WP 5:

**The Governance of Social Cohesion: Innovative Coordination
Practices in Public Management**

WORK PLAN

Version 23 February 2012

COCOPS

Contents

SECTION 1. OUTLINE OF THE COCOPS WORK PACKAGE 5

Section 1 is based on the description of Work Package 5 in the COCOPS Grant Agreement. It gives an overview of the original description of WP5. It is developed further in Section 2, which outlines a detailed work plan for the years 2012-2013.

Work package 5: The governance of social cohesion: innovative coordination practices in public management

Start month: 16   (April 2012)
End month: 29   (May 2013)

Objectives:
- To search and identify innovative coordination practices and related steering instruments in public management in European public sectors.
- To compile a good practice database and case study catalogue of such coordination practices with direct utility to public managers and the research community.
- To analyse the functioning of such coordination practices and to assess their value in countering public sector fragmentation and delivering public value.

COCOPS Milestone 4: Inventory of innovative coordination practices and integrated analysis finalised by month 30 (June 2013).

Participant number	Participant short name	Person-months per participant
1	EUR (Rotterdam)	1.00
2	HER (Hertie)	1.00
3	UiB (Bergen)	13.00
4	UB (Bocconi)	1.00
5	UC (Cantabria)	1.00
7	COR (Corvinus)	1.00
8	EXE (Exeter)	1.00
9	KUL (Leuven)	1.00
10	TAL (Tallinn)	12.00
		Total 32.00

Deliverables

Deliverable no.	Deliverable title	Lead beneficiary number	Estimated indicative person-months	Nature	Dissemination level	Delivery date
D5.1	Community of practice	3 (UiB)	2	O	PU	29
D5.2	Case study catalogue	3 (UiB)	3	R	PU	29
D5.3	Report & policy brief presentation to practitioner group	3 (UiB)	27	R	PU	29
		Total	32			

O – Other; R – Report; PU – Public.

SECTION 2. WP 5 WORK PLAN 2012 – 2013

2.1. Expected Results

Considering the aims of the WP 5 and the COCOPS project in general, we have slightly modified the original approach and have adapted it in accordance with the resources ascribed to the partners within the WP5 (one person month per partner). As their contribution to the WP 5, all the partners are expected to deliver at least one description of a coordination practice in their country and invited to develop it further into an in-depth academic case study (see Annex I-II).

a) <u>A coordination practice</u> represents a short case study of a coordination instrument based on a standardized template and about 2500-3500 words long. The practice must come from one of the three areas mentioned in the WP5 (central government, health, or employment services). The description starts with a country background and should provide detailed information on what kinds of coordination practices have emerged in this country, in the selected policy field, also addressing the question of why and with what effects.

The coordination practices will be the main input to the three deliverables of the WP 5:

- An online community of practice – i.e. a virtual/online solution giving practitioners the opportunity to read examples on coordination instruments, to comment on them, to ask questions and respond to the general discussion topics related to coordination within the public sector;

- A case study catalogue – a set of coordination practices that is going to be made public online and that will feed into the community of practice;

- A policy brief and report of WP 5.

The community of practice and the case study catalogue will be made available through the COCOPS web-page and the information about them will be disseminated through the COCOPS Academic Advisory board and the Board of Practitioners. Each partner is also asked to suggest a further list of practitioners (e.g. relevant public officials, top executives from the fields of health and employment) from their native country with the contact details for the dissemination activities.

b) <u>In-depth academic case studies</u> represent traditional research papers that are around 8000 words long and publishable as book chapters or journal articles. Each partner is expected to develop one

(or more) of the coordination practices into in-depth case studies that will form the basis for joint publications. We foresee a special issue of a journal or an edited book coming out of the WP5. Collecting a critical mass of high quality case studies in the specific policy areas (central government, health and/or employment services) would make consideration of further joint publications possible.

Besides official partners of the WP 5, also other COCOPS partners, members of the COST CRIPO network and other interested institutions are welcome to contribute to the coordination practices and in-depth case studies. Junior researchers (PhD students, post-docs) both from within and outside COCOPS are encouraged to take part. A detailed research protocol (Annex I) should make it an especially attractive option for them.

