Exploring the effect of network governance on the facilitation of urban innovation

AN EVALUATIVE CASE STUDY OF CITY DEALS

A Master thesis written By

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Abstract

There is a deficit on theoretically derived frameworks on network governance and innovation. This research aims to provide a contribution to the scientific and social community by performing an empirical case study on City Deals by combining two theoretically derived frameworks on network governance and protective spaces. City Deals are a cooperative agreement were a network aims to collectively solve a complex societal problem by facilitating innovations. This research explores the effects of a City Deal on the governance of a network to facilitate innovation by using the framework on governance capacities, and analyzes the effect of a City Deal on the facilitate space for innovation by using the framework on protective spaces. Governance Capacity revolves around the set institutional capacity by a network to collective solve the problem and the performance of that network to govern the problem. Innovation requires a protective space where a niche is 1) shielded from mainstream selection systems, and where the niche can be 2) nurtured to become 3) empowered enough to function within a mainstream selection systems. Forty-four interviews with City Deal officials have provided the input for the analysis of this research. Respondents experience the effect of a City Deal on the established network as positive and make creative use of their network to govern a problem with the limited resources set in available for the network. But for City Deals to facilitate innovation, more institutional capacity available should be set available for a network to govern a complex problem more successfully. Moreover, more institutional capacity needs to be set for a network to effectively facilitate a protective space for a niche to develop. Learning processes should be more structurally embedded within City Deals to nurture the development of a niche better and follow-ups need to be more incorporated within City Deals to ensure the empowerment of a niche.

Preface

Throughout my studies, I have mostly focused on the governance of sustainable development and, except for one course in the first year of my bachelor, studied limited the literature around innovation processes. This thesis revolves around the governance of a network and how to facilitate innovation processes. Especially the latter was a new and interesting field for me to research throughout the thesis. Even though the novelty of the subject to me, it was very interesting to delve within the innovation literature and it appealed more to me than initially thought.

Furthermore, this thesis revolves around a research of the environmental assessment agency of the Netherlands (PBL) by request of the ministry of Interior Affairs and Kings Relations (BZK). I hope for BZK and cities involved within City Deals that the recommendations in this research will be handles for future improvement to smoothen the City Deal process further.

Lastly, I would like to thank Ton Dassen for introducing me within the PBL community and David Evers for being a very involved PBL supervisor. Furthermore, I would like to thank David Hamers and Marloes DIgnum for the smooth cooperation throughout the research. I would also like to thank Mattie Blauw (BZK) and Saniye Celik (BZK) for their supervision, tips and tricks throughout the research and their BZK perspective and help. Additionally, I like to thank Lotte ten Harmsen van der Beek for conducting some of the interviews. Additionally, I like to thank my Utrecht University supervisors Peter Driessen and Rob Raven for their feedback throughout the process and Dries Hegger for his elaborate feedback as a second reader. Finally, I like to thank all the respondents for their cooperation throughout the research and providing me with the data necessary to answer the research question.

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1. Introduction

Cities can be perceived as economic powerhouses and places where social interaction occurs that enable citizens to exchange ideas and stimulate local-based innovation (Evans, Karvonen, & Raven, 2016; Hamers, 2016). Cities, however, are also places where some of societies biggest challenges manifest themselves. In this 'urban age' cities are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibilities as well as their capacities to play their part in addressing issues like poverty, segregation, and climate change adaptation. Currently 72% of the EU population lives in urban areas (cities, towns and suburbs) on only 17% of the land area (Nabielek, Hamers, & Evers, 2016). Projections are that in 2050 80% of the European population will be living in urban areas. A higher urbanization degree in combination with an increased population growth will increase the pressure on cities to facilitate a certain standard of living for its inhabitants. Research has shown that urbanization causes environmental and economic constraints on land and people (Reckien & Karecha, 2007). Additionally, urbanization can indirectly affect society by contributing to health problems as a result of pollution and food shortages (Marsella, 1998; Yusuf, Reddy, Ôunpuu, & Anand, 2001). For cities to ensure a certain standard of living for its inhabitants, cities should strive to solve their societal challenges while strengthening, or even using, their innovative capacity.

However, according to Castells (1996) current public structures insufficiently provide the answers to solve the societal and technical challenges. According to Hajer (2011:29-30), current modernistic political institutions face a three-fold problem: 1) there is an implementation shortage where policy does not resolve the issue, a shortage of learning capacity (experienced knowledge and experiences are not integrated into existing processes) and, partly because of this, there is a shortage of legitimacy (citizens and organizations do not trust the government anymore). Hajer (ibid) argues that network governance is the answer for this three-folded problem: an alternative policy process where various levels of government (national government, provinces, and municipalities) cooperate with societal partners to solve societal and technological challenges. However, managing a network governance is a complex activity (Klijn, 2005). A network can be defined as "more or less stable patterns of social relation between mutual dependent actors, which form around policy programs and/or cluster of means and which are formed, maintained and changed through series of games" (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Literature argues that network governance occurs in a context on where there is no shared opinion on which way to go, there is no hierarchy and there is no authority, and for a network to succeed in such a context it should be well managed. The research from Kickert et al. (1997) provides a contribution on the management of networks. Kickert et al. (1997) argues that finding a common purpose is one of the main tasks of network management. Additional characteristics of network management are a strong orientation towards facilitating interaction processes, mediating between different actors and an orientation to goal searching rather than goal setting. Stimuli are interpreted by the actors according to their own frame of reference and the strategic interactions of actors and between the different strategies are unpredictable. Furthermore, networks are also influenced by the context in which network needs to be managed. The complexity of the context is the presence of different actors, often acting on distinct levels, the existence of different relevant policy programs and the lack of an encompassing, formal organizational context. Provan & Keith (2008) argues, based on a literature review on network governance, that there are certain critical contingencies that can be identified to explain whether or not a particular form of network is likely to be effective. They propose that the successful adoption of a form of governance will be based on four key structural and relational contingencies: trust, size (number of participants), goal consensus, and the nature of the task

(specifically the need for network-level competencies). Pahl-Wostl (2009) takes a different approach and developed a conceptual framework on which to analyze the adaptive capacity of a network to govern their resources effectively. She addresses different concepts in which a network should aim to learn: context, frames, actions and outcomes. In turn, the social learning capacity of a network is determined by the influence of the formal and informal institutions, the role of state and non-state actors, the nature of multi-level interactions and the relative importance of bureaucratic hierarchies. If a network learns and adapt across the different concepts and there is a balance between the influential factors, then a network has a higher chance to effectively govern a transitional problem.

1.1.   Agenda Stad/City Deals

As a response on the urbanization and the literature around network governance, the Dutch national government introduces the 'Agenda Stad'. Agenda Stad has two starting points. First, Agenda Stad is there to stimulate cities to make an effective contribution towards the transitions in the fields of growth, innovation and livability. Where growth refers to an increase in volume; more inhabitants, more economic activity, higher prosperity, and a larger output. Livability adds the aspect of quality to growth. Agenda Stad argues that economic growth should not be the standard for success, but livable growth should. Innovation adds another layer to these dimensions; not just more and better, but also more innovative. Growth as livability should be long term oriented to be sustainable in a fast-changing society and economy. Secondly, the national government aims to play a role by facilitating the conditions so that cities could effectively make their contributions, by providing and advising them with the (legal, financial and administrative) space they need. With Agenda Stad the National government aims to facilitate, with and for cities, an acceleration of the urban transitions. For this it is necessary; to diminish the obstacles caused by existing relationships; to neglect regulation and legislation; to create new opportunities; map the challenges; move organizations to step over their own interest; and to experiment (BZK, 2016; BZK, EZ & I&M, 2015; Denktank Agenda Stad, 2015).

The main policy instrument of Agenda Stad is the City Deal. City Deals are a public-private cooperatively agreements between the national government, cities and other societal actors on how to innovatively resolve societal problems. The intention of Agenda Stad is that City Deals should be initiated and drafted bottom-up by cities. The national government, as a partner, aims to facilitate by (temporarily) adjusting legislation and regulation to create a space where cities can experiment within Living Labs, by linking financial flows, or by adjusting the conditions regarding finances and procurement. The effect of a City Deal could extend beyond the thematically, or region-specific content of the deal, such as climate adaptation, urban construction, and the restructuring of the food chain. It could also suffice as a new permanent way of cooperating between the different actors (BZK, 2016). The substantive results combined with the new form of cooperation could result into national legislation or programs that better facilitate urban innovation, such as Circular Economy, the National Food agenda, or the National Environmental Vision.

1.2. Research problem, objective and questions

The research was conducted under the guidance of the Dutch Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) who received a request of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) to conduct an "ex durante" evaluation on the current performances of City Deals. Actors invested a lot of work in City Deals, but to what extent has the efforts of a network had its effects on the goals it aimed to achieve? The ministry of BZK wants to learn about the effects of City Deals to improve the quality of future and current City Deals. However, City Deals have been initiated since 2016 and only 2 out of 17 City Deals have been completed. For most deals, it is too soon to evaluate the effect of a City Deal on growth and livability since its effect still need to occur. However, it can be researched to what extent current City Deals facilitate urban innovation, since innovation can be induced by a process among actors (Geels, 2006; Hendriks & Grin, 2007; Smith & Raven, 2012).

However, the literature argues that there are two deficits regarding how networks should govern urban innovations in order to contribute to societal goals (Hillman, Nilsson, Rickne, & Magnusson, 2011). The first deficit is that literature on network governance and innovation are not yet fully brought together, resulting in a lack of a comprehensive, theoretically derived framework (Jordan, 2008). The second deficit, is that there is a shortage of systematic empirical analysis of network governance arrangements and how they affect innovation processes, particularly in the light of sustainability (Hillman et al., 2011; Salter & Salter, 2010). This research aims to provide a contribution to the literature by combining literature on network governance and on the facilitation of innovation by a network, and to provide an empirical exploration on how network governance facilitates innovation processes. The objective of this research is to evaluate City Deals as an instrument by exploring how City Deal networks have facilitated urban innovation by use of their governance. The objective and aim of this research revolves in the following evaluative question:

To what extent contributed City Deals to the governance of a network to facilitate urban innovation?

However, as said there is a shortage on theoretically derived frameworks and therefore this research will evaluate the effect of City Deals on urban innovation separately by using two frameworks on which the researcher explores the effect of City Deals on network governance and innovation. Therefore, two sub-questions have been derived that should allow to explore and evaluate the effect of City Deals networks on their facilitation of urban innovation.

1. What has been the effect of City Deals on the network governance of City Deal actors?
2. What has been the effect of City Deals on the facilitated space for innovation?

The chapter theoretical framework will introduce the lenses through which both research question will be researched on. While the chapter methods will further specify the operationalization of both questions.

1.3. Relevance

In 2015 the mayor of Rotterdam, Achmed Aboutaleb, gave a lecture called "the cry of the city" (Aboutaleb, 2015). In his lecture, Aboutaleb argued for a new form of governance, a form where the government does not regulate but facilitates cities to deal with the 21th century problems cities are facing. Some of these 21th century problems are urbanization, loss of resources (due to budget cuts), and an increase in responsibilities. New sustainable innovations cannot emerge by top-down policies

but need to be facilitated by bottom-up governance structures. He argues that cities are the implementing body of the ideology of the national government, which is according to Aboutaleb an ineffective way of stimulating local based innovations. The cry of Aboutaleb touches two of the three problems of modernistic political institutions according to Hajer (2011), current policy structures do not solve the problem which questions the legitimacy of the current political structures. Aboutaleb also calls for a new way of governance, a way where various levels of governance (national governance, cities, provinces) help each other instead of regulating each other. This research is relevant since cooperatively solving problems in a network is a new way of working for the various levels. The evaluation has determined the positive and negative experiences so far and results in a learning possibility for networks to improve their governance and to collectively facilitate urban innovation.

In addition to the societal relevance of this research, scientifically publications, such as the innovative city (Hamers, 2016) and the experimental city (Evans, Karvonen, & Raven, 2016), supports the inefficiencies mayor Aboutaleb experiences from an innovation, or transitional, point of view. Both publications emphasize the importance of experiments, both technological, social and institutional, to facilitate 21th centuries problem solving innovations to take ground within cities. As illustrated in chapter 1, a lot has been researched around network governance and on how to facilitate innovation. However, it has not been researched yet how the governance of a network could facilitate urban innovation to re solve a complex societal problem. This research adds to the knowledge gap by combining the literature on network governance and innovation in an evaluative framework and provides an empirical case study on how network governance can affect urban innovation.

1.4. Reading guide

This research will first present the theoretical framework where the two sub-questions will be operationalized using two frameworks: 1) Governance capacity, and 2) protective spaces. Second it will be explained how the qualitative research has been conducted to conclude on the effects of City Deals. Thirdly, the results will be presented. Next the results will be discussed in the context of the existing literature on which recommendations will be build. Limitations and suggestions for future research will be discussed. In the light of all these elements the conclusions will conclude on the research questions and state the contribution to the scientific literature.

2. Theoretical framework

In order to assess the contribution of a City Deals to the governance of a network to facilitate urban innovation, two theoretically derived frameworks have been combined to assess and explore the effect of City Deals. This chapter elaborates on the frameworks that have been used to answer the main and sub-questions.

To assess and explore the effects City Deals had on the governance of a network to collective solve problems, the framework on governance capacity by Dang et al. (2015) has been used. The framework has been developed in reaction to the acknowledgement of the literature that governance is a precondition of political, social, and economic development, and that concepts such as governance capacity are a widely used theoretical tools for the assessment, but issues remained on what constitutes as governance capacity and how can it be assessed in a comprehensive manner. In turn, Dang et al. (2015) provides a framework that elaborates on what governance capacity entails and on how it can be assessed. In this research, the framework on governance capacity will be used to evaluate the effect of a City Deal on the governance capacity of a network to cooperate and collectively solve problems.

The second framework has been the framework on protective spaces by Smith and Raven (2012), which has been used to evaluate how City Deal enabled networks to facilitate a space for innovation. The framework has been developed to understand the dynamics of a protective space as a condition to stimulate innovation and the involvement of actors in a systematic way. The framework can and has been used to assess the extent to which City Deals contributed to the stimulation of a protective space for innovation to arise and will help to answer the second sub-question. When both variables have been explored, it can be evaluated to what extent a City Deal is successful and where there is room for improvement for a City Deal to reach the goals that it aims to reach.

2.1. Governance capacities

The theory on governance capacity relates to City Deals as the deals have two phases. In the first phase, the network cooperates on what the goal and sub-goals of the City Deal should be, what the general agreements should be, and what the responsibilities per actors should be. After the goals, agreements, and responsibilities have been formulated, the deal will be signed by the different actors on which they enter the second phase; the execution phase. In the execution phase, actors follow up on the general agreements and their responsibilities to fulfill the City Deal within the duration of the deal. Governance capacity has been defined as the ability of societal actors to work together to collectively solve problems. It includes the potential of actors' cooperation and the performance in terms of solving collective problems, both of which are the outcome of actor's interactions, and evolve under and are influence by wider societal context. The cooperation and the execution phase of a City Deal correlates with the duality of the governance capacity framework on the actor's capacity to cooperate and their performances.

Table 1 illustrates the different elements regarding the governance capacity framework. Institutional capacity can be defined as the processes that enables actors' cooperation for problem solving. Governance performance can be defined as the collective problem solving among actors involved in terms of process and impact. It emphasizes the importance to make available the institutional capacity, but also the effectiveness of collectively solving the problem. It emphasizes both issues regarding a process between different governmental layers (national vs. local) and therefore adds to the duality of

a City Deal process, as why the theory has been chosen for the evaluative framework (Dang, Visseren-Hamakers, & Arts, 2015).

	Dimensions	Variables	
		Institutional capacity	*Governance performance*
Governance capacity	*Enabling rules of the game*	Codification of decision-making rights	Practicing rights
	Converging discourses	Venues	Social learning
		Open attitudes	
	Facilitating resources	Resource availability	Employment of resources

Table 1: The governance capacity framework (Arts, Leroy, & van Tatenhove, 2006; Dang et al., 2015)

The governance capacity framework consists of three operational steps in which the first step distinguishes three different dimensions: rules of the game, discourse, and resources. The first dimension is whether the rules of the game were enabled for actor to get involved. The rules of the games are the formal and informal rules for policy and decision making, such as legislation and procedures. The second dimension is distinguished as converging discourses of various actor coalitions. Converging discourse is defined as working towards shared perspectives of the actors involved, considering their norms and values, definitions of problems, goals, and actors approaches to solution. The third dimension is distinguished as facilitating resources for actor commitment. Resources are defined as the division of power and influence among actors through their mobilization division, and the effective deployment of resources by the network (Arts & Tatenhove, 2004; Dang et al., 2015).

The second step operationalizes these elements into the variables of institutional capacity and governance performance as illustrated in table 1. Enabling the rules of the game is an important element regarding governance capacity, as to govern means to make rules for a set of actors who act in relation to others (Carlsson & Sandström, 2007). As rules provide the structure under which social cooperation takes place, rules could constrain or enable social cooperation (Thye, 2000). It is recognized that the rules of the games differ from case to case, as will be the case with the city deals. However, a general element is to provide actors, especially those who under normal circumstances were marginalized, with the rights to get involved into decision making. As it can be assumed that joint decision making, by including affected actors, allows decisions to become more responsive and helps to gain the support of actors for problem-solving strategies. Regarding institutional capacity, the codification of decision-making right has been identified as a criterion to enable actors to the rules of the game. As it describes the extent to which actors obtain the legal rights to be involved in decision making. Scharpf (1978) argues in his research that selective activation of potential participants in a network is "an essential prerequisite for successful inter-organizational policy formation and policy implementation" and, if it is performed correctly, is based on "the correct identification of necessary participants in policy-congruent networks," as well as the willingness of these potential participants to devote resources to the network and not be influenced by actors who may have other interests at stake. Stone (2001) argues that governing networks for the use of cities must "bring together resources that are adequate to address the identifying agenda," otherwise the arrangements will not be effective. Deactivation of a 'weak link' in a network is also argued to be an essential element regarding the effectiveness of a network. Network structures must have the opportunity to be rearranged if they are not performing as desired. The most common prescription in this regard is to introduce new actors

as a means of changing the network dynamics, shifting the influence of existing actors and facilitating fluid leadership roles (Agranoff & Mcguire, 2001; Klijn, 2005; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). For governance performance, gaps between the codification and realization might arise which limits the practicing rights, therefore practicing rights can be determined as a criterion to assess the governance performance of a network.

