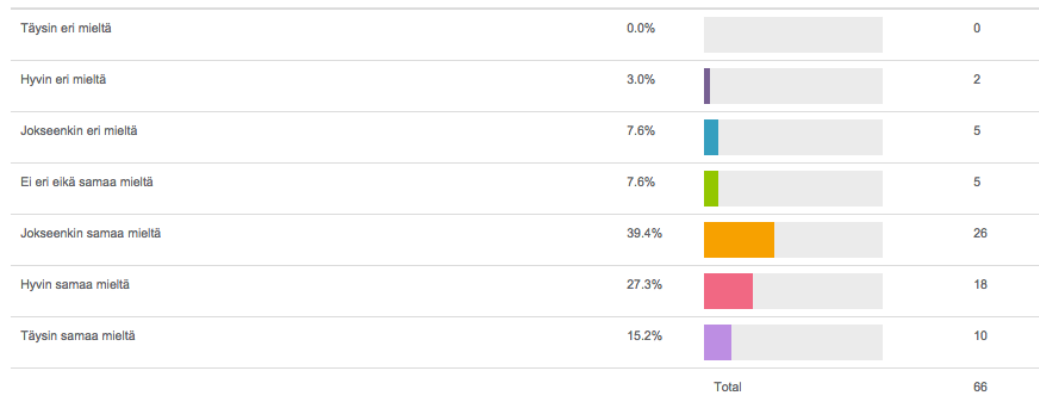
20. Koen, että minulla on hyvät edellytykset hoitaa työtehtäviäni.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	36.4%		24
Hyvin samaa mieltä	37.9%		25
Täysin samaa mieltä	15.2%		10
		Total	66
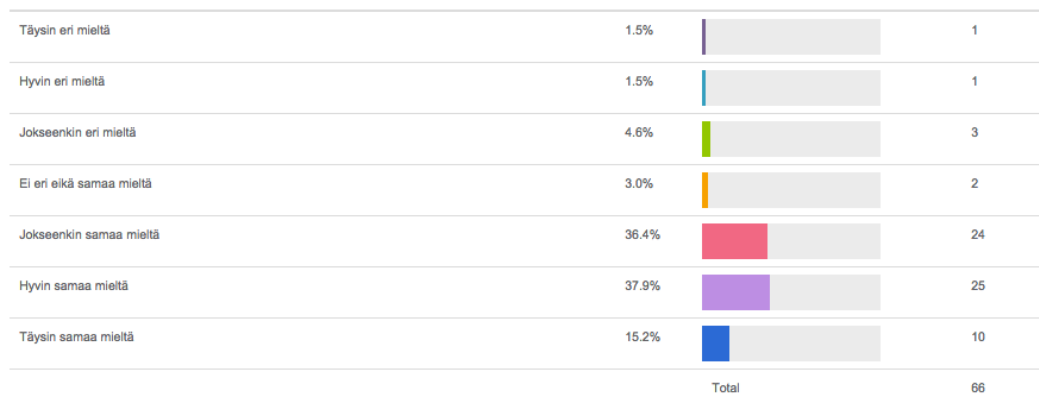
21. Koen, että työyhteisössäni opitaan epäonnistumisista.

Täysin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Hyvin eri mieltä	9.1%		6
