

Master thesis

Success struggles and steering

How to steer citizens' initiatives on their path to success

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kennis en aanpak van
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Abstract

The research question in this thesis is: what is the influence of governmental steering strategies on the performance of citizens' initiatives serving a social purpose? The importance of citizens' initiatives and active citizenship is growing (WRR, 2012) and the relationship between initiatives and municipalities is changing. Where the government used to determine the public value for its citizens, a shift is visible towards a society where citizens decide what is important and the government is ought to support initiatives of citizens that aim to realize these values (Van der Steen, Van Twist, Chin-A-Fat, & Kwakkelstein, 2013). Municipalities are struggling with how to deal with initiatives. Which options do they have, and how do these options influence initiatives? This thesis aims to contribute to the knowledge that municipalities need to develop adequate policies on initiatives. More specific, the focus in this thesis is on the influence of governmental steering strategies on the performance of initiatives.

To investigate the relation between governmental steering and the performance of initiatives, an extensive desk research and a multiple comparative case study at eight initiatives within three municipalities were conducted. The document analyses of municipal policy documents and interviews with a volunteer of each initiative, and two civil servants of each included municipality, led to several results.

In the literature, six metagovernance steering strategies are identified: setting strategic frameworks, monitoring, framing and storytelling, providing supportive actions, setting playing rules, and playing with fear. The steering strategy doing nothing is complemented by the researcher. All of these steering strategies are found in practice. The most effective steering strategies are providing support and monitoring. Followed by framing and storytelling and setting playing rules. The effectiveness of doing nothing and playing with fear could not be determined due to the size of the sample. The most effective steering strategies, supporting and monitoring, are also applied most. On average, setting strategic frameworks does not contribute a lot to the performances of initiatives, but it was applied a lot.

Based on the findings in this thesis, there is one main conclusion. Governmental steering strategies can contribute to the substantive performance of initiatives. The most effective steering strategies are those which are in line with the participatory governmental attitude, which implies that the initiatives can realize their goals without experiencing limitations from the government. The government supports initiatives with realizing their goals if they ask the government to do so.

Preface

After months filled with quests to the most relevant articles, cooperative municipalities and interesting initiatives, I managed to finish this thesis within my deadline (after I postponed that deadline twice). After months I am glad to say that I am still extremely interested in the topic of my thesis: active citizenship, democratic renewal, and governmental steering. I awe the volunteers of the several initiatives that allowed me to interview them. They share a believe that they can make a difference in this world, or at least, in their own neighborhood. In our modern times, it is easy to think that one has no time to be active in one's living area, and to disappear in individual occupations. I sincerely believe that the activities of citizens like the ones I interviewed contribute a great deal to our welfare state. Moreover, they are pillars on which local communities are built, and important actors in times when the government retreats on several areas. Like one of the respondents said: "we need to get used again to do something back for society. We became lazy during years of pampering wealth and welfare". These citizens are an example to many.

I want to contribute my thanks to the citizens and civil servants who took the time to answer my (sometimes difficult) questions. I enjoyed the interviews as I learned a lot of things about how initiative operate and how municipalities deal (and sometimes struggle) with the role that initiatives can, or should, fulfill within their municipalities. I want to thank professor Edelenbos for his help and for letting me use one of his yet unpublished articles. I also want to thank Willem-Jan de Gast for giving me the possibility to write this thesis at Movisie, and for helping me during the (sometimes frustrating) process of writing this it. In terms of steering strategies, Willem is a great fan of steering by doing nothing combined with monitoring and providing me with supporting actions, in my case reassurance, articles, and discussions. This helped me to make my own mistakes (e.g. creating a non-sense topic-list), and repair these mistakes afterwards with my developing knowledge about this topic, which made me more independent. Monitoring and support helped me not to lose myself into small details and to distillate results out of the enormous pile of information I had collected. I want to thank my sister Miriam for helping me with grammar errors and explaining me the difference between 'divers' and 'differs'. At last, I want to thank my housemates for preventing me to become socially isolated during the whole writing process.

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1. Introduction

During one of the governance lab excursions, organized by the professors of the master Management of Governance Networks, my classmates and I were introduced to the Zomerhof neighborhood in Rotterdam. In this neighborhood, a housing association works together with citizens and municipality in order to increase the livability of this area. This process started a few years ago and the project of the housing association attracted several other initiatives which led to a rapidly changed sight of the streets, e.g. though small green gardens on former parking lots, and restaurants ran by addicts from a shelter nearby. This excursion was the first time for me to see what collaboration between different actors could result in. Actors, that often have very different interests, managed to find common ground and start to build on that together.

It fascinated me that apparently there are people with ideas, energy, and the willingness to make an effort in order to serve society. And Zomerhof is not the only place in the Netherlands where citizens and other non-state actors come up with ideas to improve the public domain. Citizens who initiate or participate in initiatives can have several motivations to do so. Citizens often initiates out of dissatisfaction. They do not feel heard by their democratic representatives and feel like they could do it much better themselves (WRR, 2012). Besides, globalization, which fades out familiar boundaries and brings an overwhelming amount of new economic, cultural, and social features, reinforce the desire to be connected to something local, and familiar (Delwaide & Geeraerts, 2008). Sense of belonging to a local group, can be found via participation in initiatives. Moreover, active citizens are necessary for a vivid democracy and can contribute to policy processes with their extensive knowledge and experience, e.g. they start initiatives to realize their own ideals via inventive ways (WRR, 2012).

According to Hoogenboom (2011) citizens' initiatives have been active for many years. A novelty, however, is the relationship that some of these modern initiatives maintain with the government. Modern initiatives often interact with the government since the state has a reflex to interfere with initiatives, and initiatives have the reflex to ask the state for support if needed (Hoogeboom, 2011). This interaction can have different forms, but how the interaction between municipalities and initiatives should look like to be most helpful for initiatives, is unclear (Tonkens, n.d.). The ministry of interior affairs wrote a leaflet with the title: "Help a citizens' initiative!" (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2010). This title represents the struggle municipalities experience when dealing with initiatives.

After consulting several professors, I got in touch with Willem-Jan de Gast of Movisie, who is an expert on the fields of democratic renewal and active citizenship. He was enthusiastic about my idea to combine citizens' initiatives with the role that municipalities (can) play to influence these initiatives, and he offered me an internship. Together we came up with the following research question:

“What is the influence of governmental steering strategies on the performance of citizen’s initiatives serving a social purpose?”

I added ‘serving a social purpose’ to the question in order to give the research more focus, and because initiatives that serve a social purpose interest me more than initiatives that, for example, aim to preserve a natural park, even though those initiatives are valuable too. Moreover, citizens’ initiatives serving a social purpose are an extremely present-day topic since these initiatives and active citizenship are needed to realize the shift in society from a passive welfare state towards an active participatory state (King Willem-Alexander, 2013) which is necessary due to the increasing costs of the welfare state and renewing ideals about democracy (WRR, 2012).

This thesis will focus solely on the perspective of governments. This decision is made for several reasons. Firstly, it is important to limit the scope of the research, due to the limited amount of time available for this research. Secondly, discussing matters from a governmental perspective goes along well with my master’s program, and my interest lays more with the public sector and its effects on society. Finally, since Movisie naturally mainly focuses on the position of the citizen. Focusing on a governmental perspective may result in refreshing results for them.

The title of this thesis is ‘Success struggles and steering: how to steer initiatives on their path to success’ which represent the challenge that municipalities face when dealing with initiatives.

Answering the main question will result in an overview for municipalities of the existing strategies to steer initiatives and to learn how these strategies can influence initiatives. This thesis aims to contribute to the development of theory about different governmental steering strategies and their influence on the performance of citizens’ initiatives serving a social purpose.

In order to answer this question, the question is divided into sub-questions on a theoretic and empirical level:

Theoretical sub-questions

- Which governmental steering strategies can be identified in the theory?
- What kinds of citizens’ initiatives can be found? How can they be characterized?
- What is the performance of a citizens’ initiative?

Empirical sub-questions

- Which governmental steering strategies as described in the theory can be found in practice?
- Can the categorization of citizens’ initiatives, as described in the theory, be found in practice?
- Which steering strategy is most effective for increasing initiatives’ performance?
- Which governmental attitude fits best with the administrative goals of initiatives?

Chapter 2 will provide the reader with an overview of the existing theory concerning this topic and present the conceptual model that lays the basis for the research conducted in this thesis. Chapter 3 will explain the methodology used to research the main question. Chapter 4 will show the results of the qualitative research. Chapter 5 will analyze the findings of chapter 4. To conclude with chapter 6, in which the conclusions and topics to discuss will be presented. The final chapter, chapter 7 will present recommendations for municipalities.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will start with providing the reader with existing theories about governmental steering strategies and citizens' initiatives.

2.1 Governmental steering strategies

There are different perceptions on the purpose and tasks of the state. John Locke saw the state as an institution that protects the lives and properties of people (Locke, 1690). In the post-war West-European welfare states, we also consider protecting vulnerable citizens as a core activity of the state. In the eighties of the last century, political majorities in many countries considered the costs for this type of welfare state getting out of control, which led to privatization of several social tasks. The market was able to perform these social welfare services for a lower price, but the privatization led also to an undesired shift in norms and values, e.g. from righteous towards efficient (Dunleavy, 2006). In more recent years we can observe a shift from Big Government, via Big Market, towards Big Society (Nederhand et al., 2015). This shift is stimulated by the government through legislation (e.g. the three new social laws that went into force in 2015), but also by the society itself since it initiates alternatives to the services provided by the government.

These transitions in society also results in transitions in the way the government needs to deal with society. Van der Steen, Van Twist, Chin-A-Fat, & Kwakkelstein (2013) and Van der Steen, Scherpenisse, Hajer, Gerwen, & Kruitwagen (2014) identified specific types of governmental attitudes for different societal phases, which are presented in figure 3. The horizontal axis serves a scale from the government on the left, and the society on the right, which includes citizenry and market. This axis shows to what extent a certain governmental strategy operates for society (left), or with society (right). The vertical axis represents the focus on the public value (what is important and what should policies focus on), or on the performance (measurable performance indicators).

According to Van der Steen, et al. (2013) Big Government functions well with a traditional top down government. The democratically elected officeholders decide about public matters and are responsible. The government does not have to make compromises with other parties since the government is the only party who decides about the content and the executions of policies.

The next phase is the Big Market, where the market is used for achieving political goals, and the focus is on efficient delivery of these political goals. Not only did the market execute former governmental services, also the efficient functioning of a private company became an ideology for governmental organizations. This governmental attitude is called New Public Management.

The next form of government is Whole-of-Government. The government realizes that collaboration between the governmental compartments is needed to create a unity in the different

policies instead of having policies of different compartments contradicting each other. In figure 3, this phase can be positioned on the vertical axis, but is left out due to the readability of the figure.

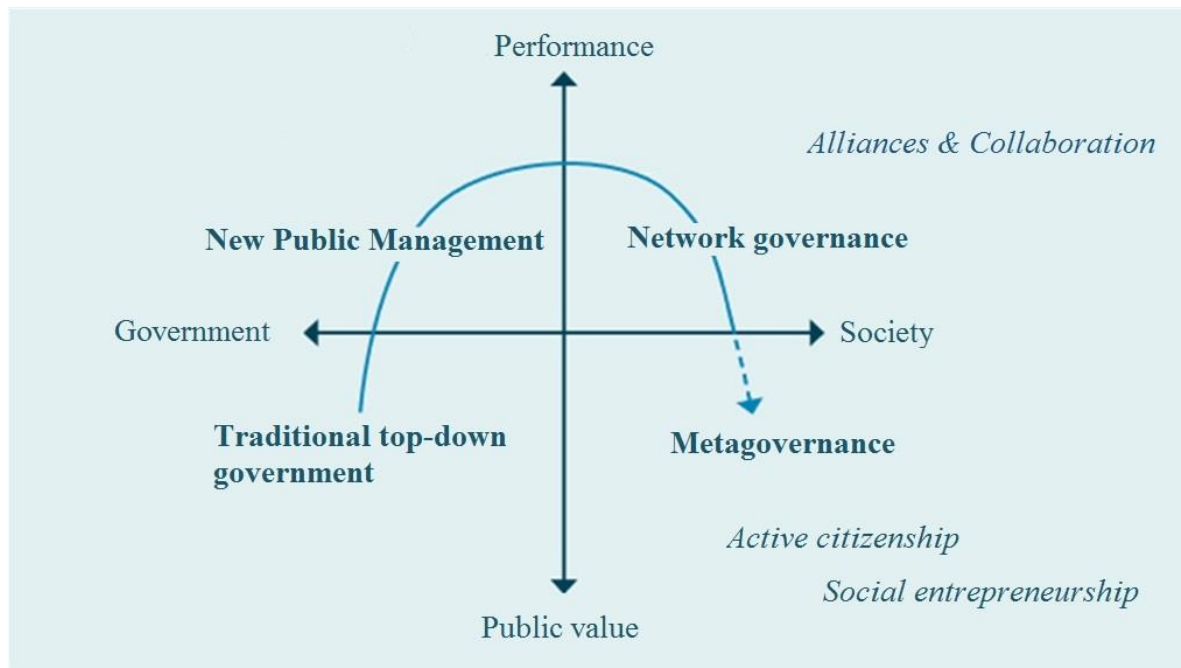


Figure 1 Governmental attitudes (strongly based on Van der Steen 2013, 2014)

In the next phase, called Networked Governance, the government does not only seek for collaboration within its own organization, but also with non-governmental actors. Important for this phase is that the government does not predefine its ambitions but tries to seek the wishes and desires within society. Together with non-governmental parties, the government tries to fulfill these wishes, without dominating the interaction. According to Klijn and Koppenjan (2016), a crucial reason for the government to collaborate more intensively with non-governmental actors, is the increasingly complexity of society that results in questions too convoluted for the government to deal with alone. Collaboration with others results in an increase of knowledge and means.

The last attitude requires the government to act responsively. The government needs to base its attitude on the specific matter that requires governmental action. Van der Steen et al. (2014) claim that a combination of different governmental attitudes is necessary since a plurality of possible matters that require action, means a plurality in suitable governmental attitudes. Actors within a society initiate activities and services which have consequences for the government. The government cannot steer these initiatives, but ignoring them is also impractical since these initiatives shape the public space, may interfere with existing public services, and may create inequality between citizens. Thus, the government needs to react. How the government needs to react, depends on the nature of that, which requires action (Van der Steen et al., 2013). In this phase, the public value is filled in by society. The government reacts, responds and tries to steer the initiatives that arise to realize this public value. The most important

strategy in this attitude is metagovernance (Nederhand, 2015), since the government cannot influence these initiatives directly (see sections on metagovernance and self-organization).

According to Van der Steen et al. (2013), the several governmental strategies do not supplant each other completely as figure 3 may suggest. Strategies change when new concepts arise. Together with other strategies they melt into new strategies. Former strategies, however, do not always disappear completely. Figure 4 shows how the development of old and new strategies looks like. Van der Steen claims that it is desirable to keep applying each strategy. Especially when it comes to the fourth phase of Van der Steen, not every public problem can be solved with metagovernance and a responsive government. Some matters demand an authority, traditional government, e.g. safety matters, and other matters can best be resolved within governance networks.

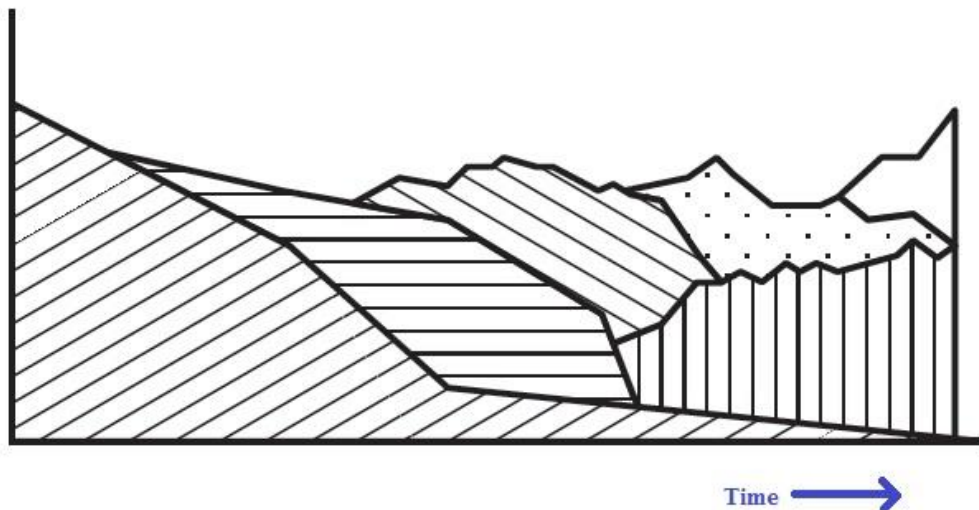


Figure 2 Mingling of steering strategies (Van der Steen, 2013)

2.1.1 Governmental steering

As described in the previous section, there are different governmental attitudes. Each of these different attitudes deals in a different way with non-governmental actors. The attitudes differ from each other, depending on who these other actors are (governmental/non-governmental, political groups, societal groups, pressure/action/interest groups) and what this interaction is about. The attempt of the government to manage a diverse group, is defined as government steering (Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997). This section will discuss the different attitudes of governments more extensively.

2.1.2 Traditional top-down government

Traditional top-down government solves public problems, makes policies, and delivers services according to the Traditional Public Administration Model. In this model, specific tasks are assigned to

specialized units within the government. The content of these tasks is decided upon by elected political office holders, who are also held accountable for the performance of these specialized units. The tasks are designed and performed in a way that aims to be effective, and is in line with the principles of equality, legitimacy, and legality (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). This model was predominately present in most modern Western European democracies for a large part of the twentieth century (Hughes, 2012).

The traditional top-down government works in accordance with the primacy of politics, which refers to the legitimacy that politicians gain through the fact of being elected. Politicians, therefore, have the ability to play a significant role in law-making, and are also able to instruct public managers on how these laws should be implemented (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016).

Problematic with traditional government is the increasing number of tasks, personnel, costs, and organizational units, which lead to difficulties with controlling budgets, coordinating the different organizational units, and motivating civil servants. Another problem is the compartmentalization of governmental institutions and the policies. While societies become increasingly complex, traditional government deconstructs issues into pieces that can be dealt with by the existing units within institution. The societal wicked issues, however, demand integral and innovative policies and services (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). When a government is functioning solely as a traditional government, the needs of society will not be fulfilled, according to the Van der Steen et al. (2014).

2.1.3 Governance

There are many different ideas and definitions of governance. Klijn and Koppenjan (2016) identified four concepts of governance each with their own definition: governance as corporate governance, governance as New Public Management, governance as multilevel governance, and governance as network governance. This last concept of governance is the most relevant one for this thesis since this concept of governance is about government working together with other actors. In this thesis, the focus is on governments interacting with non-governmental actors, namely citizens' initiatives. The definition of this last concept of governance is: a process that takes place within tightly connected networks with public and non-public actors, who work together in order to reach a common goal. This last definition fits with the third attitude of Van der Steen.

2.1.4 Metagovernance

This thesis is about the interaction between citizens' initiatives and governments. Collaboration between citizens' initiatives and municipalities does not often happen in tightly connected networks, as seen in networked governance, but takes mostly also take place in a loose and incidental way. Moreover, municipalities and initiatives do not always share a common goal. Therefore, network governance is not the governmental attitude this thesis will focus on. Metagovernance, on the other hand, is an attitude

that represents the existing relationship between municipalities and initiatives better (Nederhand, 2015). This section will discuss the notion of metagovernance.

Definitions

Meta-governance is often defined as governance of governance, regulation of self-organization, or as governance of collaboration. Torfing summarizes these definitions: “it involves deliberate attempts to facilitate, manage, and direct more or less self-regulating processes of interactive governance without reverting to traditional statist styles of government in terms of bureaucratic rule making and imperative command” (Torfing, Peters, Pierre, & Sørensen, 2012: 122). Sørensen defines metagovernance as “a way of enhancing coordinated governance in a fragmented political system based on a high degree of autonomy for a plurality of self-governing networks and institutions. Although sovereign rule indicates total top-down control over all aspects of societal governance, including process and outcome, metagovernance is an indirect form of governing that is exercised by influencing various processes of self-governance” (Sørensen, 2006: 100).

Network governance and metagovernance

Network governance and metagovernance are both processes in which governments try to deal with their environment in order to reach their public goals. However, network governance and metagovernance are not the same. Whereas in (network) governance the government is directly influencing, or even participating in closely tight networks, the government is in metagovernance on the outside of the network and tries to influence the network from a distance and in an indirect way.

Metagovernance in the past and now

Metagovernance started to play an important role when New Public Management had its proliferation, which meant that government was ought to function as efficiently as a private company. One of the important ideas of meta-governance in that period was that politicians and public managers should focus on steering rather than rowing. Politicians and public managers make policy decisions and set the goals, while service production is up to the public administrators who take part in self-governing teams. Governing should not be done by making bureaucratic rules and commands but by a combined approach of storytelling, economic incentives, and benchmarks. All these measures should be taken in order to decrease the size of the inefficient public sector, and to enhance innovation (Torfing et al., 2012).

Today, the focus on public performance, and thus of New Public Management, is decreasing and the focus on public value, as well as the role of society is growing. This changes are considered as a shift from Big Market towards Big Society. The government tries to establish a society with proactive citizens who solve their own problems or help each other instead of turning to the state for assistance. Not everything that society takes up results in a success. Arising ideas may be ineffective or illegitimate

solutions to the problem they are aiming to address. In these situations, the governments want to exercise influence without taking back all the responsibilities. Metagovernance is a strategy to exercise this kind of indirect influence. In the time of NPM, the politicians and public managers were the ones who metagoverned executing teams. Nowadays, in a period of Big Society, these politicians and public manager try to metagovern society with its numerous initiatives and movements.

Why metagovernance?

A problem with citizens' initiatives is the struggle with primacy of politics. As mentioned before, primacy of politics refers to the idea that the elected politicians should have a large say in public matters. In meta-governance (former) governmental tasks are transferred to third parties, resulting in changes in the power of politicians. The influence of politicians moves to private actors, interest organizations, street-level bureaucrats who are directly involved in performing the tasks, and citizens' initiatives or other kinds of social movements (Torfing et al., 2012). These actors can have a say in the policy execution but also in the policy making process. In the Netherlands, we consider democracy as a great value. The form of democracy we have is the representative democracy. As mentioned before, primacy of the politics is an important value within representative democracy. Democratically elected officeholders need to determine what happens with public means and how the public sphere looks like. When initiatives take over more and more governmental tasks, they also obtain an increasing amount of influence on the content of public services. The increasing influence of initiators means a decrease of influence of the democratically elected officeholders. In a situation where initiatives operate without interaction with the government, these officeholders have almost no influence at all, while the representative democracy expects officeholders to have influence and to be accountable. To conclude, in a representative democracy, democratically elected officeholders need to have influence on the activities of initiatives that take place in the public domain. This can be done by using metagovernance strategies that aim to ensure the influence of governments on initiatives (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005; Sørensen, 2006).

Forms of metagovernance

Sørensen (2006) identified four ways of metagovernance:

1. Hands-off framing of self-organization: influencing actors' behavior by shaping the political, organizational, and financial context of the environment wherein self-organization takes place.
2. Hands-off storytelling: by constructing a social and political meaning and identity, the interests of actors are influenced and therefore also their behavior. In contrast with framing, storytelling does not interfere with strategy formulation of self-organizing actors.
3. Hands-on support and facilitation: the metagovernor supports the self-organizing actors in fulfilling their needs, without seeking to achieve its own goals.

4. Hands-on participation: the metagovernor is participating directly in the processes of self-organization, and hereby tries to achieve its own goals. By participating directly, the metagovernor loses its authoritative position and needs to behave according the rules of the self-organizing environment.

Whether a form of metagovernance is hands-off or hands-on, depends on the presence of direct interaction between the metagovernor and the self-organizing actor.

Metagovernance and citizens' initiatives

The distinction of Sørensen is sums up forms of metagovernance in general. Nederhand (2015) made a specific distinction of forms of metagovernance when dealing with citizens' initiatives. This distinction will be used in this thesis as Nederhand already discovered what kinds of metagovernance can be found in practice when it comes to governments dealing with initiatives. This distinction exists out of six variations:

1. "Develop strategic frameworks that operate as administrative checks to which self-organizing communities have to comply. This can be considered as self-regulation in the context of regulation";
2. "Develop procedures to monitor the self-organization process and to assess its outputs and outcomes using performance and benchmark systems";
3. "Use (persuasive) framing and storytelling to create a shared discursive context that helps align the sense making of individual actors so that a shared belief and discourse emerges;
4. "Offer support and assistance by providing relevant information, legal assistance, meeting places and/or financial support";
5. "Try to participate in a more direct way by designing the institutional setting in which self-organizing takes place. Here, government intervention focuses on the allocation of positions to relevant actors, the relationship between them and the formulation of relevant rules-of-play";
6. "Discipline the self-organizing process by playing with fear (often linked to storytelling). In doing so, governments try to scare the involved actors so that they move in a certain direction, for instance by threatening to use financial claw-back procedures or projects appraisals, to stop funding or to impose binding rules" (Nederhand, 2015:13-15).

Heurkens, Daamen & Pol (2015) wrote an article about how these different forms of metagovernance could be used in practice. They claim that the most effective way for governments to deal with initiatives, is to be a facilitator. Also Van der Steen (2014) claims that facilitating fits the role of a networking or participatory government, and a networked of participatory government interacts with non-governmental actors, e.g. initiatives. Heurkens et al. do not see facilitating as giving initiatives what they ask for. Facilitating is a combination of strategies. Municipalities need to set a framework in which an initiative can operate. The metagovernance strategies that match this function are setting

strategic frameworks and playing rules. Next, municipalities need to stimulate initiatives to initiate, which can be done by making subsidies available and to offer support of experts, accommodations, etc. The last strategy that should be applied is facilitating. Through deliberation with initiators, the municipality knows what potential contributions of these initiators are and what they need in order to fulfill their ambitions. These strategies do not guarantee success since dealing with initiatives stays an emergent process. Combining these three forms of strategies, however, helps to reach the initiatives full potential, according to the authors.