Regarding discourses, it can be assumed that converging discourses support cooperation through the objectives and strategies that the involved actors jointly consider appropriate (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). However, it can also be assumed that actors involved in collective action could have different interests and values. This could complicate the element of converging discourses if actors are unable to reconcile their goals and preferred solutions. For reconciliation to occur, actors need spaces and processes for discussion (Dang et al., 2015). Therefore, the concepts of venues and open attitudes of involved actors toward each other's positions have been used to explore the institutional capacity of networks, where social learning has been used to explore the governance performance of a network. Venues are defined as places and practices that offer the possibility for actors to discuss and arrive at their common goals. However, if actors do not have an open attitude towards each other and show mutual respect, a venue will not facilitate the convergence of discourses. Therefore, open attitude towards each other, meaning being open to the logic of other's views and being willing to adjust one's goals and strategies, is also a criterion for institutional capacity. Social learning is defined as a deliberate attempt to adjust the goals or techniques of policy in the light of experience and latest information to better attain the ultimate objectives of governance. It is fostered by venues and open attitudes that generate new information, perspectives and facilitate the exchange of ideas (Hall, 1993). The adjustments of goals or techniques enable actors to accommodate differences and negotiate their interest in governance processes and converges the discourses (White et al., 2005).

Furthermore, the elements of facilitating resources has been addressed as it has been assumed that actors need resources to carry out activities for problem solving, and social cooperation is often driven by resource constraints (Borzel, 1998). It is also assumed that actors cooperate because they depend on each other's resources to achieve common goals and can make effective use of their own resources only if they are able to access the relevant resources of other actors (Borzel, 1998). Resource availability for institutional capacity and the employment of resources for governance performance has been used to explore the extent to which actors in societal cooperation access their relevant resources. Bäckstrand (2006) argues that resource availability is an essential condition for the effective employment of resources, as it enhances the likelihood that social cooperation will achieve its goals. For this research, employment of resources can be denoted as the effective use of resources in achieving the favorable outcome.

When the effect of City Deals on the different variables have been evaluated it can be determined to what extent a network provided the right capacity to govern a complex collective problem sufficiently. The evaluation of the governance capacity is the first step for the exploration on how networks can facilitate urban innovation by their governance.

2.2. Protective spaces

This chapter elaborates on the need for a protective space to stimulate innovation. It provides a framework on which it can be assessed how a network provides the right condition to shield, nurture and empower a niche within a protective space. But to comprehend the literature on protective spaces some general background literature on the multi-level perspective is needed.

Literature regarding the multi-level perspective on transitions have revealed that changes in stable socio-technical regimes can be initiated by niche-innovations (Schot & Geels, 2008). For networks to be able to facilitate innovations and transitions actors can stimulate the development of niches to transition the stable socio-technical regimes to a more sustainable socio-technical regime. The multi-level perspective argues that transitions come about through interactions between processes at different levels where niche innovations build up internal momentum, and changes at the landscape level create pressure on the regime, which destabilizes the regime and creates a window of opportunity for niche innovation as illustrated in figure 1 (Schot & Geels, 2008). Schot & Geels (2008) argue that if niches were constructed appropriately, niches would act as building blocks for broader societal changes towards sustainable development. Their research found that niches are perceived as crucial for bringing about sustainable regime shift, but niches cannot do this on their own. A network should aim to facilitate linkages with ongoing external processes to stimulate a more sustainable regime shift changed by niches. The theory around protective spaces can be used for a network to understand how niches could be facilitated.

Three functions can be identified within the theory regarding the protective space for a niche: shielding, nurturing and empowerment. Protective spaces shield niches from competition and allow niche actors to nurture the innovation until the niche is empowered enough to perform or contribute to a shift, or transition, of a more sustainable socio-technical regime (Smith & Raven, 2012). All three elements will be elaborated on in the following sub-chapters.
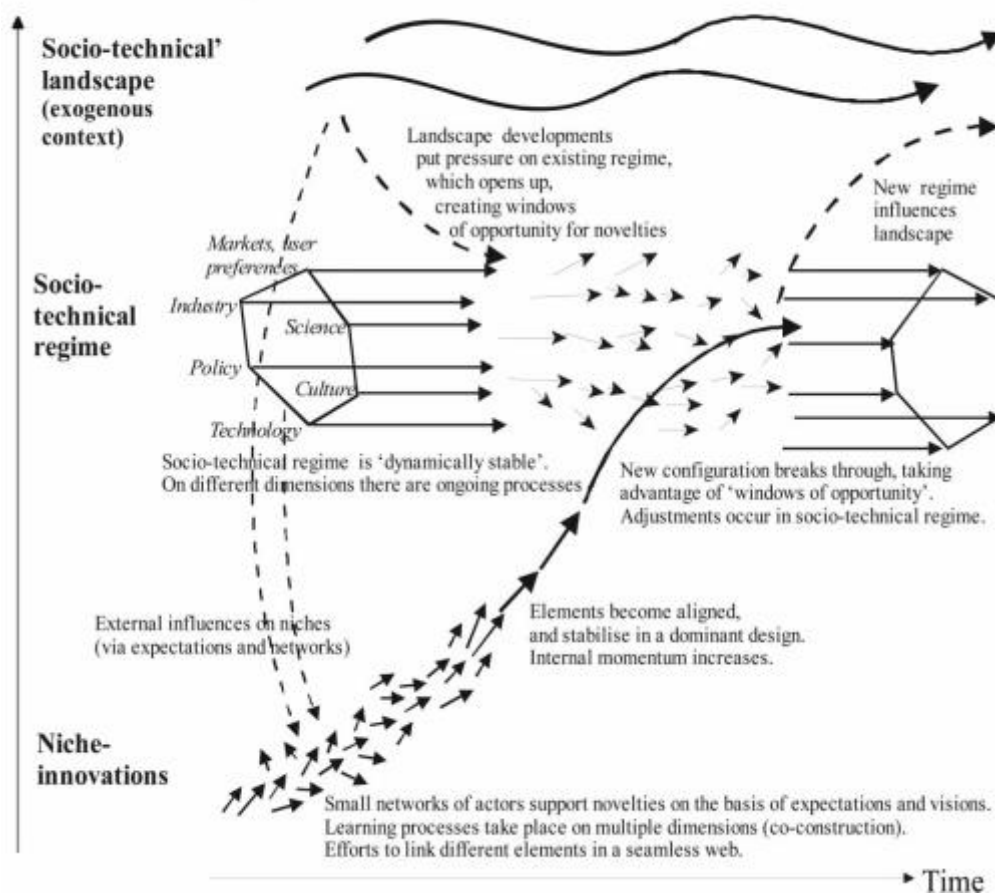
Figure 1: Multi-level perspective (Schot & Geels, 2008)

2.2.1. Shielding

The function of shielding is to provide an environment where regime selection pressures are held off in a way that allows path-breaking innovations to be nurtured and further developed. Shielding is defined as the processes that, actively or passively, hold at bay certain selection pressures from mainstream selection environment. Mainstream selection environment have been identified as: 1) industry structures, 2) dominant technologies and infrastructures, 3) knowledge based, 4) markets and dominant user practices, 5), public policies and political power, and 6) the cultural significance attached to a specific regime (Smith & Raven, 2012). Active protective spaces can be defined as spaces that are the result of deliberate and strategic creation by advocates of specific path-breaking innovations to shield regime selection pressures. Passive protective spaces can be defined as generic spaces that pre-exist deliberate mobilization by advocates of specific innovation, but who exploit the shielding opportunities they provide. Because selection environments are multi-dimensional, path-breaking innovations require multi-dimensional forms of protection. These might be deliberately created spaces through innovation-specific public or private interventions (active) or generic spaces pre-existing mobilization by advocates of specific innovations (passive). Regarding the objective of the research, the focus will be on the active shielding of niches.

2.2.2. Nurturing

If shields are actively mobilized or established by a network, then a space becomes available that provides an opportunity for a network to nurture a path-breaking innovation. Networks can nurture a

niche within a protective space until the niche is empowered enough to function within selection systems. Nurturing can be defined as the processes that support the development of the path-breaking innovation. Early strategic niche management emphasizes key niche nurturing processes (Kemp et al., 1998), such as: assisting learning processes, articulating expectations, and helping network processes. Kemp et al. (1998) hypothesized that learning processes would contribute to the nurturing of niches if they are not only directed at the accumulation of first-order learning (such as data and facts), but also enables changes in cognitive frames and assumptions (i.e. second order learning). Expectations could contribute towards the nurturing of niches if expectations were made: more robust (as in shared by many actors), more specific (i.e. if expectations are too general they do not give guidance), and have a higher quality (i.e. the content of expectations is substantiated by ongoing projects). Finally, it can be hypothesized that social networks are more likely to contribute towards nurturing of niches, if the networks are broad (i.e. multiple kinds of stakeholders are included to facilitate the articulation of multiple views and voices), and deep (i.e. people who represent organizations should be able to mobilize commitments and resources within their own organizations and networks. Figure 2 illustrates the processes contributing towards the nurturing ability of networks towards niches.
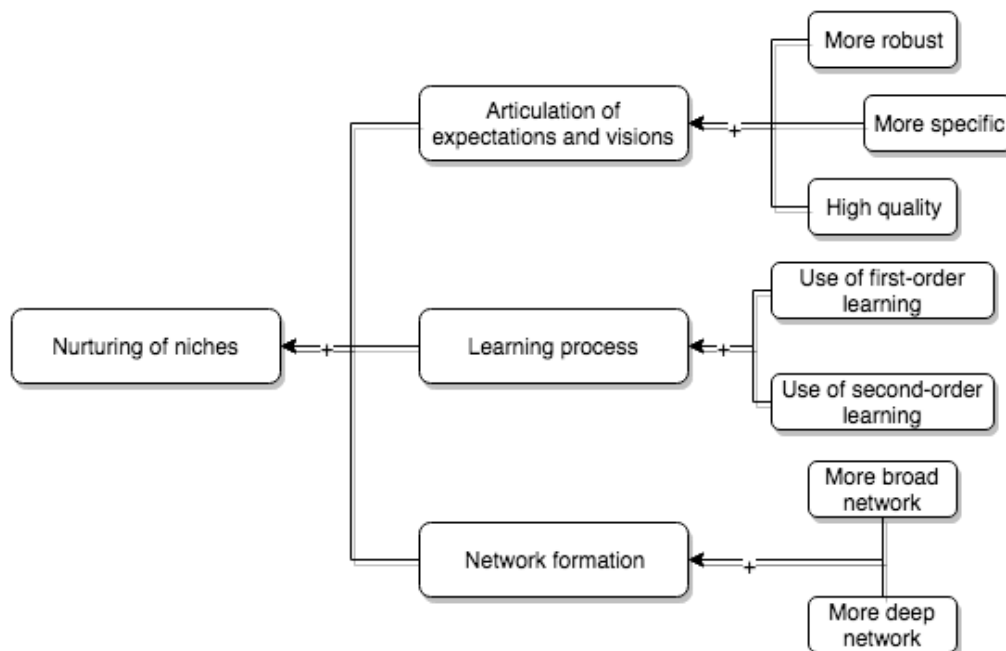

Figure 2: Framework for assessing nurturing (Hoogkamp, Kemp, Schot, & Truffer, 2002; Kemp et al., 1998; Smith & Raven, 2012)

2.2.3. Empowerment

A protective space is a temporary space in which a niche is shielded from mainstream selection systems and where networks can nurture the innovation. However, at some point the niche should become empowered enough so that it is nurtured enough that it can function without a shield. Empowerment of a niche is therefore an important function and can be defined as the processes and mechanisms that contribute to changes in mainstream selection environment in ways favorable to the path-breaking innovation (Smith & Raven, 2012). Two different types of empowerment can be identified: empowering to fit and conform & empowering to stretch and transform (Smith & Raven, 2012). Fit and conform can be defined as processes that make niche innovations competitive within unchanged selection environments. Stretch and transform can be defined as the processes that re-restructure mainstream selection environments in ways favorable to the niche. In other words, empowerment can

converge in two ways: innovation adapts to the current system, or the current system adapts to the innovation. Complementary, stretch and transform empowerment within sustainable development is the development of 1) institutional reforms that transform incumbent regimes; and 2) the political capacity to avoid protective space becoming captured by sectional interests, and to ensure protection stimulates the dynamic accumulation of innovative capabilities for sustainable development. Stretch and transform empowerment relies more on external processes then internal processes. It assesses whether capabilities have been created that attract resources that empower participation in political debates over the future shape of institutions and regime selection pressures. The extent to which certain social actors capture these processes for sectional interests depends upon the power relations between the different actors, and the way a wider politics of the public good holds them to account.

When the effect of City Deals on the facilitation of a protective space has been evaluated it can be determined to what extent a City Deal network facilitated urban innovation. The evaluation on the facilitation of protective spaces is the second step necessary for the exploration on how networks can facilitate urban innovation by their governance.

2.3. Evaluative framework

Table 2 illustrates the variables, indicators and the operationalization of the indicators on both framework. The table shows an overview on how the dependent variables can be researched to evaluate the effect of a City Deal on each dependent variable. Some indicators show overlap with other indicators, but each indicator should be evaluated to determine what the effect was of City Deals on the governance capacities and on protective spaces. Table 2 has also been used as a basis for the formulation of the interview questions as presented in appendix 7.1.

Dependent variables	Variable	Indicator	Operationalization
Governance capacity	Institutional capacity	Codification of decision making rights	The extent to which actors obtain the legal rights to be involved in decision making.
		Venues	The existence of a place to discuss and arrive to common goals
		Open attitudes	The extent to which actors are open to the logic of others views and are willing to adjust one's goals and strategies
		Resource availability	The extent to which actors in city deals access their relevant resources
	Governance performance	Practicing rights	Processes or practices that limit the execution of the codified rights
		Social learning/second order learning	signs for the deliberative attempt to adjust the goals and techniques in the light of past experiences and latest information as to attain a better objective
		Employment of resources	The extent to which the resources contributed to the favorable outcome
Protective space	Shielding	Strategies	The presence of strategies to actively shield innovations from regime selection pressures
	Nurturing	Articulation of expectations and visions	Processes that contributed to make the expectations more robust (shared by many actors), more specific (give guidance), and have a high quality (content is structured by projects such as research or experiments)
		Learning processes	The accumulation of first order learning (data and facts) and changes in cognitive frames and assumptions (or second order learning)
		Network formation	Broad network: multiple actors are included in the process and deep networks: the respective persons should be able to mobilize commitments and resources within their organization or networks
	Empowerment	Fit and conform	Processes that makes the niche competitive within an unchanged environment
		Stretch and transform	Processes that re-structured the environment favorable to the niche

Table 2: Evaluative framework (Dang et al., 2015; Markard, Raven, & Truffer, 2012; Schot & Geels, 2008; Smith & Raven, 2012)

3. Method

This chapter will elaborate on the methods used for this research. The research framework illustrates the different steps taken to achieve the answer on the research question. The steps illustrated within the research framework will be addressed one by one to elaborate on the choices made throughout the research. The unit of analysis for this research is the City Deal, and the research is based on a single case study with an embedded design by evaluating the different City Deals to explore the general effect of a City Deal on the facilitation of urban innovation (Verschuren, Doorewaard, Poper, & Mellion, 2010; Yin, 2011).
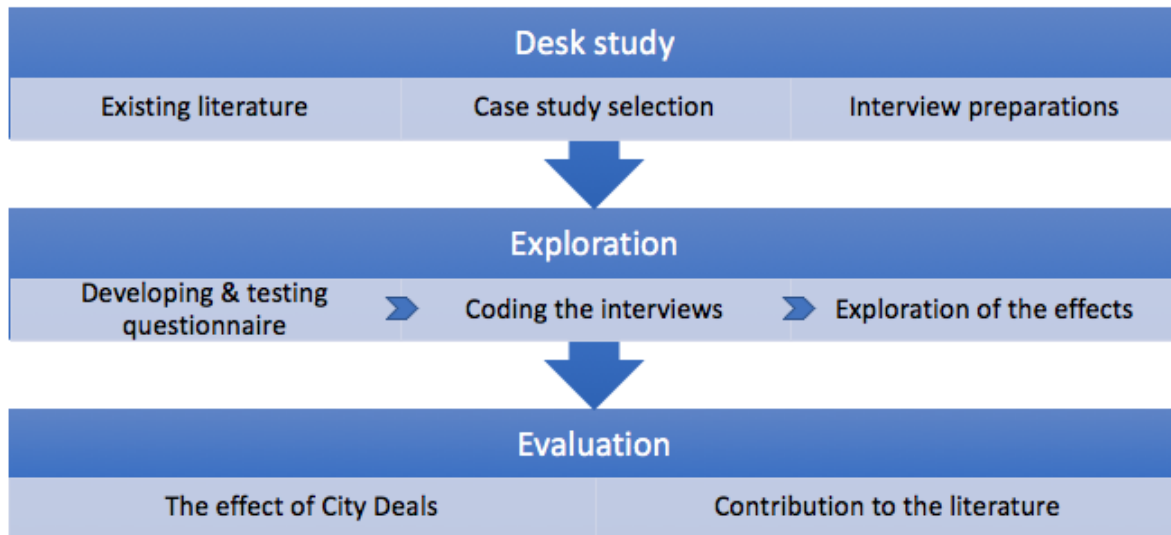

Figure 3: Research Framework

3.1. Desk Study

During the desk research phase, existing literature regarding or related to City Deals have been researched. No scientific literature has been written about City Deals. However, City Deals are a spinoff of another policy instrument called 'green deals' which is a deal where green bottom-up initiatives are facilitated with the help off the national government to give a sustainable boost to the environment. Green Deals have been there since 2011 and some policy evaluations have been conducted. The evaluations have been used as some general background information on how City Deals, since it is a spin-off of green deals, potentially could take form (PBL, 2016; Schulz, Scherpenisse, van der Steen, & van Twist, 2016). Furthermore, to gain insight on the specific content of a City Deal each physical City Deal has been read and analyzed to gain a general insight in what City Deals aim to solve and how networks are used within City Deals. Regarding the case study, it has been decided to include multiple deals since each City Deal aims to solve a very different societal problem. For different societal problems, different network governance problems arise. Therefore, the general effect of a City Deal cannot thoroughly be evaluated by including a holistic case study design which resulted in the decision to include an embedded case study design within this research (Yin, 2011).