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	19.7%		13
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	22.7%		15
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	37.9%		25
Hyvin samaa mieltä	4.6%		3
Täysin samaa mieltä	1.5%		1
		Total	66
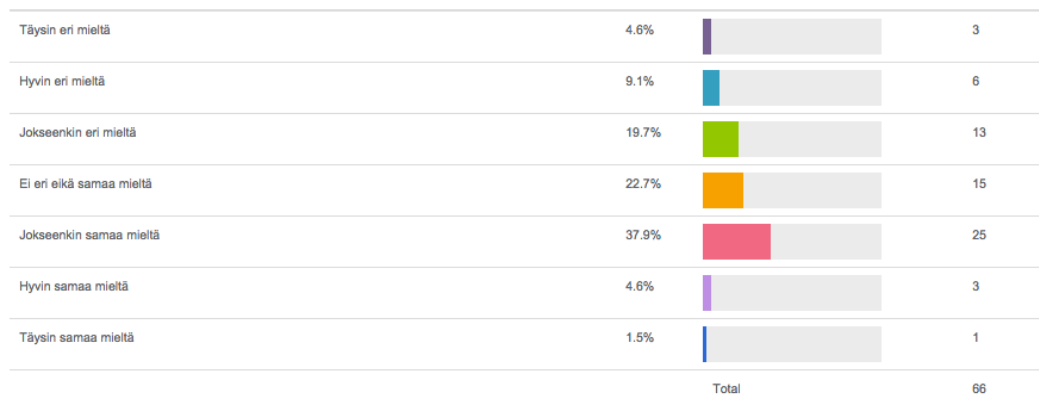
22. Koen, että työyhteisössäni ollaan rohkeita kokeilemaan uutta.

Täysin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Hyvin eri mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	34.9%	23
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	12.1%	8
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.3%	18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	12.1%	8
Täysin samaa mieltä	1.5%	1
	Total	66
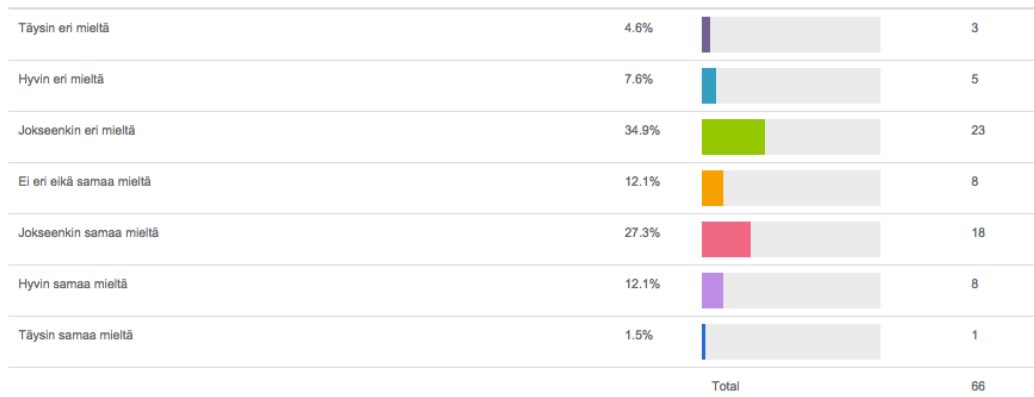
23. Näen työssäni jatkuvasti uusia mahdollisuuksia.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	12.1%	8
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	10.6%	7
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	28.8%	19
Hyvin samaa mieltä	31.8%	21
Täysin samaa mieltä	10.6%	7
	Total	66
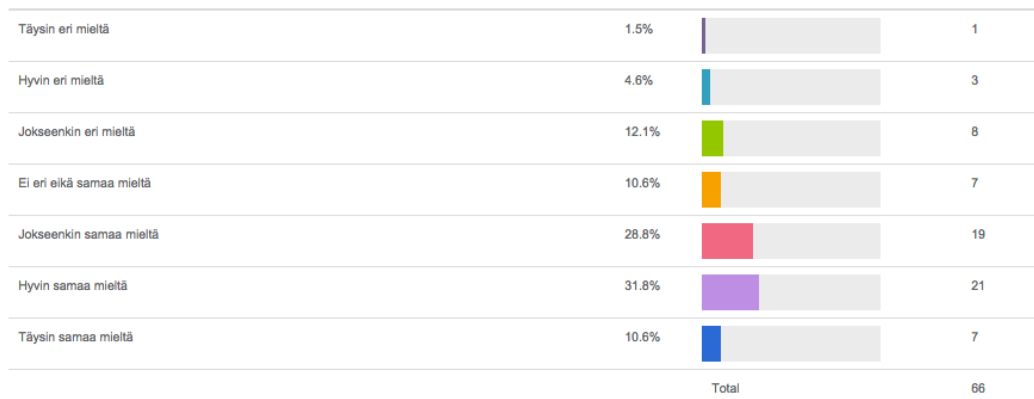
24. Työyhteisössäni hyödynnetään kaikkien osaamista.

Täysin eri mieltä	9.1%	6