2.1.5 Strategies

Mintzberg and Waters (1985) have done a lot of research on strategies. One of the theories they came up with, and which is relevant for this thesis since the research question is about governmental steering *strategies*, is the idea of deliberate and emergent strategies. Mintzberg and Waters see strategies as a pattern in a stream of actions. Some of these streams of actions are intentional, while others are not. The intentional streams of actions are called deliberate strategies. The streams of action that are unintentional, or despite of intentions are called emergent strategies. Purely deliberate or emergent strategies are rare. Strategies often have a degree of deliberateness or emergentness. The deliberative and emergent strategies are the poles of a continuum along which real-world strategies can fall (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). According to this theory, every stream of governmental actions can be seen as a strategy, whether this action is deliberate, and successful, or not. When municipalities deal with citizens' initiatives, they have to deal with emergence (more about emergence and self-organization in section 4.2.1.1.1). If municipalities want to influence initiatives, they end up in a push-pull process since they are two different systems that interact. They can try to influence each other but since they are separate systems, they cannot decide for one another (Edelenbos, 2016). Municipalities need strategies to influence the emergent initiatives.

2.2 Performance of citizens' initiatives

2.2.1 Citizens' initiatives

Citizens' initiatives have been in the Netherlands for a long time. Some authors, however, consider the more recent forms of initiatives as novelties since they appear on a smaller scale and are easier to access for outsiders than older forms of initiatives. In addition, their relationship with the government is different (van der Heijden, Van der Mark, Merresonne, & Van Zuylen, 2007). Until the French revolution, citizen's participation was solely an activity for the elite, and after the new constitution of Thorbecke in 1848 which enabled everybody to initiate, interaction between citizens and government went through the well-organized, segregated religious initiatives. Nowadays, everyone can start an initiative and citizens communicate directly with governments (Hooigeboom, 2011).

The traditional instruments of the representative democracy do not satisfy citizens anymore. Figure 1 shows the turn-out of the municipal elections in the Netherlands in the period between 1970, the first local election where voting was not mandatory, and 2014 (www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl, 2016). The figure shows that a declining number of people takes the effort to vote for politicians in their municipality, which is in line with the claim of Putnam (2000) who states that civil engagement is declining in Western democracies. Dalton (2008) disagrees with Putnam and states that citizens are engaging in alternative ways. People do not feel heard by local politicians and start to explore different ways of engaging in public affairs, e.g. by initiating a civic movement.

Not only citizens can benefit from citizens' initiatives through direct forms of influence on public matters that affect them, governments can also benefit. Citizens' initiatives can provide alternatives to expensive urban development programs that aim to increase the viability and safety in a neighborhood. Besides that, citizens' initiatives educate and empower citizens and social organizations, which reduces the reliance on governmental services (Bakker, Denters, Oude Vrielink, & Klok, 2012). Thirdly, citizens' initiatives can emerge in areas that slipped the political attention. Fourthly, the initiatives can step in those areas where the market fails to provide. Finally, initiatives bring common purpose and social solidarity among the participating actors (Edelenbos, 2016).

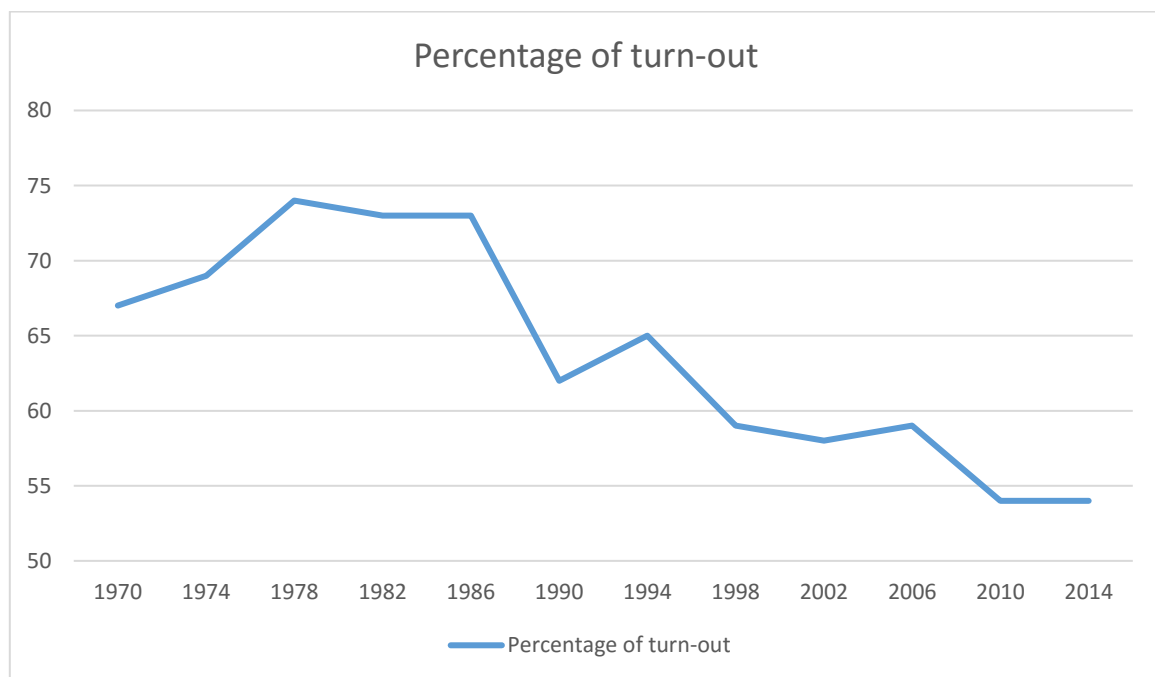


Figure 3 Percentage of turn-out at municipal elections in the period 1970-2014 (www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl, 2016)

2.2.1.1 What are citizens' initiatives?

In the reviewed literature, several definitions were found:

“Collective activities by citizens aimed at providing local ‘public goods or services’ in their street, neighborhood or town, in which citizens decide themselves both about the aims and means of their project and in which local authorities have a supporting or facilitating role” (Bakker, 2012: 397).

“Collective processes started and led by residents to improve living conditions in the place where they live” (Castell, 2016:5). With the term ‘community’ he refers to “people living in a city district, neighborhood or housing unit that share common problems and resources which may be a ground for collective action” (Castell, 2016: 5).

Initiatives that are initiated by the local community or individuals within the local community, which address a specific set of public problems or needs, and aim to address these problems or needs through sustainable collaboration between citizens, production, and local ownership of services or goods that improve the social and physical environment (freely translated from Van Meerkerk et al., 2015).

Bakker (2012) identified four features that can be found in most initiatives. First, citizens’ initiatives are a common action. An initiative is in principle a common action. It may happen that a single actor starts an initiative, but in most cases there is a group of people involved. Second, citizens’ initiatives are self-organizing: the purpose, practices, and means are determined by the initiators (the next paragraph will elaborate this characteristic further). Third, citizens’ initiatives provide local public goods or services: the initiatives are not solely beneficial for the individual. Fourth, citizens’ initiatives are independent of governments or professional organizations: since citizens’ initiatives are self-organizing, governments or professional organization have limited influence.

Igalla and Van Meerkerk (2015) found additional features:

1. Local orientation: the initiators aim to improve the social and physical circumstances of their own local environment.
2. Specific purpose: the initiatives are aimed at a specific question or necessity.
3. Pragmatic: initiatives are characterized by a hands-on and pragmatic approach.

The characteristics of Bakker (2012) and Igalla and Van Meerkerk (2015) are together the core of the definition of citizens’ initiatives that is used in this thesis: a citizen’s initiative is a pragmatic and self-organizing common action which produces goods or services that serve a specific purpose with a local orientation and independently from other actors.

2.2.1.2 Self-organization

Self-organization is an expression originating from the realm of physics, in which it refers to emergence of order in physical processes that seem to be chaotic (Nederhand, 2015; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Kauffman, 1993). Scholars of public administration started using the term when addressing complexity thinking. Complexity thinking implies the acknowledgment of the presence of

continuously interacting elements of a system (Edelenbos, 2016). These interacting elements cause the emergence of properties of the overarching system (Klijn, 2008; Mitleton-Kelly, 2003). The structure of the system is directly related to the interaction of the elements of the system (Checkland, 1981), and a system with elements can be seen as a closed system that interacts with its environment. The system has its own distinctive dynamics and will react to the environment in its own way. Pressures from the outside will have no, or limited, effect on the system. Managing the system, therefore, can be difficult if you do not control the elements or are not part of the system (Klijn, 2008). Some public administration scholars define self-organization as “the emergence and maintenance of structures out of local interaction, an emergence that is not imposed or determined by one single actor, but rather the result of a multitude of complex and non-linear interactions between various elements” (Jantsch, 1980; Cilliers, 1998; Edelenbos, 2016). Citizen’s initiatives can be seen as self-organizing processes wherein community driven initiatives aim to change or improve something via enduring forms of cooperation among citizens (Edelenbos, 2016).

2.2.1.3 Why do citizens’ initiatives emerge?

Citizens’ initiatives mostly emerge out of dissatisfaction with the current state of the habitat. A (new) governmental intervention does not correspond with the interests of citizens or a desirable action is not performed by the government or market (Van Meerkerk, Koppenjan & Keast, 2015). Afterwards, citizens join these emerged initiatives motivated through three main motives (Denters, Tonkens, Verhoeven, & Bakker, 2013a). The first motive is agreeing with the specific goal of the initiative. Citizens want to contribute to the quality of their habitat. The second motive is a social motive. Citizens want to meet and interact with others while serving a helpful cause. The wish to undertake activities with people from the same neighborhood is strengthened by the globalization and digitalization. People want real contact with persons nearby (Delwaide & Geeraerts, 2008). The last motive is participating out of own interest: people want to learn something new or get to know new people.

2.2.1.4 Types of initiatives

De Wilde, Hurenkamp, & Tonkens (2014) identified in their article four types of initiatives. They come to these four types via two variables: internal connectedness and external connectedness which are based on Putnam’s theory on social capital, and bonding and bridging. Social capital means, according to Putnam, the real face-to-face connection between citizens that functions as a source for, among other things, coordinated action. Coordinated action is needed for citizens’ initiatives to thrive. Social capital arises from two forms of interaction: bonding contact and bridging contact. With bonding, Putnam means the connection between group members that strengthen the bonds between the members and focuses on the identity of the group and homogeneity. Bridging, on the other hand, focuses on interaction between members of different social divisions (Putnam, 2000). In the article, De Wilde et al. call bonding internal connectedness and bridging external connectedness. On an internal level this means

the interaction among the volunteers of an initiative. This can be phone calls from one volunteer to another, meetings, activities with members only, etc. On an external level this is interaction with the outside world (Putman’s bridging). The outside world can be understood as other volunteering citizen’s groups or local institutions. The four different types of initiatives are presented in table 1.

1. Feather light groups: little contact among their volunteers and little contact with the outside world. (lower educational levels, less enduring)
2. Cooperative groups: great deal contact among the volunteers, but little contact with outside world. (lower educational level, average enduring, socializing is considered to be more important than achieving results. Fits with Putnam’s behavioral perspective)
3. Networked groups: little contact among volunteers, a lot of contact with outside world. (higher educational level, achieving results is more important than socializing)
4. Nested groups: substantial contact among volunteers and with the outside world. (higher educated, long existing associations, sufficient institutional outlet for their ideas. High amount of bridging and linking social capital) (De Wilde et al., 2014).

Table 1 Types of initiatives based on connectedness

		<i>Internally</i>	
		Disconnected	Connected
<i>Externally</i>	Disconnected	Feather light	Cooperative
	Connected	Networked	Nested

According to De Wilde et al. the social dynamics of a group are relevant for their appreciation of engagement of local authorities. Their research shows that feather light initiatives, in general, would like to be recognized by local authorities. Knowledge about how to expand connectedness on both levels, was often missing. Municipalities could contribute to this knowledge gap but regard these initiatives often as hopeless.

Networked and cooperative groups expressed the need for some kind of dialogue with the local government. Volunteers of these kinds of groups want to be recognized as a volunteer, but also as an expert on their own living area where their initiative operates in. They want a political audience for their plans, but this political audience often did not respond to the invitations of the volunteers to get involved.

Nested groups succeed in creating and maintaining flexible and productive relationships with local authorities. The volunteers of this type of initiatives are often high educated and possess a lot of social capital, which enables them to be a flexible and reliable, and thus valuable, partner for local authorities.

2.2.1.5 Initiatives and sustainability

Besides a distinction based on connectedness, Igalla and Van Meerkerk (2015) found other characteristics on which initiatives can be categorized. These researches claim that there are three characteristics that can influence the sustainability of initiatives: the network structure, the organizational appearance, and the business model. Also personal characteristics of an initiator can influence the sustainability of an initiative: gender, origin, profession, age, educational level, income of household. The correlation between the business model and sustainability of an initiative was not proven by the research of Igalla and Van Meerkerk.

If an initiative strongly depends on a single or a few volunteers, the network structure is very centered. This makes an initiative vulnerable and therefore less sustainable. An initiative can be more sustainable if the responsibilities are shared among a larger number of volunteers, and if the volunteers establish more relationships with actors outside the initiative. Also the organizational appearance of an initiative can influence the sustainability. An organization with an physical-social infrastructure can be more sustainable than an initiative without these infrastructural features. This infrastructure can for example exist of a legal status, a physical place, or a website. The last characteristic, a business model of an initiative, can exist of none, a single, or different funders. A variety of financial sources decreases the independence of an initiative on one subsidizer, and this increases, therefore, the sustainability of an initiative. On the other hand, dependency on a single financial source, increases the dependency of an initiative.

2.2.2 Performance in the context of citizens' initiatives

Several scholars of the University of Twente investigated different matters concerning citizens' initiatives (Denters, Bakker, Vrieling, & Boogers, 2013b). One of these matters is the influence of local government support on the successfulness of citizens' initiatives. These scholars identified three levels on which initiatives can be successful:

- Substantive success: the realization of the goals as defined by the initiators;
- Societal success: the initiative's contribution to solidarity, learning effects, and inspiring others;
- Administrative success: contribution of the initiative to a better relationship with public authorities and contribution to reducing public expenses) (Denters, et al 2013b).

In their research, De Wilde et al. (2014) measured the performance of citizens' initiative by asking initiatives about their satisfaction of their own performance. A high satisfaction means that the initiative performs well. This method is used in this thesis as well (see chapter 3).

2.3 Governmental steering and citizens' initiatives

After discussing different governmental steering strategies and several aspects of citizens' initiatives, it is important to explain where and when governments and initiatives meet each other. Hoogenboom (2011) identified two reflexes where interaction between these two actors takes place. The first reflex is that initiatives tend to ask the government for the (financial) support that they need to fulfill their goals. Also Van Meerkerk et al. (2015) recognize this tendency. Initiators lack the necessary amount of social, intellectual, or financial capital to realize their goals. Hence, they seek out for collaboration with either private, public or non-profit actors. The second reflex is the tendency of the government to involve themselves with the initiatives. According to De Jong, Litjens, & Pröpper (2013) half of the city councils, aldermen, and also civil servants, struggle with their new role where they are supposed to give initiatives the space they need but still fulfill their obligations to the representative democracy.

Giving initiatives the space they need, may not be the most ideal situation. Citizens are not always able to create sustainable initiatives. According to Bang (2009), the start-up of an initiative often comes with a lot of energy and enthusiasm of just a few people. These energetic persons can become less enthusiastic when time passes, move away or get a burn-out. This means that initiatives are very fragile in the beginning. Close collaboration with other actors, e.g. a municipality, will prevent an initiative to fall apart when individual volunteers leave. A municipality can, therefore, play a role in the continuity of an initiative. Besides continuity, the responsibility for possible failures and the accessibility for every citizen are important topics. Moreover, the ideas of the initiators may not be the best solutions for public problems. Perhaps their solutions transfer the addressed problem to other neighborhoods which means that the plans of the initiative are serving interest of the neighborhood but not the public interest (Van der Steen et al., 2014). At last, as mentioned before, the representative democracy needs governmental involvement (metagovernance) in order to prevent initiatives of being a democratic threat.

3. Research design and methods

This chapter will explain how the research is conducted based on the theory discussed in the chapter before.

3.1 Conceptual model

This chapter will explain the focus of this research by demarcating the broad topic of citizens' initiatives and governmental steering strategies.

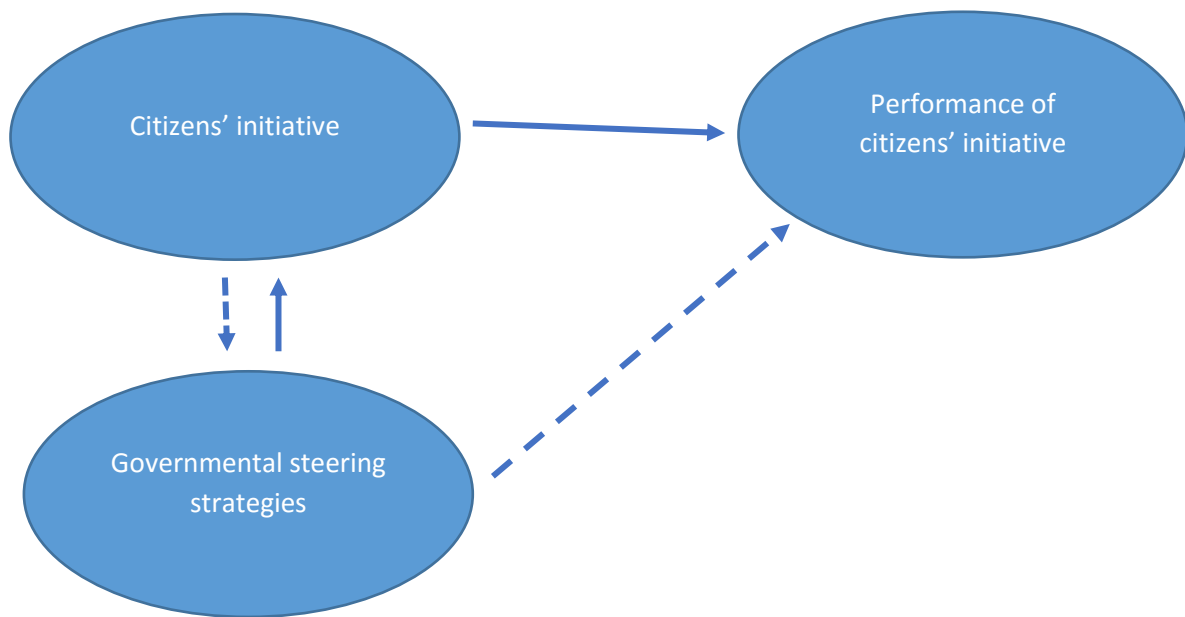


Figure 4 Conceptual model

Figure 3 shows the conceptual model that is used in this thesis, and was inspired by the conceptual model used by Nederhand, Bekkers, & Voorberg (2015). The notions 'citizens' initiatives', 'governmental steering strategies', and 'performance of citizens' initiatives' will be thoroughly elaborated upon in the following chapter. Important to mention is that the citizens' initiatives investigated in this thesis, serve a social purpose, e.g. initiatives that aim to improve viability in a neighborhood, to reduce loneliness among elderly, or other activities that increase the wellbeing of a group of people. The governmental steering strategies investigated will be at a local, municipal level. This governmental layer has the most direct interaction with initiatives and is, therefore, the most interesting actor to include in the research. The arrows in this model represent relations of interaction: the (f)actor mentioned at the beginning of an arrow influences the (f)actor mentioned on the end of the arrow. A dotted arrow means that the relationship represented by that arrow is not discussed in this thesis.

As mentioned in the introduction, there are many more factors influencing the performance of citizens' initiatives than only governmental steering strategies, e.g. culture, politics, media. The government can influence the performance of a citizens' initiative by influencing the citizens' initiative itself, but also by influencing other factors that play a role in output and outcome of an initiative. One can think of a municipality promoting participation in initiatives among citizens through informational events or flyers, or trying to get the media to write about success stories of initiatives (see figure 2). These indirect forms of governmental effect on the performance of initiatives will be left out of this thesis due to the limited amount of time and the extensiveness of the influence of those indirect forms. These forms are represented in the conceptual model by the dotted arrow.

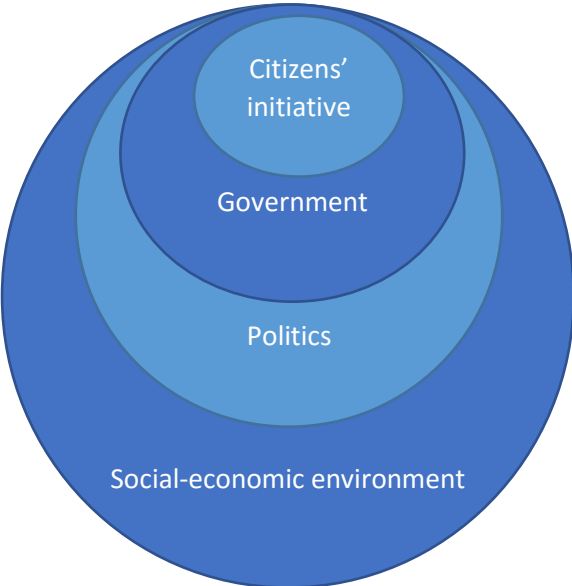


Figure 5 Position of citizens' initiatives in larger context

Another matter that will not be included in this research is the characteristics of a citizens' initiative itself that influence the performance. These characteristics could be the legal status, number of volunteers, educational level of volunteers, available resources, etc. Researching these characteristics would be extremely important and valuable for the initiatives themselves, but again, due to the limit amount of time available, demarcations have to be made. The arrow in figure 1 representing this correlation is not dotted because the relation between citizens' initiatives and their performance stays important for the research conducted in this thesis, namely the influence of the government that helps initiatives to improve, or perhaps decrease, their performance.

3.2 Operationalization

This section provides the reader with clear definitions of the used concepts. Moreover, the transformation of these concepts into measurable indicators is presented.

3.2.1 Independent variable: governmental steering strategies

Definition

Mintzberg defines strategy as a pattern in actions (see chapter 2). In this thesis, the definition of Mintzberg is linked to governmental steering which leads to the following definition:

Governmental steering strategy is defined as a pattern of interactions of a governmental entity towards an entity with the aim to direct its behavior.

Indicators

To find out which governmental steering strategies are applied in a specific case, we need to know what kind of strategies exist in relation to citizens' initiatives. In chapter 2, several distinctions of governmental steering are made. In this thesis, I will use the distinction made by Nederhand (2015) since she made plausible that her distinction represent the steering strategies which are applied in relation to citizens' initiatives. In addition to Nederhand's five steering strategies, I added 'doing nothing'. Not doing anything can also be a conscious or unconscious pattern of action, or more precisely, no action. In this thesis, doing nothing is only regarded as a steering strategy when a municipality does nothing in a situation it could have done something. E.g. if a municipality does not know an initiative, it does nothing. But in this situation the municipality could not have done anything since it is not familiar with the initiative. In this case, doing nothing is not a steering strategy. It becomes a steering strategy when a municipality knows an initiative but does not interact with it. The indicators identified by Nederhand are: setting strategic frameworks, monitoring, presence of supportive actions, setting playing rules, and playing with fear. And the strategy 'doing nothing' is added to this enumeration. The definitions are:

1. Setting strategic frameworks: "develop strategic frameworks that operate as administrative checks to which self-organizing communities have to comply. This can be considered as self-regulation in the context of regulation" (Nederhand, 2015: 5);
2. Monitoring: "develop procedures to monitor the self-organization process and to assess its outputs and outcomes using performance and benchmark systems" (Nederhand, 2015: 5);
3. Framing and storytelling: "use (persuasive) framing and storytelling to create a shared discursive context that helps align the sense making of individual actors so that a shared belief and discourse emerges" (Nederhand, 2015: 5);

4. Presence of supportive actions: “offer support and assistance by providing relevant information, legal assistance, a meeting place and/or financial support” (Nederhand, 2015: 5);
5. Setting playing rules: “try to participate in a more direct way by designing the institutional setting in which self-organizing takes place. Here, government intervention focuses on the allocation of positions to relevant actors, the relationship between them and formulation relevant rules-of-play” (Nederhand, 2015: 5);
6. Playing with fear: “discipline the self-organizing process by playing with fear (often linked to storytelling). In doing so, governments try to scare the involved actors so that they move in a certain direction, for instance by threatening to use financial claw-back procedures or projects appraisals, to stop funding or to impose binding rules.” (Nederhand, 2015: 5);
7. Doing nothing: the government consciously or unconsciously steers through not interacting with the initiative.

Values

Every steering strategy can be applied in different degrees. These ‘degrees’ need to be made measurable. Since every initiative and municipality, and the interaction among these two, is unique, it is impossible to set objective standards that define the amount of usage of a certain steering strategy. The most convenient way to find out which strategies are used, is by asking the involved actors if they recognize any of these strategies and to search for strategies in policy documents. As the policy documents are general documents, they will solely reveal which strategies are potentially or ideally applied, but not how much or how often a certain strategy is applied in a specific case. The values raised from these documents will be: ideally applied, or not present. The only way to discover to which degree the strategies are applied, is through directly asking the involved actors. These actors will be asked to fill in a table with six possible degrees of application of the strategies (for an example see table 2). Zero black circles means that the steering strategy is never applied. One circle means that the strategy is rarely applied. Two circles means that this strategy is sometimes applied, and three circles mean every now and then. Four circles mean that a strategy is often applied, and five black circles mean that the strategy is applied very often. The difference in black circles means a difference in the application of the strategy. The distance between the circles is not always the same and each respondent can interpret the numbers of black circles differently. However, within a table that was completed by the same respondent, it will become clear which steering strategies are most applied and which are less or not applied.

Besides the application of the several steering strategies, also the effectivity of the applied steering strategy was researched. Interviewees were asked to fill in a model with five circles to assess the effectivity of the steering strategies that they applied or recognized. Zero black circles means that the applied strategy does not contribute to the performance of the initiative. One circle means that the

applied strategy contributes very little to the performance. Two black circles mean that the strategy is a bit effective. Three black circles mean that the strategy has a moderate effect on the performance of the initiative. Four black circles mean that the applied steering strategy contributes substantially to the performance of initiatives. Five black circles mean a n extreme positive effect on the performance of an initiative.

Other possible values in the table are a question mark, which means that the respondent did not know how to answer the question, and a line, which means that the question is not relevant. This question is irrelevant and the table will contain a line.

Table 2 Example of table

<i>Steering strategy</i>	<i>Applied to initiative X</i>
<i>Setting strategic framework</i>	● ● ● ○ ○
<i>Monitoring</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

3.2.2 Dependent variable: the performance of citizens’ initiatives

Definition

The definition of a citizens’ initiative that is used in this thesis is the one from Denters et al. (2013a):

A citizens’ initiative is a social and collective activity of citizens who aim to secure and improve the quality of the public domain. Citizens determine how, what and when.