On January 2017 eleven City Deals have been signed of which two have been completed. Some initiatives are on their way to become a City Deal, while other initiatives have been rejected or lapsed as a City Deal. This research aimed to incorporate every phase a City Deals goes through to gain insight on the effects of City Deals for each phase. However, due to time and resource constraints not all City Deals can be included within this research and therefore some selection criteria, in consultation with

the ministry of BZK, have been determined to make an informed selection between the City Deals (Yin, 1981). The first selection has been an equal dispersion of the different themes City Deals aims to provide a contribution on. During the formation of Agenda Stad the ministry of BZK determined different themes on which they would like to strike a City Deal. Multiple deals can contribute to one theme and currently under every theme there is one or more City Deals contributing to the theme. The different themes are climate adaptation, next economy, social arrangement, data-infrastructure, circular city, cross-boundary economy, healthy urban living, urban transformation, and top campuses and innovative environments. Through the inclusion of all the themes a general image can be attained on the effect City Deals can have on the governance processes and space for innovation. The second criterion is to have a dispersion on City Deals who aim to provide a urban contribution or a national contribution. City Deals can use their agglomeration power to efficiently tackle a urban perceived problem or to attain a regional perceived goal (for example Health Hub), but City Deals can also aim to deliver a contribution on the national level to stimulate urban innovation (for example food on the urban agenda). An equal distribution of City Deals operating on both level needs to be included within the case study selection. A third criteria was to include larger and smaller cities. City Deals have been developed for every city, but is there a dispersion on what kind of cities benefit the most from the City Deals? Fourth, there should be an equal representation of cities across the Netherlands. Not only the Randstad, but also cities outside of this economic powerhouse. The different criteria have resulted into the case study selection as illustrated in table 4.

Furthermore, since a City Deal is a cooperation between multi-level actors to collectively solve complex societal problems, multiple actors have been included within a case to capture the comprehensive story behind the governance processes and the possible space created for innovation. As the carrying ministry on Agenda Stad, the ministry of Internal Affairs has provided a list of involved actors and representatives for each City Deal which have been contacted for an interview. A request was made to incorporate, if possible, two representatives of different ministries involved, one representative on the municipality level, and one representative of an involved societal actor. Preferably two ministries have been chosen per City Deal as it was hypothesized that facilitating innovation will be impossible if one does not institutionally innovate as well. Especially with large bureaucratic organizations such as the National Government, but as well with larger cities, it is thought that compartmentalization of organization is not conducive for innovation (De Blasio, Selva, Blasio, & Selva, 2016). But as the National Government aims to facilitate innovation for cities it was chosen to include two ministries, instead of cities or societal actors. Time constraints has withheld the research to include two representatives of each level.

Another step taken was the preparation of the interviews. To make respondents more likely to cooperate for this research, the ministry of BZK has written an email to each respondent to announce the research and to state that the help of each respondent was deeply appreciated. Out of the 45 planned interviews, only one respondent rejected the interview since he has changed jobs and was not involved within City Deals anymore. In total 44 respondents have been interviewed throughout the research which are illustrated in appendix 7.2. Their names have been removed due to the promised anonymity throughout the interviews. Another preparation measure, due to time constraints, was to hire a student to conduct ten interviews. A briefing was organized where the goal and the aim of the research has been explained the student, the theoretical framework has been sent to give her the theoretical basis to conduct the interviews independently. In her first interview, the student has observed the researcher and in the second interview she conducted the interview while

the researcher observed her and gave feedback. Furthermore, a factsheet for each City Deal has been developed so that the interviewer could focus on the process of a deal and not the content.

3.2. Exploration

This chapter will elaborate on the explorative part of the research. It will discuss the formulation and the development of the questionnaire, how the data has been coded and how the data can be used to evaluate the effect of City Deals.

The theoretical framework has been used to formulate questions on which to evaluate the governance capacity of a City Deal network and how a City Deal network facilitated a protective space. The questionnaire is illustrated in appendix 7.1 and table 3 connects the different indicators to the question numbers. The questionnaire has been developed around the operationalization of the indicators and best practices were incorporated of another master graduate who analyzed the protective space facilitated by the English City Deals (Prinssen, 2017). The questionnaire has been tested in the field with an expert and based on the interview changes in formulation have been made to make the questions more understandable for the interviewees.

After all the interviews have been conducted and transcribed, the data has been coded through the coding software Atlas.ti. Two different approaches where used throughout the coding, a deductive and an inductive approach to include a rival explanation within the research to increase the internal validity of the research (Gibbert, Ruigrok, & Wicki, 2008). For the deductive approach, a code was made for each indicator and were quoted whenever applicable to a corresponding quote. For the second approach, the data had been inductively coded. This had been a very iterative and time-consuming approach, since codes were added throughout the coding process when certain topics got frequently addressed. Every time a new code was added to the list, all the quoted documents needed to be checked again to connect the code to the quotations. Moreover, the quotes were given a normative load when respondents argued that something was 'hard', 'bad', 'good' or 'easy'. The combination of an inductive and deductive approach allowed the research to identify a deeper connection on how or why specific indicators worked the way they did (Gibbert et al., 2008). Furthermore, coding the quotes with a normative code such as good or bad allows to determine to what extent the indicators were experienced bad or good and why so. In general, 152 codes have been created and 5766 quotations have been coded by one or more of those 152 codes and 1715 out of the 5766 quotations have been coded with a normative code. Appendix 7.3

Indicator	Interview question
Codification of decision making rights	B.1.1, B.2.3 C.4.3
Venues	A.3
Open Attitudes	B.2.2 B.2.3
Resource Availability	A.4
Practicing rights	A.4 C.4.6
Social learning	B.1.3
Employment of resources	A.4 C.4.1
Shielding	B.3.1 B.3.2 B.3.3.
Articulation	B.1.2 C.4.6
Learning processes	B.1.2. B.1.3
Network formation	B.2.5 C.4.3
Stretch and transform	B.3.4 B.3.5 B.3.6. C.4.1. D.5.3
Fit and conform	B.3.4 B.3.5 B.3.6. C.4.1. D.5.3

Table 3: operationalization of the indicators within the questionnaire as illustrated within appendix 3

illustrates the figures that have been used for the exploration of this research.

The coded data can be used to explore and answer the main research questions. The main analytical method for the results has been the use of a co-occurrence table. By using co-occurrences, one could explore how many times a certain code occurred with another code. This gives a quick overview of which indicators often connect with one and another. Another method has been to use the normative quotations of a code and use a co-occurrence function to assess how many times a specific code has been quoted with another code as a positive or negative experience. By combining both analytical methods it can be explored and evaluated to what extent a City Deal influenced the network governance of City Deal actors or the facilitated space for innovation, as judged by the respondents.

Furthermore, a feedback moment has been organized with respondents and other City Deal officials. The feedback moment had two different goals. One was to facilitate a discussion on whether there were any discrepancies or translation errors regarding the preliminary results. Second was to let City Deal actor's retrospect on what they could have done differently and what they could do differently starting the day after. Especially the first goal is relevant for the results of this research as there was one discrepancy within the results and the opinion of the respondents. The second goal was especially relevant to create a sense of societal impact for the results. The meeting has been guided and moderated by Platform 31, an organization who specializes in connecting policy, practice and science with managers, policy makers and executives that enables them to get started immediately.

In the conclusion, each indicator will be evaluated based on the interpretation of the researcher as an expert on the effect of City Deal. The researcher has conducted the interviews where he experienced the emotions and intonations throughout the interviews. Since the nature of the research is qualitative and therefore dependent on interpretation and difficult to quantify, evaluating based on personal judgement of the researcher it the preferred evaluative option.

3.3. Validity

In case studies, it is important to check the validity and reliability of your research. In his research Yin (2011) argues that four parameters need to be met in order for a research to be valid and reliable: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. The combination of table 2 and table 3 operationalize the concepts on which this research aims to measure the success of a City Deal. It illustrates the way the research is constructed in combination with the questionnaire in appendix 7.1. In addition, the constructed research approach has been submitted for feedback by the ministry of BZK to determine whether the research has been rightfully constructed, since they can be considered as key informants regarding City Deals (Yin, 2011). Furthermore, this research has an explanatory nature to it, therefore the internal validity also needs to be incorporate within the research. One tactic to test the internal validity of a research is to address rival explanation in the data collection phase of a research. Internal validity of the results has been tested by performing two evaluative methods on the same collected data. A group of two researchers of PBL analyzed the results by hand and interpreted the results more unsystematic, while another group of two (including the writer) coded systematically the data in a coding software. Both methods have been set next to each other to derive results based on the subjective interpretation of the researcher and a more systematic approach to deduce the subjectivism of the interpretation of a researcher. Both results were very similar, but with different intonations. External validity has been accounted for since existing and tested frameworks have been used to evaluate the unit of analysis, which allows the results of the research to be

generalized in the perspective of the used frameworks. The research is reliable due to the case study protocol used throughout the research (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002; Yin, 2011). With the questionnaire, the list and goals of the chosen City Deals, the respondents, the research can be repeated should provide the same results. However, time can be considered as a factor influencing the reliability as more negative or positive experiences could have occurred over time, changing the results of a repeated research.

#	City deal	Themes	Content	Cities	Ministries*	Other actors
			Executed			
1	**Roadmap next economy**	Next economy	Regional development strategy which anticipates on new economic carriers and required skills	MRDH (Rotterdam, Den Haag, 21 surrounding municipalities)	EZ en BZK	Provincie Zuid-Holland EPZ
2	**Warm Welcome for Talent**	Campuses and innovative environments	aims to remove decisional barriers for every high-quality entrepreneur who wants to start working in the Netherlands.	Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Groningen, The Hague	EZ, SZW, VenJ, & OCW	Expatcenter Amsterdam
			in progress			
3	**Climate Adaptation**	Climate adaptation	A learning, experimenting and innovating track to utilize the climate change opportunities	Zwolle, Dordrecht, Rotterdam, The Hague, Gouda	I&M	Waterboard, Province of Overijssel, Tauw, Kennisland, Unesco-IHE, Ecoshape, Utrecht University
4	**The Inclusive City**	Social arrangements	To improve the inclusive arrangements of households regarding work, income, debts, and livability	Zaanstad, Leeuwarden , Enschede, Utrecht, Eindhoven	SZW, VWS, OCW, BZK	
5	**Health Hub**	Campuses and innovative environments	Stimulating a healthy urban lifestyle by an innovative and coherent approach of complex health issues and the improvement of the Utrecht health related economy	Utrecht and surrounding municipalities (De Bilt, Zeist, Nieuwegein, Woerden)	EZ, VWS, OCW, I&M	Economic board Utrecht, Utrecht University, University of Applied Science Utrecht
6	**Digital Living Environment**	Data infrastructure	Largescale digitalization of homes to improve the cost-efficient development of innovative housing and care services	Brabantstad (Eindhoven, Tilburg, Den Bosch, Helmond, Breda), G4	EZ, BZK I&M	Woonconnect, KPN
7	**Circulair City**	Circulair city	Pooling regional strategies to become a circular town by measuring, example projects and system transitions	Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Venlo, Haarlem, Almere, Dordrecht, Apeldoorn/Deventer/Zutphen	I&M, BZK en EZ	TNO, Circular Economy, Royal HaskoningDHV
8	**Urban Consturction**	Urban transformation	Aims to identify barriers and develop best case practices to stimulate construction within cities instead of expanding cities	Leiden, Rotterdam, The Hague, Gouda, Dordrecht Schiedam Alphen aan de Rijn	BZK & I&M	Provincie Zuid-Holland, Bouwend Nederland, Vastgoed Belang, BNG Bank
9	**Food on the Urban Agenda**	Healthy City and Environment	A food chain quality leap: from individual agricultural policy to an integral food policy	Den bosch, Utrecht, Helmond, Oss, Groningen, Leeuwarden, Venlo en Ede	EZ en BZK	Province Gelderland & North-Holland
			Lapsed			
10	**Urban Accessibility**	Urban accessibility	The introduction of new mobilization concepts in the urban environment	Utrecht, Groningen, Den Bosch, Assen, Helmond, Lelystad, Nijmegen, Zwolle	I&M	
11	**Healthy Urbanization**	Healthy urbanization	The upscaling of a more active and healthier urban habitat	Utrecht, mogelijk Groningen en Nijmegen	I&M, VWS	

*: BZK = Internal Affairs and Kingrelations, EZ = Economic Affairs, I&M = Infrastructure and Environment, SZW = Social Affairs and Employment, VWS = Public health, Welfare and Sport, OCW = Education, Culture and Science, VenJ = National security and Justice, Fin = Finance

Table 4: Case study selection (Gerring, 2007; Gibbert et al., 2008; Yin, 2011)

4. Results

This chapter present the results. First, some general findings will be presented to provide a context in which to understand the outcomes and quotations. Furthermore, this section will explore the effect of a City Deal on the governance capacity of a network, and on the facilitated protective space, so that the conclusion can evaluate the effect of a City Deal on facilitated urban innovation.

4.1. General findings

As stated in the methods, the research is strongly based on the experiences of the respondents. In order to understand the effect a City Deal has had on the governance capacity of a network and on the protective space, the experiences should be illustrated within a context on which the results can be interpret.

On May 2015, the four biggest cities in the Netherlands and BZK wrote a proposition paper on what steps needed to be taken so that cities could compete better internationally. Cities experience barriers on complex societal problems which withhold cities to compete more successfully. The proposition paper pleas for a new way of working between cities and the national government to facilitate cities to innovate (G4, 2015). The proposition paper was the start of Agenda Stad and resulted into an appeal from BZK towards cities to submit societal problems cities were facing and how together they could solve their perceived problem. One condition was that submitted problems should not be a plea for funds. A second conditions was that the problem is (at least) caused by legislation. The third condition was that BZK would only sign a City Deal when multiple cities are involved within the deal. Many cities, individually, replied with several societal problems they would like to see solved. For example, Amsterdam submitted around 20 ideas of which only two have been made into a deal.

Most initiatives have been submitted by the larger cities as they were involved from the start with the set-up of City Deals. However, since every city individually submitted a problem, each problem did not include multiple cities. As a response BZK held a conference where cities could pitch their ideas and find partners for their deals, which initiated a phase were cities and ministries selected other partner cities to cooperate on a City Deal.