Hyvin eri mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	25.8%	17
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	18.2%	12
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	30.3%	20
Hyvin samaa mieltä	9.1%	6
Täysin samaa mieltä	1.5%	1
	Total	66
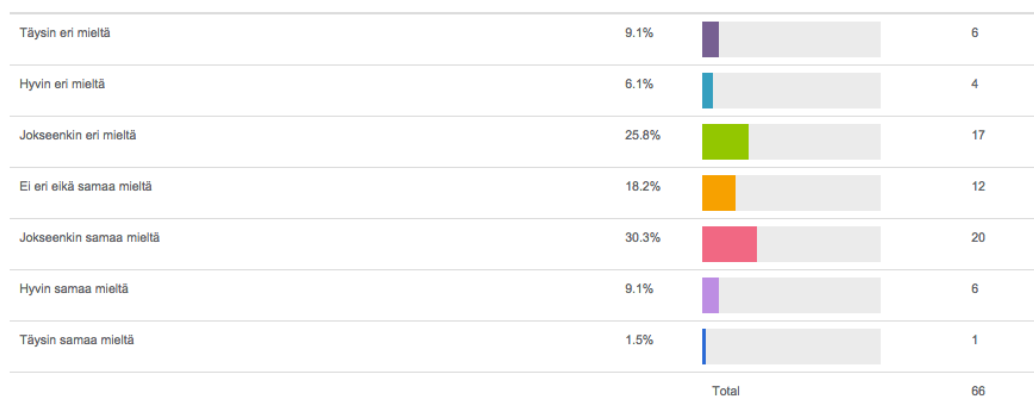
25. Ymmärrän oman työni merkityksen organisaatiomme tavoitteiden saavuttamisessa.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	6.1%		4
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	15.2%		10
Hyvin samaa mieltä	40.9%		27
Täysin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
		Total	66
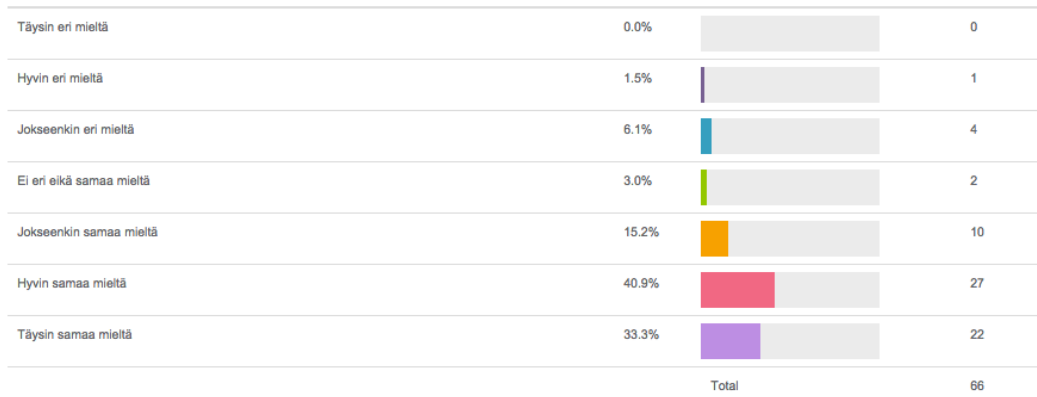
26. Voin itse vaikuttaa omiin työskentelytapohini ja käyttämiini työkaluihin.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	10.6%		7
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%		2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	25.8%		17
Hyvin samaa mieltä	47.0%		31
Täysin samaa mieltä	10.6%		7
		Total	66
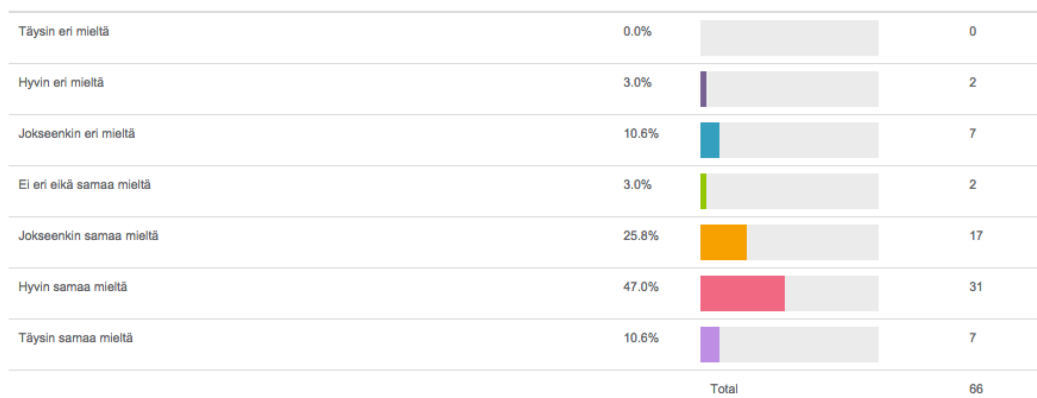
27. Voin itse vaikuttaa omaan työnkuvaani.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%		5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	9.1%		6