The definition of performance of citizens’ initiatives is based on the definition of success of citizens’ initiatives as described in the previous chapter. The three types of success identified by them are:

- Substantive success: the realization of the goals as defined by the initiators;
- Societal success: the initiative’s contribution to solidarity, learning effects, and inspiring others;
- Administrative success: contribution of the initiative to a better relationship with public authorities and contribution to reducing public expenses (Denters et al., 2013b).

I made some adjustments to this distinction to make it more compatible with my own research. First of all, I changed success into performance. Success and performance share more or less the same meaning except that success includes a positive, normative value. I consider success to be the same as positive performance. Since I also include the negative consequences of governmental steering strategies, I use the more neutral form: ‘performance’. Secondly, I changed the content of the three

levels. I have given substantive performance a narrower definition in order to increase the difference between substantive and societal performance. This will prevent confusion about the difference between substantive and societal performance. I gave societal performance a broader definition because I did not want to limit my interviewees with the three forms of societal effects that are mentioned in Denters' definition. I also changed the third type of performance: administrative performance. The definition of Denters includes saving public expenses. I find this irrelevant for my research since my thesis is about how governments can stimulate initiatives, and not about how initiative can be profitable for society. I focus, therefore, on the first part of Denters' definition of administrative success: the relationship between the initiative and public authority. I added the idea that the relationship between administrators and initiatives should be stimulating the substantive performance. I did this because it is not about whether the relationship is untroubled, but about the usefulness of the government interacting with this initiative for the substantive performance of an initiative. In other words, does the effort that the government makes contribute to a better society, via improving the performance of this initiative? If not, it is not in society's interest for the government to interact with this initiative. Questions in the topic list will provide me with answers about the substantive and administrative performance of an initiative and the role that the municipality plays in those two forms. The municipality cannot influence the societal performance directly, but stimulates a positive outcome for society by increasing the substantive performance of initiatives. Measuring the influence of governmental steering strategies on the societal performance of initiatives is, therefore, not included in this thesis. My new definitions are as follows:

Substantive performance: the realization of the primary goals of the initiative, the extent to which the output is realized: e.g. a service, event or product;

Societal performance: the realization of changes in society;

Administrative performance: the extent to which the relationship between the initiative and the government contributes the initiative to increase its substantive and societal performance.

Indicators and values

In order to research the performance of citizens' initiatives, I need knowledge about the goals on the three levels (substantive, societal, administrative) of the initiative. Moreover, I need information about types of initiative in order to compare the outcomes of different types with their performances. The article of Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015) was used as an inspiration to find a way to categorize the initiatives that are included in this thesis. In their article, the scholars claim that certain features of initiatives can influence the sustainability of an initiative. Even though this research is not about sustainability of initiatives, the features used in the research of Igalla and Van Meerkerk can be used as an inspiration for relevant characteristics that actually help to explain the variety of initiatives and their

difference in appreciation of certain steering strategies. One of the features that possibly influences an initiative's sustainability are the characteristics of the initiator. Igalla and Van Meerkerk distinct several characteristics of initiators: gender, nationality, profession, age, educational level, and income. Most of these characteristics are not useful for my research and turned out to have no significant influence on the sustainability of initiatives, according to the results of the research of Igalla and Van Meerkerk. I picked two characteristics that determine the amount of knowledge that is available within the initiative, which also relates to the amount of social capital and its relation to governmental steering strategies that De Wilde et al. (2014) are discussing in their article. These characteristics are educational level and profession. I decided to add the characteristic 'amount of experience with the public sector' as this can influence the amount of knowledge about available governmental support. Igalla and Van Meerkerk included this characteristic in profession, but I believe that you can also obtain knowledge about the functioning of the public sector in different ways than a working with or within the public sector based on your profession. I also included 'position within the initiative' to provide the reader with an idea about whom I had an interview with. An overview of the used indicators and values can be found in table 3.

Table 3 Initiative: indicators and values I

Variable	Indicator	Value
Initiative	Interviewee characteristics	
	Position within initiative	Open
	Educational level	Low/medium/high
	Profession	Open
	Amount of experience with the public sector	Little/medium/substantive

Igalla & Van Meerkerk did the same for other characteristics of initiatives. They divide initiatives based on three more topics: network structure, business model, and organizational design, again based on presumptions that differences in these three topics influences the sustainability of initiatives. Since the aim of my research is not to investigate the sustainability of different types of initiatives but the influence of the type of initiative on the used steering strategies by the municipality, I changed these topics as well. The network structure will be assessed with questions about the number of volunteers and the connectedness of the initiative. The business model will be determined with questions about the annual budget and funders of the initiative. The organizational structure will be measured through a question about the legal status. To get a more profound impression about the initiative itself, questions about the age and the products the initiatives aims to deliver are included. To assess the performance of an initiative, the goals on the three levels identified by Denters et al. (2013a) need to be researched. The internal and external connectedness can be relevant for my research

according to De Wilde et al. (2014) and was therefore included (see chapter 2). The indicators and values can be found in table 4.

Table 4 Initiative: indicators and values II

Variable	Indicator	Value
Initiative	Characteristics	
	Legal status	None/foundation/private enterprise/ association/ ...
	Budget	In euros a year
	Funders	Municipality/social funds/ contributions/ merchandize/ ...
	Size	Number of volunteers
	Age	In years
	Product/Service	Open
	Goals	
	Substantive	Open
	Societal	Open
	Administrative	Open
	Connectedness	
	Internal connectedness	Low/high
	External connectedness	Low/high

3.3 Methods

3.3.1 Methodology

What?

In order to research the main question, I performed a qualitative, multiple comparative case-study at three municipalities and eight citizens' initiatives. A multiple case-study is a suitable research method due to the existing void of knowledge and theory about the relationship between citizens' initiatives performance and governmental steering. A multiple-case study enabled me to explore the variety of influences on this relationship, and eventually to come to general conclusions. The data I gathered during the case-studies enabled me to answer the sub-questions, and eventually the main research question.

How?

I conducted a qualitative research and use semi-structured interviews as main method. The reason for this decision was that since the available theory about the way governmental strategies influence the performance of citizens' initiatives is scarce, this method would help me to conduct a research of an explorative nature. I chose to work with semi-structured interviews because I needed a certain structure during my interviews, but also a certain degree of freedom that enabled the interviewee to talk freely about his/her initiative. Using a topic list during the interviews enabled me afterwards to compare the answers of the different municipalities and initiatives on specific topics in a structured way, which helped me to find correlations between steering strategies and performance of initiatives. I complemented the semi-structured interviews with a document analysis in which I searched in municipal policy documents for explicit strategies and actions concerning initiatives. I also asked the initiatives to provide me with documents and copies of letters between the municipality and the initiative, if these documents existed and if this was possible. This enabled me to get a more overall impression of the relationship between the initiatives and the municipalities and the applied strategies. The applied strategies were also compared to the ideal situation of the municipal organization that is written down in policy documents.

Who/Where?

To get an idea of the used governmental steering strategies concerning citizens' initiatives, I needed to gather information from municipalities about which strategies they apply. I needed, thus, to interview municipalities and search in letters between municipalities and initiatives for signs of applied strategies. Another part of the research question is the influence of these strategies on the performance of citizens' initiatives. This meant that I also needed to include citizens' initiatives in my research and ask them how municipal interference influences their performance. I also asked them how they experienced the steering of the municipality. On the other hand, I asked the municipality how they imagined their strategies to influence the performance of initiatives.

My aim was to take three Dutch municipalities as my research objects with all different sizes. Larger municipalities have a larger budget and more capacity. Logic reasoning leads to the assumption that in these municipalities there are more citizens' initiatives and that these municipalities have more experience with how to deal with these initiatives. They may also have a more clear vision about which strategies to apply in which situation. Smaller municipalities, on the other hand, may be struggling more with finding a clear vision and encounter less initiatives to experiment their possible strategies with. On the other hand, smaller municipalities may be more capable in achieving personal relationships with their initiatives, while for a larger municipality this would be impossible due to the rich amount of initiatives. If I would only focus on the larger municipalities, I might get a wrong impression of the reality. In other words, by including municipalities of different sizes, I am extending the external

validity. The second criteria for picking my municipalities, letting it depend on the presence of existing warm contacts within Movisie, was for pragmatic reasons: to help me finishing this thesis within the scheduled time. Unfortunately, I had to let go of the wish to find three municipalities that differ in size completely. After I found one small and one large municipality, I had difficulties finding a middle sized one. At the same time, an opportunity was presented to include another municipality. This municipality had almost the same number of inhabitants as the other small municipality. However, I intentionally decided not to waste this possibility and I included this second small municipality as well.

Within the three municipalities I tried to find three initiatives. In the ideal situation, these initiatives show different characteristics regarding their number of volunteers, purpose, legal status, educational level of initiator, and most important: the type of relationship with the municipality (e.g. very intensive, little involvement, averse relationship). Moreover, a diversity in the types that de Wilde et al. (2014) identified would be ideal. However, I found out that it is difficult to determine beforehand all the different characteristics of an initiative, and to find initiatives that are willing to participate in my research. Therefore, I decided to let go of the wish to investigate a set of initiatives with an ideal distribution of characteristics. Instead, I found people within the three municipalities with a large network and a lot of knowledge on the existing initiatives in the municipalities. I asked them to pick three initiatives with different characteristics and determine afterwards the characteristics of this certain initiative. Eventually, this worked out well, although I solely found nested initiatives, which means that I cannot test the theory of De Wilde et al. (2014) as I wanted to. The reason for solely finding nested initiatives is probably because these initiatives are most visible. Cooperative initiatives are externally low connected which assumingly also means that they are not well known by actors who do not take part in these initiatives. Networked initiatives are externally high but internally low connected. This can result in my key persons finding these initiatives less relevant for me. Besides, De Wilde et al (2014) state that 80% of the initiatives of their sample were nested initiatives. It is, therefore, not strange that I found only nested initiatives. Another wish was to interview three initiatives in each of the three municipalities. Due to the limited amount of time, and a last minute cancelation, I decided to interview eight initiatives instead.

I started with interviewing the citizens' initiatives. Based on the information gathered during these interviews, I determined which civil servants were, for my research, the most fitting persons to represent the municipal points of view. Some municipalities have certain civil servants who play boundary spanning roles between the initiatives and the municipality. The initiatives often appointed these civil servants as the person they interacted with most. Sometimes initiatives had less intense relationships with municipalities. In those cases, I had to approach strategic managers since the initiatives interacted only with them. In the end, it turned out that in all the municipalities, several civil servants were working with citizens' initiatives. In the two small municipalities, I succeeded in talking to the most relevant persons. In the large municipality, I managed to interview two of the by the

initiatives suggested civil servant. This means that I missed one important civil servant. There was not enough time to approach this person for an interview. An overview of the interviewed municipalities and initiatives can be found in table 5.

Table 5 Overview of interviewed municipalities and initiatives

	Municipality I	Municipality II	Municipality III
Size (number inhabitants)	50.000	500.000	50.000
Interviewed civil servants	Neighborhood manager (civil servant 1)	Neighborhood manager (civil servant 1)	Program manager (civil servant 1)
	Neighborhood manager (civil servant 2)	Strategic manager (civil servant 2)	Policy advisor (civil servant 2)
Interviewed initiatives and which civil servant was interviewed about this initiative	Dorpsdata (both civil servants)	Wijkwinkel (civil servant 2)	Constructive Dialogue (civil servant 1)
	BuurtOog (both civil servants)	Female Empowerment (civil servant 1)	Bridging Government (civil servant 2)
	TalentEvent (both civil servants)	Meet in the Park (none)	

3.3.2 Topic list interviews

As mentioned before, I used semi-structured interviews as main research method. This means that I used a topic-lists that functioned as a guideline during the conversation with the interviewees. I made two topic lists: one for the initiatives and one for the municipalities. The topic lists (in Dutch) can be found in appendices 1 and 2. The questions of these lists were partly based on literature, and partly on the insight I gained during researching municipalities and citizens' initiatives.

3.3.2.1 Topic list for initiatives

The topic list for initiatives is exists of three parts. The first parts focuses on details of the interviewee and the initiative, the second part is about the relationship between the initiative and the municipality, and the third part is a scheme about steering strategies that the interviewee will be asked to fill in.

Part 1

The first part of the topic list starts with an introducing question where the interviewee is asked to talk about his/her position/role within the initiative. This question is meant to check if I am talking to the right person. The person I am talking to needs to play a central role within the initiative so he/she fully understands the reason of existence of the initiative, and he/she is the person who is interacting with the municipality.

The second question concerns the background of the interviewee. According to Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015), the educational level of initiators influences initiatives. In this specific research the educational level of initiators seems to influence the sustainability of the initiative. My research is not about sustainability, but the performance of initiatives. Since it is not difficult to argue that sustainability and performance might be connected, I decided to include this question in the survey. My own reasoning brought me the idea that besides a high educational level, the amount of experience of the interviewee with the public sector may influence the kind of initiative-municipality relationship, and perhaps also the performance. Thus, the question regarding the background of the interviewee also includes the amount of experience with public administration.

The third question includes five questions that aim to get a general idea about the initiative. Questions regarding the legal status and the financial model of the initiative are included because of the possible influence on sustainability (and performance) that Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015) found in their research. The number of involved volunteers, the age of the initiative, and the activities or products the initiative produces are asked in order to get a general idea about the initiative.

The fourth question is an important one since it aims to gather information about the substantive and societal goal of the initiative, based on theory of Denters et al. (2013b). This is relevant since knowledge about these goals is necessary in order to say something about the performance of the citizens' initiatives. A sub-question is added to find out with what activities or products is aimed to achieve the goals.

The fifth question is inspired on theory of De Wilde et al. (2014) and concerns the internal and external connectedness of the initiative. According to this theory, the connectedness may influence the governmental support that initiatives are appreciating, or not.

Part 2

Part two focuses on the relationship between the initiative and the municipality. Question six is a general question about possible freedom and limits initiatives are experiencing within a municipality while developing their initiative. This question tries to make the most clearly experienced governmental steering strategies visible. Besides, it may show something about the strategic framework that the municipality is applying to the initiatives.

Question number seven is similar to and as broad as question number six. The question is about if, and how, the interviewee experiences steering by the municipality. This question is formulated in this way so the interviewee gets the opportunity to explain the most visible and present steering strategies before the questions about specific steering strategies influences the perceptions of the interviewee.

The eighth question is about with whom within the municipality the interviewee interacts. This is important to determine with which civil servant I need to arrange an interview to talk about the municipal side of the story. Also part of this question is who started the interaction, what is the interaction mainly about, and what was the result of the interaction. These question are asked to give a general idea about that nature of the interaction.

The ninth and tenth question are about the influence of the municipality on the realization of the substantive and societal goals of the initiative, as described at question number 4. This question is very important for answering the main research question in the end since it shows in which ways the municipality can influence the performance of initiatives.

The eleventh question is about the administrative performance of initiatives. The interviewees are asked for their perceptions on how the ideal relationship with the municipality would look like, if the actual relationship looks like this ideal relationship, and to what extent the municipality is contributing to this ideal relationship.

The last question of part two requires some creativity from the interviewee, whom is asked how he/she would deal with initiatives in general if he/she was working for the municipality. The purpose of this question is to find out which steering strategies has the most potential to actually mean something for initiatives, according the interviewee.

Part 3

Part three concerns a scheme with six steering strategies, as identified by Nederhand (2015) complemented with the steering strategy ‘doing nothing’. The interviewee is asked to fill out the scheme. The first column shows the six steering strategies. In the second column, the interviewee will color a number of circles that represent the degree to which this certain strategy was applied on the initiative of the interviewee. The more circles are colored, the more this strategy is applied. The last column shows into what extent this applied strategy helped the initiative to achieve its substantive and societal goals.

3.3.2.2 Topic list for municipalities

The list for the municipalities needs to focus on the steering strategies that are used to influence initiatives. This can be conscious, but also unconscious. The topic list starts with general questions concerning the civil servant who is being interviewed, and the local policy concerning citizens’

initiatives in general. The second part of the list concerns questions about the relationship between the municipality and specific initiatives.

Part 1

In the first question, the interviewee is asked about his/her position within the municipality. This question is meant to make the interviewee make himself/herself feel at ease and to check if I am talking to the right person. This is probably the case since I asked the initiatives specifically about their contact person within the municipality.

The second question concerns the general vision of the municipality (the city council) on citizens' initiatives. This is important to know because, logically, the applied steering strategies will originate from certain general policy visions. The civil servant will be asked to tell about this vision and to point out the name of the document where this vision is written down, so I can use this document in my document analysis.

The third question is about the civil servant's ideas about what a citizens' initiative actually is. I ask this question for practical reasons. I experienced, namely, that municipalities have different ideas about which initiatives are also citizens' initiatives. The core of the notion is clear: a citizen has an idea and starts to organize something. But municipalities may give supportive action only to initiatives that meet certain requirements, e.g. initiatives cannot make revenues.

In the fourth question, the interviewee is asked about if he/she treats initiatives with certain traits differently than others. With this question, I hope to reveal that certain steering strategies are used more often on initiatives with certain traits.

The fifth question concerns a general question about the reasons of interaction between initiatives and the municipality. The interviewee is asked about what the most common requests are from initiators. This question includes a sub-question where the civil servant is asked if there are any special arrangements or services for initiatives. This sub-question will provide me with an idea of the different services or supportive actions that municipalities might offer their initiatives.

The sixth question aims to reveal the steering strategies that municipalities are applying on initiatives consciously. Besides, the civil servant is asked to fill out the figure of Van der Steen (2014) to determine what governmental attitude this municipality acts like.

3.4 Internal validity

The internal validity is in this thesis ensured through working systematically with clear definitions, objectives, indicators and values. These definitions, objectives and indicators were used as base to construct a questionnaire used for the semi-structured interviews. The performed interviews have the same structure which makes it possible to compare them.

3.5 External validity

The external validity is ensured by the chosen research method. By conducting a multiple case study at several municipalities and citizens' initiatives, the external validity is increased. Important to mention is that the general idea is that the governmental style, when it comes to citizens' initiatives, is gradually transforming. If this research would be repeated in a few years, the situation might have been changed whereas municipalities can be using different steering strategies more predominantly than they do nowadays. However, a strategy transformation does not necessarily influence the effects of a strategy. In this research, one large and two small municipalities are researched. It is unclear if the findings can also be applied to middle sized municipalities. Moreover, also between the two smaller municipalities a lot of differences were found concerning the way the municipalities deal with initiatives.

3.6 Reliability

The reliability is ensured by working systematically and to report carefully on the performed activities. Throughout the whole research, the same structural models were used (see appendix: "Taxonomy initiative" and "Taxonomy municipality"). Together these models helped to obtain the relevant information from the case studies.

3.7 Triangulation

In order to acquire a more complete idea of the reality, two research methods are combined to strengthen the outcomes of both methods. The first variable, governmental steering strategies, is researched via interviews with initiatives and municipalities, and via a document analysis. Documents that are investigated are municipal documents: e.g. political programs and policy document that address active citizenship and citizens' initiatives. The performance of citizens' initiatives is researched via interviews with initiatives. The combined methods increase the reliability and validity of the research.

4. Empirical findings

*In this chapter, the results of the interviews and document analysis will be presented and scrutinized. This chapter exists of four sections: the first three sections will present each the findings in one municipality. These three sections start with a description of the municipality that was researched and the policies of this municipality regarding initiatives. After this, a short introduction will be given of the interviewees and each initiative that was researched. In the next part, the relationships between the municipality and the separate initiatives is presented. The last section will show the patterns found in the results. **The initiatives will be given fictional names in order to increase the readability of this chapter.***

4.1 Municipality I

4.1.1 Local government

Municipality I is located in the western part of the Netherlands and has about 50.000 inhabitants. Via a keyperson of a welfare organization I found a coordinator, a chairman and a project leader of each of the three citizens' initiatives with whom I conducted interviews. The results of these interviews will be demonstrated later in this section. First, the policies of the municipality regarding initiatives will be discussed, based on an interview with two neighborhood managers, and based on a policy document of the municipality.

4.1.1.1 Policy document

The agreement between the ruling parties in the city council contains several ambitions that are assumed to be guiding for four years. One of these ambitions is that the municipality wants to support initiatives of citizens. The goal is to develop a situation where the municipality joins social movements that arise among the citizens. It is not the municipality who initiates, but citizens who come up with an idea and the municipality who participates and supports that idea. The municipality aims to be flexible and serve civil ideas.

4.1.1.2 Civil servants

The neighborhood managers explain that the municipality takes its ambitions seriously. They recognize that it was often the strength of the municipality on which the initiative was built. Nowadays, they try to help an initiative to start up, but they do not take over the whole organizational aspect. Activating citizens is still a very important issue: making people ready to participate and giving them the confidence that they can achieve something. Since the wellbeing of citizens within municipality I is very high, and initiatives are often started out of dissatisfaction, municipality I does not have many initiatives. Every initiative that starts within the municipality and asks for help, is received with open arms.

Most requests of initiators to the municipality concern planting flowers or bushes on public soil to decorate the neighborhood. Other citizens request financial means that are needed to realize certain projects. The neighborhood managers have a certain budget which they can spend on initiatives or other forms of citizen participation, e.g. an information meeting about restructuring a neighborhood. The managers have to justify the budgets they spend before the political parties and the welfare organization who also invest in projects. The ambition of serving the ideas of citizens is present within the municipality. However, in reality the managers encounter difficulties, for example, when working with municipal legal experts who do not possess this flexible way of thinking (yet).

During the interviews, the neighborhood managers were asked which governmental steering strategies, as identified by Nederhand et al. (2015), they apply in general, and if they think these strategies contribute to the substantive performance of initiatives, which is called the perceived effectiveness. Table 6 shows how often each strategy is applied and if the managers think this strategy helps the initiative to achieve its goals (zero black circles is not applied/perceived not to be effective, five black circles signify always applied/perceived to be extremely effective). Moreover, the managers were asked to comment on the several strategies which the municipality applies.

Strategic framework: It makes things easier if the initiative that asks for support fits within the municipal policies. But also for initiatives that have ideas that do not fit the municipal policy programs, the municipality can offer help. The municipality wants to get rid of those programs anyway since they oppress the initiatives.

Monitoring: Within municipality I it is common to monitor initiatives by staying in touch with the initiators. Sometimes it is even hard to let go of an initiative since the involvement of the managers is also a sign of gratitude towards the initiators. E.g. one of the managers is participating every Saturday, in his spare time, in an initiative to clean the streets. Participating in this initiative helps the manager to get in touch with other active citizens and to find other ideas which might need municipal help. Monitoring also happens in an informal way, e.g. by meeting each other at events and asking casually how things are going.

Framing and storytelling: Every year the municipality sends newsletters to the citizens where initiators get the opportunity to talk about their initiative. Also in the local newspaper, there is a column where activities in the neighborhood are discussed. The managers feel that it is important that citizens inspire each other to become active. If the municipality picks up that task, citizens may feel like it is another attempt to cut the budget.

Presence of supportive actions: There is a budget for activities in the neighborhood and the managers can offer their own time to help out with initiatives.

Setting playing rules: There are some playing rules attached to certain supportive actions. E.g. the justification of expenditures by financial aid, and rules regarding the maintenance of the green planters in the neighborhoods.

Playing with fear: The managers do not recognize this strategy.

Doing nothing: The municipality aims to be an active facilitator. Doing nothing does not fit this ambition.

Table 6 General usage of steering strategies according municipality I

	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●○○	●●●○○
<i>Monitoring</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○
<i>Playing rules</i>	●○○○○	●●●○○
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○○○○○	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○○○○○	-

4.1.2 Initiatives

The three initiatives that were interviewed in municipality I, are all very different. Dorpsdata aims to establish a digital database in which neighbors in need can ask for help, and neighbors with skills and spare time can offer their support. These neighbors will find each other through this database webpage. The second initiative, Buurt-Oog, was initiated by the municipality with the goal of engaging citizens in public safety by participating in a neighborhood surveillance service. Citizens walk in pairs through the streets of the village in order to check for suspicious scenes. The third initiative, TalentEvent, aims to organize an event in a village where the inhabitants can show each other their hobbies and talents. The characteristics of these three initiatives can be found in table 8.

In order to analyze the information from the interviews in a structured way, the analysis is based on a coding system. The taxonomy of this coding system can be found in the appendix. The taxonomy is based on the topic-list, and therefore on the literature described in chapter 3.

4.1.2.1 Interviewee

The person of Dorpsdata whom I interviewed, is not the initiator of this initiative, but he got involved and is now the initiative's chairman. He knows a lot about the public sector due to his former involvement in politics. He also has a close relationship with the neighborhood manager, who plays an important role in the interaction between initiatives within municipality I and the municipality. The interviewee has the phone number of the manager and they speak regularly.

The coordinator of Buurt-Oog, who was my second interviewee, has no experience with the public sector. He was active in the neighborhood association due to his believe that citizens should be active and engage in activities that increase the livability and social cohesion within a neighborhood, and via this association he got involved in initiative 2.

The third interviewee was the chairman of TalentEvent. She was not the initiator of the initiative but was asked to participate by the neighborhood manager of the municipality. He asked her because of her former involvement in activities in the village. Since she is an independent, freelance entrepreneur, she has flexible working hours which makes it possible for her to be involved in realizing the goals of TalentEvent.

Table 7 summarizes the characteristics of the first three interviewees that are relevant according to the literature.

Table 7 Interviewees within municipality I

	Dorpsdata	Buurt-Oog	TalentEvent
1.1 Characteristics			
1.1.1 Position within the initiative	Chairman	Coordinator	Chairman
1.1.2 Educational level	High, interviewee holds an university degree	High, interviewee holds an university degree	High, interviewee holds an university degree
1.1.3 Profession	Retired	IT-specialist	Freelance communication advisor
1.1.4 Experience public administration	A lot, obtained during a political career and involvement in other initiatives	None	A lot, obtained during freelance assignments within public sector and involvement in other initiatives

4.1.2.2 Initiative

Like many Dutch municipalities, municipality I needs to cut in its expenses on the social domain. Many municipalities aim to do this by letting citizens in need rely on support of their social network instead of on services or facilities funded by the municipality. The initiators of this citizens' initiative were afraid that the underlying assumption of the municipality including that citizens in need have this kind of social networks, were false. Therefore, they conducted a survey in their neighborhood

to investigate how strong the social commitment of citizens is, if the inhabitants of the neighborhood feel responsible for the physical and social livability, and if the inhabitants are involved in volunteering. After the survey was completed, the initiators concluded that there was a need for an additional social network that would ensure the wellbeing of citizens in need. This led to the idea of creating a digital database where citizens can be connected to each other based on their needs and offers.