Figure 4 illustrates the diversity of positive versus negative experiences per respondent in percentages. As illustrated the positive experiences range from 19% to 85% of the total normative quotes. It shows that there is not a real consensus about whether a City Deal can be perceived by the respondents as a positive or negative instrument. However, when grouping the respondent within the levels they operate the experiences become more balanced. There is a small difference between how the different actors experience their City Deals (figure 5). Another different angle to group the respondent is within their City Deal. Figure 6 illustrates the normative experiences of respondents per City Deal. There is a difference in how positive or negative respondents are about their own deal. This information provides the context on which quotes have been used. If a quote is used from a certain City Deal then these figures provide the normative context in which the quote takes place and one could see if respondents within a certain deal are mainly positive or negative. These figures should not be used to state whether a City Deal is successful or not, as for example a negative experience could result in a positive result. A further exploration is necessary for the research question to be answered.
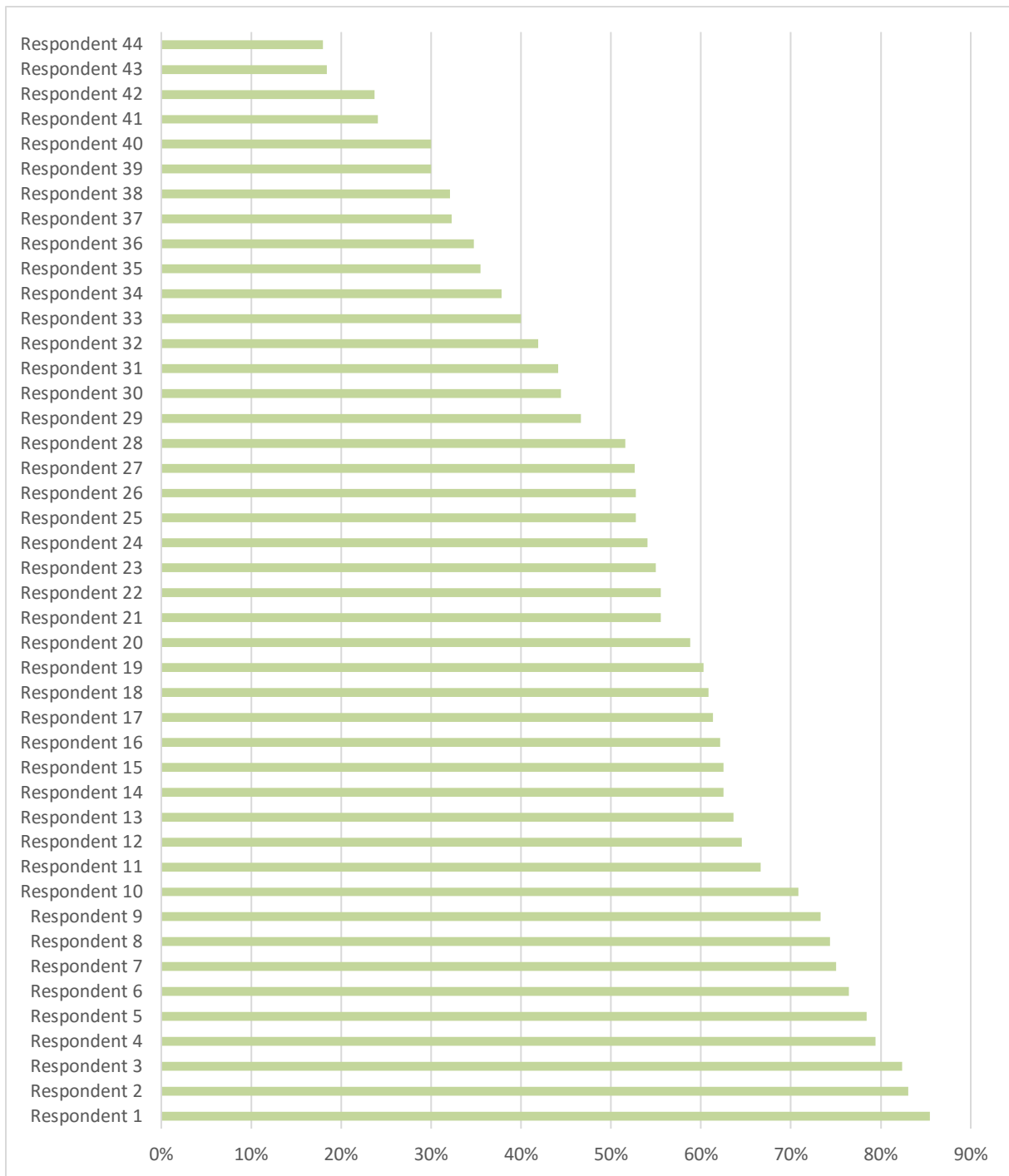
Figure 4: visualization of the positive experiences compared to the total amount of normative experiences in percentages per respondent.
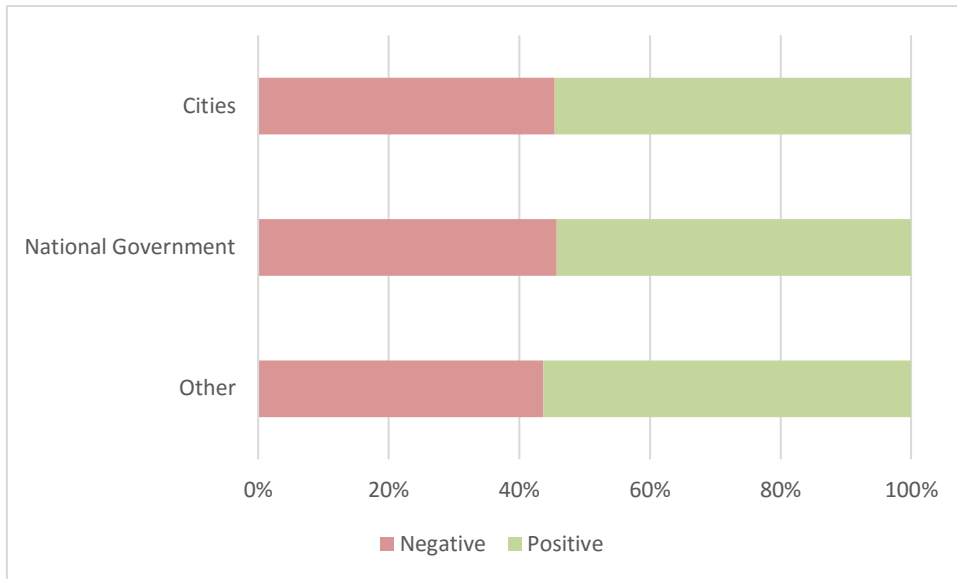
Figure 5: Representation of the normative experiences in percentages per type of actor
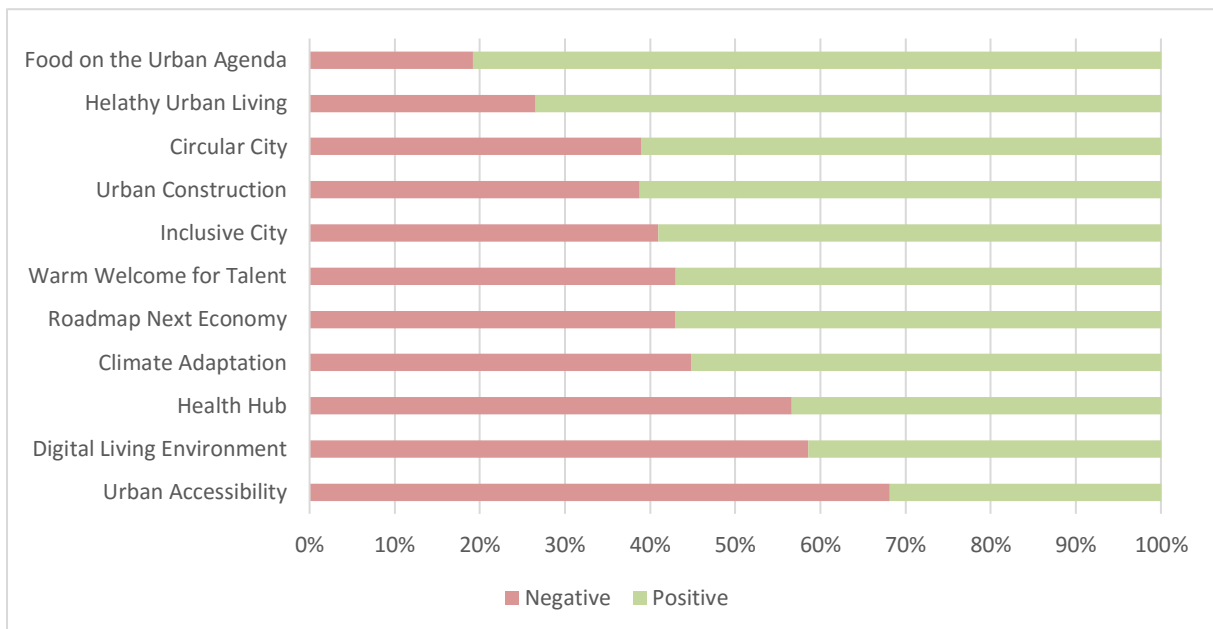

Figure 6: Representation of the normative experiences in percentages per City Deal

4.2. The effect of City Deals on the Governance Capacity

This chapter addresses the exploration of the governance capacity and will evaluate the governance capacity per sub-variable. The main findings per sub variable will be addressed and will conclude on the effect of City Deals on the network governance of the actors.

4.2.1. Institutional Capacity

Institutional Capacity has been defined as the processes enabling actors' cooperation for problem solving. The indicators associated to institutional capacity are: 1) codification of decision making rights, venues, open attitudes and resource availability. This section explores the effects City Deals had on the processes that enabled the networks to collectively invest and to solve the problem at hand?

4.2.1.1. Forming a network

One of the first steps towards a City Deal is to form a network. In the theoretical framework, the importance of forming a network and factors influencing the effective formation of a network have been stated.

The exploration revealed that in general the respondents experienced the selection processes of actors as more negative than positive. City Deals differ a lot in how they select and form their network. For example, the deal Inclusive City used their existing network to strike their deal. While Circular City had send out a request to the G32 to participate within the deal. However, since a lot of cities showed interest in the deal they have set an entry requirement for partner cities. Partner should be a leader in the field of Circular Economy and must contribute 5000 euros to the City Deal. In most cases, the submitting city has been put in charge of the responsibility to search and select other actors in consultation with the corresponding ministries. In other cases, the ministry has connected cities with similar ambitions to each other based on the pitches as has happened with the lapsed City Deal Urban Accessibility. The lapsed deal is interesting as the connected cities differ in ambitions and energy which resulted into a hazy fade-out of actors and fade-in of new actors.

> "Both ideas did not have much in common with each other. Eventually we decided that it would be better to each go in a different direction and develop four different deals if the connections are that minimal." – Urban Accessibility

The exploration shows that there was a discrepancy in the way cities and the national government experience to what extent it should be decided who gets to join and who does not. Since cities individually submitted a societal problem, it has been experienced as difficult by cities to find other cities who relate to the subject without significantly changing the focus of the City Deals. In addition, respondents perceived the value of inclusion of more cities within a deal differently. Larger cities perceived the added value more negatively then smaller cities. Conversely, respondents of the national governments stated that their aim is to be there for the whole of the Netherlands and not to solve a local problem perceived by a single city.

> "Eventually we told Amsterdam that if this is the deal, then there will be no deal. The Minister will not solve an individual problem only perceived by Amsterdam. A City Deal is there to cooperatively solve a regional exceeding problem." – Warm Welcome for Talent

The literature states that actors must be selected that have the same interest as stake as the other chosen actors, for actors to devote resources to the network. The exploration showed that the national

government and cities differ in their interest which resulted that resources were not fully devoted to the network by the actors, which will be discussed further in the chapter on setting the institutional capacity. Interest differ due to the different operational levels the actors operate on. Moreover, the exploration showed that different interest could also occur among different cities as cities are competitors to each other and experience slightly different problems on which it is difficult to adequately form the identifying agenda of the City Deal. For the deal Inclusive City, the cities cooperated on the problem before City Deals has been introduced as an instrument and the cities experienced less difficulties in setting the identifying agenda for their deal. For the deal Climate Adaptation, the established network aims to utilize the chances arising with climate change, but also compete to be a leader in climate adaptation, and since every city experience different problems with climate change it has been experienced as more difficult to set the agenda. Furthermore, the exploration revealed that no weak links have been deactivated within a City Deal. Respondents argued that some cities had withdrawn of the City Deal in the goal formulation phase, but no city has been deactivated from a network in the execution phase of a City Deal. Most respondent were quite positive on the established network and perceived it as one of the prime benefits from the City Deal as the quote below illustrates. As argued by an interviewee from the deal Roadmap Next Economy.

> *"Institutionally the right partners have been brought together, and I also think the network succeeded to give ground to the economical part of the deal." – Roadmap Next Economy*

But some respondents argued that they would like to embed a moment within their City Deal where partners can enter or voluntary quit a City Deal, but that actors were scared to develop such a moment. Literature argues that such a moment where a network can be rearranged would benefit the network if they are not performing as desired. Moreover, the introduction of new actors can change the network dynamics which is seen by the literature as a positive contribution to shift the influence of a network. Furthermore, fluid leadership is addressed as a condition for networks. For each deal, a city has been designated as the pulling factor of the City Deal. Sometimes the leadership is facilitated by the city and sometimes cities hire an external process facilitator as the leader of the deal. Some deals have shown to fluidly adapt the leadership role throughout the process. For example, the deal Circular City hired a process facilitator to set up the deal, but figured that different skills were needed for the various stages throughout a City Deal and hired a process facilitator with more knowledge on circular economy.

4.2.1.2. Setting the institutional capacity

Eventually after the network has been established, the actors collectively set the institutional capacity available during the goal formulation phase of the City Deal. In the goal formulation phase actors determine what the goal of their City Deal will be and what each actor will or should contribute to the process. First the main findings regarding the openness of the goal formulation phase will be introduced and second the main findings regarding the contributed resources by the actors.

In general, the results show that city respondents are more negative about the open attitudes within City Deals, while respondents from the national government are positive about the openness of the attitudes throughout the process.

City respondents struggled with the fragmentation of the national government in the goal formulation phase. A City Deal is often cross sectoral and therefore crosses the boundaries of multiple ministries.

Moreover, the aim of BZK is also to involve multiple ministries per City Deals. However, a City Deal is an instrument of the ministry of BZK, and other ministries have their own instruments through which the ministries would rather govern. This fragmentation between ministries is often experienced by city respondents as negative and city respondents argued that there is a need for a stronger sense of leadership that unifies City Deals as an instrument on the national government level.

"If I want to report something to the second chamber I will do that through the ministry of I&M, not through a BZK instrument." – Urban Accessibility

"My minister ordered me to develop Living Labs." – Healthy Urban Living

Another negative experience among cities has been the fact that the goal formulation phase is too open. The openness of City Deals as an instrument is experienced as ambiguous by city respondents. Respondents argue that the conditions (to arrive at a City Deal) and the expectations (of the different partners on what a City Deal could be) is ambiguous, which resulted into an extensive goal formulation process and a lack of focus. It is argued by some respondents that specific guidelines from the national government about the objectives and possibilities of City Deals could help to create a sharper focus earlier on in the City Deal. However, during the feedback moment city respondents were scared that more guidelines would limit the potential innovative character of the City Deal. However, the guidelines should not be there to limit the potential innovative character of the City Deal, but should generate a common perception on what a City Deal could be and could not be, so that the actors could arrive at a specific focus earlier. For now, a city deal has been experienced as an instrument with not much grip to facilitate a shared problem definition or to divide tasks for the execution phase. In contrast to the openness of the process, respondents argued that one thing was too closed. City respondents found it ambiguous that a City Deal has too few leads to adjust current legislation or regulation, especially in the light that Agenda Stad aims to resolve obstacles in regulation and legislation to stimulate innovative solutions for the complex societal problems. More strongly, in the written deal for the Inclusive City it is implied that planned experiments should occur within the existing boundaries of current legislation.

A more positive effect of City Deals on the institutional capacity is that respondents experienced the network of actors from multiple levels as positive. In general respondents argue that the added value of City Deals is that it brings together actors who operate on different organizational levels and therefore do not understand each other as well. Respondents report that by working together on a problem, they understand each other organization a bit better which, in turn, improved the openness of the attitudes towards each other.

Another issue regarding the limitation of setting the institutional capacity of a network has been the geographical distance. Physical appointments are preferred over email, phone and skype appointments to arrive at common shared goals, and therefore investments need to be made by the actors to physically attend meetings. However, sometimes the network of a City Deal exists of ten cities which means that at least ten persons should be available at a certain date. Respondents have experienced this as a negative influence regarding the process of a City Deal. Respondents argued that since City Deal work is often not included within their current workload, it is difficult to preserve a date in a fully booked agenda or when last minute a work-related appointment drops in.

In relation to the geographical distance, the involvement of an external process facilitator has been positively experienced by the respondents. Since City Deal officials do not have much time for a City Deal to physically arrive at common goals, the involvement of an external process facilitator has been experienced as essential. An external facilitator has the time and capacity to connect expectations of different actors and to put pressure on respondents to deliver their contributions towards the City Deal. It has also been argued that an external is preferred over an internal facilitator, since interests could get entangled. However, not every City Deal has the resources to finance an external facilitator and resources need to be set available for this investment.

> *"I noticed that the interest of actors differs, the municipalities, the ministries, the knowledge institutions. It is too much work for them to be updated about all the different actors. There must be someone who drives the process and has the time for it." – Circular City*

Finally, cities, larger cities more than smaller cities, experience an urge to compete and are more reluctant in fully making their institutional capacity available on some matters. It can be argued that a City Deal contributed positively to the setting of the institutional capacity by cities, since would not even discuss the availability of their institutional capacity without the existence of a City Deal. However, for City Deals to have their full effect, cities need to look past their own interest to set their institutional capacity available for a network to collectively solve a specific problem.

> *"Cities are proud, they all think they know how to solve it, that they do no need anyone else. And well, not every city of course, but I do experience it quite often." – Urban Construction*

Another important aspect regarding the institutional capacity is the availability of resources within the network. The exploration shows that both parties experiences the availability of financial resources and time more negatively than positive. Additionally, cities mentioned the availability (or lack of) resources more than the national government level did. A side note for resource availability is that BZK specifically emphasized from the start that a City Deal is not an instrument for cities to submit for funds. The ministries, one more than the other, articulated specifically that there is some capacity to facilitate the process, but not to finance the full project.

Throughout the coding process, resource availability has been split up in resource availability of capacity (such as finances or personnel) or information (such as knowledge and data). The exploration shows that the availability of information is less frequently discussed then capacity, but when discussed it is perceived positive by all the actors. On the other side, capacity has been discussed more frequently throughout the interviews and has been the number two barrier for actors when asked about constraints throughout the process. A main frustration among the city respondents was that the ministries showed a closed attitude towards their availability of resources. If there was a financial compensation within the deal, other than process compensation, then the ministry would not sign the deal. It had been clearly mentioned beforehand by the national government that a City Deal is not an instrument to receive financial resources, but respondents argued that if all actors were partners throughout the process then every actor should contribute equally. Since finances were not open for discussion, other parties also contribute as little as possible financially since the goal searching phase often lacked focus and the initial benefits of a City Deal by cities were experienced as vague. However, officials from the national government and cities stated that since ministries do not facilitate an open

discussion about the contribution of resources, City Deals stay at an intention level instead of an action level as illustrated by the quote below.

> *"Those City Deals, I do not know them all by hard, but the ones I remembered got stuck on the intention level. It is easy to quickly arrive at intentions, but what do those intentions mean. You need to grab your wallet and act. You got to rise above the intention level, then a City Deal will have a purpose." – Food on the Urban Agenda*

However, cities also mention a positive experience regarding the availability of resources. The description of City Deals implies that the national government could help offering their network to cities to create or gain knowledge on certain areas. The national government adhered to this promised and has been experienced positively. For example, ministries offered the cooperation of the Chamber of Commerce, Platform 31, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, Rijkswaterstaat, or even opened a new counter in response of the deal Inclusive City. Both city and ministerial respondents experienced this as a positive effect of the City Deals and as something that would never have happened without a City Deal.

Another positive experience regarding resource availability has been the availability of resources to facilitate the process by hiring a process manager. In general, the process manger has been stated by the respondents as essential for a City Deal. In most of the cases, both parties (cities and the national government) opened their resources to collectively hire a process manager. In fewer cases, the cities hired the process manager and in others the ministries did. Additionally, the availability of personnel from the national government is appreciated by the respondents. Respondents argued that within cities, the workload associated with City Deals adds up to the regular workload of civil servants. Writing and working on a City Deal is something city respondents did on the side, which city respondents experienced as unfortunate as they could not give the deal the full attention that it needed. This was one of the reasons why the process manager has been valued as essential as he/she could put pressure on civil servants to deliver. Moreover, for ministry officials a City Deal could be embedded within their regular workload, freeing up some capacity that cities could not offer. This trade-off of resources has been perceived as an effect due to City Deals as well.

4.2.1.3. Conclusion

This exploration has shown that the effect of a City Deal on the institutional capacity of a network is limited. A positive effect of a City is the established network between the actors, that would not have been established without the City Deal. However, specific guidelines on what exactly a City Deal entails and how a deal could take form could enable actors to focus earlier on in the deal. Respondents stated that if it is not clear for respondents what the potential benefits could be of a City Deal due to a lack of focus, then respondents will invest limited resources within their deal. When actors invest limited resources in a network governing a complex societal problem, the capacity of a network to collectively govern such a problem will decrease. If City Deals want to increase the effect of their governance capacity, then more guidelines regarding City Deals are need, an open discussion about the availability of resources are needed, and an external process facilitator is needed to manage the goals and expectations of a deal.

4.2.2. Governance Performance

This chapter aims to explore the effect of City Deals on the collective problem solving of actors in terms of process and impact. Governance performance has been explored by three different indicators: practicing rights, social learning, and the effectiveness and cost effectiveness. First, the limiting factors throughout the execution of a City Deal will be identified to explore the effective employment of resources within the network. Furthermore, this chapter will explore how networks attempted to learn throughout the process and how that influenced the future of the process.