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	39.4%		26
Hyvin samaa mieltä	31.8%		21
Täysin samaa mieltä	6.1%		4
		Total	66
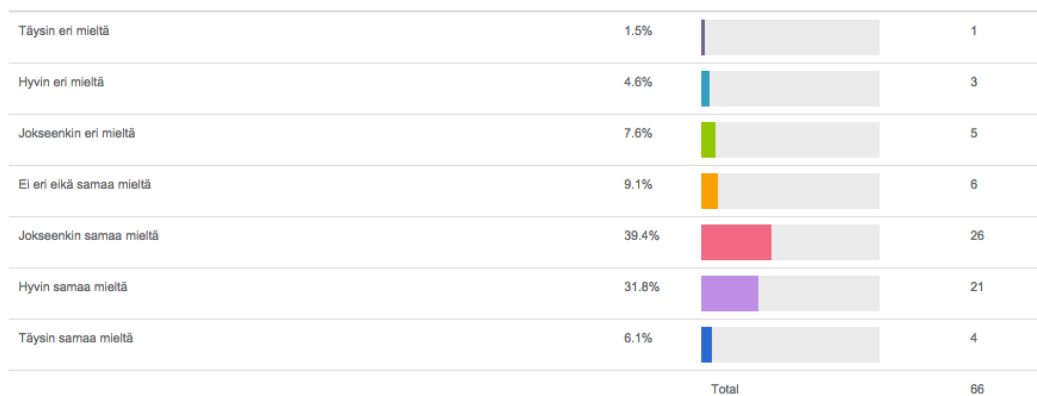
28. Koen, että jotkut työyhteisöni jäsenet ajavat usein omia etujaan yhteisten tavoitteiden sijaan.
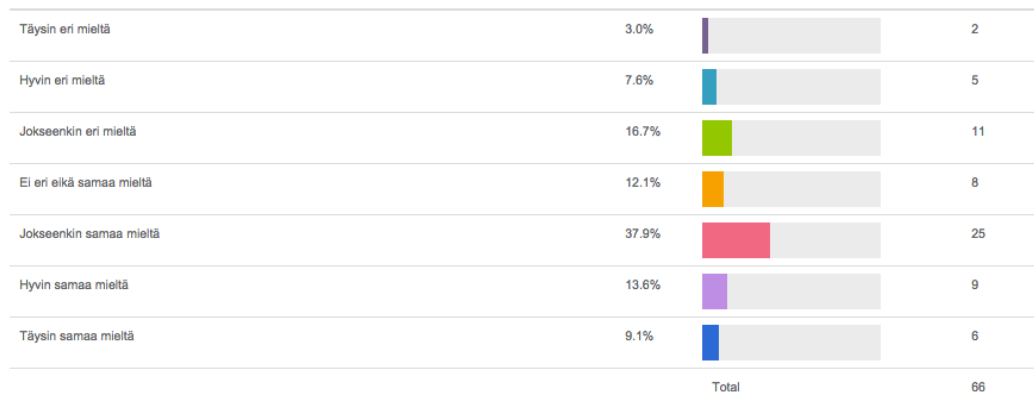
Täysin eri mieltä	3.0%	2
Hyvin eri mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	16.7%	11
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	12.1%	8
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	37.9%	25
Hyvin samaa mieltä	13.6%	9
Täysin samaa mieltä	9.1%	6
	Total	66

29. Koen, että työpaikalla oikeat ihmiset tekevät päätöksiä työni sisältöön liittyen.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	12.1%	8
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	15.2%	10
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	47.0%	31
Hyvin samaa mieltä	16.7%	11
Täysin samaa mieltä	0.0%	0
	Total	66
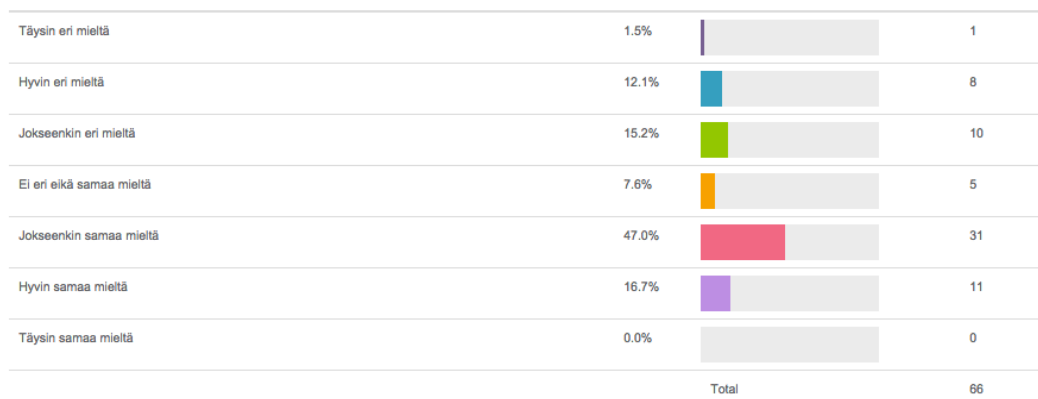
30. Koen, että työtäni ohjaavat keskenään ristiriitaiset ohjeistukset.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	7.7%	5
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	27.7%	18
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	13.9%	9
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	29.2%	19
Hyvin samaa mieltä	12.3%	8
Täysin samaa mieltä	7.7%	5
	Total	65
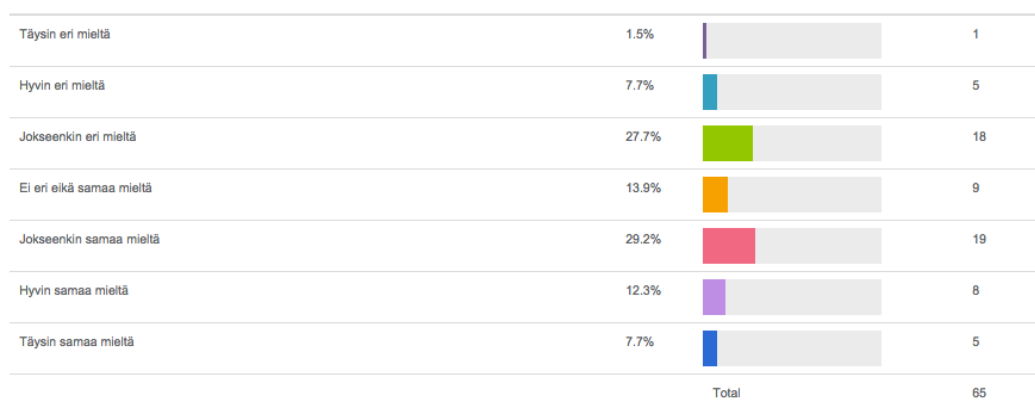
31. Koen työyhteisöni byrokraattiseksi.

	%		
Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	24.2%		16
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	9.1%		6
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.3%		18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	25.8%		17