Initiative 1, Dorpsdata, is a loosely organized initiative. It has close ties with the neighborhood association since the chairman of the initiative, and my interviewee, is also the chairman of the neighborhood association. Dorpsdata does not need a large budget, solely a one-time budget to finance the research which showed on one hand that there is a need of an additional social structure since the social networks of people are not sufficient enough to fill the void that is caused by the retreating government, and on the other hand that citizens are willing to perform a small, free service for their neighbors.

Initiative 2, BuurtOog, includes a neighborhood watch. Inhabitants of the neighborhood invigilate the area several times a week. BuurtOog was initiated by the municipality. In another neighborhood in the municipality already existed a neighborhood watch. This watch was quite successful and the municipality wanted to set up a similar service in other areas. They asked the neighborhood association to attend an information evening and during this evening volunteers were found to set up this watch. The volunteers of the neighborhood watch walk in pairs every week one or two shifts of each one hour. They can make their own schedule on a website that is being monitored by the coordinator. Before every start their shifts, they report to the police that they are about to start their tour. The police can give them information about certain oddities the volunteers should pay attention to. Since everything is arranged through the municipality, this initiative does not need a legal status or budget. The volunteers walk their rounds in pairs which causes a high connectedness among the volunteers. They also speak to inhabitants of the neighborhood that they meet on the streets who, for example, forgot to close their windows or left their keys in their doors. Even though the municipality initiated this watch and provides it with all necessities, the volunteers can choose how they want to arrange their watch. The volunteers are in charge.

The initiator of the third initiative, TalentEvent, wanted to create a social structure in a relatively new neighborhood. The idea is to organize an event where citizens can sign up to demonstrate their talents and hobbies. Citizens may get in touch with other inhabitants that share the same talents or hobbies. This creates the opportunity for sustainable meetings between citizens to arise. The initiator went to the neighborhood manager for help. The manager found a group of active citizens who together organize the event. Interesting to mention is that the initial initiator left the group of organizers. The guess of the interviewee was that the initiator left because she could no longer find her initial idea in

the plan as it was realized. TalentEvent is young and the event will be the first one. The initiators hope that this event will turn into an annual tradition.

The third initiative, TalentEvent, exists of six volunteers. These six volunteers call themselves the working group and they are in charge of the organization of an event where citizens can show each other their hobbies and talents, which will create connections among citizens. The working group is supported by a large group of active citizens who will participate in the event. TalentEvent uses, like Dorpsdata, the neighborhood associations for their formal communication. This makes that they do not need their own legal status. Organizing a large event comes with a large budget, for which the initiative found several funders: the municipality, the neighborhood associations, a social funds, and other sponsors. The initiative is internally and externally connected through a closely working together working group and high collaboration with the inhabitants of the neighborhood.

Table 8 Initiatives within municipality I

	Dorpsdata	Het Buurt-Oog	TalentEvent
<u>2.1 Characteristics</u>			
2.1.1 Legal status	None	None	None
2.1.2 Budget	Small budget for startup	None	Large
2.1.3 Funders	Small budget obtained from municipality	None. Necessities are provided by the municipality	Several funders: municipality, charity organizations, neighborhood association
2.1.4 Size (number of volunteers)	5	15	6
2.1.5 Age of initiative	2-3 years	2-3 years	<1 year
2.1.6 Product	Database for citizens	Neighborhood watch	Event for citizens
<u>2.2 Goals</u>			
2.2.1 Substantive	Conducting a survey and creating a database to connect citizens	Setting up a neighborhood watch	Organizing an event where citizens can show each other their talents
2.2.2 Societal	Enhancing social network of citizens and enlarge social cohesion in the neighborhood	Improving the feeling of safety and activate citizens through engaging them with public safety	Creating a social structure for the village that will bring people together and increase the livability
2.2.3 Administrative	Municipality needs to provide financial means to start the initiative	Facilitating without taking over	Working closely together with the municipality
<u>2.3 Connectedness</u>			
2.3.1 Internal connectedness	High	High	High
2.3.2 External connectedness	High	High	High
2.3.3 Type of initiative	Nested	Nested	Nested

4.1.3 Interaction

4.1.3.1 Municipal attitude towards initiatives

This section explains how the interaction between municipality I and the initiatives within this municipality looks like. The description of these interactions is based on the interviews.

The first initiative, Dorpsdata, wants to set up a database that will prevent people from getting into trouble when the municipality retreats from certain areas within the social domain. Since the municipality is retreating from these areas, it feels natural that the municipality is not heavily involved in this initiative. On the other hand, it was not difficult for my interviewee to get a budget from the municipality to finance the survey among the inhabitants of the neighborhood. The municipality supports the activities of this initiative but does not get involved.

BuurtOog was initiated by the municipality, so it makes sense that the municipality cherishes this initiative and supports it with everything it needs. One could say that the initiative is a service of the municipality, but ran by citizens. My interviewee does not see it this way. He says that the municipality suggests to run the neighborhood watch in a certain way, but does not enforce this. It is up to the volunteers how they want to organize their watch. However, they largely took over the suggestions concerning the organization of the municipality. When the volunteers come up with own ideas, for example organizing a self-defense course, the municipality is also very supportive, in this specific case by arranging a location for the course. BuurtOog has a fixed contact person within the municipality that arranges all the necessities for the volunteers. Moreover, there are regular meetings with other civil servants and police officers.

According to interviewee 3, and according to correspondence between TalentEvent and the municipality, this TalentEvent contained an idea that was gratefully supported by the municipality as it fitted within their policy to increase the livability and create a social structure in this neighborhood. The municipality supported TalentEvent by a large sum of money and by letting the neighborhood manager actively participate within the working group. All contact with the municipality ran through the neighborhood manager.

Table 9 Attitude municipality I

	Dorpsdata	Het Buurt-Oog	TalentEvent
3.1 Attitude of the municipality towards initiative, according the initiative	Supportive as long initiatives do not ask for money and their plans fit within the municipal policies	Very helpful	The neighborhood manager is very helpful. The city council is more pre cautious
3.2 Ways of contact with initiative	Via the neighborhood manager and the municipal welfare organization	Direct contact within the municipality who arranges all necessities for the initiative, and	The neighborhood manager is part of the working group and therefore always

	regular meetings with another civil servant together with the police	involved with everything
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4.1.3.2 Forms of interaction

The interviewed initiatives have very different relationships with municipality I. This section will briefly explain these relationships.

Initiative 1: Dorpsdata

The initiators needed financial means in order to start up a survey. They received this financial support from the municipality via the neighborhood manager. After the completion of the survey, the report was presented to the alderman. This initiative interacted with the municipality on a rare basis. Only when the initiative needed some money, they found the municipality through the neighborhood manager, who stays in close contact with the interviewee. The second interaction took place when the initiative presented the results of the survey to the alderman.

Initiative 2: Het BuurtOog

The coordinator and volunteers have regular meetings with the municipality and police. All the necessities, like jackets and torches, are provided by the municipality. The municipality demands that every volunteer signs a contract for volunteers. These contracts sum up the responsibilities of the volunteers and provide insurance.

Initiative 3: TalentEvent

The neighborhood manager was part of the group that organizes the event, which means that there are very close ties between the municipality and the initiative. The neighborhood manager makes sure that the group complies to municipal formalities, e.g. requesting a permit in time. Interesting is that the original initiator of the event left the initiative. According to the interviewee, the reason for her to leave was the fact that she could not recognize her initial ambitions in the plans that the working group was working on.

Table 10 Interaction municipality I - initiative

	Dorpsdata	Het Buurt-Oog	TalentEvent
4.1 Characteristics			
4.1.1 Intensity	Low, there was interaction twice	High, there are regular meetings and fixed contact persons	High, the neighborhood manager is part of the working group
4.1.2 Initiator of contact	Citizens	Municipality	Municipality

4.1.3 Topic	A necessary budget and presentation of the survey's results	Regular checkup meetings and about necessities	Everything. The neighborhood manager is involved in everything
4.1.4 Results	The budget was awarded and the survey report was accepted	The initiative feels taken seriously by the municipality and can function well since they have all they need	Close collaboration between the municipality and the initiative
<u>4.2 Contributions to goals</u>			
4.2.1 Substantive	The survey was made possible by the municipality. The database, however, will be established without any contributions from the municipality	The municipality provided everything that is needed for the volunteers to invigilate the streets	The presence of the municipality within the initiative is a large support to the initiative
4.2.2 Administrative	The municipality supported the initiative where needed (financially) and did not bother the initiative	The active facilitating role of the municipality is ideal for the initiative	The current relationship with the municipality is perfect for achieving the set goals

4.1.3.3 Governmental steering strategies

The interviewees were asked about which governmental steering strategies, as Nederhand (2015) identified them, are applied on their initiatives by the municipality. The results of these interviews on this specific topic are presented in two types of tables. The first three tables (tables 11, 12, 13) show the extent to which the steering strategies are applied on the specific initiatives and the perceived effectiveness of this application. Table 14 shows the codes that explain why the respondents gave certain scores to the several steering strategy.

How to read the table

The first rows of tables 11, 12, and 13 show the steering strategies identified by Nederhand et al. (2015). The second row shows the extent to which Dorpsdata experiences the usage of the steering strategies by the municipality. The third row shows to what extend municipality tries to influence Dorpsdata by using steering strategies. The fourth and fifth rows show how effective these strategies are in order to influence the substantive performance of initiatives in a positive way according to the initiative and according to the municipality. The effectiveness of not-recognized steering strategies, can, of course, not be determined. That is why some cells contain a line. Zero black circles means that the steering strategy was not applied, or that the strategy was not effective. Five black circles means that the steering strategy was used/applied a lot, or that the strategy was extremely effective. A question mark means that the interviewee had difficulties with filling in the table. This happened mostly when civil servants were asked to determine whether certain steering strategies helped initiatives with

accomplishing their goals. Tables 11, 12, and 13 only show the quantity of application of several steering strategies. Table 14 explains what the application of these strategies looks like.

Dorpsdata

Table 11 shows that the initiative and the municipality think the same about the usage and the effectivity of this usage of supportive strategy. Dorpsdata feels like the municipality is imposing a strategic framework on the initiative in an indirect way by only supporting initiatives that operate within the municipal policies. The municipality does not recognize this. The interviews do not make clear the reason of this difference in perceptions. Besides these two strategies, no other strategies were applied on this initiative. The effectiveness of the presence of supportive actions was perceived the same by the civil servants and the initiatives. Dorpsdata considers the contribution of setting strategic frameworks to the substantive performance moderate: “An initiative can only expect support from the municipality if the goals of the initiative are in line with the municipal vision” (interviewee Dorpsdata). The ambitions of Dorpsdata fit in this municipal vision so they could get financial support of the municipality.

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Dorpsdata	Municipality	Dorpsdata	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●○○	○○○○○	●●●○○	-
<i>Monitoring</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○	●●●●○	●●●●○
<i>Playing rules</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-

Table 11 Applied steering strategies on Dorpsdata

BuurtOog

Table 12 shows how BuurtOog and municipality I perceive the governmental steering strategies used on BuurtOog. This initiative and municipality I perceive more or less the same applied steering strategies and the effectiveness of those applied strategies. A small difference can be found in the extent to which strategic framework are imposed and how effective this is, and in the usage of the strategies “playing with fear” and “setting playing rules”. The difference in playing with fear can be explained by a difference in interpretation of the contracts for volunteers. The interviewee of BuurtOog said that these contracts keep some volunteers away as they get scared by the formalities in this contract. The municipality considered these contracts not as a form of playing with fear. The difference in perceptions on setting playing rules can be explained by the fact that the municipality made a lot of playing rules, but did not enforce these rules. BuurtOog could decide to do things differently but it does not. BuurtOog,

therefore, experiences the application of setting playing rules less severe. The municipality applied a lot of steering strategies on initiative 2. Especially by using monitoring, framing and storytelling, offering supportive actions, and setting playing rules. As mentioned before, how these forms of steering look like in practice, can be found in table 14. The presence of supportive actions and framing and storytelling are the most effective steering strategies for this initiative, followed by setting strategic frameworks.

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Het BuurtOog	Municipality	Het BuurtOog	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●○○○	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●●○○
<i>Monitoring</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●○○	●●●○○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
<i>Playing rules</i>	●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●○○	?
<i>Playing with fear</i>	●○○○○	○○○○○	●●●○○	-

Table 12 Applied steering strategies on BuurtOog

TalentEvent

The same goes for TalentEvent. In general, the scores that this initiative and the municipality gave to the applied strategies and the effectiveness of these strategies are very similar. Monitoring, framing and storytelling, and offering support are the most applied strategies. The difference in the perception of the application and effectivity of the steering strategy framing and storytelling can be explained by the different perceptions that both parties had on the meaning of this strategy. The interviewee of TalentEvent did not experience a clear message of the municipality that tried to influence the course of the initiative. The civil servant considered having himself in the working group of the initiative, the ultimate form of telling the municipal story to the initiative. The civil servant that was interviewed about this initiative had difficulties assessing the effectivity of the applied steering strategies for the initiative. The initiative considered the presence of supportive actions the most effective steering strategy, since the financial help and the time and effort that the civil servant put into the initiative, helped the initiative to realize its goal.

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	TalentEvent	Municipality	TalentEvent	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●○○○	●○○○○	●●●●○	?

<i>Monitoring</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●○	●●●○○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●○○	●●●●●
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	?
<i>Playing rules</i>	●●○○○○	●○○○○	●●○○○○	?
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-

Table 13 Applied steering strategies on TalentEvent

Table 14 shows the codes that were given to the comments of the interviewees of the initiatives on the interview questions about the steering strategies. These codes show in how several steering strategies were applied and how they can contribute to the performance of initiatives.

	Dorpsdata	Het BuurtOog	TalentEvent
5.1 Strategic framework	The municipality has policies and are more willing to support those initiatives who are operating within this policy framework	The non-binding rules of the municipality about what the initiative would contribute and how, helped the initiative	The neighborhood manager represents the policies of the municipality and steers the course of the initiative in a direction that is also beneficial for the municipality
5.2 Monitoring	Not applied	The municipality wants to be engaged with the initiative and arranged that there will be regularly meetings. Directly, this does not contribute to achieving our goals, but the information that the municipality acquires can help indirectly	The neighborhood manager is always present, so the municipality knows everything
5.3 Framing and storytelling	The municipality is actively telling a story to the citizens in general. Not specifically to the initiative	The municipality had a clear story prepared, including a presentation of a best practice, in order to give this initiative an idea how to organize a neighborhood watch	This does not happen very actively but there was an article in the local paper
5.4 Presence of supportive actions	The municipality ensures support through the neighborhood manager and indirect through the welfare organization in the	Things that the neighborhood watch needs to fulfill its purpose, is taken care of by the municipality for free	The neighborhood manager is doing many tasks for the initiative and is present at every meeting. The initiative

	municipality. Support is given in several forms: financial, expertise, and accommodation		also received a budget from the municipality
5.5 Setting playing rules	Not applied. Initiative determined its own rules	The municipality sets rules regarding the contracts for the volunteers but also the regularly meetings are some kind of rule of the municipality.	The neighborhood manager sets some rules about his position and what the municipality wants/needs/expects
5.6 Playing with fear	Not applied	The municipality obliged the initiative to use certain contracts which scared some volunteers off, while it provided them with insurance as well	Not applied
5.7 Doing nothing	-	Not applied	-

Table 14 How steering strategies are applied in municipality I according to the initiatives

4.1.4 Summary

All initiatives are content with the relationship they have with the municipality. The municipality is small and it is evident with whom they need to talk when they need something: the neighborhood managers. Two initiatives have very close relationships with the municipality. The neighborhood manager participates in TalentEvent, and BuurtOog has frequent meetings with civil servants. Dorpsdata has incidental contact with the municipality, which is fine as Dorpsdata is very independent.

The most applied steering strategy in this municipality is providing initiatives with supportive actions. This support mostly includes financial support and attention. Since the municipality pays a lot of attention to the initiatives, monitoring also gets a high score from two initiatives. Monitoring of these two initiatives looks like regular meetings about how things are going for the initiatives in general. This attention is appreciated a lot by the initiatives as it helps them to realize their goals.

According to the municipal policy documents, municipality I wants to act according to the fourth attitude of Van der Steen (2013): the participatory governmental attitude. The municipality wants to participate with initiatives of citizens instead of initiate ideas itself. The interviewed civil servants try to work according this policy. In practice, one of the three initiatives that were interviewed (BuurtOog), was initiated by the municipality (this was however, before/during the municipal elections which means that the policy document that expresses the ambition not to initiate but to participate was created after the start of this initiative). Another initiative (TalentEvent) was originally initiated by a citizen. The neighborhood manager helped this citizen to find other citizens to realize her plan and this manager also

actively participated. Eventually, the plans of the group that organized the event deviated so much of the original plan of the initiator, that she left the group. In these two cases municipality I acted with the third attitude of Van der Steen (2013). The neighborhood managers explain that there are very little citizens’ initiatives in their municipality. Every initiative, therefore, is received with a lot of enthusiasm and given a lot of attention. Perhaps more than the municipal formal policies would suggest.

Table 15 shows the total scores of the different steering strategies according to the initiatives. The maximum score in the table is 15, which means that a score of 15 means maximum application of the strategy or maximum effectivity of the applied strategy. All initiatives experience a lot of support from the municipality, which is in line with the policies and the suggestions of the civil servants. Besides support, monitoring is the most applied strategy in municipality I. This strategy is on average perceived less effective as setting strategic frameworks.

Table 15 Total of applied steering strategies within municipality I according to the initiatives (maximum score is 15)

<i>Steering strategy</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Effectiveness</i>
<i>Strategic framework</i>	7	11
<i>Monitoring</i>	10	7
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	8	8
<i>Presence supportive actions</i>	14	14
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	5	5
<i>Playing with fear</i>	1	3

Conclusions:

- Municipality I is more actively energizing initiatives than the policy documents suggest.
- The policy documents suggest an attitude that fits the participatory attitude as identified by Van der Steen (2013). The civil servants and two of the three initiatives steer/experience steering that fit the networking attitude of Van der Steen (2013): BuurtOog and TalentEvent. The last initiative does not interact much with the municipality: Dorpsdata. Since the initiative does not ask for a lot of support, one could say this fits the participatory attitude.
- The most applied steering strategy according to all initiatives is offering support. This strategy increases the performance of the initiatives the most of all strategies.

- The second most effective steering strategy for initiatives is setting strategic frameworks.
- The civil servants experience difficulties within the municipal organization that lacks the flexibility to deal with initiatives properly.

4.2 Municipality II

4.2.1 Local government

Municipality II is a municipality in the western part of the country and has more than 500.000 inhabitants, which makes this municipality one of the largest municipalities within the Netherlands. In general, it was harder to find cooperative initiatives and civil servants in this municipality than it was in the other two municipalities, since the municipal organization is much larger and there are dozens of civil servants working with citizens' initiatives. Eventually, I found three initiatives and two civil servants that were willing to be interviewed. Due to the limited amount of time, I was not able to find and interview a civil servant about the third initiative.

4.2.1.1 Policy documents

The coalition agreement of the ruling parties of municipality II is divided into several main themes. Active citizenship or citizen's participation/initiatives is not one of these themes, but are mentioned a few times within the other themes. The municipality has a separate policy document for citizens' initiatives.

In this documents, the municipality expresses the value that initiatives can have for the neighborhood. Citizens' initiatives arise on a voluntary base and aim to improve the livability of the municipality. The initiators of an initiative can be (a group of) citizen(s), an organization without seeking out for profit, or a social entrepreneur. The municipality wants to support these initiatives in order to strengthen the positive effects these initiatives have. In municipality II, three types of initiatives are identified based on the amount of financial support they need. The first category exists of initiatives that require less than 250,- euros on an annual basis. Support on content and financial level goes via a welfare organization. The next category of initiatives are the initiatives who request between 250-10.000 euros. These initiatives are supported by the welfare organization but also by neighborhood managers. Municipal support for this category of initiatives can include coaching initiators, connecting initiators with each other, advising initiatives concerning their ideas. The last category includes initiatives with subsidy requests more than 10.000 euros a year. These initiatives need to meet more accountability criteria.

4.2.1.2 Civil servants

Within municipality II, I interviewed two civil servants. Civil servant 1 emphasizes that the municipality focuses on inhabitant's wishes while designing policies. It is no longer the municipality who decides what is best for the people, but it are the citizens who can decide. That is the general attitude of the municipality, on paper at least. In practice, civil servant 1 experiences difficulties with the municipal organization. The municipal employees who work with citizens' initiatives directly, understand how this ideal policy of listening to the inhabitants, looks like. The rest of the organization is stuck in the traditional flow where the policy direction is decided by aldermen and existing rules should be obeyed. When the public value is ought to be constructed by citizens, flexibility within the municipal organization is needed. Civil servant 2 faces the same problem. Furthermore, he claims that municipality II is not ready yet for letting initiatives develop themselves into their full potential. Experiments with initiatives are fun and exciting. But sustainable initiatives, that take over municipal services and come up with unorthodox ideas is not something the municipality is ready for. This is also visible in how the municipality deals with durable initiatives. As long as an initiative is temporary, and voluntary based, there are all kinds of supportive instruments that the municipality can offer. But when an initiative is more sustainable, with a business plan that can financially maintain the initiator and a legal status, the municipality acts more hesitatingly.

“The municipality regards initiatives as something fun and important. For these fun and innovative initiatives are all kinds of budgets available. But if an initiative becomes more serious and professional, these budgets become inaccessible” (civil servant 2, municipality II).

Table 16 shows the steering strategies that are in general applied in municipality II according the two civil servants that were interviewed. Both civil servants agree on the strategies that are applied. The most prominent strategies that are used in municipality II are setting strategic frameworks, framing and storytelling, and the presence of supportive actions. Unfortunately, civil servant 2 had no time to fill in the perceived effectiveness of these steering strategies.

The municipality impose a lot of strategic frameworks on initiatives. Civil servant 1 says that last year the budget in her neighborhood for initiatives was already given away in September. This resulted in more control from the city and an even more strict check whether subsidy request meet all the set criteria. These criteria do not help initiatives as they reduce the freedom of initiatives. Civil servant 2 says that initiatives are often steered in a direction that is in line with the municipal goals.

Both civil servants mention that in their opinions, monitoring is the most effective steering strategy for initiatives. Monitoring should not be linked to strategic framework as a control mechanism, but as an instrument to improve the relationship between the initiative and the civil servant, but also political officeholders. There is less need of paperwork and accountability obligations when the city council and the civil servants are closely involved in activities of initiatives. This accumulates trusts

since the municipality sees what initiatives do with their received subsidies. Both civil servants acknowledge that this strategy is not applied enough.

Framing and storytelling happens a lot. Mostly through connecting initiators of different initiatives with each other so they can inspire each other or even work together. Civil servant 2 says that he tries to tell initiatives inspiring stories about possible futuristic scenarios for their initiatives. With a clear vision for the future, initiatives get a better idea of what they have to do to get there.

Within municipality II are many forms of support for initiative. This support can come from the municipal welfare organization or from the municipality itself. Support can have many different forms: financial, informative, or an accommodation.

Municipality needs to set better playing rules, according to civil servant 1. The municipal welfare organization and also the civil servants have less time to support initiators personally. Initiators sometimes expect that the neighborhood manager arranges everything for them. This is not the case and this should be made more clear towards citizens.

Playing with fear can help initiatives to wake up and be more active. In general prefer both civil servant a positive approach.

Sometimes the civil servants decide to do nothing because there is nothing they can do at that moment, or because the initiative is doing fine without interference of the municipality.

Table 16 General usage of steering strategies in municipality II

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	<i>Civil servant 1</i>	<i>Civil servant 2</i>	<i>Civil servant 1</i>	<i>Civil servant 2</i>
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●○○○	-
<i>Monitoring</i>	●●○○○	●●○○○	●●●●●	-
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●●●●	●●●●○	●●●●○	-
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○	●●●●○	-
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	●●●○○	●●●○○	●●○○○	-
<i>Playing with fear</i>	●●○○○	●●○○○	●●●●○	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	-	●●○○○	-	-

4.2.2 The initiatives

The three initiatives that were interviewed within municipality III represent a wide variety of initiatives. The Wijkwinkel is located within a neighborhood and aims to be a place where people meet each other and where the local economy will be stimulated and people develop their financial independence. Female Empowerment is an initiative that organizes activities for female immigrants in order to help them integrate and develop themselves. The last initiative, Meet in the Park is an temporary stand that is located in a park. From this stand, several activities are organized that aim to connect the wide variety of citizens.

4.2.2.1 Interviewee

The first interviewee was the initiator and chairman of the Wijkwinkel. He used to work within the human resources sector, but since a few years he is fully dedicated to the Wijkwinkel. He does not have a lot of experience with the public sector.

The second interviewee was the initiator and the chairman of the Female Empowerment initiative. The interviewee has fled a country in the Middle East and has been living in the Netherlands for several years now. She did not study and has no experience with the public sector, other than the contact she has with this sector related to her activities for her initiative. Moreover, she is unemployed and works 40 hours a week at her initiative.

The third interviewee is the director of Meet in the Park. This means that she is not part of the board of the initiative but she is in charge of the daily business. She has finished several studies on a high educational level and has a lot of working experience with what she obtained a lot of experience with the public sector.

Table 17 presents the characteristics of the interviewees within municipality II.

Table 17 Interviewees within municipality II

	Wijkwinkel	Female Empowerment	Meet in the Park
1.1 Characteristics			
1.1.1 Position within the initiative	Initiator, chairman	Initiator, chairman	Director
1.1.2 Educational level	High	Low	High
1.1.3 Profession	Used to work in human resources	None	Used to work for NGOs
1.1.4 Experience public administration	None	None	A lot. Used to work for international public entities

4.2.2.2 Initiative

Wijkwinkel was initiated 2-3 years ago and is a foundation and a private enterprise. The initiative maintains itself with a small budget which is partly received by the municipality, and partly

earned by renting out rooms and catering services. The board of Wijkwinkel exists of 2 people and there are 10-15 volunteers involved in the initiative. The substantive goal of the initiative is to help people to become financially independent and by connecting people. The societal goal is to increase the self-reliance of the citizens and to stimulate the local economy. The best possible relationship with the municipality, the administrative goal, is a close working relationship where the municipality supports the initiative more, mostly financially. Also the rules that limit the initiative should be uplifted.