4.2.2.1. Factors limiting the governance performance and the effective employment of resources

A co-occurrence analysis, as shown in figure 11 in appendix 7.3, showed that the code practicing right most often co-occurred with the ministry of I&M. Two major factors played a part; first, as stated within the institutional capacity, respondents of the ministry of I&M showed a lesser sense of ownership for a City Deal then other ministries. This is partly concluded by personal experience throughout the interviews, but also by officials cooperating with I&M in a City Deal network. For example, an I&M official stated in its interview that if I&M got something to communicate to the second chamber, they preferably will do so using their own means, for example by Living Labs, instead of through instruments initiated by BZK. The lesser extent of ownership has been experienced as a factor that limited the governance performance of a network to collectively solve complex societal problems. Second, potential City Deals under the ministry of I&M were forwarded by BZK without exactly knowing what plans were already brewing at the ministry of I&M. The City Deal Urban Accessibility raised resistance at I&M since the deal was in violation with already existing policy, in this case the Multiannual Program Infrastructure, Space and Transport (MIRT). A ministerial official of I&M stated that if you are already attempting to fix a problem with one line, you do not create a parallel line, that is just a waste of time and resources. This was the main reason why Urban Accessibility did not make the cut as a City Deal. The quote below illustrates that fragmentation, and I&M, limited the practicing rights within the City Deal Climate Adaptation.

> *"Consequently, you see that I&M were simultaneously working on the Living Labs, which is a similar idea, but BZK was first you know. So that is where we already saw the fragmentation first. Subsequently, we worked to tackle the fragmentation, but to do so we needed the help of I&M, but then fragmentation got in our way since I&M did not really want to join a BZK party." – Climate Adaptation*

A discussion often arises among respondents whether a City Deal would perform better within existing policy trajectories or at the start of new trajectories. According to some respondents the instrument should be better connected to current policy trajectories. Other respondents argued that there are other means to achieve the same results as City Deals have created so far. A city Deal would then be the less preferred option since there are no resources connected to it. A respondent stated that he thought that the most limiting factor was that decisions were made elsewhere and that he would like to have been more connected to that decision arena. However, other respondents argue that a close connection to an existing policy trajectory could pose a danger for the performance of City Deal. Those respondents argue that there needs to be a certain tension for City Deals to have their use, for example urban experimentation and the national policy domains who are strongly decentralized as substantiated by the quote below. The exploration showed that City Deals that are connected to national policy in a starting phase (Climate Adaptation, Food on the Urban Agenda), experience less

resistance and are in general more positive about their deal, then City Deals who tackle an issue where there is already a policy at hand (Urban Accessibility, Digital Living Environment).

> *"A City Deal should poke something, the established order or change only then has a City Deal proven its usefulness." – Urban Accessibility*

It has been mentioned in chapter 4.2.1.2. that respondents experiences a lack of resources. Correspondingly, the lack of resources, led to limiting practicing rights for a network to solve the collective problem at hand. The unavailability of resources for the deals resulted in uncertainties among the respondents which have cost respondents an extensive amount of negative energy as illustrated by the quote below.

> *"Well financial resources are scarce, we are scavenging for resources each time but that's a very negative way of working. For now, we are covered for the first half of 2017 and now we need to cover the next half. I truly feel that too much negative energy went into this process." – Inclusive City*

City Deals require more than just finance, it also requires personnel that can positively influence the favorable outcome. It has been mentioned that the work load associated with a City Deal is often not incorporated within the regular workload of City Deal representatives, there is more capacity to work on the improvement of City Deals within the national government then within cities. Therefore, the low availability of time forces City Deal participants to use time as effectively as possible, two mains issues have been revealed regarding the effective use of time within City Deals. First, collectively coming to a written deal has been experienced as an ineffective use of human resources. Respondents argued that writing a City Deal was overly complex and experienced writing a deal as demotivating. Cities argued that, "for the sake of motivation", the national government should allow cities to cooperate with their legal department instead of the currently controlling one direction feedback moment. This feedback system, as experienced by city respondents, was harsh, took too long and demotivated the cities to cooperate. Another issue regarding the written deal is the fact that every City Deal has included the phrase: "These agreements are not legally binding". Some city respondents stated that since the phrase is in the deal, cities feel limited pressure regarding the execution of the City Deal as the deal can be considered as a declaration of intent. Excluding binding commitment can be perceived as a negative contribution towards the governance performance of a network.

> *"It's horrible, just horrible, and while it does not even have a legal status. I'm just like, stop involving those lawyers." – Circular City*

> *"And then you need to write the deal, and you know, nobody is happy about the format of that deal. But then you attempt to write one and you send it back to the partners for feedback and then you get the most intense feedback of those lawyers of the ministries." – Health Hub*

Second, the exploration revealed that for actors to effectively use their time and resources, every actor representative within the network should have a personal connection to the subject. On the city level, a personal connection is almost self-evident as the topics are submitted bottom-up. However, at the level of the national government it is less self-evident as they need to facilitate a topic from bottom-up and not top-down. City Deals require an experimental state of mind from ministry officials to facilitate innovation, and even though the intentions of City Deals are innovative, when not passed on

to the executive ministry officials, City Deals networks tend to think within existing systems. In City Deals were the ministry officials had a personal connection with the problem, a thrive, or experienced the problem, facilitated more innovative ideas then when there was no personal connection experienced. If ministries really want to facilitate the innovative thought of mind within City Deals, then they need to be selective on who they appoint to a City Deal. If there are no personnel with a clear personal connection, qualifications or innovative state of mind within the organization, then a City Deal will facilitate innovation less effectively. The quote bellows illustrate how a respondent who thought within the existing systems of his organization hindered the experimental character of the City Deal.

> *"A difficulty was the cooperation with Woonconnect, Eindhoven, thought we were whining while at the same time, I knew this was going to give trouble within the national government, because you know I have been doing this for a while. Eventually this became apparent within EZ and I&M to find a form that would be acceptable for both of us. Cause we were not going to monopolize a private party."*
> *– Digital Living Environment*

Regarding the governance performance of a network, it is not very effective to collectively invest scarce time to find the financial resources necessary for the City Deal. However, the fact that resources are scarce within City Deals does not mean that the City Deal cannot be effective. In some cases, the scarcity of resources forces actors to creatively think about solutions to obtain the goal with the least amount of resources. The deals Climate Adaptation and Circular City established an 'entrance fee' for cities to participate. If a city wanted to have joined the deal, they should have contributed 5000 euro to the City Deal process. That way, both deals had some space to maneuver. Climate Adaptation and Urban Construction used their network to provide PhD and master thesis positions to develop knowledge with relatively low investment costs. Other deals, such as Inclusive City, struggled more with the unavailability of capacity and to receive more finances they were confronted with the choice to include another institution to receive funds for the execution of the deal. However, the network was reluctant to cooperate as it was perceived that the joined institution would not have the same affinity to the deal as the current network, which was perceived as a greater threat for the effectiveness of the deal then the scarcity of resources. Deals who did have some access to financial resources used it to outsource a research project to an external party (Urban Construction, Warm Welcome for Talent). Creative use of resources is not always evenly possible for each City Deal. Respondents argue that to avoid the resource problems in hindsight and increase the effective employment of resources, City Deals needs to be operationalized before the physical deal is struck so the network knows more concise what resources are needed to reach the goal of the City Deal. In relation to this, throughout the exploration the importance of events was stressed to stimulate the energy of actors and to make steps. However, respondents argued that often after the deal has been signed, the network entered an operational phase were a lot of energy was lost since not the right amount of resources were set available to effectively operationalize the City Deal. Respondents argued that a City Deal could become more effective when a deal is operationalized beforehand and the energy of signing the deal can be used to accelerate the vigor of a deal.

City Deals networks who did made some financial resources available to the process used those resources to finance a process facilitator or to outsource a research to an external party. Respondents state that a process facilitator delivers as essential contribution to a City Deal as officials do not have

much time to be involved with the facilitation of the process. Most City Deals had the capacity, financial or personnel, to assign a project facilitator and experienced this as beneficial contribution to the process. Some City Deals (Urban Accessibility, Urban Construction) did not assign a process facilitator and stated that if they could do one thing differently it would be to assign a process facilitator. For Urban Construction, the process has been pushed by an official of the ministry of BZK but due to time constraints partners felt like they could have contributed more to the goal searching phase of the process if they were asked. Regarding the limiting resources available for the City Deal process it is considered that appointing a process facilitator is the most effective allocation of the limited resources available in a City Deal network, as illustrated by the quote below of one of the most positive City Deals.

> *"Look, to keep a City Deal running, you need to have some backup. Because you know, we do it alongside our regular jobs. And sometimes that work can be connected to your regular workload and sometimes it cannot. Therefore, there needs to be a facilitator who guards a certain continuation within the City Deal. That is why you really need to make sure you got some finances to hire a facilitator and I am happy we made sure of that." – Food on the Urban Agenda*

Another key factor which limited the governance performance of a City Deal was regulation and legislation. Most respondents argued that access to the knowledge of other governmental levels due to the City Deal was helpful to understand what is possible and what is not possible within existing legislation. The City Deals that struggled with legislation did so due to the privacy law and the procurement and competition law. Which is questionable since Agenda Stad states that the national government could facilitate local based innovation by adjusting their procurement policy and to disable current legislation or regulation for experimentation space (Denktank Agenda Stad, 2015). For example, the City Deal Digital Living Environment was built around the innovation of a single market player, that could digitalize the living environment of households and generate data that could be used to improve the livability of that area. The idea was that the generated data would be governed under the supervision of the national government, instead of a market company who could use personal data for their own gains. However, the generated data was in contradiction with the privacy law and it was insisted by the national government that specific functionalities, or data generation functions, should be excluded from the program which would require new investment costs. Furthermore, the program was a closed source program and the competition law states that the national government could not support a close sourced program. Transitioning a program from a closed source to an open source program required another investment cost but also shifts the relation and responsibilities of the developer and the end users creating a new dynamic. The deal Digital Living Environment is one of the most innovative deals since the deal is built around a technological innovation instead of a process innovation, but the deal receives the most resistance as well. While exploring this deal and others it could be observed that the deal receives resistance since a private party is closely connected to the deal, while with other deals private parties contribute knowledge regarding the problem, but not the technological solution for the social transition. Regarding this case, it could be argued that if City Deals are built around a technological innovation from a private party, then the deal will be less effective as it will perceive more barriers. However, innovation is driven by competition between companies and organizations. If City Deals want to facilitate the effect they aim to facilitate then they should provide more space for innovation, by disabling legislation or regulation, for City Deals to be effective.

Another factor determining the effectiveness or performance of a network is how a City Deal will be followed-up. As mentioned, City Deals often aim to generate and bundle knowledge using their network which they could use to tackle their problem or facilitate their transition at hand. However, when asked to respondent what will happen to the City Deal after it has been finished most respondents said they did not know. The City Deal Roadmap next economy is one of the two deals which is finished. The deal performed a research on how to future proof their investment agenda so that the region of The Hague and Rotterdam stays relevant in a future where modern technologies arise. For example, how do you stay relevant as a harbor city when the 3D printer enters the market? The roadmap has been developed and business cases have been executed. However, respondents argued that the real work needs to start now, but that there has not been a discussion yet about the follow-up of the results of the City Deal. In terms of effectiveness, a City Deal is not effective when the goals have been reached within the time limit, but is effective when multi-level actors create a spin-off to collectively solve their larger problem. It is difficult to determine what the future effects will be since most City Deals are still in their execution phase. However, based on the City Deals that have ended so far and the responses gathered on the expected follow-up of the City Deals, it is advised that (new) City Deals create an open discussion in which they articulate how the City Deal and their actors can contribute to the larger problem at hand after the City Deal has ended.

> *"I can't imagine, with any City Deal, that they have accomplished what they wanted to accomplish at the end of the deal. There's a world to solve after a deal and we should aim to solve that collectively in some kind of prequel of the deal." – Roadmap Next Economy*

Another issue is that since City Deals can been perceived as "declarations of intent", due to the lack of resources and the openness of the process as mentioned in the institutional capacity chapter. A City Deal can be seen by respondents as a 'paper tiger' with minimal or no concrete results. When questioned what respondents saw as the added value of City Deals, some respondents (Health Hub, Digital Living Environment) argued that a City Deal is a 'paper tiger', good for show but what will be the effect of it as illustrated by the quote below.

> *"I've told my co-worker, it does not need to get any crazier. So far, the City Deal is only a paper tiger and the first real action that happening right now is somebody who is there to evaluate the City Deal. We have not even started yet, we don't even have a penny to spend one hour on it." – Digital Living Environment*

When asked to a city official if she was happy with the results of the City Deal, she answered yes but also added that if I would ask the same question to het Alderman he would say no. She argued that since there are no visible results of a City Deal on the lower level that voters can experience, Aldermans do not experience the use to invest time and resources in a City Deal. Respondents also stated that a City Deal stands or falls with the commitment of an Alderman. If these abstract results are the first impressions of Alderman's, they who will decide whether a city will continue or not, then it could be expected that cities will be less likely to strike deals with the national government in the future, which is the case with Rotterdam already as shown in the quote below. It can be argued that if City Deals only agrees on intentions, then cities will lose their trust in the instrument. For City Deals to be effective in the future the deals need to take more form so that the instrument could better serve its usefulness.

> *"You know our Agenda Stad flow is kind of gone you know, we don't do much with it anymore, also because our focus is on the elections. You know we got Agenda Stad as a line, but we also got other lines. Our key issues have been discussed and at some point, you know, the momentum is gone." – Roadmap Next Economy*

4.2.2.2. The social learning capacity of a network

A critical point regarding the governance performance is the extent to which a network adjusts their goals and policy techniques in the light of experiences and additional information to better attain their ultimate objective of governance. In general, the exploration reveals that the networks unintentionally incorporated social learning within their deals. Most City Deals (Warm Welcome for Talent, Urban Construction, Inclusive City, Digital Living Environment, Food on the Urban Agenda) use their City Deal to attain new knowledge on their problem at hand and to understand how to tackle it collectively. Warm Welcome for Talent used the City Deal to confirm what they already knew to get political support, while Urban Construction used research to attain information on how cities and national government could cooperate to form a reasoned policy which addresses urban construction. Inclusive City performed a case study to identify the problems that disadvantaged the lower social classes and on how funds could be distributed more efficiently based on the identified problems. Other deals, such as Climate Adaptation and Circular City, attempted differently to incorporate experiences and newly attained information in their process. These City Deals used their network to learn and bundle the information gained by experiments and pilots on a certain topic (climate adaptation or circular economy). This would allow cities to make a better-informed decision as they have learned from previous experiences from other cities.

However, only Climate Adaptation stated to have the intention to perform an internal evaluation as on how to adjust their techniques or goals to better attain their ultimate objective. An improvement could be to oblige an evaluation after the first year of a City Deal on which actors could adjust their goals, techniques or resource input as the ultimate objective sees fit after a year of experience. However, respondents argue that the workload of City Deals adds to their regular workload and pressure is experienced while honoring the already existing commitments. The national government could take a role on of facilitate the evaluation for each City Deal to keep focus on how to attain the ultimate objective. The ministry should then facilitate an open discussion on which new commitments, such as resource commitments, could be made based on the evaluation that differ from the first deal text. Some respondents argued that it is difficult to admit if something is not working the way it was expected to be, but that actors should be able to adjust a City Deal as they are all sailing on new waters. Few City Deals have a duration of four years and more, especially for those deals an internal evaluation has argued to be useful as it identifies whether adjustments would be necessary.

> *"I believe that, you know when you want to be a learning network, at one point you have got to evaluate. At some point you need to decide, you know, like this track was relevant but due to circumstances, could be anything, is not relevant anymore. Or we could not free any resources for is, or its too much then we initially thought. I would dare to decide that, don't think everybody would, but I would!" – Climate Adaptation*

The interviews also reveal that larger cities have more capacity to learn since larger cities are in more deals entangled then smaller cities. For example, the municipality of Utrecht is involved with five deals and representatives of those deals come together once a month to discuss the progress on Agenda

Stad and share the best practices and experiences of their deals. Amsterdam and Rotterdam also use their internal network to learn from their experiences, although less structural. However, smaller cities are often involved with one or two deals and therefore do not have the opportunity to internally learn from best practices. The national government could adopt a role on which they facilitate the possibility for (smaller) cities to learn from previous City Deal experiences. A challenge would be to allow cities to learn from other experiences while not requiring too much time of the people involved.

4.2.2.3. Conclusion

The effect of City Deals on the governance performance of a network can be considered as good. There are some factors (I&M, funds, time, regulation) limiting the performance but networks are resourceful in finding ways to tackle or avoid the limiting practicing right. It can be considered that for the limited amount of resources available to City Deals, networks are effective in reaching their goal with the limited resources they have, even though respondents experience it as an exhaustive and discouraging process. So far two City Deals have been finished (Roadmap Next Economy and Warm Welcome for Talent) and more deals expect to reach their goal within the duration of their City Deal. Almost all respondents argued that more action could have been accomplished when there was more institutional capacity available for the City Deal. Some respondents experienced the effects of a City Deal as a paper tiger, who is good for show but does not have much effect. In general, City Deals performed on what they preached, but also argue that goals need to be searched more concise and resources needs to be set available to fully facilitate the larger transitioning challenge. City respondents argued that due to the limiting and abstract effects of a City Deal, City Deals suffered some image damages on the directory level of cities. For City Deals to have the effect they aim to have ambitions need to be upgraded to a more concrete level.

4.3. Protective Spaces within City Deals

The effect of City Deals on the governance capacity of a network to collectively solve a complex societal problem has been explored. For this chapter, the same will be explored regarding the effect of City Deals on the facilitation of a protective space by a network. As stated in the theoretical framework, a protective space can be distinguished through three distinct functions: shielding, nurturing and empowerment. Each of these functions will be explored to evaluate the effect of City Deals.

4.3.1. Shielding

Shielding has been defined as the processes that, actively or passively, hold at bay certain selection pressures from mainstream selection environment. City Deals could have the potential to actively or passively shield innovation from their mainstream selection environment. In general, most respondents agree that a City Deal is a new instrument that facilitates a discussion around a problem where actors, who normally would not have a discussion, can discuss what according to who is interfering and how it could be solved. Moreover, respondents argue that City Deals are more a process experiment that generates support among directors to innovatively solve a complex problem by means of governance. Therefore, City Deals can be defined as an instrument that shields actors from their regular system processes and to discuss and come to terms in a new way of handling. But to what extent did City Deals shield actors to discuss and come to terms outside of their regular processes?