Täysin samaa mieltä	9.1%		6
		Total	66
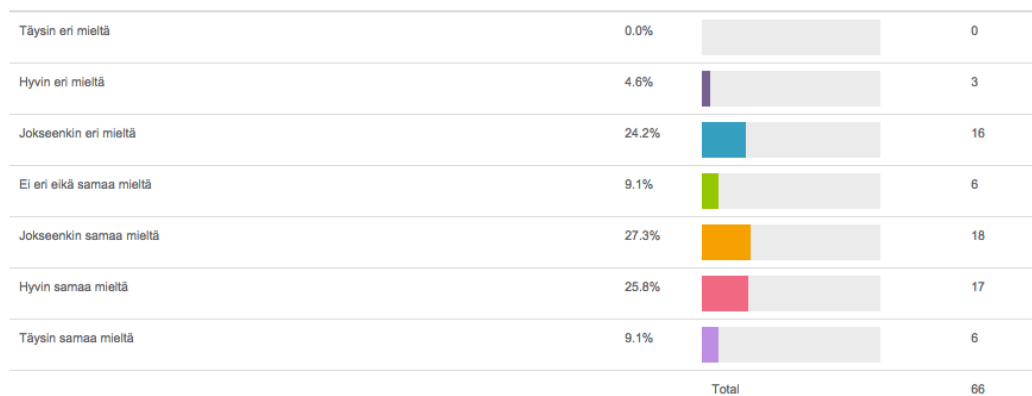
32. Ymmärrän, mihin organisaatiomme pyrkii toiminnallaan.

	%		
Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	3.0%		2
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	4.6%		3
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	25.8%		17
Hyvin samaa mieltä	40.9%		27
Täysin samaa mieltä	24.2%		16
		Total	66
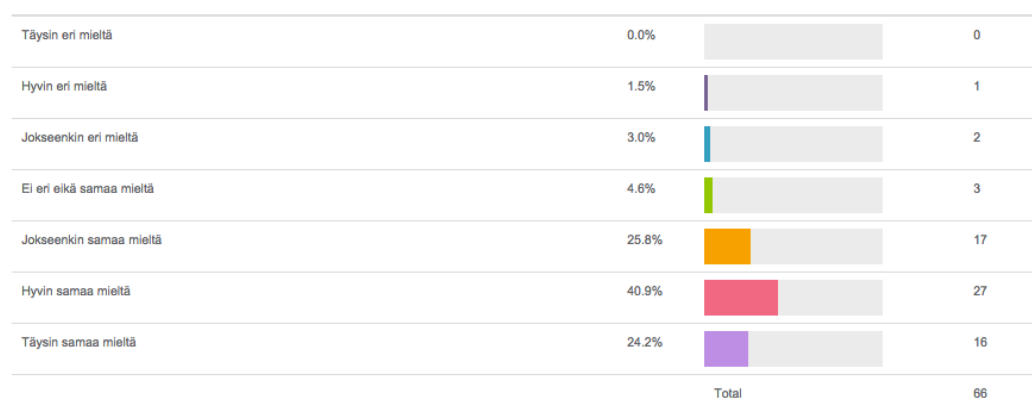
33. Työyhteisölläni on yhteisiä tavoitteita.

	%		
Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%		0
Hyvin eri mieltä	1.5%		1
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%		5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%		5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
Hyvin samaa mieltä	33.3%		22
Täysin samaa mieltä	16.7%		11
		Total	66
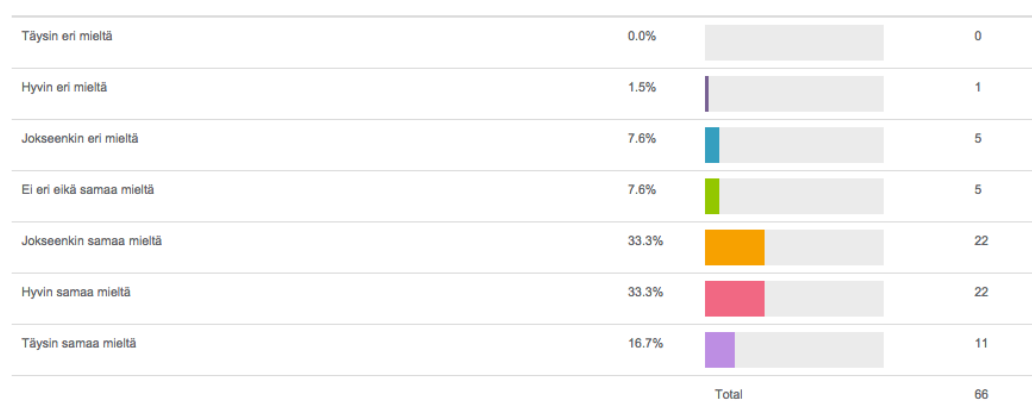
34. Voin itse vaikuttaa työyhteisöni tavoitteisiin.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	9.1%	6
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	16.7%	11
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	28.8%	19