The WP5 is led by the University of Bergen (UiB, the lead beneficiary) and the Tallinn University of Technology (TAL). UiB and TAL will:

- provide the framework (work plan, template, example of a practice);
- coordinate all the activities related to the WP 5;
- contribute 3 coordination practices each;
- contribute 2-3 in-depth case studies each;
- write the policy brief and the report;
- take responsibility for launching the community of practice and the case study catalogue;
- look for options for the joint publications;
- Plan for other WP 5 dissemination activities.

2.3. Theoretical framework

The focus of WP5 is on new coordination practices emerging in public administrations in Europe, on the background of governance for social cohesion. Green and Janmaat (2011, p. 18) define social cohesion as 'the property by which whole societies, and the individuals within them, are bound together through the action of specific attitudes, behaviours, rules and institutions which rely on consensus rather than pure coercion'. The focus of WP5 is on governance arrangements, and the way they can contribute to the achievement of social cohesion through integrating the interests and creeds of different actors engaged in the processes of policy making and implementation. Coordination practices emerging in the policy fields of health and employment services are especially relevant from this perspective.

The main research questions of WP5 are:

- What kind of coordination practices have emerged in the selected policy fields, in the countries we study?
- What are the reasons for these new practices to appear?
- What are the constraining and enabling factors that influence how these practices work?
- What are the perceived effects and implications?
- What are the differences or similarities between selected countries in terms of emerging practices, their reasons and effects?
- How can we explain such differences and similarities?

Coordination in a public sector inter-organizational context can be seen as the purposeful alignment of tasks and efforts of units in order to achieve a defined goal (Verhoest & Bouckaert 2005). Its aim is to create greater coherence in policy and to reduce redundancy, lacunae, and contradictions within and between policies (Peters 1998). In the common usage, it has a number of synonyms: cooperation, coherence, collaboration and integration.

Coordination can be seen both as a process and as an outcome. In terms of outcome, there are different levels of coordination – from independent decisions by organisations (very little coordination) to the development of government strategies encompassing all areas of the public sector (very much coordination) (Metcalfe 1976). WP5 focuses mostly on coordination as a process.

Coordination as a process is brought about with the help of specific activities or structures – the *coordination instruments* (also 'coordination tools', 'coordination practices' within WP5) (Bouckaert et al. 2010). Coordination instruments can be identified as more formal structures and procedures designed to impose greater coordination among individuals and/or organizations, but may also include more informal arrangements. Inter-organizational coordination can be predominantly vertical or horizontal and can be achieved by using hierarchical mechanisms, market incentives, contracts, network-like bargaining mechanisms and multi-level governance approaches (Thompson et al. 1991; Peters 1998; Bouckaert et al. 2010). Coordination can be voluntary and based on normative agreements/common norms, or the result either of coercion (the use of hierarchical authority) or the use of incentives. It can be directed towards specific policies and problems or at the policies and behaviour of the politico-administrative system more broadly.

In recent years, coordination has been seen as a central effort within current reforms or reform movements within the public sector. States have developed new approaches intended to counter the fragmentation brought about by NPM and to integrate the public sectors (Osborne 2009; Wegrich 2010). The new coordination practices come in various shapes and names, such as integrated governance, outcome steering, joined-up government (Bogdanor 2005; Hood 2005), holistic governance (Perri 6 et al. 2002), new public governance (Osborne 2009), networked government, partnerships, connected government, cross-cutting policy, horizontal management, collaborative public management (Gregory 2003) or whole-of-government (OECD 2005; Christensen and Lægreid 2007). For example, the 'joined-up government' introduced by the Blair government in UK in 1997 denotes the aspiration to achieve horizontal and vertical coordination in order to eliminate situations in which different policies undermine each other, so as to make better use of scarce resources, to create synergies by bringing together different stakeholders in a particular policy area, and to offer citizens seamless rather than fragmented access to services (Pollitt 2003). 'Holistic government' aims to establish clear and mutually reinforcing sets of objectives that are framed in terms of outcomes, and translated into mutually reinforcing means and instruments (Perri 6 et al. 2002).