> *"It generates support within your organization to enable innovation, but I see it more as a new form of cooperation where you can casually exchange images and barriers." – Circular City*

According to the ministry of BZK, a City Deal could be an instrument that shield actors while experimenting outside existing regulation or legislation. However, ministerial and city respondents argued that facilitating an experimental space is easier said than done by ministries. Respondents argued that due to the fragmentation within the national government, space for experimentation could not be facilitated by the ministries. Ministries experienced the potential experimental space of City Deals differently and were fragmented on what room should be provided to the network. This fragmentation has resulted into a confusion among cities of what a City Deal potentially could shield. The different intentions of ministries on the use of City Deals as an instrument, resulted into an experience where cities perceived more resistance then they expected, since initially Agenda Stad argued that City Deals provide a space for cities to experiment.

According to city respondents' more space for experimentation could have been facilitated by ministries in two ways: 1) as mentioned a personal connection to the subject or 2) peer-pressure from one ministry to another ministry. Regarding the first, the usefulness of a personal connection to a City Deal of those involved is essential as mentioned within the chapter on governance capacity. City Deals where ministerial officials showed a personal connection to the subject were Inclusive City and Food on the Urban Agenda, and deals where a personal connection lacked was Digital Living Environment and Urban Accessibility. The quote below illustrates how ministerial officials could tend to facilitate innovation a bit further then their organizational systems would allow if they have a personal connection to the subject. Regarding the second, respondents stated that they missed a leading director of Agenda Stad who could put peer pressure on other ministries involved, or even cities, to facilitate the stated goals of Agenda Stad. Respondents argued that such as role could logically fit

within the ministry who is responsible for Agenda Stad. The existence of such a role could put pressure on actors to experiment outside of legislation and regulation, which could stimulate a less fragmented perspective of what Agenda Stad could mean for cities.

> *"I know that my ministry would not have signed the deal if there was no compliance with legislation. So we formulated in a way that it touches the boundaries of legislation. However, the ministry of V&J is now showing interest in the deal but they are scared to death that the deal exceeds their legislation. So I say, at mine ministry they are scared as well, but if cities cross our legislation, then it is not the deal who caused that, but the cities. Anyhow, that is how we attempted to facilitate as much space for innovation as we can." – Inclusive City*

All City Deal networks struggled to determine the boundaries of their City Deals. A reason was that respondents argued, as stated in the institutional capacity chapter, that the process was to open. The openness of the process had also its effect on the shielding of a niche by a network. The lack of focus in a deal could pose a problem for the facilitation of a protective space since boundaries are needed to determine what to protect from mainstream selection systems. Strategies need to be developed on how to manage the expectations of respondents on what City Deals are or could be. BZK aimed to keep the City Deal process intentionally as open as possible, so that networks could collectively determine the potential of a City Deal. The quote bellows illustrates the openness of the process and how cities experienced the openness. To maximize the facilitated space for innovation, the instrument and the problem need to be clearly structured for a network to determine what specifically can be shielded and how the instrument can help with that. As mentioned, the respondents were reluctant against the idea during the feedback moment to specify the instrument City Deals further. The instrument should have boundaries that manage the different expectations of a network more sufficiently, but it should not decrease the innovative potential of a City Deal

> *"At the beginning, it was not really clear what was really meant with a City Deal. It was interesting but also difficult as the national government really dropped it at the feet of the cities. They said yeah just name what you want, find some other cities and then we will join to. It does not work that. It is not easy to find partners for a problem that's not yet clear for an instrument that's also not that clear." – Roadmap Next Economy*

Furthermore, when exploring the actual or physical experiments within City Deals it is noticeable that all actors to a limited extent facilitate a shielding space for innovation as almost all experiments were ventured before the City Deal. Actors do not experience the added value of setting an experiment for a City Deal since experiments cost resources which the actors did not set available as shown by the quote below. Therefore, a City Deal has almost no effect on the facilitated space for innovation as all experimental space was set before the City Deal. However, the effect of a City Deal is that the experiments are bundled to stimulate a quicker learning curve as actors share their learning experiences.

> *"Yes, they were experiments that were already running, because you know- how do you say that? You're not going to set a whole new experiment just for a City Deal." – Climate Adaptation*

4.3.1.1. Conclusion

The exploration has revealed that the effects of City Deals is limited on the facilitation of a shielding function for a protective space. City Deals promote to stay within the limits of the current selection systems as they need to stay within legislative and regulative boundaries and no financial resources are involved for City Deal. For City Deals to enable innovation, or even a transition, more experimental capacity is needed for a network to go beyond the legislative or resource boundaries. This capacity to experiment should be set during the phase where the network decides on the institutional capacity, since actors determine during that phase what they intend to shield. A positive effect of City Deals is that it creates a new setting where actors can discuss about the problems they are facing and on how the problem could be or should be solved. City Deals are a shield to discuss issues outside the regular organizational processes of actors, but if City Deals aim to stimulate innovation then it should aim to go beyond the shielding of organizational processes.

4.3.2. Nurturing

Nurturing has been defined as the processes that support the development of the path-breaking innovation. Nurturing processes have been identified as articulation, learning processes, and network formation. This chapter explores the effect of City Deals on the processes that supports the development of the path-breaking innovation.

4.3.2.1. Articulation of networks

The previous chapter argued that City Deals initiates a new way of working for the respondents. Almost no respondent had experiences on cooperating that closely with different levels of government on a complex societal problem. To determine the effect of City Deals on the nurturing of the innovation, it is essential to explore the extent to which actors articulated their expectations towards each other to nurture the innovation.

A crucial point regarding this matter has been the effect of a City Deal regarding the specificness of the expectations. As described in the previous chapter the process was too open for the network to focus, meaning the instrument City Deal was not specific enough and did not provide enough guidance to collectively nurture the innovations at hand for each City Deal. The exploration revealed that most City Deals struggled to get specific, which affected each network differently, but also each network tackled it differently. Respondents of Food on the Urban Agenda and Circular City are positive regarding the specificness of their deals. While Urban Accessibility, Digital Living Environment, Health Hub and Healthy Urban Living are predominantly more negative regarding the specificness of their deal. When the respondents' quotations are analyzed regarding the reasons why specificness is experienced positively or negatively the reasons differ for each deal. Healthy Urban Living has not become specific yet since they are in the goal formulation phase. The deal is still taking its time to cooperatively agree on what to include and exclude within the deal and are on their way to get specific. The City Deal Urban Accessibility is lapsed, one of the reasons the deal has lapsed is that actors could not get specific due to their diversity in goals they aimed to achieve. Regarding the deal Digital Living Environment, the deal is not considered specific since each actor aimed to guarantee their own interest, resulting in unique perspective on what is the problem and how it should be solved. The deal Health Hub remains at an abstraction level that gives the actors no specific guidance on how to continue and more effort is needed to concretize the goals as illustrated by the quote below. However, the City Deal Food on the Urban Agenda has aimed to learn from the previous experiences of other City Deals and are deliberatively staying away from abstraction and attempt to focus early on which the respondents experienced as positive. The City Deal Circular City invested within their deal by organizing a weekend in a hotel were the actors could come together and work on the goal formulation of their deal. The geographical distance for the partners within this deal is relatively large and by organizing a work weekend the actors could make progress regarding the goal searching and formulation of the City Deal in real life instead of by mail and minimize the traveling time of those involved. Respondents experienced this as a positive way to specify the expectations.

> *"My expectations were that we should have had more concrete agreements at this point than we have now. More work is needed in this phase to specify the goals and agreements more." – Health Hub*

Another point is the sense of ownership regarding a City Deal. The exploration revealed that when cities, or even the national government, loses their sense of ownership than an innovation is less likely to be nurtured. Respondents (Climate Adaptation, Circular City) argued that due to a division in the

distribution of roles between the city and the national government, actors decreased their sense of ownership while in the goal formulation phase. The distribution is as followed, a city presents a problem and the national government accepts it under the circumstances that there are no funds involved, the deal stays within the legislation, and all claims are not legally binding. These limitations change the profound idea substantially and the sense of ownership of cities could decrease. Some respondents argued that the same results could have been achieved without the involvement of the national government or that goals could be more ambitious (Warm Welcome for Talent, Inclusive City, and Digital Living Environment). The sense of ownership needs to be robust, shared by all the actors, to effectively manage the niche. On the other hand, City Deals streamlined the expectations of the network since the goal formation phase was often extensive due to the openness and the scarcity of resources. Most respondents argued they had different expectations of the process initially, but the duration of the formulation phase helped to manage the expectations.

> *"If you would ask me, how much percent of the success that we have achieved is caused by the City Deal, then I would say ten to fifteen percent. Which is achieved by the three persons involved and the communicative benefits they could achieve within their organization. But in general, I think we would got this far without the City Deal." – Inclusive City*

Regarding the quality of the expectations within City Deals it is somewhat different. Since resources are scarce within a City deals process, actors argue that experimental failure is often not an option. In addition, City Deals are at the start of an innovation, there are no preceding project available to nurture the quality of the expectations of a network. Therefore, City Deals often have the tendency to contribute in the form of a cooperative research that if resources should be invested, then the network would qualitatively know where to invest the resources. For example, with the City Deal Warm Welcome for Talent the municipality of Amsterdam had a suspicion regarding the source of their problem, but the national government would not act based on a single suspicion. As a result, the network cooperatively performed a research with multiple municipalities on which the cities research the specific problem and provided recommendations on what changes need to be made within each organization. This research has been finished and all the actors are implementing the recommendations from the research within their organization. It could be concluded that a City Deal is not substantiated by ongoing project, but often results in the ongoing project that could substantiate the expectations. Therefore, the effect of a City Deals is to qualitatively manage the expectations of a network since there are no other ongoing projects and which to base the expectations on effect the quality of the expectations.

4.3.2.2. The learning ability of a network

This effect of City Deals also has its effect on the learning processes of a network. Since not much research is done before a City Deal, City Deals often perform a research to accumulate data and facts on which to some extent change the cognitive frames and assumptions of a network (Warm Welcome for Talent, Inclusive City, Urban Construction). Other deals (Health Hub, Roadmap Next Economy, Healthy Urban Living) accumulate to a lesser extent data and facts by the means of a research, but aim to do so by the inclusion of advisory boards or knowledge institutions within their network. Circular City, Food on the Urban Agenda and Climate Adaptation aim to accumulate the experimental data and facts of pilots from their newly formed network to develop a best practice community for actors outside of the City Deal to learn from and to provide input for the national agenda on their matters. It

can be concluded that City Deals generate or bundle a lot of knowledge and experiences, but how does that change the cognitive frames and assumption of the actors within a network?

For many City Deals the learning processes are there, but not yet clearly defined. This hinders the learning potential from experiments and the distribution of experiences to scale-up innovation. Ambiguity is created by the indistinct connection between the experiments on the city level, and with the drawing of general conclusions, how the general conclusions are shared within and outside the City Deal network, and the translation of those conclusion to concrete guidelines for innovations in policy and the implementations practices. Respondents argue that to increase the learning potential of a City Deal a baseline measurement preceding the deal is necessary, and standardizing the learning processes within a network would increase the learning potential. Both measurements would help networks to take concrete steps faster in the execution phase of a City Deal. The national government could adopt a more active role regarding the collection and implementing of the best practices to improve the diffusion of knowledge within networks.

A positive example of a City Deal with a clearly defined learning processes is the City Deal Inclusive City. The network followed a clear path of three phases from problem analysis to the intended system change. Phase one performed an analysis of the daily practices of vulnerable households, by a pilot of hundred cases, within the social domain (living, work, income, debt, debt relief, care, youth care, and support for the old and disabled). The analysis gave insight into the functioning of the current system and revealed transitional bottlenecks in the system. In phase 2 the parties involved (primarily the municipality in collaboration with professionals and households) designed alternative arrangements for more effective forms of support for the respective households, and these arrangements were experimentally tested in the field. Finally (phase 3), established a 'change agenda' based on the experiences from the experiments. These include improvements in the existing system, in the social domain, and in the work processes among members and between municipalities and other parties. The goal of the deal was to be able to help those in need, citizens who call on the government for social support, better. The design of this deal is a positive example for clarifying learning processes within a deal and that could have its impact in the physical world of citizens, but also the abstract system world of the government (Hamers, Evers, & Dignum, 2017).

However, City Deals can also harbor less structural learning processes, that facilitates the sharing of experiences on which cognitive frames and assumptions can be changed. Respondents argued that due to the established network of City Deals and by enabling a conversation about the best practices of each other, cities assumption about the problem have been broadened. For example, by the quote below.

> *"You really notice the differences between cities on a specific matter and how they have incorporated the problem within their organization. We got a lot of cool stuff going on all the buildings opportunities, lots of cool maps and such. But then I see that The Hague got better information on costs of land and what more." – Urban Construction*

But there are not much learning processes going on between the deals. Some cities initiated some learning processes independently. For example, the municipality of Utrecht is involved within five City Deals. The City Deal representatives structurally come together once a month to discuss the progress of their deals. What barriers were experienced and how did those barriers have been solved. Such

learning processes contribute towards the development of the deal since bottlenecks can be avoided and process can be smoothened. Other larger cities, such as Rotterdam and Amsterdam, also incorporated such feedback moment, although less structural. Smaller municipalities are often involved in fewer City Deals then larger cities and have less opportunities to learn from other deals then large cities have. The City Deal Climate Adaptation is a City Deal with a duration of four years. To remain on track and to keep focus on their goals, the deal independently planned an evaluation of their deal. Do they need to change goals, or are the goals still as relevant as a year ago, and if not, what do they need to change? Such processes have been determined as the respondents as an effective way to learn and to adjust the cognitive frames and assumptions on. However, such processes where actors learn within their deal or between deals are insufficiently facilitated and needs to be better incorporated within City Deal to ensure that every City Deal has a moment to adjust their goals and assumption to better facilitate the innovation.

4.3.2.3. The effect of network formation on the facilitation of protective spaces

Networks are more likely to contribute towards the nurturing of niches if the networks are broad and deep. In general, the respondents experience the broadness of a network as positive. Each City Deal has and aimed to form a network with at least more cities then one, more ministries then one (except for Climate Adaptation), and at least one private actors (such as a knowledge institution). There is as a dissemination between the national government and cities on when a network is perceived as to broad and when not. There is a clear extinction between cities wanting to represent the local level and the national government wanting to represent the national level. Cities think that too many stakeholders will slow down the process and generalize the results of a City Deal, while the national government preferably wants to incorporate every interested actor/city as illustrated by the quote below. Networks should facilitate an open discussion on when there are stakeholders' necessary to achieve the goal. Some deals (Circular City & Climate Adaptation) set an 'entrance fee' for cities to join, this forms a barrier where only the motivated actors will join the network.

> *"If I could do one thing over I would open the process for everybody. It looks kind of weird that the government did not make an open process of it. All cities should be able to join and I don't think that happened for this deal." – Climate Adaptation*

Another issue regarding the matter was that respondents experienced it as difficult to include societal actors to the City Deal to form a broad network. Most deals manage to include societal actors, but also argued that it is very difficult to provide an incentive when the available capacity is limited. However, time is money within a private party and if there are no clear incentives to be involved on the short term, then private organizations can be reluctant to cooperate. However, some respondents argue that the effect of a City Deal is that you can create a different dialogue with partner to discuss how the complex societal problems can be tackled, for example as the quote from a respondent of Health Hub illustrated. However, it could be considered to what extent the private sector should be included within City Deals. To stimulate innovation, it would be preferred since innovation occurs through competition between companies, but there are other instruments (such as the green deals) where there are more benefits for the private sector to get involved.

> *"And because of the City Deal we see that there is a distinct way we can discuss in a client-contractor way in which collectively aim to solve those problems. Suddenly there comes another client, with a different lens then a researcher, who says but*

> *did you consider this and that. Well this voluntary cooperation construct is one of the more important innovation in my opinion." – Health Hub*

Moreover, it has been questioned to respondents to what extent the people within the network could mobilize the commitment and resources within their own organization and network necessary for the City Deal. Most respondents argued that resources (time, knowledge, process funds) could be mobilized by the representatives, but mandate has been experienced as a more difficult resource to mobilize but also essential for the support and execution of the City Deal. The exploration reveals that smaller cities experience it as less difficult to mobilize the mandate from their directors then with larger cities, because of the differences in the bureaucratic organizational structure of both types of cities. One respondent argued that if she could do one thing over, she would start a deal with medium sized cities since medium sized cities can quicker mobilize the resources necessary for the deal. A respondent from a larger city argued that to speed up the City Deal process, City Deal representatives need to determine as much as possible without the involvement of a director.

> *"If possible, my ambition would be to avoid the directory level and to avoid to rapport to the chamber. Everything we could arrange on a different level, we should definitely do." – Warm Welcome for Talent*

However, it has also been experienced as difficult to get mandate within the ministries. For example, the ministry of I&M showed more affinition with the instrument of Living Lab, then a City Deal. Therefore, it had been experienced as difficult for I&M officials to receive a mandate from directors, haltering the speed of a City Deal. On the other hand, the directors of the ministry of EZ had determined to invest resources in City Deals, whereas it had been experienced as easier by EZ officials to receive a mandate for the City Deal. However, if the hurdle of mandate has been overcome and there was a commitment from the directors for the City Deal, within the ministries and cities, then a City Deal experiences less resistance and the process experienced a boost.

Another issue regarding the deepness of a network has been that network are fluid and require different expertise over time. The need for different specializations of people changes during the deal. For example, to start a deal it is important to include persons from the public affair department, while further along the deal strategic persons are necessary, and when executing the deal people who are familiar with content are necessary. The need for distinct types of knowledge or input shifts during the extension of a deal and networks should adopt or be able to mobilize those types of knowledge for the nurturing of a deal. For some deals (Circular City, Food on the Urban Agenda, Warm Welcome for Talent) networks have adapted to the need for distinct types of knowledge inputs and other deals adapted less to that need (Digital Living Environment & Urban Construction).