Hyvin samaa mieltä	28.8%	19
Täysin samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
	Total	66
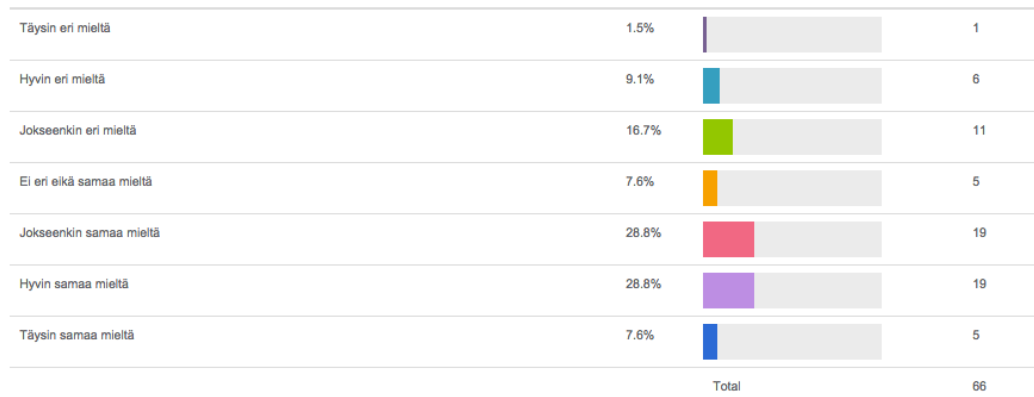
35. Koen, että omalla työlläni on selkeitä tavoitteita.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	9.1%	6
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	3.0%	2
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%	2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	19.7%	13
Hyvin samaa mieltä	48.5%	32
Täysin samaa mieltä	16.7%	11
	Total	66
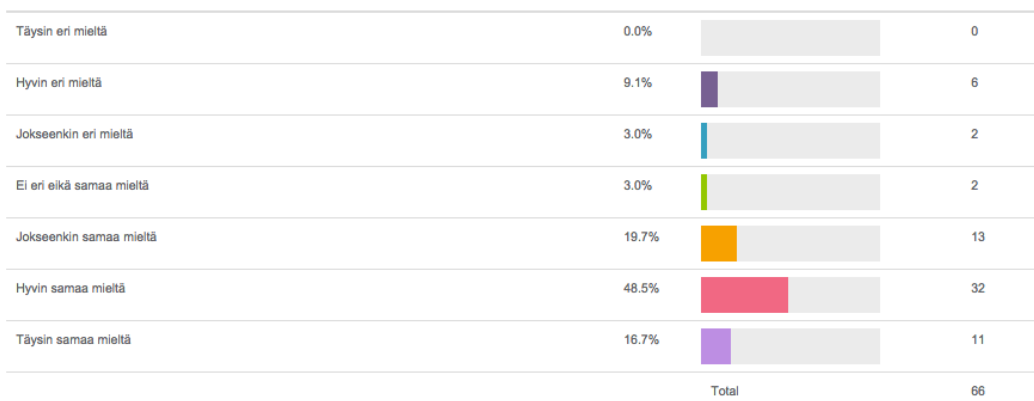
36. Toimintamme on käyttäjälähtöistä: tiedän, ketä varten työskentelemme.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%	5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	3.0%	2
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.3%	18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	36.4%	24
Täysin samaa mieltä	19.7%	13
	Total	66
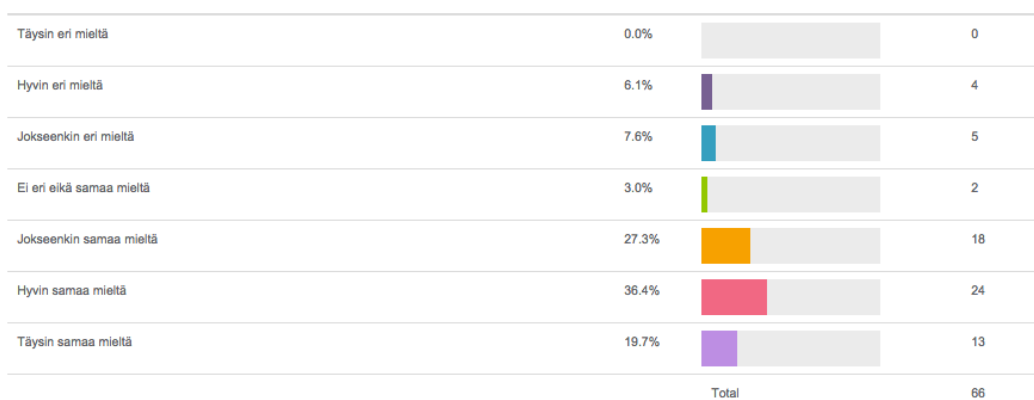
37. Olen usein tekemisissä niiden ihmisten kanssa, joita varten työskentelemme.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	9.2%	6