All these initiatives can more broadly be referred to as *whole-of-government* (*WG*). The WG concept does not represent a coherent set of ideas and tools, just like NPM, and can best be seen as an umbrella term describing a group of responses to the problem of increased fragmentation of the public sector and public services and a wish to increase integration, coordination, and capacity (see Baechler 2011; Christensen & Lægreid 2007; Ling 2002). A common feature is the notion that working across organizational boundaries will enable more efficient and/or effective policy development, implementation and service delivery. One can distinguish between WG policy making and WG implementation, between horizontal linkages and vertical linkages, and the target for WG initiatives can be a group, a locality, or a policy sector (see Pollitt 2003b). WG activities may span any or all levels of government, and involve groups outside government. It is about joining up at the top, but also about joining up at the base, enhancing local level integration, and involving public – private partnerships.

From the perspective of the COCOPS project, it is important to note that the new emphasis on coordination and joined up solutions results from an increased recognition that the existing specialization in the public sector apparatus is not fit to handle complex challenges in the society. There seems to be a mismatch between the problem structures and the organizational structures. Important tasks are crosscutting organizational borders. Examples of such '*wicked problems or issues'* (Rittel and Webber 1973) for which there are no obvious, easily defined or found solutions, are climate change, unemployment, internal security, crime, homelessness, sustainable healthcare, immigration,

drugs and social cohesion. The wicked issues challenge existing patterns of organization and management; they do not fit easily into the established organizational context, and are constantly framed and reframed. These problems are unlikely to belong to any one organization, they typically overlap organizational borders, and can only be solved by working across them (Clark and Steward 2003).

2.4. Selection of the coordination practices to be studied

WP5 will look at coordination in a broad sense, encompassing coordination of policy design, policy implementation and management. Our purpose is to study both horizontal coordination (within levels of government, between ministerial areas) and vertical coordination (between levels of government). WP5 will cover both intra- and inter-organizational coordination. The focus will be on *positive coordination*, meaning coordination that purposively aims at building coherence. This is in contrast to what has been called *negative coordination*, meaning alignment or just plain agreement to avoid conflict (cf. Sharpf 1994).

Partners have the freedom to choose coordination practices within the general framework described below:

- WP5 is expected to give an overview of innovative coordination practices within public administrations in Europe. 'Innovative' is taken to denote 'emerging', 'new', or 'novel' in this context and may include both positive and negative lessons.

- Each partner is asked to provide at least one description of a coordination practice that comes from one of the three areas (central government, health and employment services) and is based on the template (see Annex I).

- The practices chosen should have emerged within the last 10 years.

- They should have relevance for the state's public administration and its functioning.

- The practices can concern both coordination of administrative policy (for example, civil service) as well as the content of public policies and service delivery (for example, provision of employment services). They may be the result of conscious reforms or may have emerged as a result of bottom-up activities or participation. Coordinating arrangements that try to link up different policy areas are especially interesting.

- Although the WP5 will mainly cover coordination within the public sector, coordination between the public and private or non-profit sector is also very relevant, for example in relation to different schemes for co-production of public services (Brandsen & Pestoff 2006).

- The coordination practices to be studied can have both formal and informal aspects.

- The descriptions of the practices can be based on a combination of different sources of data – official documents (green and white papers, discussion documents, evaluation reports, and government audits), interviews, government databases, secondary data etc.

- Such coordination practices can be for example:

    - one stop shops;
    - (inter- / intra-organizational) networks;
    - new/restructured ministries or agencies;
    - common/shared objectives, procedures or strategies;
    - systems for exchange of information;
    - specific management instruments/procedures;
    - horizontal management arrangements, partnerships, network(s);

- joint planning/working groups (temporary, long term, permanent);
- specific joint entities (advisory, executive or regulatory);
- special positions/appointments with coordination responsibilities, tsars;
- strategic units, reviews, inter-agency collaboration units, intergovernmental councils, circuit-breaker teams, task forces, lead agency approach;
- cross-cutting policy arrangements;
- cross sectorial policy programs;
- digital-era governance solutions (cf. Dunleavy et al. 2006; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011);
- Specific budgeting tools that force the achievement of common goals.

Bouckaert et al. (2010) and Askim, Fimreite et al. (2011) provide good country and case study examples. The WP5 approach has made use of some of the dimensions these authors use.

2.4.1. Central government

WP5 will concentrate on horizontal coordination within central government and cover coordination practices and reforms within the cabinet, central ministries and (semi-) autonomous agencies. The focus of descriptions that come from the area of central government should be on the coordination practices that cover the whole of public administration (or at least most of it) or concentrate on particular 'wicked issues'. WP5 will not focus on vertical coordination mechanisms within central government, e.g. in specific fields of governance.