Female Empowerment does not have a legal status yet but there are plans to get one soon. The current working relationship between the municipality and the initiative is ideal, according the interviewee. The activities of the initiative are financed via an annual subsidy received from the municipality. Female Empowerment can use the accommodation for the activities in exchange for executing various tasks, e.g. cooking and maintenance of the garden of the accommodation.

The same goes for Meet in the Park. This initiative already exists for 8 years and it has a large budget. Most of this budget is granted by the municipality, and the rest originates from sponsors and merchandizes.

The goals of the initiatives can be found in the table.

Table 18 Initiatives within municipality II

	Wijkwinkel	Female Empowerment	Meet in the Park
2.1 Characteristics			
2.1.1 Legal status	Foundation and private enterprise	None	Foundation
2.1.2 Budget	Small	4000 per year	>50.000,- per year
2.1.3 Funders	Via commerce, social funds and subsidy from the municipality	An annual subsidy from the municipality	Municipality, social funds, sale of goodies, exploitation of food stand
2.1.4 Size (number of volunteers)	2 board members and 10-15 volunteers	3 board members and 10 volunteers. In total 50 women are participating	>20 and a board of 4 persons
2.1.5 Age of initiative	1-2 years	3,5 year	8 years
2.1.6 Product	Meeting place for neighbors, carpenter service for citizens with a low income, room rental	Several types of activities for female immigrants	Activities during spring/summer for people living in the neighborhood
2.2 Goals			
2.2.1 Substantive	Making people financially independent by helping them to get a job through stimulation of the local market	Organizing activities for immigrant women	Organizing activities

2.2.2 Societal	Increasing self-reliance of people, stimulating the local economy	Personal development and integration of immigrant women	Increasing social cohesion
2.2.3 Administrative	A close relationship with the municipality, more financial support, and a municipality which would stimulate the local economy. The municipality should take the initiative serious	A close working relationship with a fixed neighborhood networker	A close working relationship with a fixed civil servant is the ideal administrative situation
2.3 Connectedness			
2.3.1 Internal connectedness	High	High	High
2.3.2 External connectedness	High	High	High
2.3.3 Type of initiative	Nested	Nested	Nested

4.2.3 Interaction

4.2.3.1 Municipal attitude towards initiatives

Wijkwinkel does not feel taken seriously by the municipality. Other organizations receive financial compensation for activities which the Wijkwinkel performs for free. This has to do with tender obligations and contracts that limit the municipality to fund the same kind of activities of other organizations. The civil servant has advised Wijkwinkel about the possibility to change that by participating in the next public tender. The initiative would like the municipality to support the initiative's idea to stimulate the local economy. The municipality could do this, for example, by buying benches from unemployed peoples that volunteer at the Wijkwinkel. The municipality declines this idea since local made benches would not be conform the municipal identity.

The municipality is very content with Female Empowerment, even though the target group is not as culturally various as the municipality aims for. The interviewed civil servant states: *"We [the municipality] are very accommodating with this initiative. Only women with an Islamic background participate in the activities of this initiative and they often speak Arabic. Normally, this would not fit in the municipal vision as we try to stimulate cultural diversity. But since the initiator of Female Empowerment knows how to activate these women, we still support this initiative"* (civil servant 1, municipality II). The neighborhood networker helps the initiative as much as she can. However, there are limits on how much she can give the initiative. E.g. at first, the participants of Female Empowerment refused to buy coffee at the location where they meet, while the manager of this location demanded this

as a compensation for providing a room for free. The neighborhood networker mediated in this situation but eventually, the participants had to comply to the rules of the manager.

There was no civil servant interviewed about Meet in the Park. The interviewee of the initiative thinks that the municipality is fond of Meet in the Park as it receives a lot of attention from the municipality. A fixed contact person is assigned to the initiative and a large subsidy is yearly granted. Moreover, many civil servants are participating in the activities of the initiative, and not only those who are professionally in contact with this initiative. The municipality has used this initiative as an example to other areas in the city.

Table 19 shows the codes from the interview reports.

Table 19 Attitude municipality II

	Wijkwinkel	Female Empowerment	Meet in the Park
3.1 Attitude towards initiatives	There is no dense relationship. The municipality could support the initiative more to reach its full potential	The neighborhood networker facilitates and helps the initiative whenever the initiative asks. The municipality encourages and suggest this initiative to get in touch with other initiatives and learn from each other	The municipality tries to cherish the initiative and helps the initiative to create a sustainable environment for the initiative to operate in
3.2 Ways of contact with initiative	Via several civil servant. No fixed contact person	Via a fixed neighborhood networker and directly to the city council	The initiative has a fixed contact person within the municipal organization. Other civil servants attend the activities of the initiative regularly as they live in the same neighborhood

4.2.3.2 Forms of interaction

There is no regular interaction between Wijkwinkel and the municipality. According to the initiator, he sometimes runs into the area manager. In those occasions the area manager might give the Wijkwinkel some advices, but he does not offer support. The Wijkwinkel would like to receive more support from the municipality but it is difficult to receive this support without having to comply to a list of demands of the municipality. *“I do not experience any limitations when it comes to developing my initiative because I do not interact with the municipality. I do not need them, and they do not need me”* (interviewee Wijkwinkel).

The area manager finds it difficult to steer Wijkwinkel. He believes that the best way to steer is to have close contact because steering is something that is a dynamic process which happens between two actors. With Wijkwinkel, this close relation does not exist.

Female Empowerment has a very warm relationship with the area networker. This networker is the fixed contact person of the initiative and helps the initiative with all kinds of matters. They meet every eight weeks and have regular email contact. The interviewee of the initiative considers the current working relationship as ideal.

Also Meet in the Park has a fixed contact person within the municipality with whom they meet regularly. Several civil servants, among them their fixed contact person, attend the activities of Meet in the Park. The municipality is actively involved with the initiative.

Table 20 shows relevant details about the interaction between the initiatives and municipality II

Table 20 Interaction municipality II - initiative

	Wijkwinkel	Female Empowerment	Meet in the Park
<u>4.1 Characteristics</u>			
4.1.1 Intensity	Not on a regular basis	There is a close relationship. The neighborhood networker and the interviewee meet (at least) every 8 weeks and have much more informal contact with each other via mail	The initiative has regular meetings with the municipality
4.1.2 Initiator of contact	?	The initiative	The initiative (probably. It was a long time ago)
4.1.3 Topic	The topic depends on the occasion but is not about how the initiative and municipality can help each other	General check up	General check up
4.1.4 Results	There are no results and there is no collaboration	A close relationship which results in the initiative receiving all the help it needs	Close relationship
<u>4.2 Contributions to goals</u>			
4.2.1 Substantive	No contributions	The municipality helps with organizing the activities (accommodation, ideas for the conversation course, speakers, etc)	The municipality helps through advising how to deal with complaining neighbors, and requesting necessary permits, and helps financing the activities

4.2.2 Administrative	The municipality does very little to reach the ideal relationship. The initiative wants support which cannot be given due to tender obligations and municipal policies	The municipality contributes a great deal to this ideal relationship by actively maintaining the close relationship	The municipality contributes actively to reaching and maintaining this ideal relationship
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4.2.3.3 Governmental steering strategies

Due to the limited amount of time that the civil servant had for the interview, there was no time to fill in the by the civil servant perceived effectiveness of these strategies. Table 21 shows to which degree Wijkwinkel and the civil servant think the different strategies are applied. The steering strategies that Wijkwinkel recognizes are different than the steering strategies that the civil servant does. The initiative and civil servant agree on the fact that setting strategic framework is the most applied strategy. Wijkwinkel states that these strategic frameworks do not help this initiative a lot since these strategic frameworks limit the possibilities (see quote further in this section). An interesting difference is the perception of the application of supportive actions. The civil servant feels like the municipality supports Wijkwinkel quite a lot. Wijkwinkel does not experience this support. The civil servant says that Wijkwinkel gets all the financial support they can wish for. Wijkwinkel, however, desires more. The initiator of Wijkwinkel said this: *“We perform activities that other organizations get paid for, for example guiding volunteers. We do not get paid for this since guiding volunteers should be done by the organization that won the public tender competition. If we would get money for these activities as well, we could spend more time on them”* (interviewee Wijkwinkel). Wijkwinkel does not experience playing rules set by the municipality. The civil servant claims that there are playing rules for initiatives in general but specific rules for the interaction between the municipality and Wijkwinkel are missing. The civil servant recognizes the usage of playing with fear in the dependent position of Wijkwinkel in relation to the housing association. There is, namely, a possibility that the housing association will withdraw the possibility for Wijkwinkel to use the location. Wijkwinkel did not recognize playing with fear as a steering strategy in this situation.

Table 21 Applied steering strategies on Wijkwinkel

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Wijkwinkel	Municipality	Wijkwinkel	Municipality*
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●○○○	
<i>Monitoring</i>	●○○○○	●●○○○	-	
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●○○○	●●○○○	●●○○○	

<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	● ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	● ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○	?

* Due to the limited available time of the civil servant, the perceived effectiveness of the strategies according to the civil servant, could not be filled out.

Female Empowerment and the civil servant are both very content about the working relationship they maintain. About the applied steering strategies, they have different opinions. The civil servant says that the municipality applies framing and storytelling through actively seek to create connections between initiatives. In addition, the municipality applies the strategy of framing and storytelling by giving Female Empowerment a lot of attention and possibilities to present itself to others. The interviewed initiator recognizes the attempt of the municipality to connect her with other initiatives, but she does not regard this as the application of the strategy framing and storytelling. The civil servant also believes that the municipality used playing rules and playing with fear on the initiative. The civil servant states that there are a lot of agreement (playing rules) between the initiative and the civil servant. The interviewee of Female Empowerment does not recognize these agreements as a steering strategy. Neither does Female Empowerment recognize the usage of playing with fear. Table 22 shows the extent to which the interviewees recognize the different steering strategies. Table 24 reveals how these steering strategies look in practice.

Table 22 Applied steering strategies on Female Empowerment

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Female Empowerment	Municipality	Female Empowerment	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ● ○	?
<i>Monitoring</i>	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ●
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ● ●	-	● ● ● ● ●
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ●
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ● ○	-	● ● ● ● ○
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	● ● ● ○ ○	-	● ● ● ● ●
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-	-

Meet in the Park is a very independent initiative with a very clear idea of what they want. Their ambitions are very similar to the ambitions of the municipality (according to the interviewee of the initiative). This results in a minimum steering on strategic framework, framing and storytelling, or setting playing rules. Meet in the Park needs a certain amount of means to realize its ambitions. The municipality steps in here and supports the activities of Meet in the Park with a large sum of money. Besides financial support, the municipality tries to steer the initiative to make it as durable as possible, e.g. through advising the initiative on how to communicate with the citizens living around the stand (where sometimes concerts with loud music take place) and how to deal with complaints. Monitoring happens a lot as well. The initiative has a fixed contact person within the municipal organization and the contact with this person is very positive. This does not help, however, with communication towards other departments of the municipality, e.g. the permit department.

Table 23 Applied steering strategies on Meet in the Park

	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>
	Meet in the Park	Meet in the Park
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Monitoring</i>	● ● ● ○ ○	● ● ○ ○ ○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	● ● ● ● ○	● ● ● ● ○
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	-

Table 24 How steering strategies are used by municipality II according to the initiatives

	Wijkwinkel	Female Empowerment	Meet in the Park
5.1 Strategic framework	A subsidy was granted with some conditions	The municipality steers on the topics that are being discussed during the conversation course	Not applied and not necessary. The initiative and the municipality share the same vision
5.2 Monitoring	The municipality does not monitor the initiative. The initiative was invited to talk about its visions and experiences during certain meetings	The initiative is closely monitored. Not on their performance but to see if the initiative needs any help	A fixed civil servant does regular checkups on the initiative and participates in the activities organized by the initiative

5.3 Framing and storytelling	The municipality organized a conference which led to a platform of initiatives	Not applied. The initiative tells its own story	Not applied
5.4 Presence of supportive actions	The initiative tries to make use of the supportive actions as little as possible as there are too many obligations attached to these actions	An annual subsidy is given to the initiative. Also the municipality arranges speakers and information for the conversation course	The municipality supports the initiative financially and with advices
5.5 Setting playing rules	Not applied	Not applied by the municipality but applied by the manager of the community center as he expects the volunteers to do something back for the free accommodation	Not applied
5.6 Playing with fear	Not applied	Not applied	Not applied
5.7 Doing nothing	The municipality uses this strategy. This is not effective but larger involvement could also mean less efficiency	Not applied	Not applied

4.2.4 Summary

Municipality II provides its citizens with a lot of formal possibilities to develop their initiatives. Within the municipality, however, there is a struggle between the civil servants that work directly with initiatives (in their own words: they work in the outside world) and aim to help initiatives to develop as much as they can with a flexible attitude, and the rest of the municipal organization that sticks to traditional ways of thinking and refuse to act flexible. The initiatives within municipality II experience the most steering through supportive actions they receive from the municipality, and through imposed strategic frameworks and monitoring. Playing with fear and setting playing rules are the least recognized strategies by the initiatives. According to the tables, the initiatives experience less steering than the civil servants claim to apply.

Table 25 Total of applied steering strategies within municipality II according to the initiatives (maximum score is 15)

<i>Steering strategy</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Effectiveness</i>
<i>Strategic framework</i>	6	6
<i>Monitoring</i>	8	6
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	2	2

<i>Presence supportive actions</i>	8	10
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	0	0
<i>Playing with fear</i>	0	0
<i>Doing nothing</i>	1	0

- Municipality II distinguishes three types of initiatives based on the amount of subsidy they ask for.
- All initiatives within municipality II are nested initiatives.
- The most applied steering strategies according to the civil servants are setting strategic frameworks, supporting, and framing and storytelling.
- The most applied steering strategies according to the initiatives are supporting, monitoring and setting strategic frameworks.
- The civil servants that were interviewed experience difficulties within the municipality when it comes to flexibility that is needed to deal with initiatives.

4.3 Municipality III

4.3.1 Local government

Municipality III is located in the central part of the Netherlands. The ruling coalition consists of four parties. These parties are predominantly politically centered on the center/right. The municipality has around 50,000 inhabitants. In the methodological chapter, I explained that I aimed for researching three municipalities that differ in size. Due to time pressure, I decided to investigate two municipalities with more or less the same number of inhabitants since I already had contacts within those municipalities. Moreover, municipality III is a new municipality, merged out of several smaller municipalities. This is interesting since a new municipality might face different difficulties than other, more stabilized municipalities.

Within the municipality Movisie had contacts who helped me to find three initiatives. In the end, it turned out to be impossible to schedule an interview with one of these initiatives within the time I had. That is the reason why there are only two initiatives included from municipality III.

4.3.1.1 Policy documents

The municipality III has a document wherein the ambitions regarding the participatory democracy are explained. Citizens' initiatives play a crucial role in this form of democracy. The

participatory policies are inspired on a motto: “The road to an equal collaboration based on each other’s talents”. The municipality aims to work on three main themes: making the municipal organization citizen friendly, creating a stimulating environment wherein citizens are encouraged to participate and initiate, and working together with citizens on a pleasant, sustainable, and valuable municipality. The steps that need to be taken in order to accomplish those themes are: giving space to initiatives, but also set clear boundaries. And at last, connecting citizens, organizations and civil servants with each other in order to inspire, share knowledge, acknowledge, and value. This ambition corresponds with either the third attitude as identified by Van der Steen (2013). The citizens are aimed to be actively involved and the focus is on collaboration, and not on supporting and facilitating citizens’ ambitions as it would be the case in the fourth attitude.

These ambitions will be realized by several interventions. The first intervention focuses on the attitude of civil servants. Municipal employees will be trained to receive active citizens in a hospitable way. A second intervention is lifting up the juridical barriers that citizens are facing while dealing with the municipality. In order to create a stimulating environment for citizens to become active, each neighborhood will get its own alderman who will inspire the inhabitants and be inspired at the same time. Another instrument is the initiatives table. This is a platform where civil servants and experts are discussing initiatives of citizens and try to find ways to support these initiatives without taking the initiatives over. Citizens with initiatives can also sign up to participate in these meetings. The municipality also wants to create physical meeting points and give initiatives the possibilities to use these places for their activities or meetings. Besides a physical meeting point, also a digital meeting point will be established to let citizens meet other citizens from their own houses. At last, the municipality gives citizens the opportunity to challenge the services that the municipality offers by coming up with a more effective, cheaper, better idea. This program is called Right to Challenge and creates the possibility to become a social entrepreneur.

4.3.1.2 Civil servants

Within the municipality I spoke to two civil servants. Both of them work with active citizens on a daily basis. The following quotes are from the civil servants and illustrate their perceptions on the municipal policy towards citizens’ initiatives:

“The municipality needs to activate citizens by tapping into their passion. If you touch that spot, energy and movement will be activated” (Civil servant 1, municipality III).

“We want to establish an initiatives table. Right now, contact between municipality and initiative focuses on financial matters. We want to change that at talk about the reasons for the initiator to come up with those plans and see if the collaboration with other initiatives would be valuable” (Civil servant 1, municipality III).

“When it comes to initiatives, we look at if the initiative contributes to the social cohesion. To the connection between citizens. The interaction, it is all about the interaction on a local level” (Civil servant 1, municipality III).

The civil servants consider every initiative of a citizen as a citizens’ initiative. However, as soon as an initiative asks for financial support, the municipality looks at to which extent the initiatives contributes to the municipal policy goals. If the initiatives contributes a lot, the municipality has more legitimacy to support this initiative financially or otherwise. If the initiative does not contribute directly to the goals of the municipality, the initiative is ought to be more independent. Social enterprises are not considered as citizens’ initiatives and will, thus, not be supported through the several supportive instruments that the municipality has for initiatives. However, there is one exception. Right to Challenge is an instrument especially for social enterprises that provides entrepreneurs the possibility to challenge the existing services provided by the municipality by suggesting cheaper or better services. Social entrepreneurs cannot come up with new services within the program Right to Challenge as only existing municipal services can be challenged. One of the interviewed civil servants wants to expand the possibility for social entrepreneurs. This civil servants sees a certain amount of superstition towards social entrepreneurs within the municipality: they only want to earn money. While most of the time, she says, social entrepreneurs are really motivated by the potential social improvement their plans can achieve. Both interviewed civil servants appoint the fourth attitude, as identified by Van der Steen (2013) as the ideal situation for the future.

Regarding the governmental steering strategies that are in general applied in municipality III, the two interviewed civil servants have some different views. A graphic demonstration of the perceived usage and effectiveness for the performances of initiatives according to the two civil servants, can be found in table 24. Both civil servants agree that municipality III has an attitude that fits the second attitude of Van der Steen (2013). The municipality is not much fully focused yet on the possible advantages of involving society and is more focused on the internal situation, which is challenging after the merger. Within the existing interaction with initiatives is municipality III focused on the performance, which is formalized in contracts. The usage of steering strategies according to the civil servants is presented in table 26.

Strategic framework: according to civil servant 1, the municipality has many strategic frameworks to which initiatives have to comply, if they want to receive financial support. The frameworks this civil servant refers to can be found in the general municipal objectives, and also the objectives from the social domain. This civil servant claims that these frameworks sometimes can be helpful, and steer initiatives in a more valuable direction. On the other hand, the time and energy that initiatives have to spend on proving that they truly contribute to these frameworks, can be considered as wasted and frustrating since it does not directly contribute to the goals of the initiative. Due to this, civil servant was not able to

determine whether strategic frameworks help initiatives or not. Civil servant 2 mostly agrees with civil servant 1 except that this civil servant regards the time wasted on responsibilities that come with these frameworks more negative for the performances of initiatives.

Monitoring: when it comes to monitoring, the civil servants have different opinions about the usage of this strategy by their municipality. They do agree on the fact that the usage of this strategy depends on the initiative. Civil servant 1 says that through the initiatives table the amount of monitoring will increase, and that monitoring is very useful since a close working relationship between the municipality and the initiative will increase the performance of the initiative. Civil servant 2 thinks that monitoring almost never happens.

Framing and storytelling: civil servant 1 thinks this happens to little and should be done more. While civil servant 2 thinks that the municipality is doing this quite well through organizing meeting for initiatives that are operating on the same theme. This is quite effective since it generates a lot of energy among the initiators.

Presence of supportive actions: about the presence of this steering strategy, both civil servants agree. The supportive actions are decreasing the amount of rules, improving the attitude of civil servants, offering financial support, offering the knowledge and help of experts, offering accommodation, etc. Civil servant 1 thinks that these means increase the performance of initiatives. The second civil servants think these supportive measures are not very helpful since the municipality tends to take over the whole initiative as soon as an initiative asks for a little bit of help. This decreases the maturity of initiatives.

Setting playing rules: the civil servants think the exact opposite of the application of this steering strategy. Civil servant 1 claims that the municipality has some criteria citizens’ initiatives have to comply to, but the municipality tries to apply these criteria as little as possible. The second civil servants says that every initiative that gets support of the municipality receives an agreement where the obligations of the municipality and the initiative are written down. This is very ineffective for initiatives since the formalization of the agreements take a lot of time and involve too many civil servants.

Playing with fear: both civil servants do not recognize this strategy.

Doing nothing: this strategy is not recognized by civil servant 1. Civil servant 2 says that there are most citizens’ initiatives are unknown within the municipal organization. Thus, in that regard, the municipality does most of the time nothing.

Table 26 General usage of steering strategies in municipality III

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Civil servant 1	Civil servant 2	Civil servant 1	Civil servant 2
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●●○	●●○○○	?	●○○○○

<i>Monitoring</i>	●●●○○	●○○○○	●●●○○	●○○○○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●○○○○	●●●○○	●●○○○	●●●●○
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●●○○	●●○○○
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	○○○○○	●●●●●	-	●○○○○
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○○○○○	●○○○○	-	○○○○○
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○○○○○	-	-	-

4.3.2 The initiatives

Within municipality III, two initiatives were interviewed. The two initiatives are very different when it comes to how they operate and the structure of the initiatives. But the purpose of the two initiatives is somewhat similar. Both initiatives try to have a constructive dialogue with the municipality.

The first initiative, Constructive Dialogue, was initiated when the municipality presented a plan for reconstruction the neighborhood. The inhabitants of this neighborhood was not given the possibility to express their opinions about the plans of the municipality, which frustrated them. The initiative was initiated as an attempt to open a constructive dialogue with the municipality where the redesign process would be reopened and the inhabitants of the neighborhood would be involved in the process. A participatory decision making process was not something the municipality was very experienced with. Constructive Dialogue had to make a large effort to make the municipality receptive for a participatory way of restructuring the neighborhood. At the moment, the dialogue that was aimed for is achieved and both parties are still discussing about the final completion of the neighborhood.

Bridging Government was originally an idea of an alderman. He wanted to have a platform that would function as a soundboard between the municipal organization and the citizens in the neighborhood. The alderman tried to find a group of citizens suitable and willing to take up this role, but he failed. His idea, however, stayed alive and a few years later, the idea of installing a platform was reborn but now initiated by citizens. The interviewee was one of the initiators of this platform and became chairman. The platform aims to help citizens finding the information and civil servants they need. Moreover, the municipality asks the platform advice about how to involve citizens with municipal policy making. The members of the platform are not elected by the inhabitants of the neighborhood, thus, the platform is not a representative but advisory entity.

4.3.2.1 Interviewee

The interviewee of the first initiative, constructive dialogue, is the initiator of the initiative. At the time she started the initiative, she worked at a different municipality than the one she was involved

in through the initiative. After the merger of several municipalities, she works now at the municipality where the civil servants, with whom she was in touch with for her activities within the initiative, work as well.

The second interviewee is the chairman of initiative “Bridging Government”. The interviewee is nowadays retired but during his career, he has gained a lot of experiences with processes of interaction between municipalities and citizens. This is very helpful for fulfilling his position within the initiative.

The characteristics of the interviewed volunteers can be found in table 27.

Table 27 Interviewees within municipality III

	Constructive Dialogue	Bridging Government
1.1 Characteristics		
1.1.1 Position within initiative	Initiator	Chairman
1.1.2 Educational level	High	High
1.1.3 Profession	Policy advisor within a municipality	Retired
1.1.4 Experience public administration	A lot due to the profession of the interviewee and involvement in other initiatives	A lot

4.3.2.2 Initiative

Constructing Dialogue was initiative 3 years ago as an answer to the plans of the municipality to redesign a neighborhood. The initiators do not call themselves an initiative but a movement. Constructive Dialogue has no legal status and no budget, the only costs that were made were for the survey and these costs were covered by the municipality. The initiative had/has regular meetings with the board, but also with a group of supportive volunteers. Around this group of people is another layer of citizens that support the activities of the initiative by participating in the activities (e.g. a picnic with the alderman to show what the inhabitants of the neighborhood find important in their living area). The initiative communicates a lot with the environment through social media, but also through meetings with the municipality. The internal and external connectedness of Constructive Dialogue, therefore, are high, This means that the initiative is a nested initiative according to De Wilde et al. (2015). The initiative aims to get the municipality to involve citizens in making plans for a design for the neighborhood. The societal goal behind this is to construct a sustainable collaborative relationship between the municipality and citizens where citizens have faith in the best intentions of the municipality and the municipality will include citizens while making important decisions. This will lead to an increasing trust of both parties in each other. Table 28 demonstrates the details of this initiative.

Bridging Government was initiated 7 years ago and is an association. Almost all inhabitants of the neighborhood are member of the association. The budget of the association is 6000,- on an annual basis. This budget is yearly granted by the municipality with a number of conditions about how this

should be spend. In general, the members of the association decide on what the budget will be spend, within the framework presented by the municipality. This can be activities or plants to cheer up the neighborhood. The internal and external connectedness of Bridging Government are high: there are regular meetings between the board members and working groups, and the platforms communicates with other institutions. Bridging Government, therefore, is a nested initiative. Table 28 shows the details of this initiative.