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	16.9%	11
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	6.2%	4
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.7%	18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	29.2%	19
Täysin samaa mieltä	9.2%	6
	Total	65
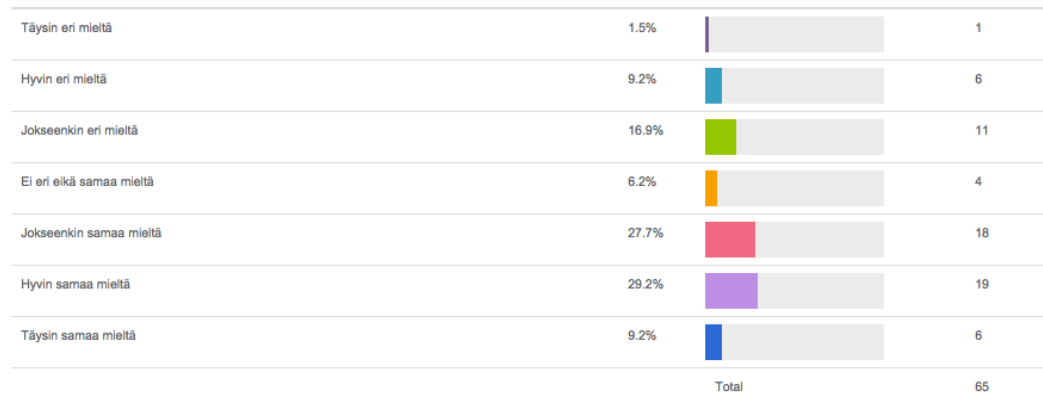
38. Työni on tulevaisuusorientoitunutta: mietin usein, miten työni tulokset vaikuttavat tulevaan.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	4.6%	3
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	27.3%	18
Hyvin samaa mieltä	22.7%	15
Täysin samaa mieltä	34.9%	23
	Total	66
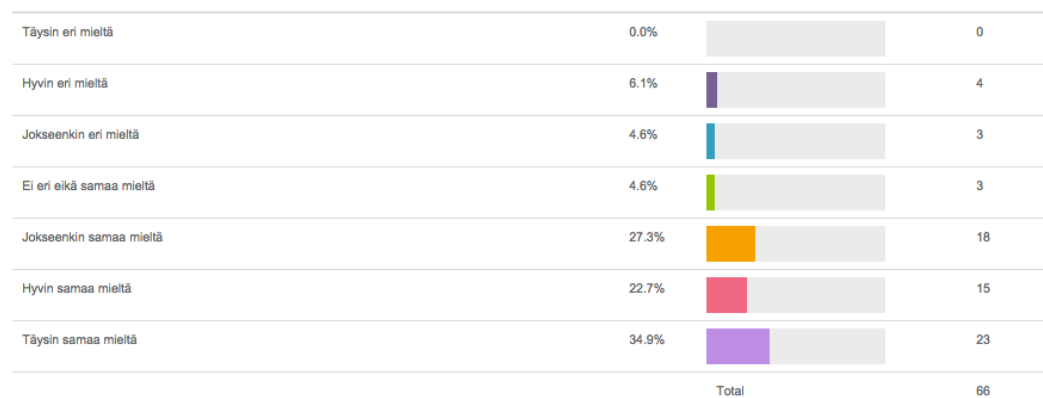
39. Koen, että työni edistyy ja saan asioita aikaan.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	3.0%	2
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	34.9%	23
Hyvin samaa mieltä	47.0%	31
Täysin samaa mieltä	7.6%	5
	Total	66
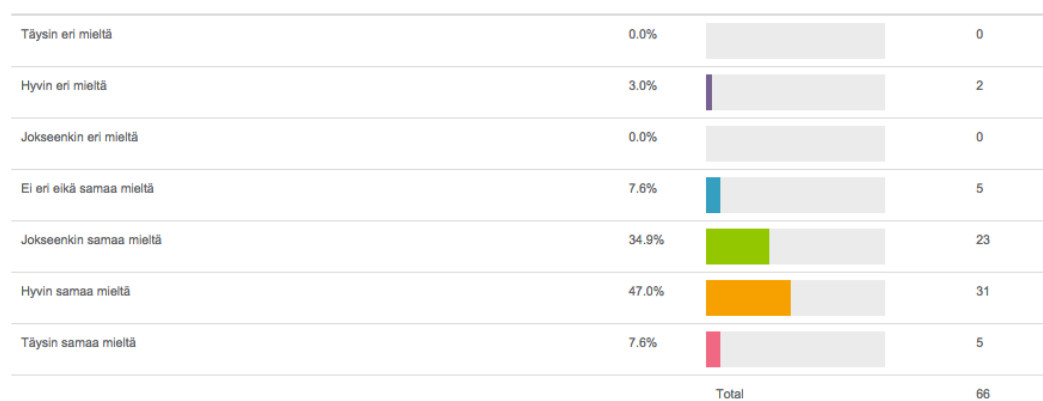
40. Koen, että saan työpaikallani toimia omien ammatillisten tavoitteideni mukaisesti.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	9.1%	6