Possible options:
- coordination through the Prime Minister's Office;
- coordination of 'wicked issues' (e.g. internal security, climate change, social problems);
- coordination between public, private and/or non-profit sector;
- coordination through special units (e.g. the Social Exclusion Unit (UK), Cabinet Implementation Unit (Australia));
- special positions/appointments with coordination responsibilities, tsars (e.g. the appointment of a Coordination Minister (Norway));
- budgeting tools;
- inter-ministerial and inter-agency collaboration units;
- super-networks;
- inter-governmental councils;
- lead agency approach;
- circuit breaker teams, task forces;
- Cross-sectorial programs.

2.4.2. Health

The health sector includes public sector arrangements concerned with the provision, distribution and consumption of health care services as well as systems related to health care policy making. It includes also arrangements for promoting and ensuring citizens' health. WP5 will include primary care as well as secondary care and hospitals. New coordination mechanisms can emerge both from administrative reforms (structural changes) and reforms of health policies.

Possible options:
- vertical coordination (between central – regional – local levels);
- horizontal coordination (within central – regional – local levels);

- coordination between public, private and/or non-profit sector where relevant;
- policy-making systems;
- coordination of service delivery organizations (hospital reform, health insurance);
- primary and secondary care

2.4.3. Employment services

The employment sector includes public sector arrangements to ensure employment, social security and social inclusion as well as systems related to policy making in the field of employment. New coordination mechanisms can emerge both from administrative reforms (structural changes) and reforms of welfare policies.

Possible options:
- vertical coordination (between central – regional – local levels);
- horizontal coordination (within central – regional – local levels);
- coordination between public and private sector where relevant;
- partnerships (public-private or state-municipality);
- one stop shops

2.5. Timetable

2.5.1. General

Key dates for partners are <mark>highlighted</mark>.

Activities	Date	Month	Responsible
Circulation of draft work plan for WP5 (description, case study protocol, example of a coordination practice)	23 January 2012	13	UiB/TAL
Feedback expected from the partners	10 February 2012	14	All
Circulation of the final work plan for WP5 (description, case study protocol, example of a coordination practice)	1st March 2012	15	UiB/TAL
Official beginning of the Work Package 5	**1st April 2012**	**16**	
WP5 kick-off in Rome, meeting for those who are present in IRSPM	11-13 April 2012	16	All
Submission of the coordination practices	15 June 2012	18	All
Sending information to UiB on the selection and number of in-depth academic case studies to be undertaken	15 June 2012	18	All
Feedback on the coordination practices sent to the partners	1st September 2012	21	UiB/TAL
EGPA Conference 2012 in Bergen WP5 meeting. Discussion of progress and the publication strategy	5-8 September 2012	21	UiB/TAL, all
Submission of the in-depth academic case studies	1st December 2012	24	All
Review and revision of the in-depth case studies, preparation of joint publications	December 2012 – first half of 2013	24-30	All
Draft WP5 final report and policy brief circulated; comments expected from the partners	February – March 2013	26-27	UiB/TAL, all
ECPR Joint Sessions in Mainz	11-16 March 2013	27	All
Launch online community of practice	April 2013	28	UiB/TAL, all
Launch case study catalogue	April 2013	28	UiB/TAL
Publication of the WP5 final report and the policy brief	May 2013	29	UiB/TAL
Official end of the Work Package 5	**31 May 2013**	**29**	
Inventory of innovative coordination practices and integrated analysis (COCOPS Milestone 4) finalised	June 2013	30	UiB/TAL
Dissemination activities for WP5, online community of practice active	April – December 2013		UiB/TAL, all
Joint publications	2013 – 2014		

Month	Date	Heading	Participants	Place/Event
16	11-13 April 2012	WP 5 kick-off	Those who are present	IRSPM, Rome, Italy
21	5-6 September 2012	Discussion of progress and the publication strategy	All	EGPA, Bergen, Norway
25-29	First half of 2013	Meeting for discussing and preparing joint publications	All	To be confirmed, probably in combination with some other event
Additional meetings are possible, especially if they can be combined with other academic events. Proposals welcome.				

2.6. References

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ANNEX I. Coordination practice and in-depth case study protocol

ANNEX II. Example of a coordination practice