4.3.2.1. Conclusion
The conditions to collectively nurture an innovation within a City Deal are partially there. Some elements were well incorporated within City Deals, and some elements less well. The main improvement for City Deal would be to incorporate learning processes more structural within a City Deal process so that networks could successfully provide the conditions to nurture the innovation. Structural learning processes that are needed are; internal evaluations to stimulate articulation on the goals of the deal after the deal has been signed, but also to determine how the network needs to change during the distinct phases of a City Deal; between deals about best and worst practices; and the standardization and sharing of the learning processes of the experiments internally and externally

from the network. Current practices are too much reliant on the input and creativity of networks to incorporate the learning processes within their deal and a more systematic umbrella approach is necessary to structurally increase the nurturing potential of a City Deal.

4.3.3. Empowerment

Empowerment of a niche can converge in two ways, the innovation adapts to the current system, or the current system adapts to the innovation. However, it is too soon to fully explore the effects of City Deals on the empowerment of innovation, since City Deals stand in the starting blocks of innovation, but based on the interviews some conclusions can be derived regarding the potential empowering effect of a City Deal.

Since the deals are in the starting blocks, most deals (Warm Welcome for Talent, Urban Construction, Inclusive City) performed a research to collectively pinpoint the problem. Especially those kinds of deals require a follow-up to empower the innovation. For example, the deal Urban Construction performed a research to identify the barriers for stimulating the urban construction and transformation of a city. Nothing can be empowered if the results of the research do not receive a follow-up. The deal is almost finished and so far, no discussion has taken place on the continuation of the results as illustrated by the quote below.

> *"Initially the idea was to start with a City Deal 1, you know the research we are performing now, and then when the results were finished, what is now, there should have been a sequel. You know, about what are we going to do with the results? Well that sequel never got off the ground"* – Urban Construction

The City Deal Warm Welcome for Talent, also performed a research to remove the barriers and stimulate foreign entrepreneurs to start a business within the Netherlands. The research provided concrete recommendations for each organization and the ministries are incorporating the recommendations within the organizations. This deal is a best practice on how a City Deal stretch and transformed the current system to adapt to the innovation. Whereas Urban Construction is an illustration on where the effect of City Deals could be improved to ensure the empowerment of the results of a City Deal. If City Deals want to facilitate and stimulate innovation, then City Deals need to facilitate a discussion about the follow-up of a City Deal.

Furthermore, respondents have been asked on how they think their City Deal will be continued. In general, cities have a more negative experience regarding the continuation of their City Deal then the national government. Main reasons given were: lack of trust, insecurity of existence after the elections, lack of articulation on the continuation of their City Deal. If City Deals, after the elections, want to be a vehicle to facilitate innovations, then the national government should create trust between the actors by articulating about the future potential or continuation of the City Deal. This will increase the extent to which a City Deal can shield an innovation from current or future mainstream selection environments.

4.3.3.1. Conclusion

Therefore, the effect of a City Deal on the empowerment of an innovation is difficult to explore, but for City Deals to have an effect in the empowerment an open discussion about the follow-up of a City Deal should be facilitated. Currently respondents state that a follow-up is often uncertain and not yet standardized, but since City Deals are at the brink of an innovation a follow-up in any kind of form should be open for discussion.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This chapter will interpret the results by reflecting the results to the existing body of literature on network governance and protective space to provide recommendations. The limitations of the research will be addressed as well as the suggestions for further research. The conclusion will answer the main research question and the contribution of this research to the existing literature.

5.1. Connection to the existing literature

Networks arise in a context where there is no shared opinion on which way to go, nonexistence of hierarchy and authority, and that is why network should be managed. However, the exploration revealed that there is a lack of management on City Deals that steers a network to find a common purpose. There has been a process facilitator involved for almost every City Deal, but as argued by the literature managers should facilitate interaction processes more, mediate between different actors and facilitate a goal searching phase rather than a goal setting phase (Kickert et al., 1997). The current set-up of City Deals does not facilitate those characteristics of network management as there is no capacity to facilitate more interaction processes between the actors, or to provide room for an extensive goal searching phase.

Kickert et al. (1997) also argues that networks are influenced by the context in which they operate. Where the context is influenced by the presence of different actors, often acting on distinct levels, the existence of different relevant policy programs and the lack of an encompassing, formal organizational context. The exploration confirmed that the acting of actors on distinct levels complicated the process of City Deals to facilitate innovation. It also confirmed that the existence of relevant policy programs on the national level could smooth the City Deal process, since cities could contribute their urban experiences in a network to innovate the policy programs. However, this only occurred for City Deals influencing a starting policy program and not a fully developed policy programs, such as the MIRT. Furthermore, the research also confirmed that the lack of an encompassing, formal organizational context in which City Deals occurred, provided difficulties for actors to concretize their deal. Fragmentation within the national government and lack of leadership for City Deal as an instrument problematized the execution of City Deals.

Proven and Keith (2008) argues that the successful adoption of a form of governance will be based on four key structural and relational contingencies: trust, size, goal consensus, and the nature of the task. The exploration revealed that City Deals mainly affect the trust relationship between the actors, but does not give lead to argue that City Deals succeed when trust is high between the network. There has been experienced a discrepancy between the respondent regarding the size of a network, but has not been experienced as a key structural contingency for the successful adoption of network governance. However, the exploration reveals that goal consensus can be considered as a key structural contingency of network governance. Goal consensus can be considered as one of the key factors determining the differences on the perception of the normative experiences of respondents on their deals. It can be less evaluated how the nature of the task contributed to the adoption of governance since this research mainly focused on the process effects of City Deals networks and not on the context of City Deals.

Pahl-wostl (2009) hypothesized that if a network learns and adapt across the different concepts and there is a balance between the influential factors, then a network has a higher chance to effectively govern a transitional problem. The theory on protective spaces by Smith and Raven argues as well that

learning capacities play an influential role in the nurturing capacities of a network, but also influences the governance performance of a network. The exploration revealed that improving the learning capacity could have resulted in an improved nurturing potential of a network.

Borzel (1998) argued that actors cooperate because they depend on each other's resources to achieve common goals and can make effective use of their own resources only if they are able to access the relevant resources of other actors. If the national government aims to facilitate urban innovation by means of network governance then they should allow a network to access their relevant resources. This does not necessarily imply that the national government should finance every City Deal to the fullest, but if they aim to stimulate cooperation within networks they at least should facilitate a discussion in which the availability of resources can be determined to solve common goals. In the current set-up of City Deals, the attitudes towards the availability of resources by the national government has been too closed to fully facilitate network governance by City Deals.

5.2. Recommendations

The exploration has revealed many recommendations throughout the research. This chapter will provide the recommendations as apparent by the exploration for the future use of City Deals as an instrument for networks to facilitate urban innovation:

- More leadership or ownership by the national government needs to be taken in an encompassing formal organizational structure to facilitate a context where City Deals networks could facilitate the urban innovation it aims to facilitate.
- There needs to be a more open process when discussing the availability of resources to a network.
- More capacity, regarding time, needs to be set available by the actors when enacting into a City Deal to elaborate on the goal searching phase and focus to focus on the interaction processes within City Deals.
- Learning processes should be standardized within City Deals to structurally improve the governance performance of a network to nurture urban innovation.
- Personnel with a personal connection to the subject needs to be appointed to the City Deal for a network to facilitate innovation more effectively.
- The goal formulation phase of a City Deal should exceed the intention level, for actors to remain their trust in the instrument.
- City Deal networks should aim to be fluent. Different phases require different types of knowledge. A network should adapt to the need of knowledge throughout the phases.
- City Deals representatives should aim to acquire the directory mandate of the organizations involved to effectively facilitate urban innovation.
- The national government should articulate about the future potential or continuation of a City Deal to facilitate the empowerment of a City Deal and to safeguard trust within the network.

5.3. limitations

This research is qualitative from nature and therefore the results are subjected to the subjective judgement of the researcher. The subjective judgement is to a certain extent tackled by the coding program of Atlas.ti. A systematic analysis has been conducted on which an objective judgement could be based. However, the process where gets decided which quotes receive a code throughout the process is subjected to subjectivism and although there is an analytical framework on which to code

on, with 5755 quotations it is possible some quotes were overseen and other were less accurately quoted. It is expected that the size of the database increases the validity of the research even though subjectivism is inevitable throughout qualitative research.

Another limitation throughout this research has been the lack of scaling of the normative experiences throughout the research. The normative experiences played an important part throughout this research, but were always quoted equally. If a respondent stated that something was slightly difficult the quote was coded as negatively as a phrase stating it was extremely difficult. The same goes for quotations which were positively coded.

The subjective judgement could have been tackled more by including a research design of qualitative and quantitative data. However, with the used frameworks it is hard to measure the openness of attitudes or shielding strategies by quantitative research methods, but it could have been used to substantiate the normative experiences for some indicators, such as the general attitude of the respondents on the performance of their City Deal.

Furthermore, even though the researcher is very grateful for the cooperation of the respondents, it became apparent throughout the interviews that the respondents were also colored by the positions they fulfill. For example, interviews with a public affair respondents focused more on the difficulties regarding the agenda setting of ministries, while content respondents focused on difficulties regarding the execution of the deal. The research design could have accounted more for the various positions respondents fulfilled, or the exploration should have diverged the results more on the affiliation level per respondent.

This research has been an evaluation of City Deals on the facilitation of urban innovation. The exploration illustrates that several improvements could be made for a network to better facilitate urban innovation. However, this does not mean that City Deals in general are an unsuccessful instrument. City Deals also aim to facilitate an improvement on livability and urban growth, but the effects of City Deals on these two aspects were left out of consideration throughout the research.

5.4.   Suggestions for future research

This thesis has bundled the two fields of literature and provided an empirical exploration on how a form of network governance can stimulate innovation process. The research shows that both frameworks show some overlap on the indicators, such as network formation versus codification of decision making rights and social learning versus learning processes. Moreover, this research also illustrates how both the governance performance and the protective space are both dependent on the set institutional capacity in the goal formulation phase of a network.

More research is needed regarding the management of a network when setting the institutional capacity for a network to facilitate urban innovation. Which factors contribute to the effective setting of institutional capacity for a network to shield, nurture and empower urban innovation. Furthermore, this research made a first attempt to combine theoretically derived frameworks from two different fields. The results reveal that the governance performance and especially the institutional capacity is an import requirement for a network to effectively facilitate urban innovation. More empirical research is needed to identify and substantiate the interrelations between the two different concepts further for networks.

5.5. Conclusions

The research question was to determine the extent to which a City Deal contributed to the governance of a network to facilitate urban innovation. The data has been explored and the indicators affecting the dependent variables are by the writers' judgement (as stated in the method section) evaluated as illustrated in table 5.

City Deals have shown to contribute to a limited extent to the governance capacity of a network. The exploration reveals that resources (time and finances) within City Deals are insufficiently set available. However, the exploration also revealed that the most positive contributions of a City Deal to the governance capacity of a network are the codification of decision making rights and the effective employment of the scarce resources. The exploration reveals that an open attitude regarding the determination of institutional capacity to a network is needed to effectively manage a goal searching phase where City Deal networks define a concise problem to govern the transitional challenge.

Regarding the facilitation of innovation by a network the exploration revealed that City Deals facilitates a new way of working, rather than a protective space for innovation to develop. For City Deals to facilitate a protective space for innovation, networks should create more experimentation space by investing resources and by experimentation outside of legislation and regulation. Networks should set more institutional capacity available to specify the protective space it aims to facilitate. The exploration allows to argue that if a network contributes more

Dependent variables	Variable	Indicator
Governance capacity	Institutional capacity	Codification of decision making rights
		Venues
		Open attitudes
		Resource availability
	Governance performance	Practicing rights
		Social learning/second order learning
		Employment of resources
Protective space	Shielding	Strategies
	Nurturing	Articulation of expectations and visions
		Learning processes
		Network formation
	Empowerment	Fit and conform
		Stretch and transform

Table 5: Evaluation of governance capacity and protective space

resources (time, finances and experimental space) to a network process, actors will experience more incentives to invest more time and financial resources to govern the transitional challenge more effectively. The exploration shows reasons to suspect that a network is dependent on the institutional capacity a network sets available to facilitate the function of a protective space more effectively. In addition, for City Deals to be more effective regarding the nurturing of a City Deal, learning processes need to be standardized within City Deals. For City Deals to facilitate the empowerment of a niche it is important to facilitate a follow-up of the City Deal to stretch and transform or fit and conform the niche within the mainstream selection systems.

This research contributes to the existing literature by combining the literature around network governance with the literature on the facilitation of innovation and provides an empirical case study on how network governance potentially could facilitate innovation. The experiences and lessons throughout this research can have its societal impact by being used by future networks to learn about

the limitations that could arise when collectively aiming to facilitate innovations and how problems could be over won. However, this research is also an illustration that network governance is difficult to achieve since actors tend to stay within their organizational structures. Actors who aim to solve the societal and technological challenges in networks should be managed correctly to facilitate urban innovation.

The scientific impact of the study is the contribution to the existing literature by combining the two fields of study in an empirical case study. The study contributed to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence that if networks aim to facilitate innovation, then the right institutional capacity needs to be set by a network in the goal formulation phase.

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7. Appendices

7.1. Appendix – Interview Questionnaire

Vragenlijst evaluatie City Deals

City Deal(s):

Respondent (organisatie/naam/functie):

Contactgegevens (e-mail/tel):

Datum interview:

Afgenomen door:

Uitgeschreven door:

Doel van het onderzoek

Het Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken heeft het PBL gevraagd het instrument City Deal (CD) te evalueren. Deze evaluatie noemen we een lerende evaluatie. Ongeveer een jaar nadat de eerste CD is gestart, is een aantal CDs in uitvoering en een aantal in ontwikkeling. Al tijdens de rit willen we leren van de eerste ervaringen. Het doel van de evaluatie is een actueel beeld te krijgen van de huidige praktijk rondom de CDs en om daarvan te kunnen leren voor het opstellen en uitvoeren van toekomstig beleid dat de doelen van Agenda Stad helpt te realiseren. De evaluatie richt zich op de inhoudelijke resultaten van CDs, op de samenwerking tussen partijen en op de ruimte voor experiment en innovatie.

Opzet van het interview

We interviewen vertegenwoordigers van verschillende partijen die bij CDs zijn betrokken. We zullen in de eindrapportage de bevindingen geanonimiseerd opschrijven. In het interview komen vier thema's aan bod:

A: organisatie

B: verwachting / ervaring

C: resultaten / beoordeling

D: reflectie

Het interview duurt ongeveer een uur. Laten we beginnen.

[Verstreken tijd: 10 minuten]

A. Organisatie

1. Wat is (in uw eigen woorden) een CD en hoe werkt die?

2. Welke rol spelen uw organisatie en uzelf in de CD?

3. Hoe vaak en waar komen de betrokkenen bijeen? Is dit gemakkelijk te organiseren?

4. Zijn er voldoende middelen (geld, tijd, informatie, mandaat) beschikbaar voor de uitvoering van de CD? Zowel binnen uw organisatie als bij de partners?

B. Verwachting / ervaring

1. Doelen binnen de CD.

    1. Wie heeft de doelen van de CD bepaald?
    2. Kwamen de doelen voort uit bestaande beleidsprocessen en / of lopende projecten, of zijn ze speciaal voor de CD opgesteld?
    3. Zijn de doelen veranderd tijdens het proces? Zo ja, waardoor?

2. Ervaring van de samenwerking binnen de CD.

    1. Met welke twee partijen heeft u zelf het meest te maken?
    2. Welke rollen zien de diverse partners in de CD voor zichzelf? Ziet u bijvoorbeeld verschillen tussen publieke en private partners, tussen Rijk en gemeenten en / of tussen verschillende Rijksdepartementen?
    3. Is er een duidelijke kartrekker? Zijn er partijen die zich eerder volgend opstellen?
    4. Kunt u een voorbeeld geven van wat er in de samenwerking gemakkelijk gaat? En van wat er stroef loopt?
    5. Heeft u het idee dat bij de deelnemende partijen de juiste mensen betrokken zijn bij de CD?
    6. Hoe is de sfeer in de samenwerking?

[Verstreken tijd: 25 minuten]

3. Rol van experiment en innovatie binnen de CD. *(Experiment vatten we kort gezegd op als een middel om nieuwe dingen uit te proberen. Innovatie kan daarvan een uitkomst zijn, bijvoorbeeld een nieuwe oplossing voor een inhoudelijk probleem, een alternatieve werkwijze, etc.)*

    1. Wat vindt u het belangrijkste experiment binnen de CD?
    2. Verschillen de partijen in de mate waarin ze ruimte zoeken / maken voor experiment?
    3. Welke factoren maken experiment mogelijk binnen de CD?
    4. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste innovatie binnen de CD?
    5. Verschillen de partijen in de mate waarin ze ruimte zoeken / maken voor innovatie?
    6. Welke factoren maken innovatie mogelijk binnen de CD?

C. Effecten / beoordeling

4. Resultaten van de CD.

1. Wat heeft de CD inhoudelijk nu al opgeleverd? Kunt u een voorbeeld geven van een inhoudelijk resultaat waar u trots op bent?
2. Kunt u voorbeelden geven van institutionele belemmeringen die door de CD zijn overwonnen, en van hoe deze zijn overwonnen? *(Indien nodig kan worden gevraagd naar: wet- en regelgeving, financiering, informatievoorziening, toegang tot sleutelfiguren.)*
3. Zijn er nieuwe vormen van samenwerking ontstaan die zonder de CD waarschijnlijk niet tot stand zouden zijn gekomen? *(Indien nodig kan worden gevraagd naar: samenwerking tussen steden, tussen gemeenten en het Rijk, tussen beleidsdomeinen, met maatschappelijke partners.)*
4. Welke experimenten en innovaties hebben geresulteerd in een inktvlekwerking (vertaling naar andere regio's en / of thema's) of opschaling (naar een hoger ruimtelijk of bestuurlijk niveau)?
5. Is / wordt volgens u en uw partners voldaan aan de verwachtingen die u had / hebt van de CD? Of is het anders gelopen?