Table 28 Initiatives within municipality III

	Constructive Dialogue	Bridging Government
<u>2.1 Characteristics</u>		
2.1.1 Legal status	None	Association
2.1.2 Budget	None	6000 per year
2.1.3 Funders	None, but the municipality paid for a survey requested by the initiative	The municipality. Some activities are organized from voluntary donations of the participants
2.1.4 Size (number of volunteers)	3 board members, 7 volunteers, and a lot of supporters	5 board members, plus 15 volunteers who participate in theme groups
2.1.5 Age of initiative	3 years	7 years
2.1.6 Product	A movement that tries to start a conversation with the municipality about re-designing the neighborhood	A platform for citizens
<u>2.2 Goals</u>		
2.2.1 Substantive	Citizen's involvement in re-designing the neighborhood	Creating a platform for citizens that functions as a bridge between society and municipality
2.2.2 Societal	A constructive and sustainable dialogue with the municipality that restores trust between citizens and the municipality	Increasing social cohesion, increasing livability, a decent government-citizen relationship
2.2.3 Administrative	The municipality should consider the initiative to be an equal partner in discussion about public matters	The municipality needs to take part in the conversation with citizens that are mediated by the platform
<u>2.3 Connectedness</u>		
2.3.1 Internal connectedness	High, there were a lot of meetings with the volunteers	High. There are regular meetings with the board
2.3.2 External connectedness	High, there was a lot of contact with the municipality and the inhabitants of the neighborhood	High. The platform maintains close relationships with citizens, civil servants, and other relevant institutions
2.3.3 Type of initiative	Nested	Nested

4.3.3 Interaction

4.3.3.1 Municipal attitude

In the beginning, the municipality was not very eager to cooperate with the Constructive Dialogue. The redesigning plans were already finished and only the city council had to give its approval. Thanks to the political game played by the initiative, and thanks to the fact this took place shortly before municipal elections, the initiative eventually succeeded in persuading or forcing the municipality to take part in the dialogue. After a while, the municipality was very content about the dialogue and proposed to make the dialogue more formal and sustainable by creating a group of representatives with regular meetings. In the end, the municipality used the Constructive Dialogue as a successful example to other citizens.

Bridging Government exists because of the troublesome attitude of the municipality towards citizens. The municipality is not helpful, inaccessible and inhospitable towards citizens. The platform tries to be a bridge between citizens and the municipality by enabling a dialogue between the two parties. The municipality is very fond of the work of the platform. There is a fixed civil servant that attends every board meeting, and when the municipality thinks of involving inhabitants with a decision making process, the municipality asks the platform for advice about how to do this. The municipality provides the platform with a yearly budget which they can spend on municipal objectives. The platform is an outpost of the municipality and the municipality trusts the competences of the platform.

Table 29 shows the attitudes of the municipalities towards the two initiatives and the forms of contact.

Table 29 Attitude municipality III

	Constructive Dialogue	Bridging Government
3.1 Attitude towards initiatives	The municipality has a closed off attitude. It does not cherish the chances that collaborating with citizens provides. The municipality tends to take over certain ideas of the initiative	The municipal organization is not hospitable towards citizens. They are stuck in their traditional role and are afraid to be innovative (and thus vulnerable). The collaboration between the municipality and the citizen is therefore very troublesome
3.2 Ways of contact with initiative	Via an alderman, and several civil servants	The platform has a fixed contact person within the municipality who also attends all board meetings. Besides, the chairman has four times a year meetings with the alderman about larger developments within the municipality

4.3.3.2 Form of interaction

In the beginning, the municipality found interaction with Constructive Dialogue unnecessary since the plans to reconstruct the neighborhood were already decided on. After a political game played

by the initiative, the relationship improved and the dialogue was opened. The dialogue started unstructured but eventually the municipality asked the initiators to participate in a soundboard that would brainstorm about possible forms of citizen’s participation for in the future. In the end, the interaction with the municipality was a success and the result was presented to other citizens as an example.

The municipality has a close working relationship with Bridging Government. Both parties trust each other and know where to find each other when they need help. A civil servant attends every board meeting and the chairman has regular meetings with an alderman. The municipality contributes to the substantive goal of the initiative by facilitating the initiative with a warm relationship and an annual budget. The best possible situation would be that the platform would not be necessary anymore. In that scenario, the municipality would treat citizens as equals and be receptive towards ideas and complaints of citizens. The platform is needed to guide these interaction effectively.

Table 30 shows the details of the interaction between the two initiatives and municipality III.

Table 30 Interaction municipality III - initiatives

	Constructive Dialogue	Bridging Government
<u>4.1 Characteristics</u>		
4.1.1 Intensity	In the heat of the moment, the interaction was very frequent	Every six weeks with the fixed contact person and every 3 months with the alderman
4.1.2 Initiator of contact	The initiative	?
4.1.3 Topic	Letting citizens participate in re-designing the neighborhood	Regular checkups
4.1.4 Results	Eventually the initiative got what it had asked for	A close working relationship with the fixed contact person, which also smoothens contact with other parts of the municipality
<u>4.2 Contributions to the goals</u>		
4.2.1 Substantive	A lot. The municipality made a survey possible and participated in the dialogue	The municipality helps by promoting the existence of the platform and by funding the activities of the platform
4.2.2 Administrative	The municipality did not actively contribute to this goals. The municipality was forced to by the (political) games played by the initiative	The aim of the platform is to be a bridge between the municipality and the citizens. The municipality takes part in the conversations with citizens

4.3.3.3 Governmental steering strategies

Table 31 shows the results of the models about steering strategies that were filled out by the interviewee of Constructive Dialogue and the civil servant that was interviewed about this initiative. There are a lot of differences in perception of the usage and effectiveness of the several steering

strategies according to the civil servant and the initiator of the initiative. The initiative only experiences three steering strategies: strategic frameworks, supportive actions, and playing rules. Only the latter two are effective. The first steering strategy, setting strategic frameworks, was one of the causes of the problem which made that the initiative was initiated. The civil servant says that all steering strategies are applied in the same amount, except for playing with fear and doing nothing, which are barely applied. All of the applied steering strategies are considered to be quite effective, except for playing with fear and doing nothing. The explanation for these different perceptions may be that the civil servant that was interviewed was not close enough involved with the interaction with Constructive Dialogue. The municipal employee that interacted most with the initiative was an alderman who was not reelected and therefore not available for an interview. The interviewed civil servant, however, stated to know a lot about Constructive Dialogue. Table 33 shows how these steering strategies look like in practice.

Table 31 Applied steering strategies on Constructive Dialogue

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Constructive Dialogue	Municipality	Constructive Dialogue	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○	○○○○○	●●●○○
<i>Monitoring</i>	○○○○○	●●●○○	-	●●●●○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	○○○○○	●●●○○	-	●●●○○
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●○	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●●●○
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	●●●●○	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●●○○
<i>Playing with fear</i>	●○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-

Table 32 reveals that the municipality and Bridging Government experience that the same steering strategies are applied on this initiative. The most present steering strategies are strategic frameworks, monitoring, presence of supportive actions, and setting playing rules. A strategic demand of the municipality to Bridging Government was for the initiative to sign a collaboration agreement. This agreement resulted in legitimacy for the initiative to perform certain activities. This demand is at the same time a playing rule. Both parties agree that this formal form of collaboration is very effective for the initiative’s performance since it provides the initiative with a lot of security regarding its financial position and municipal support. Monitoring happened through the presence of a fixed civil servant at board meetings. This helped Bridging Government as well since this smoothens the collaboration and fastens the contact between the municipality and the initiative. Framing and storytelling is also used but less than the others. The municipality thinks that framing and storytelling is the least effective steering

strategy on this initiative. The civil servant that was interviewed says about framing and storytelling: “This steering strategy is applied, but not that much. The initiative has a very clear framework wherein they operate. The initiative is used as an example to other neighborhood. But this does not help this initiative itself” (civil servant 2, municipality III).

Playing with fear and doing nothing are not recognized by the initiative, nor by the municipality. Table 33 shows how the application of the different steering strategies looks like in practice.

Table 32 Applied steering strategies on Bridging Government

	<i>Usage</i>		<i>Perceived effectiveness</i>	
	Bridging Government	Municipality	Bridging Government	Municipality
<i>Strategic frameworks</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○	●●●●●	●●●●○
<i>Monitoring</i>	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●○
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	●●●○○	●●●○○	●●●●○	●●○○○
<i>Presence of supportive action</i>	●●●●●	●●●●○	●●●●●	●●●●○
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	●●●●○	●●●●○	●●●●●	●●●●○
<i>Playing with fear</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-
<i>Doing nothing</i>	○○○○○	○○○○○	-	-

Table 33 How the steering strategies are used in municipality III according to the initiatives

	Constructive Dialogue	Bridging Government
5.1 Strategic framework	The city council tried to force the initiative to work with the existing redesign plans, instead of making a redesign from the start	The municipality sets a strong framework concerning activities that the initiative can perform. The initiative has to make annual accountability reports
5.2 Monitoring	Not applied	A civil servant attends the board meetings
5.3 Framing and storytelling	The initiative tells its own story about how the initiative thinks the municipality should include citizens	The municipality promotes communicating through the platforms among citizens. This platform is presented in other neighborhoods as best practice
5.4 Presence of supportive actions	The municipality arranged an accommodation to have meetings at and funded the survey	The municipality supports the initiative with a civil servant and with a budget
5.5 Setting playing rules	The voice of the initiators was formalized into a representative body. There were certain agreements this formal body had to comply to. This	There is an agreement between the municipality and the initiative where the budget and tasks of the initiative are written down

	was positive since parties took each other more serious	
5.6 Playing with fear	This was applied once. An alderman threatened the initiative not to cross any limits because it would mean credibility loss.	Not applied
5.7 Doing nothing	The municipality wanted to apply this strategy but due to the political game that the initiators played, doing nothing was impossible	Not applied

4.3.4 Summary

Both interviewed initiatives arose out of dissatisfaction about the way the municipality deals with citizens. Both civil servants acknowledge that the municipality should improve the way it perceives citizens and their initiatives. The fact that the municipality recently merged, makes this improvement more difficult since there are civil servants originating from several municipalities with each their own perceptions on active citizenship. The municipality has a comprehensive plan to realize this improvement.

The municipality tends to formalize their interaction with initiatives by letting initiatives sign contracts with all obligations from both sides written down. This formalization of playing rules helps the interviewed initiatives. Municipality III and the interviewed initiatives like that they have formal agreements on which they can built further. Civil servant 2 mentions that for other initiatives this formalization often leads to frustration since this formalization process takes a lot of time since there are too many civil servants that want to get involved with the content of these agreements.

Based on the plans written down in the municipal policy documents, the aim of this municipality is to move from the second attitude of Van der Steen, towards the third attitude. The civil servants mention that they aim for the fourth attitude where the municipality not seeks for collaboration with society, but where society initiates and decides upon the public value with a supporting and facilitating municipality.

The interviewed initiatives recognize the usage of strategic frameworks, provision of support, and imposed playing rules as most applied steering strategies. Playing with fear and doing nothing are the least recognized strategies, according to the initiatives. The usage and perceived effectiveness in total in this municipality can be found in table 34.

Table 34 Total of applied steering strategies within municipality III according to the initiatives (maximum score is 10)

<i>Steering strategy</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Effectiveness</i>
<i>Strategic framework</i>	8	5

<i>Monitoring</i>	5	5
<i>Framing and storytelling</i>	3	4
<i>Presence supportive actions</i>	9	9
<i>Setting playing rules</i>	8	9
<i>Playing with fear</i>	1	0
<i>Doing nothing</i>	0	0

Conclusions:

- The interviewed initiatives were both initiated due to dissatisfaction with the way municipality III treats its citizens.
- Providing initiatives with support, setting playing rules, and creating a strategic framework are the most applied steering strategies in municipality III.
- The strategies playing with fear and doing nothing are barely applied by municipality III.
- Municipality III tends to formalize the playing rules for initiatives (and the municipality itself) via contracts.
- The interviewed initiatives were both nested initiatives.
- The municipal policy documents preach a different attitude than the interviewed civil servants do.

5. Results

This chapter will connect the theory with the outcome of the interviews. In section 5.1 the different types of steering strategies that are applied will be discussed. Section 5.2 will focus on the effects of these steering strategies on two types of performance of citizens' initiatives: substantive and administrative performance. As mentioned in chapter 3, the influence of steering strategies on the societal performance of initiatives is not included as that correlation is not relevant for this research: the substantive goals lead automatically to the societal goals so with focusing on the influence on substantive performance, the influence on societal performance is automatically implied.

5.1 Applied governmental steering strategies

In this section, several tables will be presented. These tables show how much the different strategies are applied. The interviewees, civil servants and initiatives, were asked if they experience certain steering strategies and what they look like in practice. Every table shows three bars. The first bar shows how much a steering strategy is applied by the civil servants in general, according to the civil servants. The second bar shows how much the civil servants apply the steering strategy on the initiatives that were included in this research. The third bar shows how much the initiatives experience the application of the several steering strategies. If a bar is completely dark, it means that this strategy is maximum applied in all the investigated cases. If a bar is half-dark, half-light, this means that this strategy was medium applied on all initiatives, or that half of the investigated initiatives experiences maximum steering via this strategy and the other half does not experience this strategy at all. The most applied and experienced steering strategy will be presented first.

Characteristics and steering

The initiatives that were investigated in this research have different characteristics. According to Igalla and Van Meerkerk (2015) influence certain characteristics the sustainability of an initiative. As explained in chapter 3, some of these characteristics are included in this thesis in order to find out if these characteristics influence which steering strategies the municipality applies to initiatives. These characteristics are the age, legal status, financial model of initiatives, and certain characteristics of the initiator (or chairmen in this thesis). The ages of the investigated initiatives are between one year (TalentEvent) and eight years (Meet in the Park). No correlation is found between the age of an initiative and the application of specific steering strategies.

The investigated initiatives have different legal statuses. Five out of eight initiatives have no legal status. Meet in the Park is a foundation, Wijkwinkel is a foundation and a private enterprise, and Bridging Government is an association. Based on the sample of initiatives that was researched, no correlation can be found between the legal status and the application of specific steering strategies. One

initiative, Female Empowerment, however, mentions that it wants to have a legal status since this is a demand from the municipality in case the initiative wants to participate in public tender competitions. In that case, a specific legal status can increase the number of possible relationships between an initiative and the municipality with each their own steering strategies.

The relation between financial models of initiatives and specific steering strategies was researched. It turns out that all initiatives that receive subsidies from the municipality, which is a form of steering via supportive action, need to comply to accountabilities obligations, which is a form of setting strategic frameworks. Thus, a correlation was found between the initiatives that receive subsidies and the application of the steering strategy setting strategic frameworks. Other financial models do not influence the application of specific steering strategies.

The interviewees of the initiatives were in general initiators or chairmen of their initiative. Some characteristics of these interviewees are compared to the steering strategies that municipalities apply: amount of experience with the public sector and educational level. Based on the multiple case study conducted in this thesis, no correlations can be found between these characteristics and the application of steering strategies.

Municipal size and steering

While selecting the municipalities, the aim was to find three initiatives of different sizes. Eventually, two small municipalities and one large municipality were included in the research. The purpose of this variation in size was to see if municipalities of different sizes apply different strategies. Based on the responses of the civil servants on the question which steering strategies they apply in general, the following difference became visible. The large municipality (municipality II) applies more strategic frameworks and playing rules than the smaller municipalities. Since a large municipality needs to cope with more initiatives, it makes sense that this municipality has a detailed policy document dedicated to initiatives and makes a distinction between three types of initiatives, based on the amount of subsidy they request. This structured way of dealing with initiatives is not/less found in the small municipalities. It is difficult to draw other conclusions since the differences between the two small municipalities and the strategies they apply, are large.

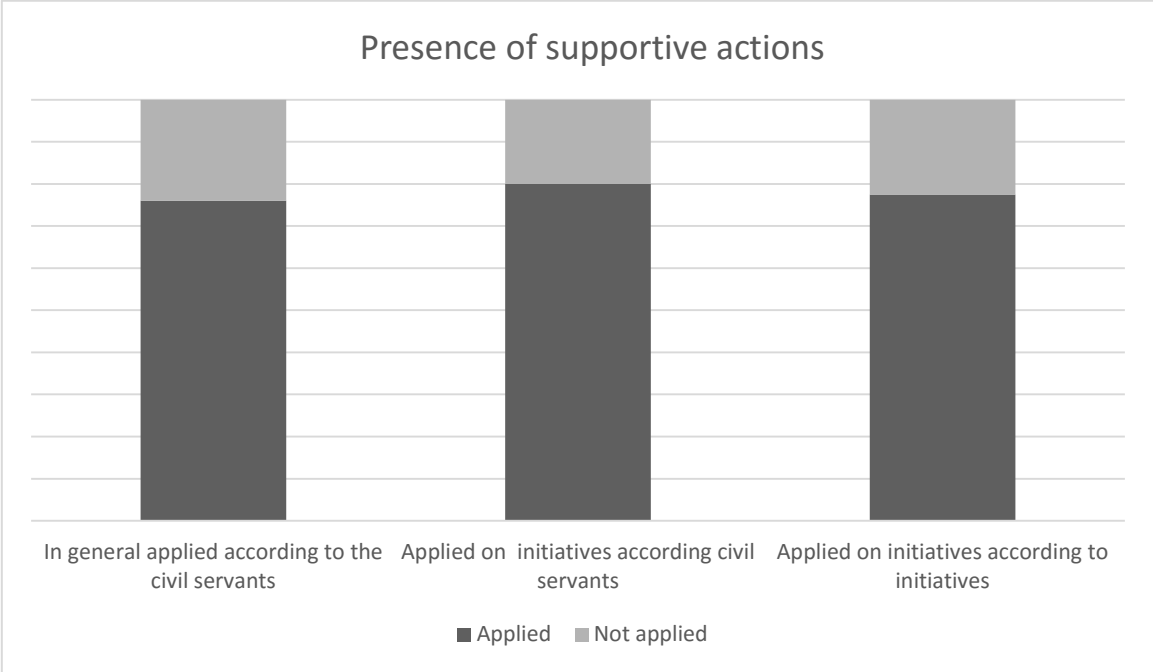
5.1.1 Supportive actions

The most applied steering strategy is providing citizens' initiatives with supportive actions. Nederhand et al. (2015: 5) define this strategy as "to offer support and assistance by providing relevant information, legal assistance, a meeting place and/or financial support. In so doing, access to vital resources is being given". Within the researched initiatives, support mostly meant financial support, but also attention, information, material, advice concerning permits, and access to accommodation were given to initiatives to support their activities. Female Empowerment even got support on a content level

by the municipality through suggestions and documents/posters for its conversation courses in which it aimed to educate and empower women. Sometimes this support was given upon request of the initiative, e.g. financial support for the surveys of Constructive Dialogue (municipality III) and Dorpsdata (municipality I). Sometimes support was provided by the municipality without prior request, e.g. the material needed by BuurtOog. Five of the eight initiatives receive an annual budget from the municipality. Two initiatives got a survey funded by the municipality but do not receive the money themselves (Dorpsdata, Constructive Dialogue). One initiative does not receive a budget but gets all the necessary equipment directly from the municipality (BuurtOog).

The perceptions of application of this strategy according to civil servants, in general but also in the specific cases researched in this thesis, and according to initiatives are very similar. They all state that this strategy was applied a lot.

Table 35 Application of support



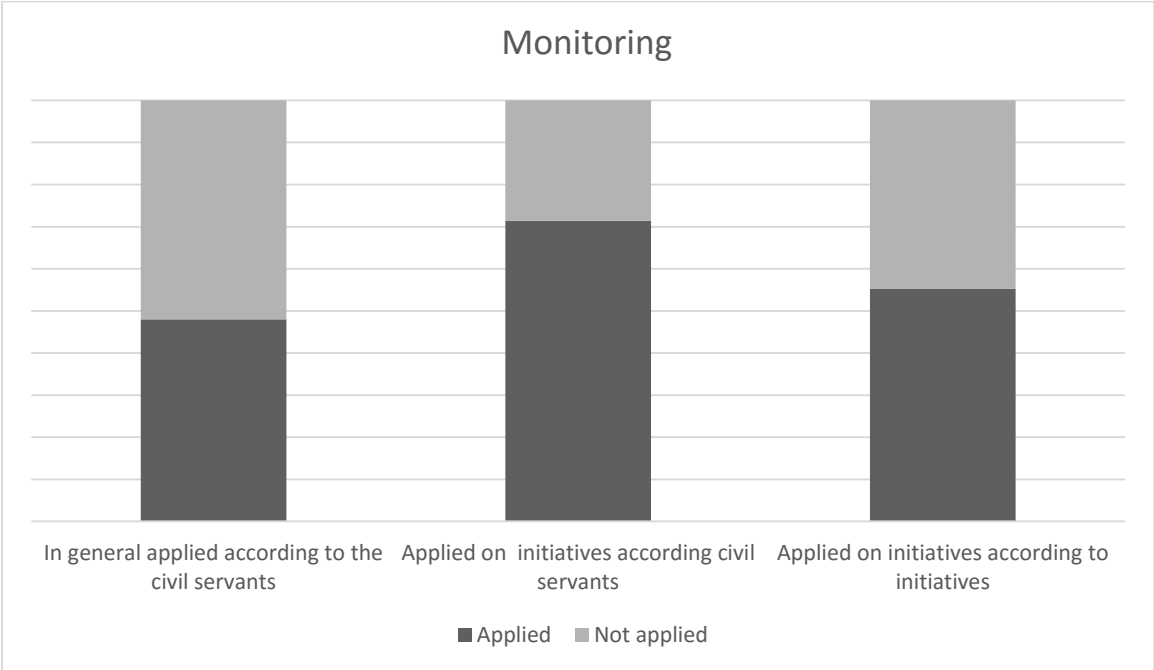
5.1.2 Monitoring

Nederhand et al. (2015: 5) describe monitoring as “procedures to monitor the self-organization process and to assess its outputs and outcomes using performance and benchmark systems”. Monitoring, thus, is used as an instrument to keep an eye on the performance of initiatives, according to Nederhand et al. In my research, however, it appears that monitoring is not often used for assessing the outputs and outcomes of initiatives. Instead, monitoring is used by civil servants to stay informed about the process. In all investigated cases where a lot of monitoring was applied, initiatives and civil servants state that the interaction they had was about how things were going at that moment and if they needed anything.

Monitoring, therefore, was in most of the investigated cases used in a way that Heurkens et al. (2015) describe as facilitating: interaction with initiatives that provides the municipality with information on which other steering strategies can be based. Moreover, monitoring is by the municipality as well as the initiatives, perceived as a way to establish a positive working relationship between the initiator and the municipality.

On average, civil servants monitored the investigated initiatives more than they claim to do in general. A possible explanation can be found in the way the initiatives were found. Contact persons were asked to suggest initiatives that interact in with the municipality, which would make those initiatives interesting cases to include in the research. It is not strange that these interesting relationships tend to be more intensive, and with more monitoring, than an average relationship. On average, civil servants claim to monitor the researched initiatives more than initiatives experience them to do so (see table 36). Monitoring turns out to be a steering strategy that creates an intensive and personal connection between the initiatives and the municipalities. All initiatives that score high on monitoring are also very positive about their relationship with the civil servant who monitors them. Monitoring results in civil servants knowing what initiatives need, and quick delivery of solutions for the needed support. In some cases, monitoring is so intensive that the civil servant is (almost) part of the initiative and participates in all meetings, e.g. TalentEvent and Bridging Government. In other initiatives, the civil servant does not take part in the regular meetings of the initiative but in additional meetings between initiatives and civil servants, e.g. BuurtOog, Female Empowerment, Meet in the Park, and Constructive Dialogue.

Table 36 Application of monitoring



5.1.3 Strategic frameworks

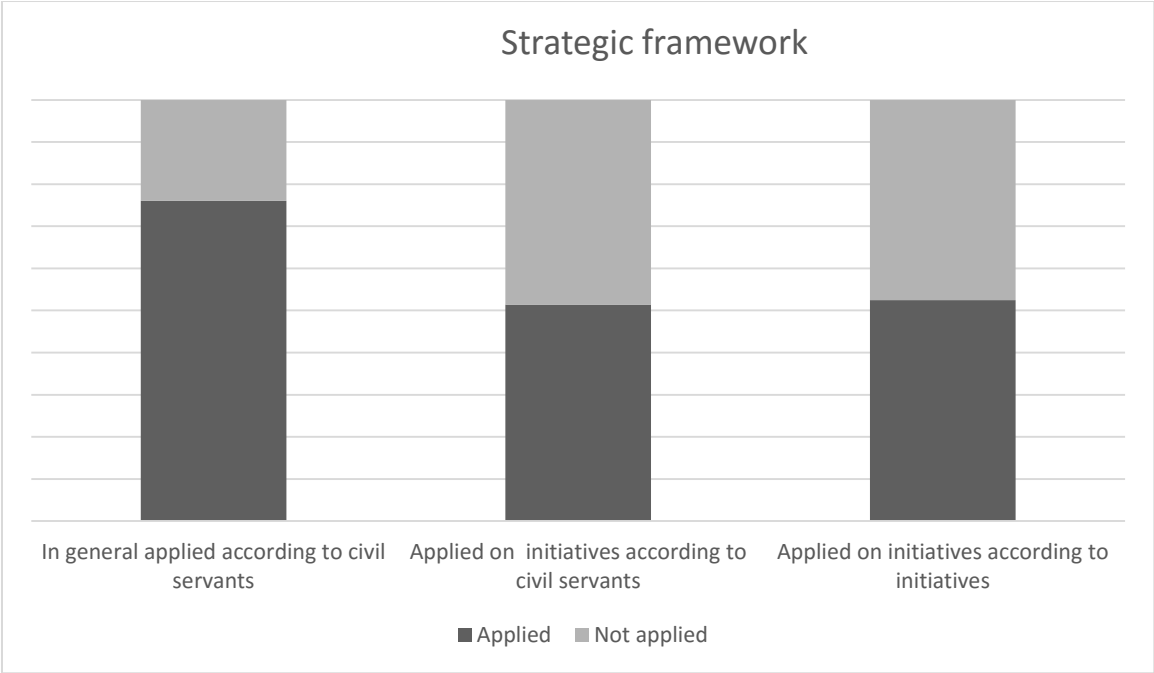
The steering strategy identified by Nederhand et al. (2015: 5) that includes strategic frameworks is defined as follows: “frameworks that operate as administrative checks to which self-organizing communities have to comply. This can be considered as ‘self-regulation in the context of regulation’”. A civil servant mentioned during the interview that the municipality has no right to interfere with initiatives. *“This changes, however, as soon as an initiative asks for subsidies. In this case, the municipality is about to spend public money on this initiative, and therefore, an obligation arises for the municipality to interfere”* (civil servant 2, municipality III). This quote illustrates that there is no such thing as self-organizing communities that have to comply to administrative checks. Initiatives can make a voluntary choice to ask for a subsidy and to have to comply to administrative checks in return. All interviewed initiatives that receive financial support, have to make annual accountability reports about their expenses. The interviewed civil servants of municipality I mention that they can see for themselves that the money the initiatives receive is spent properly. But for the sake of the city council and the audit committee these accountability reports are needed. Civil servant 2 of municipality II considers these accountability obligations as a burden for initiatives. He believes that these obligations nullify the pragmatic energy of initiatives. In general, the initiatives that receive financial support, do not consider the accountability obligations as a burden. They often mention that it makes sense to them to justify their spendings towards the city council. Wijkwinkel, however, says this: *“we do not use the supportive facilities that the municipality has for initiatives due to the many obligations that accompany those facilities. We will do it on our own”*. The initiator of Wijkwinkel also suggests that the municipality to revise their control system. Perhaps this system could focus more on trust instead of on accountability reports.