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	42.4%	28
Hyvin samaa mieltä	33.3%	22
Täysin samaa mieltä	4.6%	3
Total		66
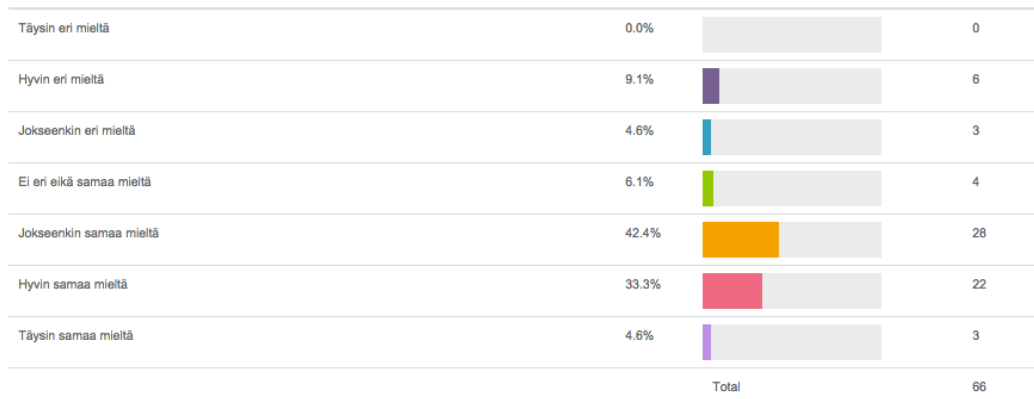
41. Koen, että työni kautta voin saada muutosta aikaan yhteiskunnassamme.

Täysin eri mieltä	0.0%	0
Hyvin eri mieltä	6.1%	4
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	7.6%	5
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	10.6%	7
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	31.8%	21
Hyvin samaa mieltä	27.3%	18
Täysin samaa mieltä	16.7%	11
Total		66
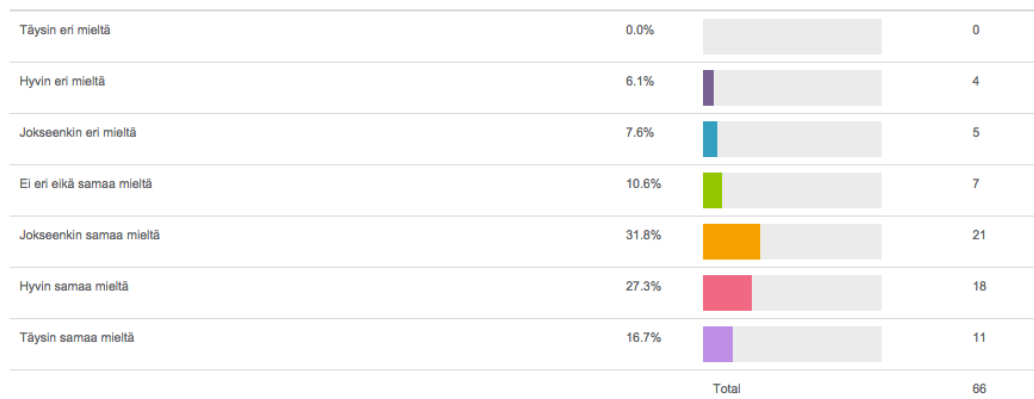
42. Koen, että työni kautta voin auttaa muita ihmisiä.

Täysin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Hyvin eri mieltä	4.6%	3
Jokseenkin eri mieltä	1.5%	1
Ei eri eikä samaa mieltä	10.6%	7
Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	34.9%	23
Hyvin samaa mieltä	28.8%	19
Täysin samaa mieltä	18.2%	12
Total		66
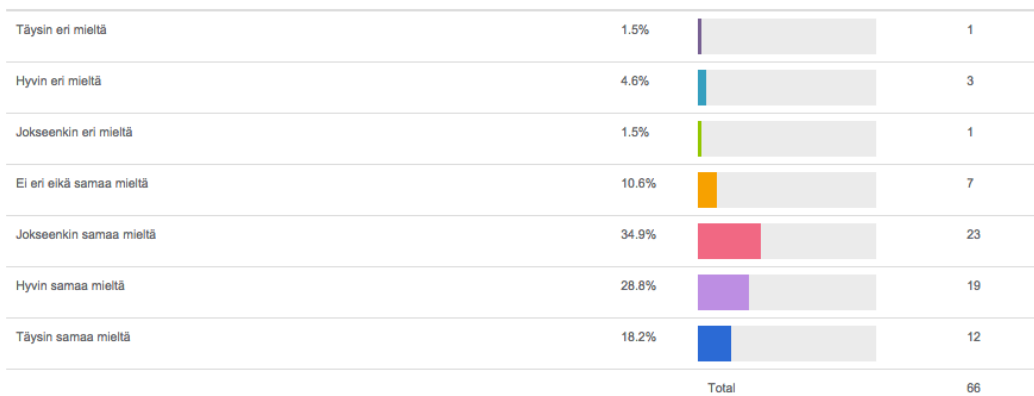
Appendix 1b: Online questionnaire comments in their original language

1) *"Työpaikkani lähiyhteisö ja työntekijät ovat strategisesti taitavia. Sen sijaan johtamisessa on suuria ongelmia. Myös vallitseva suosikkijärjestelmä murentaa työn tuloksellisuutta, sen suuntaa ja strategian onnistumista: yksi saa tehdä mitä huvittaa yhteisen työn kustannuksella."*

2) *"Vaikka oman toiminnan tulevaisuuden vaikutukset näkee, ei kaikilla ole käytännön mahdollisuutta tuoda näkemyksiään esille. Huonosti tulevaisuusorientoitunut virasto tappaa tulevaisuusorientoituneiden henkilöiden halun tuoda näkemyksiään esille."*

3) *"Suomessa ei osata johtaa tavoitteellisesti. On myös hyviä johtajia tosin. Suomalaiseen julkiseen hallintoon kuuluu eräänlainen virkamiesten autonomia ja luottamus, jolloin muutos on vaikea saada aikaiseksi. Jos vertaa julkista ja yksityistä sektoria, julkisen työn tuotteettomuus johtaa tavoitteiden puuttumiseen ja tätä kautta tehottomuuteen. Samalla julkisella sektorilla arvostetaan ihmisten osaamista ja sen kehittämistä."*

4) *"Tunteet ovat tällä hetkellä ristiriitaiset, uudistuksia tehdään kaavioina ja johtajien persoonien mukaan, ei palvelunsaajien eli asiakkaiden eli kansalaisten tarpeista."*

5) *"Hankkeistaminen ja projektirahoitteisuus on mennyt liian pitkälle. Hankesälän pyörittämisen sijaan pitäisi hakea jatkuvuutta. Toinen kriittinen asia on jatkuvat organisaatiomuutokset. Näiden aiheuttamia kuluja ei huomioida, samalla kun aikaansaadut hyödyt saattavat jäädä vähäisiksi. Kannattaako rakenteiden mylläämiseen laittaa näin paljon rahaa. Kehitetään enemminkin sisältöjä."*