D. Reflectie

5. Algemene reflectie

1. Vindt u dat er in de toekomst vaker met het instrument CD zou moeten worden gewerkt? Waarom?
2. Hoe zou u de eventuele meerwaarde van het instrument CD karakteriseren ten opzichte van bestaand beleid? En ten opzichte van alternatieve beleidsinstrumenten, zoals Green Deals, Partnerships, Stadstafels, living labs, etc.?
3. Wat verwacht u dat er zal gebeuren nadat de CD waarbij u betrokken bent afloopt? Is er al iets afgesproken?
4. Vindt u het leuk om aan de CD te werken? Wilt u nog iets kwijt? *(Indien nodig kan worden gesuggereerd: een hartekreet, wat zou u anders doen, tip of advies voor het Rijk, gemeenten en / of één van de andere partners?)*

7.2. Appendix – Interviewed affiliation per City Deal

| #	Name	City Deal	Affiliation
1	Warm welcome for talent	Amsterdam	
2	Warm welcome for talent	Economic Affairs	
3	Warm welcome for talent	Safety and Justice	
4	Food on the urban agenda	Economic Affairs	
5	Food on the urban agenda	Ede	
6	Food on the urban agenda	Leeuwarden	
7	Urban Accessibility	Utrecht	
8	Urban Accessibility	Groningen	
9	Urban Accessibility	Amsterdam	
10	Urban Accessibility	Den Bosch	
11	Urban Accessibility	Infrastructure and environment	
12	Roadmap Next Economy	Rotterdam	
13	Roadmap Next Economy	Rotterdam Agenda Stad coordinator	
14	Roadmap Next Economy	Economic Affairs	
15	Climate Adaptation	Project leader	
16	Climate Adaptation	Dordrecht	
17	Climate Adaptation	UNESCO-IHE	
18	Climate Adaptation	Infrastructure and environment	
19	Inclusive City	Public health, Welfare and Sports	
20	Inclusive City	Utrecht	
21	Inclusive City	Project leader	
22	Inclusive City	Social Affairs and Employment	
23	Health Hub	Utrecht	
24	Health Hub	Economic Board Utrecht	
25	Health Hub	Infrastructure and environment	
26	Health Hub	Economic Affairs	
27	Healthy Urbanization	Infrastructure and environment	
28	Healthy Urbanization	Utrecht	
29	Digital Living Environment	Twee Snoeken	
30	Digital Living Environment	Infrastructure and Environment	
31	Digital Living Environment	Project leader	
32	Digital Living Environment	Bim Loket	
33	Digital Living Environment	Economic Affairs	
34	Circular City	Infrastructure and Environment	
35	Circular City	Amsterdam	
36	Circular City	Domestic affairs and Royal Relations	
37	Circular City	Project leader	
38	Urban Construction	Domestic affairs and Royal Relations	
39	Urban Construction	Rotterdam	
40	Urban Construction	BouwNed	
41	Urban Construction	Infrastructure and Environment	
42	Urban Construction	Province Southern Holland	
43	Urban Construction	BNG Bank	

7.3. Appendix – Facts and Figures
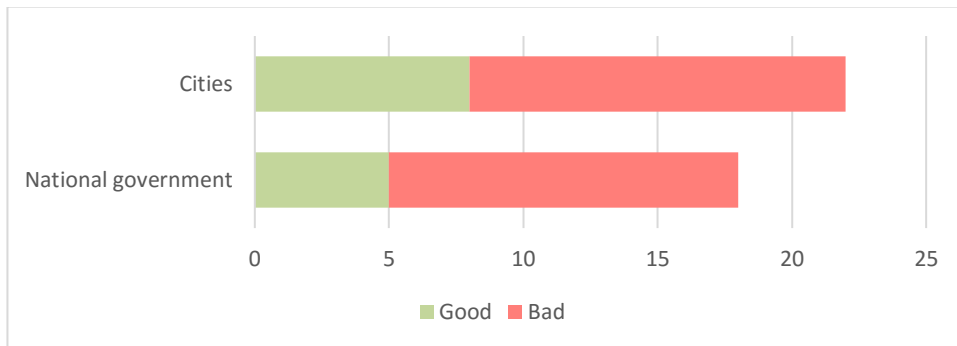
Figure 7: Normative experiences of respondents regarding codification of decision making rights

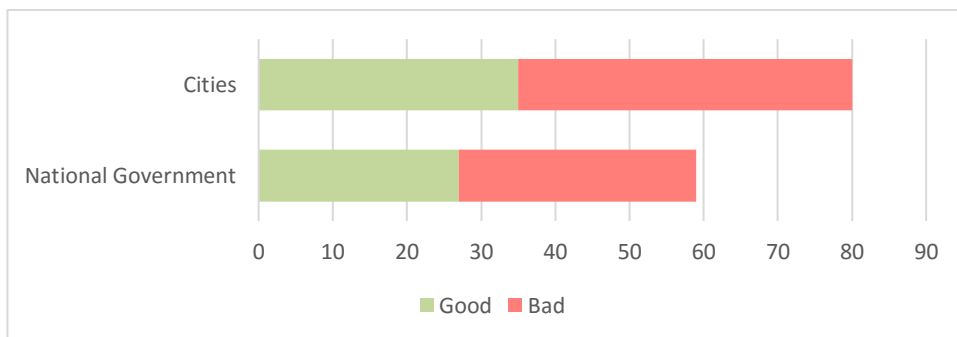*Figure 8: Normative experience of respondents on Open Attitudes*

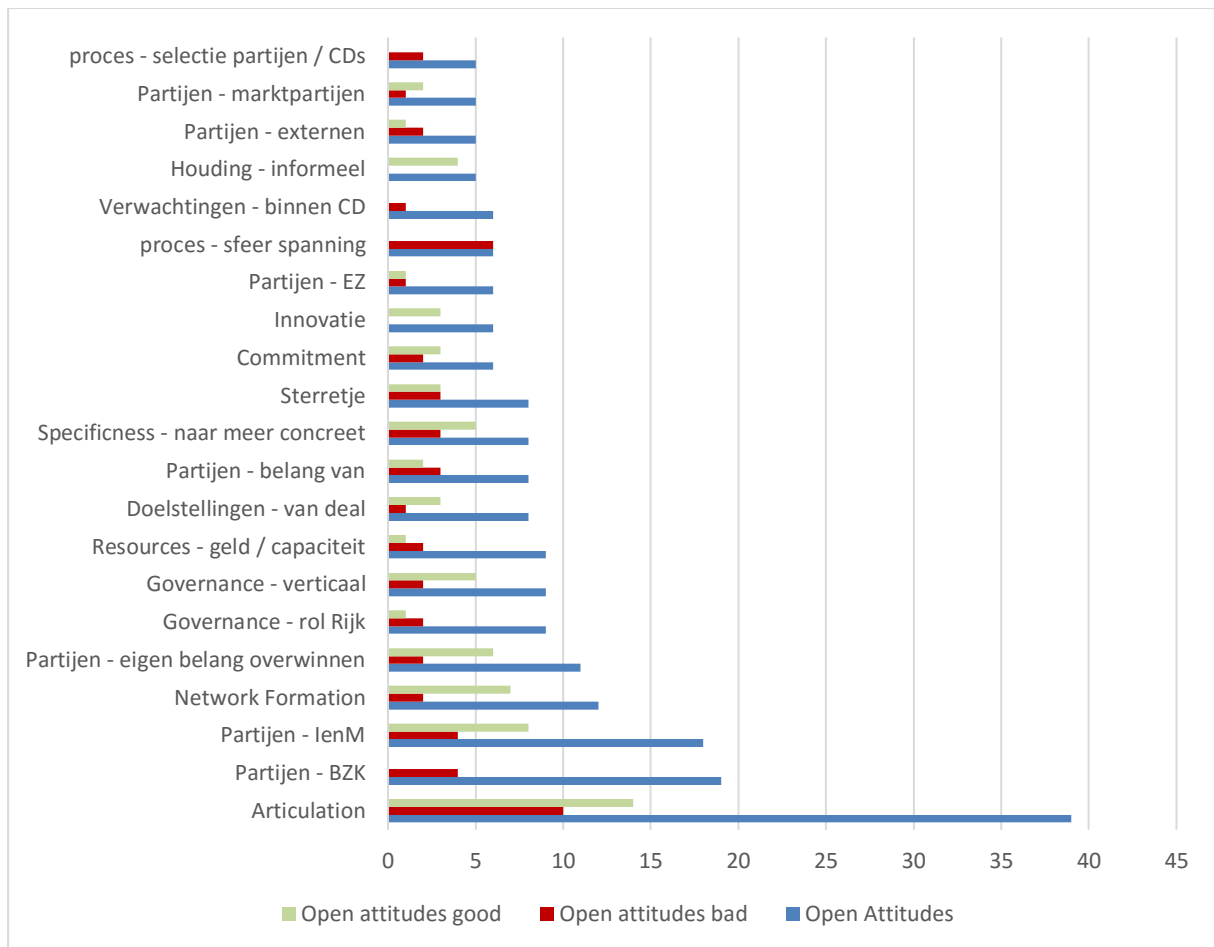*Figure 9: Normative experience of respondents on resource availability*

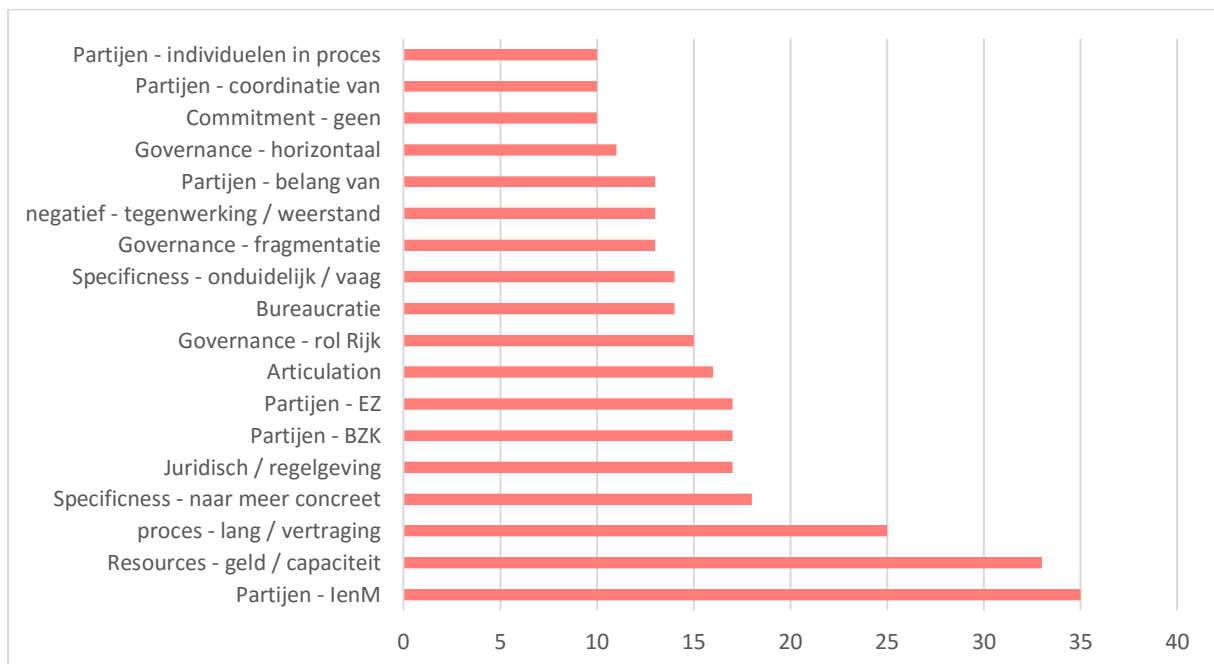*Figure 10: Co-occurrence of Open Attitudes and other codes*

Figure 11: Co-occurrence table of practicing rights with the other codes.
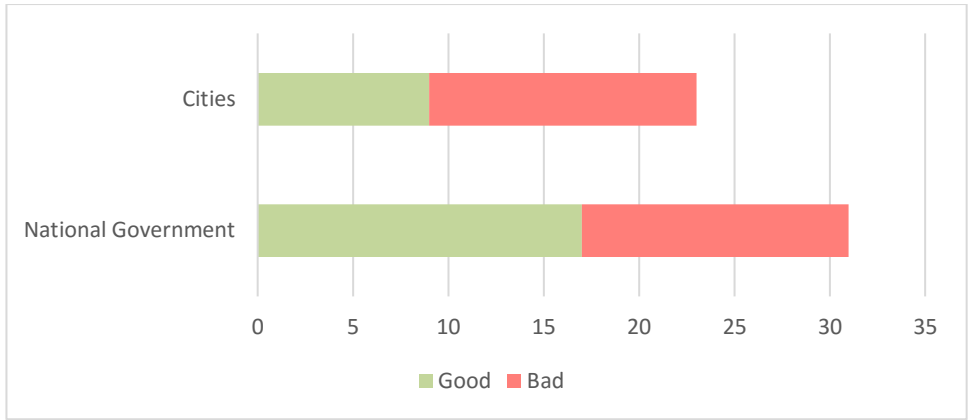
Figure 12: Normative experience of respondents on the continuation of their City Deal
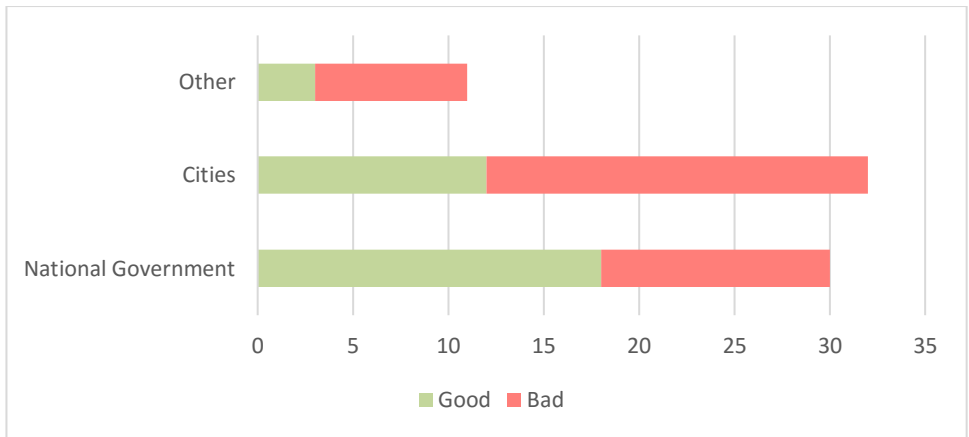

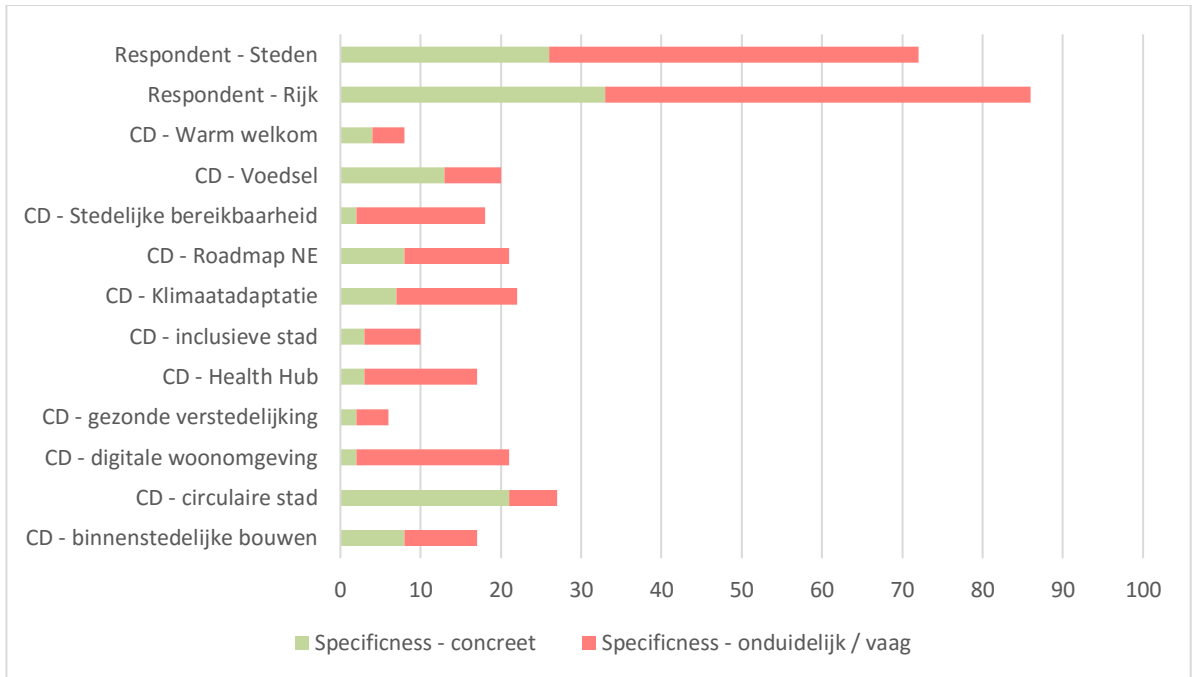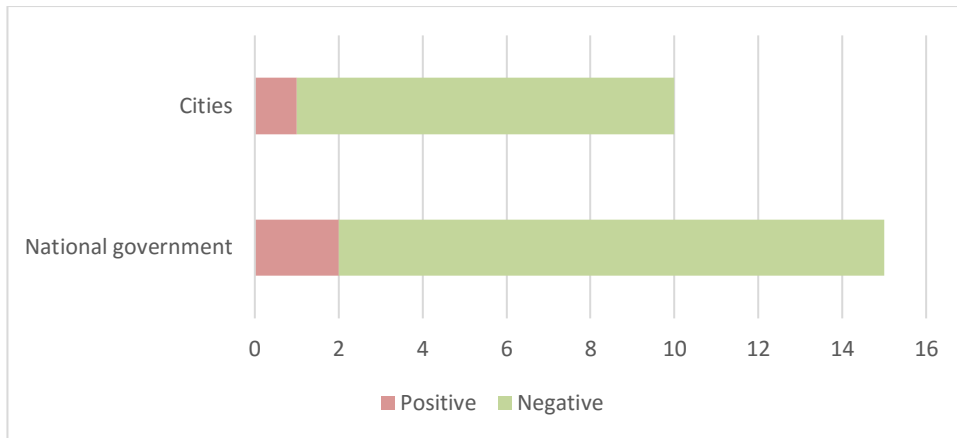*Figure 13: Normative experience on the robustness of the expectations*

Figure 14: normative experience of respondents per City Deal regarding specificness

Figure 15: Normative experiences of respondents regarding the learning processes