Steering via strategic framework does not solely concern accountability obligations after received subsidies. Strategic frameworks can also mean that the content of an initiative needs to fit the municipal ambitions. Again, an initiative does not have to comply to the municipal policy goals, but it can be a condition an initiative needs to meet if it wants municipal support. A civil servant states that *“We look if the initiatives that come to us for support match with our municipal goals. If they do, we can support them. If they do not, they will have to be more independent”* (civil servant 2, municipality III). Another civil servant says: *“We very often link initiatives to our own municipal goals”* (civil servant 2, municipality II). Another quote: *“We do not have many initiatives in this municipality. If an initiative comes to us for support, it is more convenient if this initiative fits within the municipal policies. But also when it does not fit, we will support this initiative”* (civil servants, municipality I). This form of steering on strategic framework often includes a verbal suggestion of the civil servant to the initiators, e.g. a suggestion to collaborate with another initiatives (Female Empowerment). Besides, a civil servant can participate in the regular meetings and steer these meetings towards the municipal goals (which can be the same as the goals of the initiative), e.g. TalentEvent. Moreover, the municipality can steer on

achieving municipal goals via an initiative through finding citizens to establish an initiative that will perform activities that serve the municipal goals, e.g. BuurtOog.

Table 37 shows that the civil servants claim to apply this strategy in general more often than they did on average on the investigated cases. The application of this strategy is very similar perceived by the initiatives as by the civil servants, according to the table.

Table 37 Application of strategic frameworks



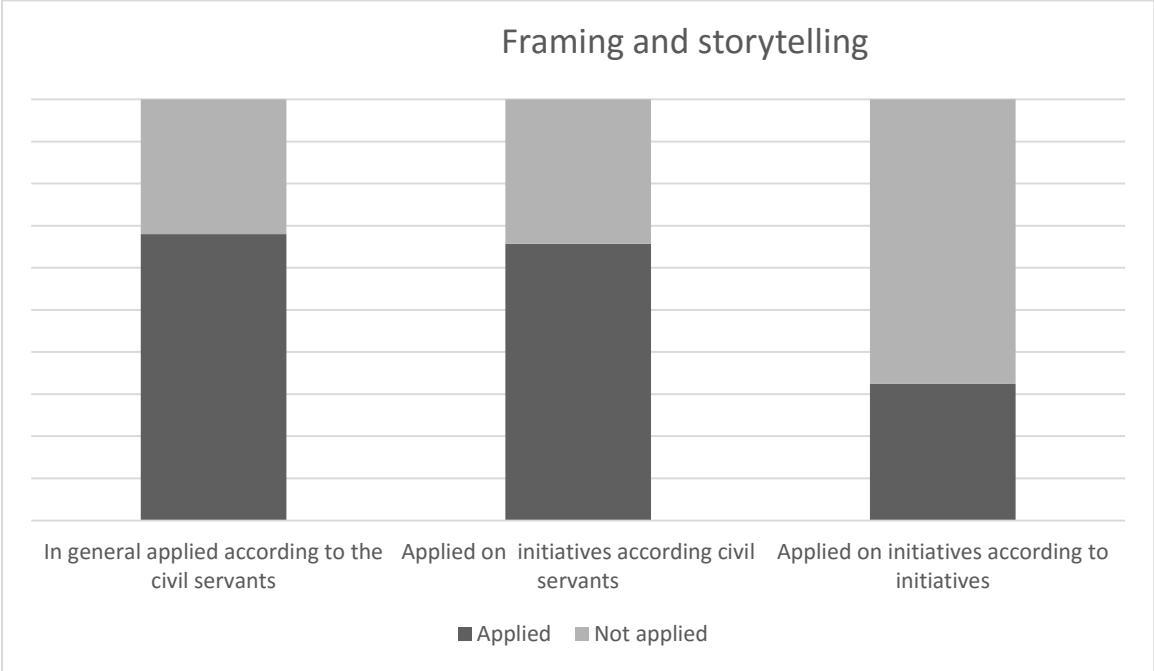
5.1.4 Framing and storytelling

Nederhand et al. (2015: 5) define this strategy as “use (persuasive) framing and storytelling to create a shared discursive context that helps align the sense making of individual actors so that a shared belief and discourse emerges”. This strategy is applied on the researched initiatives in various forms. The most distinctive form is on BuurtOog. This initiative was established on the request of the municipality. Municipality I organized an event where the need for a certain initiative was described. Moreover, a similar initiative from another area in the municipality was presented and provided the citizens who attended this presentation with inspiration how to do this in their own neighborhood. The successful story of one initiative was often used as an inspiration for other (potential) initiators. In the case of BuurtOog, a best-practice was presented to them. Dorpsdata, Female Empowerment, Meet in the Park, Constructive Dialogue, and Bridging government were used by their municipalities (or in the case of Dorpsdata, upon request of a similar initiative) to tell about their successful approaches. All civil servants that were interviewed claim that they use initiatives to inspire citizens or other initiatives. They

do this by connecting initiators with each other. Initiatives, thus, often tell their own story which is used by the municipality to activate and inspire others. The civil servants of municipality I state this: *“It is better to let initiatives inspire other citizens than a municipality who tries to inspire citizens to become active. Citizens are superstitious towards municipal attempts for activation. Citizens will consider this as another form of budget cuts”*.

The civil servants claim to apply this strategy on average as much on the interviewed initiatives as they do in general, as is shown in table 38. Initiatives experience the application of this steering strategy much less than the civil servants claim to apply. This has most likely to do with the fact described in the previous section that many interviewed initiatives tell their own story which is used by the municipality to inspire others.

Table 38 Application of framing and storytelling



5.1.5 Setting playing rules

This strategy is defined by Nederhand et al. (2015: 5) as “governments try to participate in a more direct way by designing the institutional setting in which self-organization takes place”. As mentioned in the section on strategic frameworks, the investigated cases show that as soon as initiatives receive financial support, they have to comply to accountability obligation. This is a form of institutional design. Another example of application of this steering strategy can be found in municipality III. Civil servant 2 from this municipality states that they tend to formalize interaction and agreements with initiatives via contracts. Civil servant 2 of municipality III states: *“Every initiatives that receives support*

from us, needs to sign a document where all the agreements are written down”. Both initiatives in this municipality fulfill a semi-formal role as a mediator or sound board between citizens from their neighborhood and the municipal organization. Municipality I inspired citizens to establish BuurtOog. Inspiring means that the municipality also presented a blueprint about how the initiative would function. The citizens were free to make changes, but they did not. The citizens found out that the ideas of the municipality were working well. Municipality I, thus, set flexible playing rules for BuurtOog. A civil servant of municipality I always attended, and actively participated in the board meetings of TalentEvent. The presence of this civil servant influenced the institutional setting of TalentEvent.

Table 39 shows that the municipals servants created more playing rules for the interviewed initiatives, than they do in general. This is possibly caused by the same fact that was mentioned before. My contact persons were asked to provide me with contact details of initiatives that maintain relationships with their municipalities. It might be possible that the initiatives suggested by these contact persons have more intensive relationships with the municipality than the average an average initiative has. An on average more intensive relationship will probably also mean on average more playing rules. This would explain why the civil servants claim to set more playing rules for the interviewed initiatives than on average. Interesting is the fact that the interviewed initiatives experience much less of this steering strategy than the civil servants claim to apply. The reason for this difference did not reveal itself during the interviews.

Table 159 Application of setting playing rules

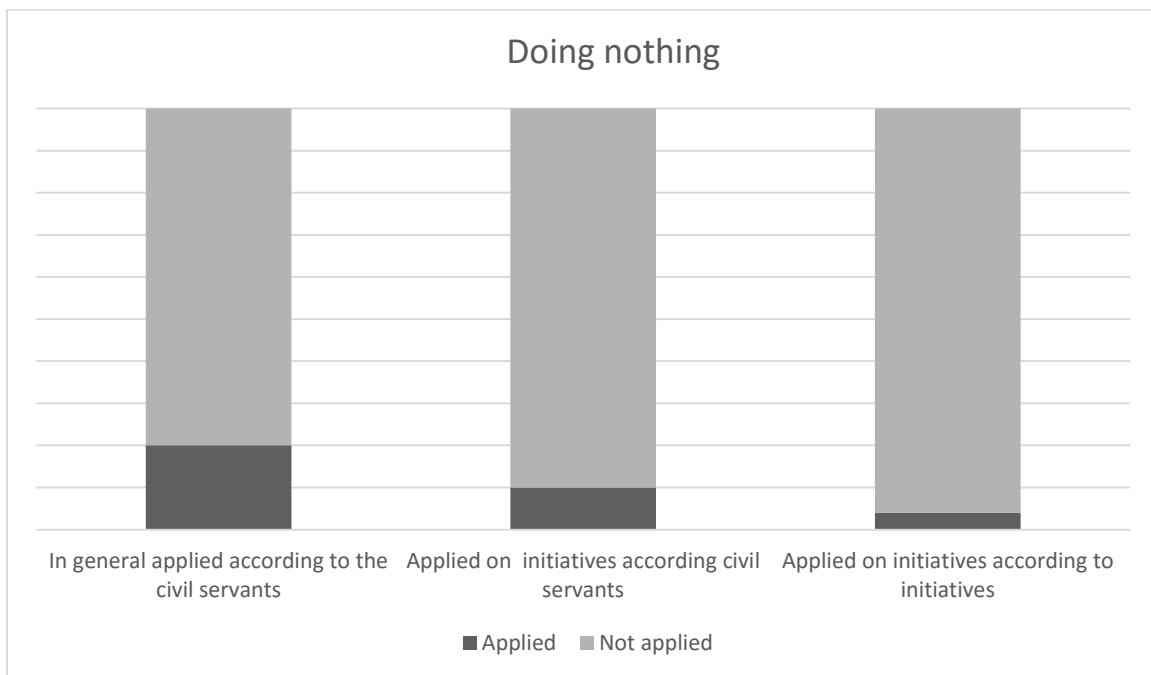


5.1.6 Doing nothing

Doing nothing is not as a strategy identified by Nederhand et al., but was added by myself (see chapter 3). As mentioned in that chapter, doing nothing is in this thesis only considered as a steering strategy when some form of interaction exists between the initiative and its municipality, but the municipality decides not to interact or steer any further.

When the interviews at the first municipality took place, this steering strategy was not yet included in the topic-list. This can possibly lead to a different score of application since the percentage of application is based on a smaller sample. Doing nothing as a strategy was not applied often. Only one municipal servant mentions this strategy as applied in general, and on the initiative he interacts with (Wijkwinkel). Wijkwinkel experiences the application of this strategy. The results concerning this steering strategy are presented in table 40.

Table 16 Application of doing nothing

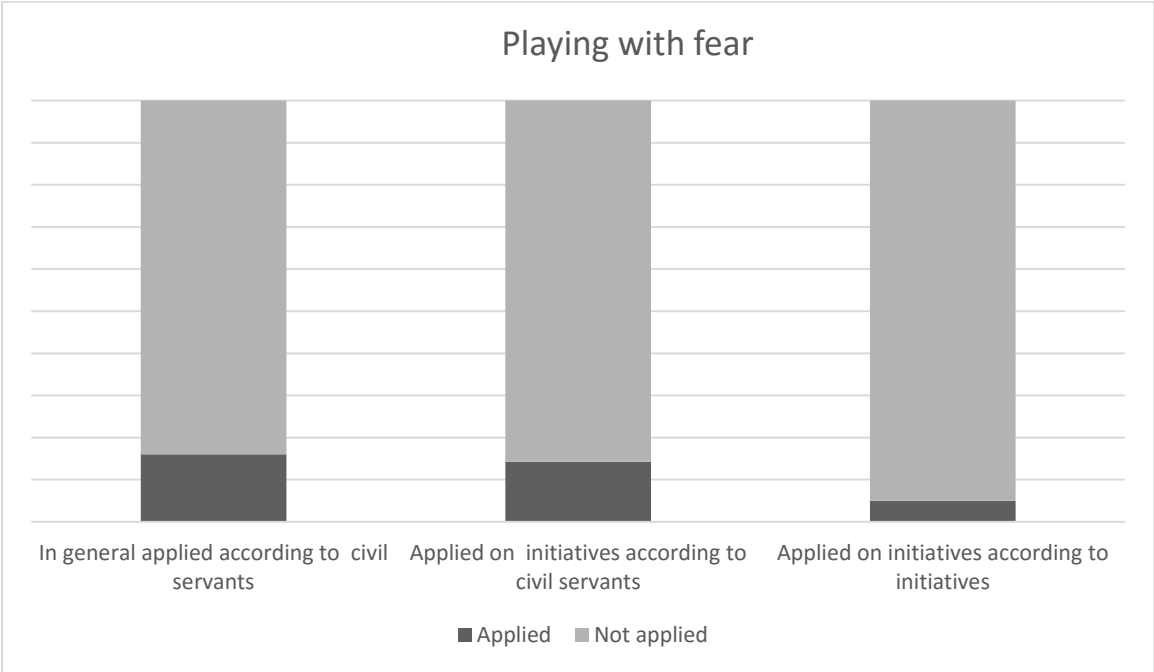


5.1.7 Playing with fear

Defined as “governments try to ‘scare’ the involved actors so that they move in a certain directions, for instance by threatening to use financial claw-back procedures or project appraisals, to stop funding or to impose binding rules”. None of the municipal policy documents or civil servants mention playing with fear as the main strategy used to steer initiatives. The civil servants claim to prefer more positive strategies, such as framing and storytelling or offering support. Both civil servants of municipality II state that they use playing with fear in general every now and then, depending on situation and initiative. These civil servants claim that they use fear also as a steering method on the two

initiatives they are interviewed about. However, these initiatives, Female Empowerment and Wijkwinkel, do not experience the application of this strategy. Also a civil servant of municipality III acknowledges that the municipality uses this strategy in rare situations. One of the two questioned initiatives in this municipality recognizes the usage of this strategy. Table 41 shows that both, civil servants and initiatives, recognize this steering strategy the least of all researched strategies.

Table 41 Application of playing with fear



5.1.8 Influence type of initiative on steering strategy

De Wilde et al. (2014) wrote that Putnam’s theory on bonding and bridging can also be applied on citizens’ initiatives. They also claimed that the degree of bonding and bridging, or in the words of De Wilde et al. the degree of connectedness, has consequences for the appreciation/need for governmental interference. De Wilde et al. also found that 80% of the initiatives they researched, were nested initiatives (n=386). In my research (n=8) 100% of the initiatives turned out to be nested initiatives, as all initiatives were internally and externally connected. De Wilde et al. found that their investigated nested initiatives possess the social capital that was needed to establish enduring and profitable relationships with local institutions. Six out of eight of the researched initiatives managed to establish durable, and profitable relationships with their municipalities. Another initiative had short-term interaction with the municipality. Any further municipal involvement was not needed. That means that only one of the eight initiatives did not have the relationship with its municipality that it wanted to have.

Since there were no other types of initiatives in the investigated sample, I cannot say anything about the type of relationship other kinds of initiatives would keep and how this differs from the relationships of the nested initiatives.

5.2 Influence of steering strategies on substantive performance

During the interviews, initiatives were asked to explain if, and how, steering strategies contributed to their substantive performance. Civil servants were asked to assess whether the strategies they applied have a positive influence on the substantive performances of initiatives. Table 41 shows how initiatives and civil servants answered these questions. A score of 5 in an initiatives bar means that the applied steering strategy contributed a lot to the initiative's performance according to all interviewed initiatives. A score of 5 at a civil servant bar means that the interviewed civil servants predict that the steering strategy improves initiatives' performance a lot. Only if a steering strategy was recognized by the initiative, or applied by the civil servant, interviewees filled out the effectiveness of this strategy. The separate steering strategies will be discussed further in this section in the order of the effectiveness according to the initiatives.

Since only two initiatives and one civil servant recognized playing with fear as a steering strategy, the score on that strategy is based on solely one respondent. The civil servant giving this score said that fear helps the initiative to work more efficient, if it is applied every now and then. One of the initiatives gave playing with fear a score of 3 out of 5 and said that the municipality, which forced the initiative to use specific contracts, helped the initiative to function well since this contract ensured the wellbeing of volunteers in case of accidents. On the other hand, this contract caused that some potential volunteers backed off because of this enforced obligation. One can question if this latter case truly describes playing with fear or if these contracts are a form of setting playing rules and, therefore, misplaced under this steering strategy.

One thing immediately stands out: the civil servants predict that the application of their steering strategy is more effective for the performance of initiatives than the initiatives think it is. As mentioned before, playing with fear is left out of this table. Also doing nothing as a steering strategy is missing in this table since none of the civil servants or initiatives filled out effectiveness of this strategy. Wijkwinkel said that the effectiveness of doing nothing was not very high since the initiative could benefit from municipal involvement. Nonetheless, municipal involvement could also deteriorate the performance of Wijkwinkel, e.g. by increasing the administrative burden. Therefore, the initiator of Wijkwinkel could not fill out the effectiveness of doing nothing.

Based on the sample investigated in this research cannot be determined if variation of the characteristics of Igalla and Van Meerkerk (2015) that were included in this thesis (age of initiative,

legal status, and financial model), and the size of the municipality wherein an initiative is located, influences the way initiatives consider certain steering strategy as effective. The sample initiatives in this research is too small to draw any conclusions on this area.

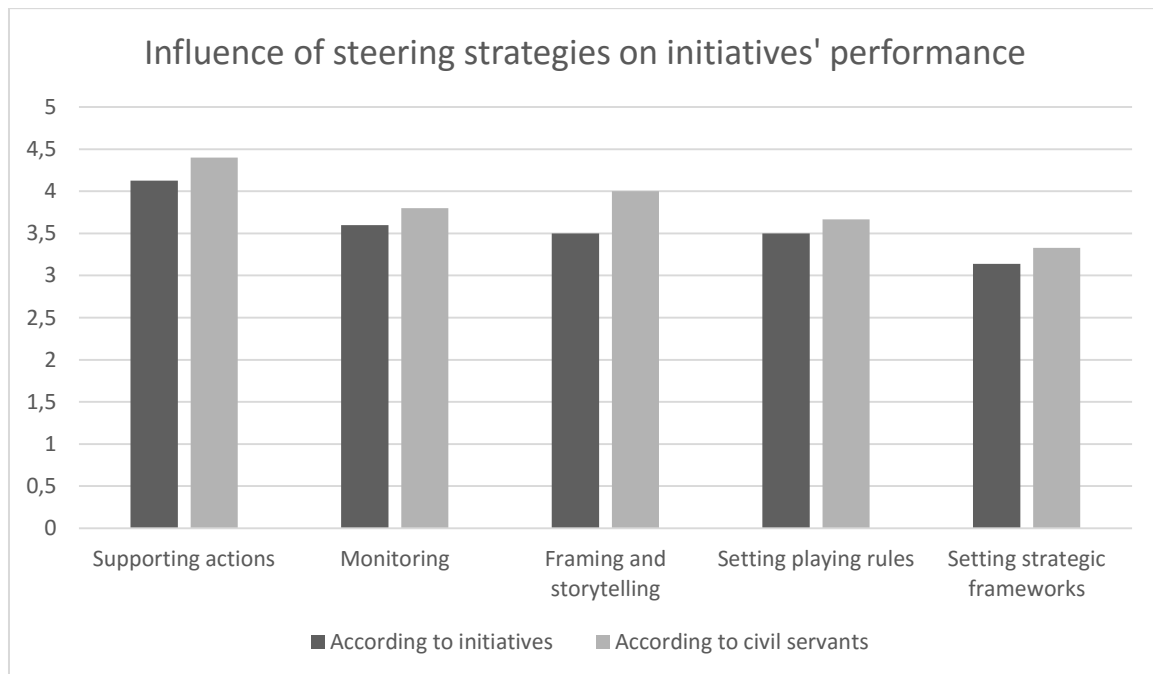


Table 42 Influence of steering strategies on substantive performance of initiatives

5.2.1 Supportive actions

The most effective steering strategy is the provision of supportive actions by the municipality. How this strategy contributes to the realization of the initiatives' goals, is obvious. In order to realize the substantive goals, initiatives often need more than just the time and energy of volunteers. Often they need equipment (BuurtOog), money (TalentEvent, Bridging Government, Meet in the Park, Female Empowerment, Wijkwinkel), or other forms of support, e.g. help with setting out a survey (Constructive Dialogue). The interviewee from Dorpsdata said that almost every initiative needs a sum of money to start up the initiative. He thinks it is important for the municipality to provide this amount because what society gets back from this initiative is much larger than that amount what the municipality invests. Moreover, if you expect initiatives to fund themselves completely, there will be much less initiatives because that just takes too much energy from the initiators.

5.2.2 Monitoring

The second most effective steering strategy according to the initiatives is monitoring. Six of the eight researched initiatives are monitored by neighborhood managers or other civil servants (BuurtOog,

TalentEvent, Female Empowerment, Meet in the Park, Constructive Dialogue, and Bridging Government). As mentioned before, monitoring is not applied or perceived as a control mechanism but as a genuine attempt of the municipality to help their initiatives. Monitoring results in close working relationships where the volunteers of the initiatives can contact their contact person within the municipality if they need help with urgent matters. On the other side, civil servants have a better idea of what kind of support an initiative really helps. In the two smaller municipalities (municipality I and III), this also resulted in faster communication with other departments of the municipality. E.g. the neighborhood manager (often the contact person of initiatives) contacts his colleagues from the legal department about a permit.

5.2.3 Framing and storytelling

After monitoring, framing and storytelling is the most effective steering strategy. This strategy often included connecting initiatives with each other, which led to new inspiration, energy, and ideas about how to improve. In the case of BuurtOog, municipality I arranged a presentation where a similar initiative talked about its activities and how it arranged everything. This was very useful for BuurtOog since it did not have to find out the best way to organize the neighborhood watch. The practices of the interviewed initiatives were often used as examples for other initiatives. This was for these other initiatives probably effective but did not contribute to the performance of the investigated initiatives. Of all strategies, initiatives and civil servants disagree most about the effectiveness of this strategy. The reason for this can be that initiatives benefit less from stories of other initiatives than the civil servants think they do. Moreover, many of the interviewed initiatives were used as an example for other initiatives. This was beneficial for the other initiatives, but not for the one that was presented as best practice (Dorpsdata, Female Empowerment, Meet in the Park, Constructive Dialogue, Bridging Government).

5.2.4 Setting playing rules

The contribution of playing rules to the realization of the substantive goals of initiatives is very different. Some initiatives state that these (sometimes formalized) rules of the play help them to be taken more seriously by the municipality and therefore increase their influence (Constructive Dialogue, Bridging Government). One of the civil servants of this municipality claims that formal playing rules are positive for these two initiatives, but that in many other cases these playing rules slow down and trouble the activities of initiatives (civil servant 2, municipality III). Civil servant 1 of municipality II says that the playing rules should be more emphasized by the municipality and the civil servants. She often experiences that initiators that ask her for help expect much more from her than she can do for them, e.g. initiators expect the neighborhood manager to help them during the activities (cleaning, preparing chairs and tables, etc.), or they expect her to arrange a permit for them, while this has to be done by someone's personal digital identity code (in Dutch DigiD).

5.2.5 Strategic framework

The situation with strategic frameworks is similar to playing rules. For some initiatives, this framework is very useful since the strategic frameworks of the municipality demonstrate their priorities. If an initiative fits in these frameworks, it is more likely to receive a lot of support of the municipality (BuurtOog). In other cases, a municipality which expects an initiative to operate within a municipal policy frame, can reduce the freedom of initiatives (Constructive Dialogue). As mentioned before, all investigated municipalities demand accountability reports from the initiatives that receive financial reports. The civil servants claim that this is inefficient since volunteers have to spend time and energy on something that does not directly contribute to the goals of an initiative. However, there is just one initiative (Wijkwinkel) which really sees this as a problem and suggests that municipalities change the focus from accountability obligations to trust. This way, initiatives can spend all their resources on the matters they care about and not on administrative burdens. One civil servant (civil servant 2, municipality II) agrees with this initiative and states that the best scenario would be a municipality which lets go of all its frameworks and trusts citizens in doing the best they can. The civil servants of municipality I mention that since society does not work with frameworks and departments, the municipal organization should do this neither and solely support initiatives without causing difficulties.

5.3 Influence of steering strategies on administrative performance

The interviewees of the initiatives were asked how the current interaction with the municipality is contributing to the realization of the substantive goals of the initiatives. Also was asked what kind of interaction or relationship with the municipality would be ideal to increase the performance of the initiative. These two questions gave answer to the administrative goals and the administrative performance of the initiatives. The results on administrative performance are presented differently than the results on substantive performance as these two forms of performance are researched in variously ways. Substantive performance is based on questions and models which the interviewees filled out. Administrative performance is based on open questions which does not result in suitable data to demonstrate in tables as is done with the data of substantive performance.

Five out of eight initiatives consider a close working relationship with a fixed civil servant, and a municipality that provides them with financial, or other forms of support, as their administrative goal. In four of these five cases, this kind of relationship is achieved (BuurtOog, TalentEvent, Female Empowerment, and Meet in the Park). The administrative performance in these situations is in these cases high. One initiative, Wijkwinkel, would like to have this kind of relationship but does not have it. DorpsData only needs financial and political support from the municipality, which it received through a subsidy for a survey and through an alderman accepting a document with the results of the survey.

Both initiatives in municipality III arose out of discontent with the attitude of the municipality towards citizens. Constructive Dialogue tries to change the municipal attitude in a sustainable way. The administrative goal of this initiative, therefore, is a municipality who includes citizens with policy making processes. Constructive Dialogue and municipality III eventually managed to establish a relationship in which the administrative goal of the initiative. The administrative performance, thus, was high. Bridging Government deals with a similar topic: the inaccessibility of the municipality. Unlike Constructive Dialogue does Bridging Government not aim to change the attitude of the government permanently. Bridging Government aims to establish a service that enables a dialogue between citizens and the municipality. The administrative goal of Bridging Government is for the municipality to take part in these dialogues, which the municipality does. The administrative performance, therefore, is high. One could state that the actual administrative of both initiatives in municipality III is for the municipality to change its attitude completely. The initiatives did not achieve this yet. However, the municipality is currently working on making the organization more receptive for its citizens, according to the policy documents.

This leads to the conclusion that seven out of eight initiatives score high on their administrative performance. Only one initiative, Wijkwinkel, has a low score on administrative performance.

6. Conclusions and discussion

This chapter will present the conclusions that can be drawn out of the results. First, the sub-questions will be answered, which will lead to an answer to the main question of this thesis. Next, several results will be discussed. This chapter will conclude with a reflection on the research process.

Conclusions

Theoretical sub-questions:

Which governmental steering strategies can be identified in the theory?

The theory provides us with a distinction made by Nederhand et al. (2015) who distinguish six steering strategies: setting strategic frameworks, monitoring, framing and storytelling, supportive actions, setting playing rules, and playing with fear. To make this distinction more complete, it is complemented with doing nothing.

What kind of citizens' initiatives can be found? How can they be characterized?

Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015) identified several characteristics that potentially influence the sustainability of initiatives. Some of these characteristics are included in the research: the age, legal status, and the financial model of the initiative. De Wilde et al. (2014) claim that there are four types of initiatives based on the degree of the internal and external connectedness of initiatives. These four types are: feather-light, networked, cooperative, and nested initiatives. These different types of initiatives prefer or need different types of governmental steering. The characteristics distinct by Igalla and Van Meerkerk, and the four types of initiatives identified by De Wilde et al. are included in this thesis.

What is the performance of an initiative?

According to Denters et al. (2013b) the performance of an initiative can be described on three levels: substantial, societal, and administrative. Substantial performance includes the realization of goals as they are set by the initiative. Societal performance signifies the changes within society the initiative achieves via the substantive goals. Administrative performance is the degree to which the relationship between the initiative and an administrative body (the municipality) contributes to the realization of the substantive goals of the initiative.

Empirical sub-questions:

Which governmental steering strategies as described in the theory can be found in practice?

All the strategies that Nederhand et al. (2015) describe can be found in practice. Also the steering strategy doing nothing was found. The steering strategy monitoring, however, was found in a different form than as Nederhand et al. (2015) describe this strategy. These researchers consider monitoring as a

form of control. The case study conducted in this thesis shows that monitoring is used by civil servants as a way to stay informed and to be able to see where an initiative needs support. This form of monitoring combined with support is called facilitation by Heurkens et al. (2015). The different steering strategies are applied in different degrees. The most applied steering strategy is offering support to initiatives. The second most applied strategy is monitoring, which is followed by setting strategic frameworks, framing and storytelling, setting playing rules, doing nothing, and at last, playing with fear.

Can the categorization of initiatives, as described in the theory, be found in practice?

The different characteristics as identified by Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015) can be found in practice but the results from the thesis show no correlation between certain characteristics and the application of certain steering strategies.

Out of the four different types of initiatives as identified by De Wilde et al. (2014), only the nested initiative was found in the investigated sample. De Wilde et al. state that nested initiatives possess the social capacity to establish and maintain fruitful relationships with public institutions, better than other types of initiatives can. Eight out of the nine researched initiatives succeeded in having a fruitful relationship with their municipalities. This means that the De Wilde et al. their statement about the possibility for nested initiatives to establish a productive relationship with the municipality is largely true. As there were no other types of initiatives investigated, the results of the nested initiatives cannot be compared with other types.

Which steering strategy is most effective for increasing initiatives' substantive performance?

Supporting initiatives results in the largest positive influence on the performance, as support provides initiatives with more means to reach their goals. Monitoring is the strategy with the second most positive influence. The interviewed initiatives appreciate the involvement of civil servants as these civil servants are better informed on the processes within the initiative and this improves their ability to support initiatives. Monitoring is followed by framing and storytelling. Initiatives acknowledge that this strategy can be very effective for initiatives since initiatives can learn a lot from each other. However, the researched initiatives were often the best practices that were presented to other initiatives, which is more useful for those other initiatives than for the initiatives investigated in this thesis. The strategy that is after framing and storytelling the most effective strategy is setting playing rules. The investigated initiatives find it useful to have clarity about what to expect from the municipality and in which way to collaborate. The next steering strategy is setting strategic frameworks. Initiatives value this strategy in very different ways. Some initiatives find the municipal strategic framework suffocating as they diminish the freedom of initiatives. Other initiatives benefit from these strategic frameworks since their objectives fit with the priorities of the municipality, which results in a supportive attitude from the municipality towards these initiatives. The influence of the usage of fear could not be determined since there were not enough cases where the usage of fear was identified. The same goes for doing nothing,

which was barely applied on the investigated cases and the influence of doing nothing is hard to determine. Civil servants expect that their steering strategies contribute more to the performance of initiatives than the initiatives recognize they do.

Which governmental attitude fits best with the administrative goals of initiatives?

Seven out of eight initiatives consider having a fixed contact person within the municipal organization who helps the initiative to get the support from the municipality it needs, as the ideal relation between themselves and their municipalities. The initiatives, however, want to keep the ability to make their own decisions: the municipality should not take over the initiative. One initiative states that it prefers a more distant relationship. If the initiative needs support from the municipality, it will contact the right civil servant directly, but close monitoring is not necessary. Van der Steen et al. (2013) would consider this ideal form of governmental steering as an example of participatory government. Citizens would determine the public value and start initiatives that would serve this value. Municipalities support initiatives that ask them to do so but municipalities do not try to change the course of the initiative.

With the answers to the sub-questions, the main question can be answered:

What is the influence of governmental steering strategies on the performance of citizens' initiatives with a social purpose?

The steering strategies that civil servants use, can be divided into seven different strategies: setting strategic frameworks, monitoring, framing and storytelling, supporting, setting playing rules, playing with fear, and doing nothing. This multiple case study shows that these steering strategies influence the substantive performance of initiatives in different ways. Supporting initiatives results in the largest positive influence on the performance. Monitoring is the strategy with the second most positive influence, followed by framing and storytelling, setting playing rules, and setting strategic frameworks. The influence of the usage of fear could not be determined since there were not enough cases where the usage of fear was identified. The same goes for doing nothing, which was barely applied on the investigated cases and the influence of doing nothing is hard to determine.

The effectivity of many steering strategy differs per initiative. Therefore, it is not possible to draw any conclusions on the difference of effectivity of the steering strategies in small and large municipalities.

The results from the case study show that some steering strategies seem to be linked. The provision of financial support seems to be linked to the application of strategic frameworks, as financial subsidies come with accountability obligations. The usage of process monitoring seems to be linked to the provision of supportive actions. In addition, the usage of monitoring seems to be linked to support. Monitoring, as it was found in the researched cases, can be considered as a form of support as civil

servants give attention and advice to initiatives. If civil servants monitor initiatives, they know what these initiatives need in order to increase their performance. Municipal support can fulfill these necessities.

The administrative performance of initiatives is based on what kind of municipality – initiative relationship would help initiatives most to increase their substantive performance. Seven out of eight initiatives want an intensive relationship with a fixed civil servant and support from the municipality in different forms. Six of these seven initiatives currently had that kind of relationship, while one did not. The last initiative wanted financial support from the municipality as a kick start, which it got. Besides this financial support, it does not need interaction with the municipality. This ideal relationship with a combined strategy of monitoring and support, fits with the participatory governmental attitude as described by Van der Steen et al. (2013). The public value gets determined by citizens and the government supports these citizens with realizing the public value.

Discussion

While investigating the initiatives and municipalities, certain things stood out that do not directly relate to the main research question of this thesis, but influence the context of the steering strategies. The following sections will elaborate on these outstanding topics. This thesis can point these topics out but cannot explain them. These topics need to be regarded as input for further discussion and research.

Most effective of most convenient?

The case study shows that the most applied steering strategies, supporting and monitoring, are also contributing most to the performance of initiatives. Nevertheless, the fact that this thesis shows that these two steering strategies are applied most and most effective, does not mean that these steering methods are therefore immediately the ultimate strategies. One could claim that these steering strategies are most convenient for initiatives since they get the support and attention they need, while it might also make them dependent and passive. One could believe that an initiative that needs to find its own financial means is more innovative and seeks more for collaboration with other initiatives. Further research should be done to find out how similar initiatives that do not receive governmental support, perform compared to initiatives that get governmental attention. This would exclude the possibility that the outcome of this thesis concerning the most effective steering strategy is actually the most convenient strategy.

Sustainable initiatives

As mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, initiatives often arise out of dissatisfaction. Initiatives aim to change this unsatisfying matter. Sometimes this matter can be solved with a single action, but it requires sustainable action to resolve the matter at stake. Chapter 2 mentioned that governmental steering is also required because it increases the sustainability of initiatives. Also the

practice shows that the civil servants seem to steer on sustainability, e.g. through formalizing interactions (municipality III with both initiatives), or through helping an initiative to create an environment that stays positive towards the initiative's activities (municipality III with Meet in the Park). Municipality I experiences difficulties with the continuity/sustainability of initiatives. Can a municipality expect initiatives to be long-lasting, as the involved volunteers can lose their interest, get a burn-out, move away, etc.? And if the answer would be negative, how much should a municipality invest in initiatives from which the continuity/sustainability is doubted?

Civil servants' struggle with the municipal organization

In the introduction is written that this thesis focuses on the role of the government in the interplay between municipalities and initiative. This thesis shows that also within the municipality are processes of interaction: namely between the civil servants that work directly with initiatives, and the rest of the organization. These former civil servants can be seen as the front line workers of the municipality. They operate more often in the real society, as they do within the municipal organization. Something that really stands out in the data, is the fact that all civil servants mention to have (severe) struggles with the rest of their municipal organization. As front line workers, these civil servants think "what do citizens need to be done", instead of "what is allowed to be done", "what do the politicians require us to do", "what kind of example do we set if we do that", etc. The interviewees often named legal advisors and the policy departments that deal with the physical appearance of the municipality as stubborn and very traditional minded. This struggle within the municipal organization was for most interviewed civil servants the largest challenge of their jobs.

Control on paper or through experience

The most applied steering strategy is providing initiatives with support. As mentioned before, when this support is financial, accountability reports are necessary for the municipal organization to justify the provision of subsidy toward the municipal audit and the city council. Most of the interviewed initiatives found this accountability report an obvious obligation and making these reports did not bother them. One respondent (Wijkwinkel), however, stated that these obligation that accompany financial support, withhold him to request this kind of support, while he definitely could benefit from these supportive possibilities. When he was asked how he found that municipalities should deal with initiatives in an ideal situation, he stated that he would like to change the municipal system from a system of control towards a system of trust. In this system, accountabilities would no longer be necessary. Also civil servant 2 of municipality II thinks that a change of control mechanism would be very beneficial for initiatives. The municipality could monitor the activities of initiatives by participating and let the outcome of these activities be the justification for spending public money on this initiative. The time initiatives would otherwise have to spend on filling out accountability reports can now be spend on the activities of the initiatives.

Reflection

Literature

The conducted research in this thesis was based on certain distinctions made in literature. From an article of Nederhand et al. (2015) were six steering strategies extracted. Five of these steering strategies were found in practice. Monitoring was also recognized but not in the way as Nederhand et al. defined it. Nederhand et al. defined monitoring as a control mechanism while monitoring was found in practice as a form of facilitation as Heurkens et al. (2015) describe it. Monitoring helps civil servants to support an initiative exactly where it needs it.

The numeration of characteristics of initiatives that Igalla & Van Meerkerk (2015) used in their research on sustainability of initiatives, was not very useful in this research. Based on the small sample investigated in this thesis, these characteristics seem not to influence the way initiatives value certain steering strategies. Only the financial model of initiatives can say something about the applied steering strategies. But receiving municipal subsidies means automatically application of the supportive steering strategy, hence, this observation was obvious. Igalla & Van Meerkerk did not predict that any of these characteristics would have an influence on the appreciation of certain steering strategies. It was my own decision to include these characteristics.

Out of the four types of initiatives that De Wilde et al. (2014) identify, only one type was recognized in this thesis. All eight initiatives were nested initiatives, although they maintain different relationships with their municipality, which is related to the amount of social capital nested initiatives possess, according to De Wilde et al. In this thesis, the distinction of De Wilde et al. did not contribute much, which may have been different if the sample would have been larger.

The way Heurkens et al. (2015) describe facilitation matches the findings of this thesis, namely that the best way to deal with initiatives is to combine monitoring with supporting.

Methodology

The conclusions about steering strategies are based on averages. The raw data shows that some steering strategies are perceived very differently (e.g. setting playing rules and strategic frameworks). Working with averages is necessary in order to come to conclusions, but it undermines the diversity in perceptions. It would have been better if a larger number of initiatives was included in the survey, as this would reveal if certain perceptions are exceptions or if they are common. In that case it may have been possible to explain why one initiative is more positive about one strategy than the other, and that would also increase the understanding of the influence of steering strategies. Moreover, the differences between the policies and attitudes of municipalities towards initiatives are very different. If more municipalities would have been included, there may have been more clarity about the reasons of a certain

attitude. Nevertheless, as this research was conducted for explorative purposes, the observations and conclusions can function as a commencement for further research.

While conducting the interviews, it became clear that respondents do not interpret the model of the circles (for measuring the degree of application and the degree of effectivity) equally. With further explanations of the meaning and implications of each circle, interviewees managed to fill it out. A researcher could consider to fill out the model himself/herself, based on the information he/she receives from the respondent. A possible downside of this suggestion is that an interviewee might forget to mention certain steering strategies or interactions which would then not be included in the model. If an interviewee fills out the model himself/herself, this downside is obviated.

Moreover, the model with the circles only measures the positive influence of steering strategies on the substantive performance of initiatives, while my aim was to also include negative influence. Zero black circles, namely, means no positive influence, but not necessarily a negative influence. I would recommend researchers in the future to find an alternative model that also measures negative influences.

During the whole research, the structure of the taxonomies, as presented in the appendices, was leading for the structures of the research. This led to an organized way of doing research and increased the internal validity. It also increases the readability of the thesis itself.

7. Recommendations

In this chapter, several recommendations for municipalities are presented. These recommendations address municipalities since the focus of this research is on municipal policies and the influence of these policies on initiatives.

Based on the outcome of a multiple case study at eight initiatives within three municipalities, the first recommendation to municipalities is to use or keep using metagovernance steering strategies on initiatives as these strategies can be beneficial for the performance of citizens' initiatives. The most beneficial strategies to increase initiatives' performance are supporting and monitoring. Through monitoring the needs of an initiative become visible, which results in knowledge on how to support an initiative in the best possible way. These two strategies combined also result in a governmental attitude that is most valued by the initiatives in this research: participatory governmental attitude.

Support exists in many forms. All three investigated municipalities have a certain budget that can be spent on initiatives. In the two smaller municipalities the civil servants that deal with initiatives decide on what the budget is spend. In the larger municipality, the city council of a smaller part of the city has the delegate to divide the budget among the initiatives within that specific area. Other forms of support that turned out to be very helpful for initiatives are having accommodations available for initiatives, and providing initiatives with advices about what kinds of support are available for them and suggestions for collaborations with other initiatives.

Monitoring can be done in several ways as well. In most investigated cases, initiatives have a fixed civil servant with whom they have regular meetings, e.g. every 6 weeks. All of the initiatives were very enthusiastic about this form of monitoring. In larger municipalities or municipalities with a lot of initiatives, this approach can be too labor intensive. There should be made decisions about which initiatives and when this strategy will be applied.

Moreover, municipalities should reconsider what the existence of certain initiative means for them as an organization. If a municipality has initiatives arising that negotiate between the municipality and other citizens because of the inaccessibility of a municipality, one might ask if the municipality should treasure these initiatives or maybe should improve its accessibility. Fortunately, the municipality where this situation was found is working on this and there are many inspiring civil servants trying to realize this improvement.

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Appendices

Topic list municipality

1. Wat is uw positie binnen gemeente X?
2. Wat is de visie van uw gemeente ten aanzien van burgerinitiatieven? En wat houdt deze visie in voor uw werkzaamheden en mogelijkheden (bijvoorbeeld erg passief en afwachtend opstellen, of actief initiatieven benaderen, budgetten uitdelen)?
3. Wat ziet u als een burgerinitiatief en wat niet? Wat zijn de voorwaarden om als burgerinitiatief aangemerkt te worden?
4.
 - a. Wat voor typen burgerinitiatieven onderscheidt u?
 - b. Behandelt u/de gemeente deze verschillende typen initiatieven hetzelfde? Hoe behandelt u deze typen verschillend? (vb. initiatieven met specifieke kenmerken zijn (on)betrouwbaarder en zullen eerder/minder snel middelen van een gemeente krijgen)
5.
 - a. Wat is het meest voorkomende verzoek van burgerinitiatieven aan de gemeente? En wat voor andere verzoeken ontvangt u?
 - b. Ervaren initiatiefnemers grenzen of problemen binnen de gemeentelijke structuur bij het ontplooiën van hun initiatief, voor zover u weet?
 - c. Zijn er speciale faciliteiten binnen de gemeente om burgerinitiatieven te stimuleren? (bijvoorbeeld right to challenge, subsidies, wijkmanager, platforms, etc.)
6.
 - a. Probeert de gemeente/u burgerinitiatieven te sturen?
Waarom (niet)?
Hoe probeert u/de gemeente initiatieven te sturen?
Waar naartoe probeert u initiatieven te sturen?
Laat tabel 1 en 2 zien en invullen
 - Laat ambtenaar het model zien en laat hem/haar de huidige en ideale situatie aanwijzen in model 1
 - Laat ambtenaar model sturingsstrategieën invullen in tabellen 1 en 2. Missen er nog strategieën?

Afsluiting

7. Waar loopt u vast op de samenwerking met burgerinitiatieven en waarmee zou u echt geholpen kunnen worden?

Tabel 1

Strategie	Toegepast door gemeente in het algemeen	Effectief voor initiatieven in het algemeen*
Strategische kaders zetten	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Monitoring	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Framing en storytelling	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Aanwezigheid van ondersteunende acties	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Formuleren van spelregels	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Spelen met angst	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Tabel 2

Strategie	Op initiatief x gebruikt door de gemeente	Effectief voor initiatief*
Strategische kaders zetten	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Monitoring	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Framing en storytelling	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Aanwezigheid van ondersteunende acties	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Formuleren van spelregels	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Spelen met angst	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

*Hoe beoordeelt u de strategieën als effectief om de prestaties van burgerinitiatieven te beïnvloeden?

Strategische kaders zetten: Initiatieven moeten aan bepaalde voorwaarden voldoen en handelen op een door de gemeente bepaalde manier. Bijvoorbeeld bepaalde rapportage verplichtingen aan een subsidie.

Monitoring: Gemeente vraagt informatie op bij initiatieven zonder aanleiding

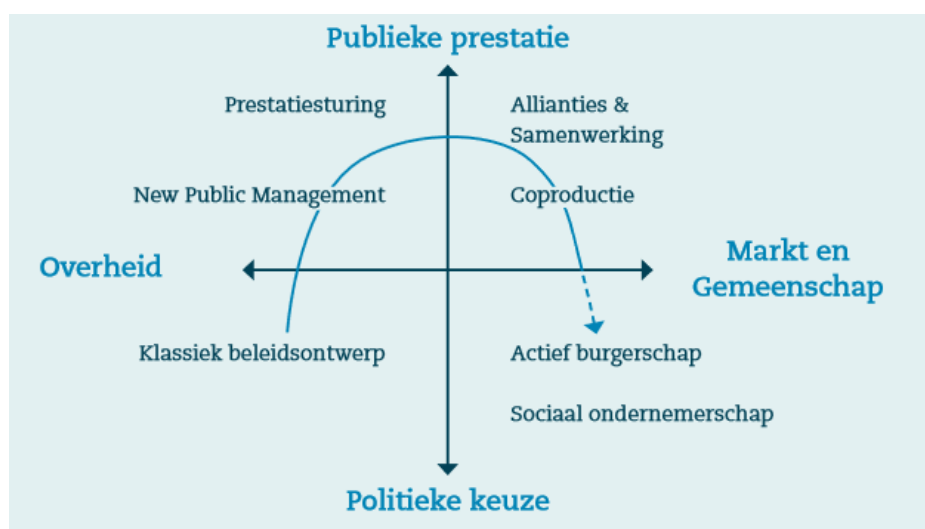
Framing en storytelling: Gemeente stimuleert “inspirerende verhalen vertellen”. Platforms organiseren waar initiatieven ervaringen kunnen delen (vanuit de gemeente)

Aanwezigheid van ondersteunende acties: contacten, expertise, informatie, accommodaties, Experimentele zone. Organiseren van een platform.

Formuleren van spelregels: institutionele setting organiseren: duidelijke maken dat je van elkaar afhankelijk bent: rolverdeling.

Spelen met angst: door middel van dreigen te stoppen met de verhuur van accommodatie, stoppen met subsidieverlening, etc.

Model 1



Topic list citizens' initiative

1. Wat is uw positie/rol binnen het burgerinitiatief?
2. Wat is uw achtergrond? (ik wil opleidingsniveau achterhalen)
3.
 - a. Wat is de juridische status van het initiatief?
 - b. Hoe wordt het initiatief gefinancierd (mits van toepassing)?
 - c. Hoeveel vrijwilligers zijn betrokken bij het initiatief?
 - d. Wanneer is het initiatief opgericht?
 - e. Wat draagt het initiatief bij? Producten, diensten, etc.
4.
 - a. Wat is de doelstelling van het initiatief (substantive goal)?
 - b. Welk maatschappelijk doel wordt hiermee bediend (societal goal)? Wat is de invloed van uw initiatief op de wijze waarop mensen samenleven?
 - c. Door middel van welke activiteiten wordt getracht deze doelstellingen te behalen?
5.
 - a. Hoeveel interactie vindt plaats tussen de betrokkenen van het initiatief onderling (internal connectedness)? (antwoord: veel/weinig/geen)
 - b. Hoeveel interactie vindt plaats tussen de betrokkenen van het initiatief en de omgeving (external connectedness)? (antwoord: veel/weinig/geen)
6. Ervaart u binnen deze gemeente de ruimte om uw initiatief te ontplooiën? Ervaart u grenzen? (Kaderstellende sturingsmechanismen)
7. Ervaart u, als initiatief, sturing door de gemeente? Zo ja, hoe? (Bijvoorbeeld: d.m.v. een poster in een bushokje met de oproep om vrijwilliger te worden of een dreigement van een gemeenteambtenaar om subsidie stop te zetten)
8.
 - a. Met wie binnen de gemeente heeft u contact (loket, ambtenaar a, ambtenaar b, wethouder) en met welke frequentie? Hoe verloopt dit contact?
 - b. Was het contact met de gemeente op initiatief van u/uw initiatief, of kwam het verzoek tot contact vanuit de gemeente?
 - c. Wat is de vraag die centraal staat/stond tijdens de gesprekken? Wat willen jullie van elkaar?
 - d. Wat is de uitkomst van de gesprekken met de gemeente? Wat voor actie heeft de gemeente ondernomen? En was dit een gewenste actie?
9. Wat voor invloed heeft de actie van de gemeente op de realisatie van doelen van uw initiatief (substantive performance)?
10. In hoeverre draagt deze invloed bij aan het behalen van de maatschappelijke doelstellingen van het initiatief?
11.
 - a. Bij wat voor initiatief-gemeente relatie heeft uw initiatief het meeste baat (administrative performance)?
 - b. Is deze relatie er op dit moment?
 - c. In hoeverre draagt de gemeente bij aan deze ideale relatie?
12. Als u een gemeente ambtenaar zou zijn, hoe zou u burgerinitiatieven benaderen/Hoe wil u dat de gemeente zich opstelt ten aanzien van burgerinitiatieven? (vb. faciliterend, participierend, zo min mogelijk interveniërend, is de gemeente in staat te anticiperen op knelpunten?)

13. Kunt u het onderstaande schema invullen?

Strategie	Op uw initiatief gebruikt door de gemeente	Effectief
Strategische kaders zetten	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Monitoring	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Framing en storytelling	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Aanwezigheid van ondersteunende acties	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Formuleren van spelregels	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Spelen met angst	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
Niets doen	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strategische kaders zetten: Initiatieven moeten aan bepaalde voorwaarden voldoen en handelen op een door de gemeente bepaalde manier. Bijvoorbeeld bepaalde rapportage verplichtingen aan een subsidie.

Monitoring: Gemeente vraagt informatie op bij initiatieven zonder aanleiding

Framing en storytelling: Gemeente stimuleert “inspirerende verhalen vertellen”. Platforms organiseren waar initiatieven ervaringen kunnen delen (vanuit de gemeente)

Aanwezigheid van ondersteunende acties: contacten, expertise, informatie, accommodaties .Experimentele zone. Organiseren van een platform.

Formuleren van spelregels: institutionele setting organiseren: duidelijke maken dat je van elkaar afhankelijk bent: rolverdeling.

Spelen met angst: door middel van dreigen te stoppen met de verhuur van accommodatie, stoppen met subsidieverlening, etc.

Taxonomy initiative

1. Interviewee	1.1 Characteristics	1.1.1 Position within the initiative 1.1.2 Educational level 1.1.3 Profession 1.1.4 Amount of experience with public sector
2. Initiative	2.1 Characteristics	2.1.1 Legal status 2.1.2 Budget 2.1.3 Funders 2.1.4 Size 2.1.5 Age 2.1.6 Product
	2.2 Goals	2.2.1 Substantive 2.2.2 Societal 2.2.3 Administrative
	2.3 Connectedness	2.3.1 Internal 2.3.2 External
3. Municipality	3.1 Attitude towards initiatives	
	3.2 Ways of contact with initiative	
4. Interaction municipality – initiative	4.1 Characteristics	4.1.1 Intensity 4.1.2 Initiator of contact 4.1.3 Topic 4.1.4 Results
	4.2 Contributions to goals	4.2.1 Substantive 4.2.2 Administrative
5. Steering strategy	5.1 Strategic framework 5.2 Monitoring 5.3 Framing and storytelling 5.4 Supportive action 5.5 Setting playing rules 5.6 Playing with fear 5.7 Doing nothing	

Taxonomy municipality

1. Municipality	1.1 Vision on citizens' initiatives
	1.2 Supportive tools
	1.3 Direction of steering
	1.4 Encountered problems while dealing with initiatives
2. Initiatives	2.1 What is an initiative?
	2.2 Do initiatives experiences barriers in dealing with the municipality?
3. Steering strategies	3.1 Strategic framework
	3.2 Monitoring
	3.3 Framing and storytelling
	3.4 Presence of supportive actions
	3.5 Setting playing rules
	3.6 Playing with fear
	3.7 Doing nothing